

ROBERT KIRKMAN • RYAN OTTLEY • CORY WALKER

INVINCIBLE™

COMPENDIUM TWO



The ultimate edition of The New York Times bestseller!



image comics presents

INVINCIBLE

COMPENDIUM TWO

**ROBERT
KIRKMAN**

writer

**RYAN
OTTLEY**

penciler (issues 48-65,
68-84, 87-96, Invincible
Returns 1 main story)
inker (issues 48-51, 55,
73, 75, 83, 87, 88)
covers (48-50, 52-65, 68-
84, 87-96)

**CORY
WALKER**

penciler/inker (issues
66-67, 85-86, 92-96,
Invincible Returns
backup story 1)
covers (issues 66, 67, 85,
86, 92-96)

**CLIFF
RATHBURN**

inker (issues 52-54,
56-65, 68-84, 87, 89-96,
Invincible Returns 1
main story)

RUS WOOTON

letterer

BILL

CRABTREE

colorist (issues 48-50)

**FCO
PLASCENCIA**

colorist (issues 51-65,
68-78, 85-86, Invincible
Returns 1 main story)

DAVE MCCRAIG

colorist (issues 66-67)

NIKOS KOUTSIS

colorist (issues 79-81)

JOHN RAUCH

colorist

(issues 82-84, 87-96)

**SHEILA
SALDANA**

color assistant
(issues 75-78)

**IVAN
PLASCENCIA**

color assistant
(issue 75)

MIKE TORIS

color assistant
(issue 79-81)

RYAN OTTLEY & JOHN RAUCH

cover

ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN #11

JASON HOWARD

penciler, colorist, cover

CLIFF RATHBURN

inker

RUS WOOTON

letterer

COVERS

JIM LEE

issue 51

DAVID FINCH

Invincible Returns 1

INVINCIBLE CREATED BY **ROBERT KIRKMAN & CORY WALKER**



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Since first breaking in as the writer of his self-published Battle Pope, **ROBERT KIRKMAN** has been a strident proponent of creator-owned comics. Making his home at Image Comics early on, Kirkman is the creator and co-creator of some of the company's most beloved titles, including Invincible, The Walking Dead and Super Dinosaur. Based on the strength of his creator-owned properties, the writer was offered work at Marvel Comics, where he worked on popular characters such as the X-Men and Fantastic Four, while launching the fan-favorite The Irredeemable Ant-Man and Destroyer MAX. More recently, Kirkman has committed himself fully to creator-owned work, continuing his three ongoing titles under his Skybound imprint at Image while also acting as executive producer on The Walking Dead television show.

Starting with issue #8, **RYAN OTTLEY** has not only made Invincible his home, but he has made it his own as well. For years, the artist has joined forces with Robert Kirkman in detailing the ongoing adventures of young Mark Grayson. Not only is Ottley a talented storyteller, but he also boasts an unparalleled work ethic. His speed made it possible for him to draw a guest spot on DC Comics' Superman/Batman as well as launch the new ongoing series Haunt, while remaining Invincible's regular artist for over ninety issues and counting.

The co-creator of Invincible, **CORY WALKER** was also the series' original artist, drawing issues #1-7 and setting the tone for the title. Since then, the talented artist has performed art duties on numerous titles at both Marvel and DC Comics, including issues of Marvel Team-Up, The Irredeemable Ant-Man, Punisher War Journal, and Shadowpact in addition to acting as sole artist on the critically acclaimed Destroyer MAX, alongside writer and Invincible co-creator Robert Kirkman. Walker has never forgotten his creation however, and has contributed frequent guest spots on Invincible issues, covers and back-ups.

The Mexico-based artist **FCO PLASCENCIA** began his professional coloring career on Gemini from Image Comics, before his extended runs on Invincible, Astounding Wolf-Man and Haunt. He currently colors DC Comic's bestselling Batman.

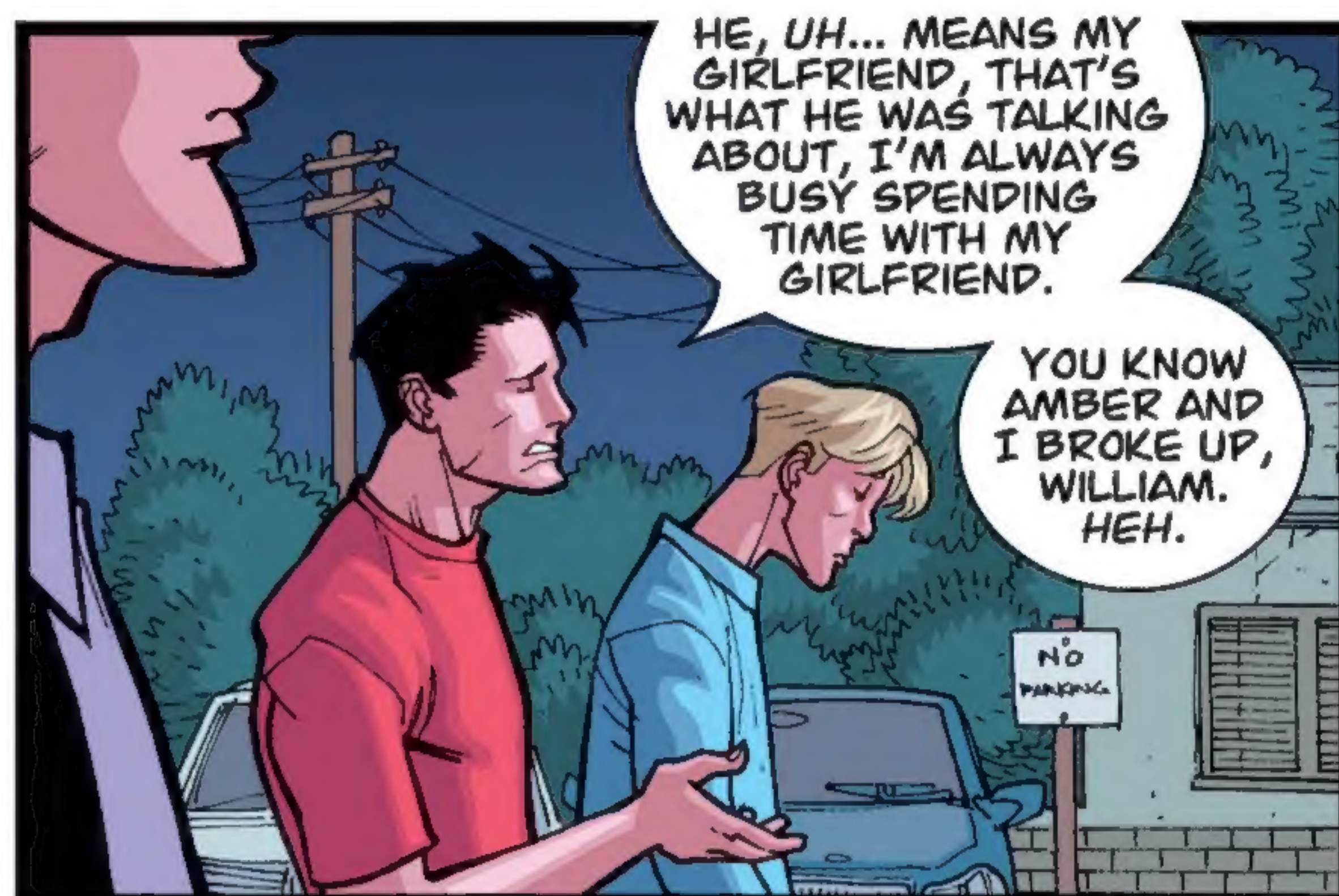
JOHN RAUCH is an American comic book colorist whose credits include Invincible, The Darkness, Teen Titans: Year One, Patsy Walker: Hellcat, and a bunch of other stuff not worth bragging about. He enjoys speaking about himself in the third person and pretending he is more talented and relevant than he really is in order to help fight off bouts of depression.

Anyone who looks at the credits of their favorite comic books is likely familiar with the name **RUS WOOTON**. With his work on Invincible, The Walking Dead, Super Dinosaur, The Manhattan Projects, Sex and more, a case could easily be made for Wooton being the go-to letterer for creator-owned comics. But Wooton's work can also be found in abundance at Marvel Comics, where as a member of Chris Eliopoulos' Virtual Caligraphy group he has lettered countless series including Fantastic Four, newuniversal, Uncanny X-Men and more.

SEAN MACKIEWICZ is the Editorial Director of Skybound Entertainment. Choosing his favorite title to work on is like picking your favorite child...if all your children were covered in blood.

CHAPTER 48

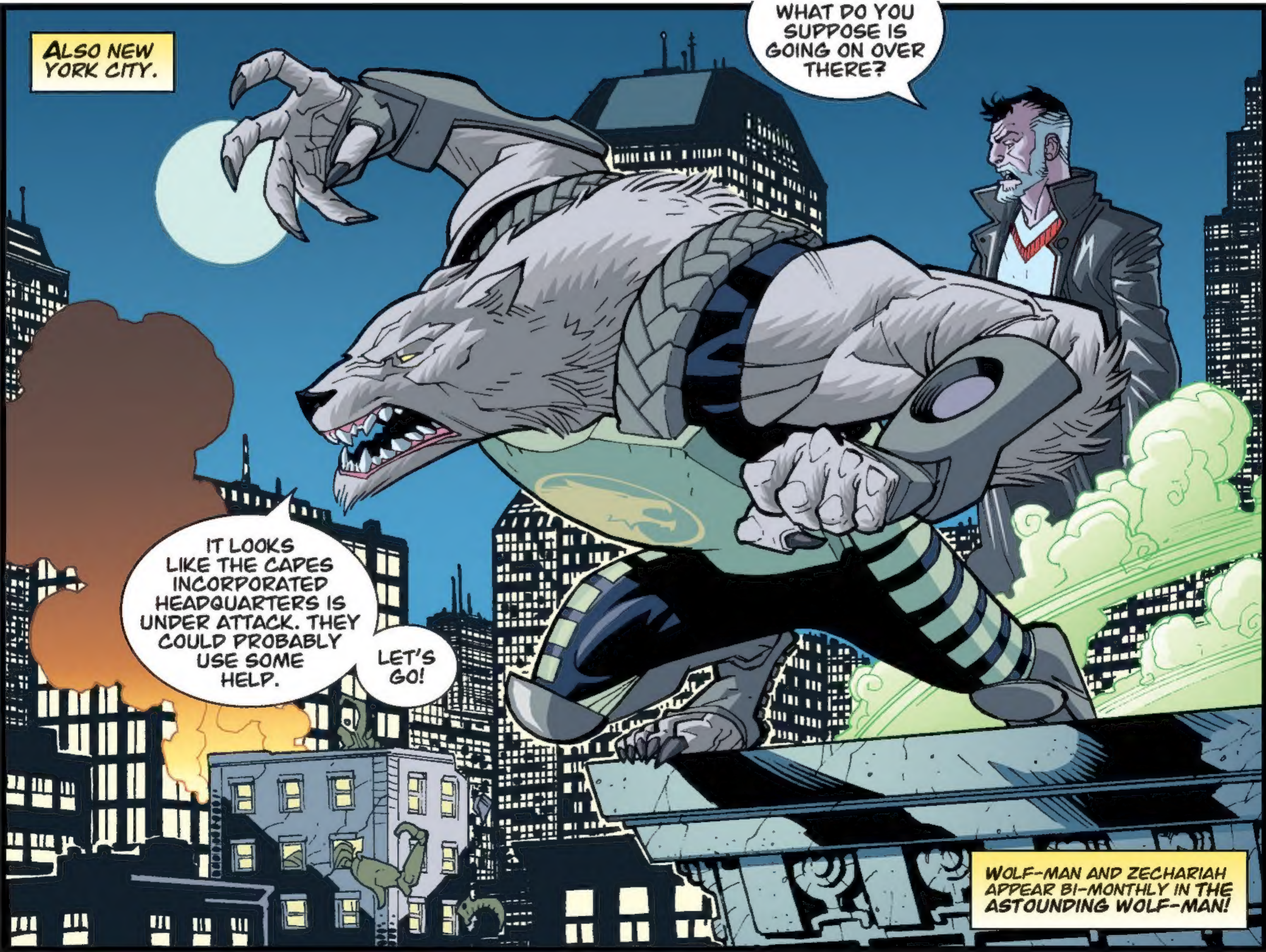


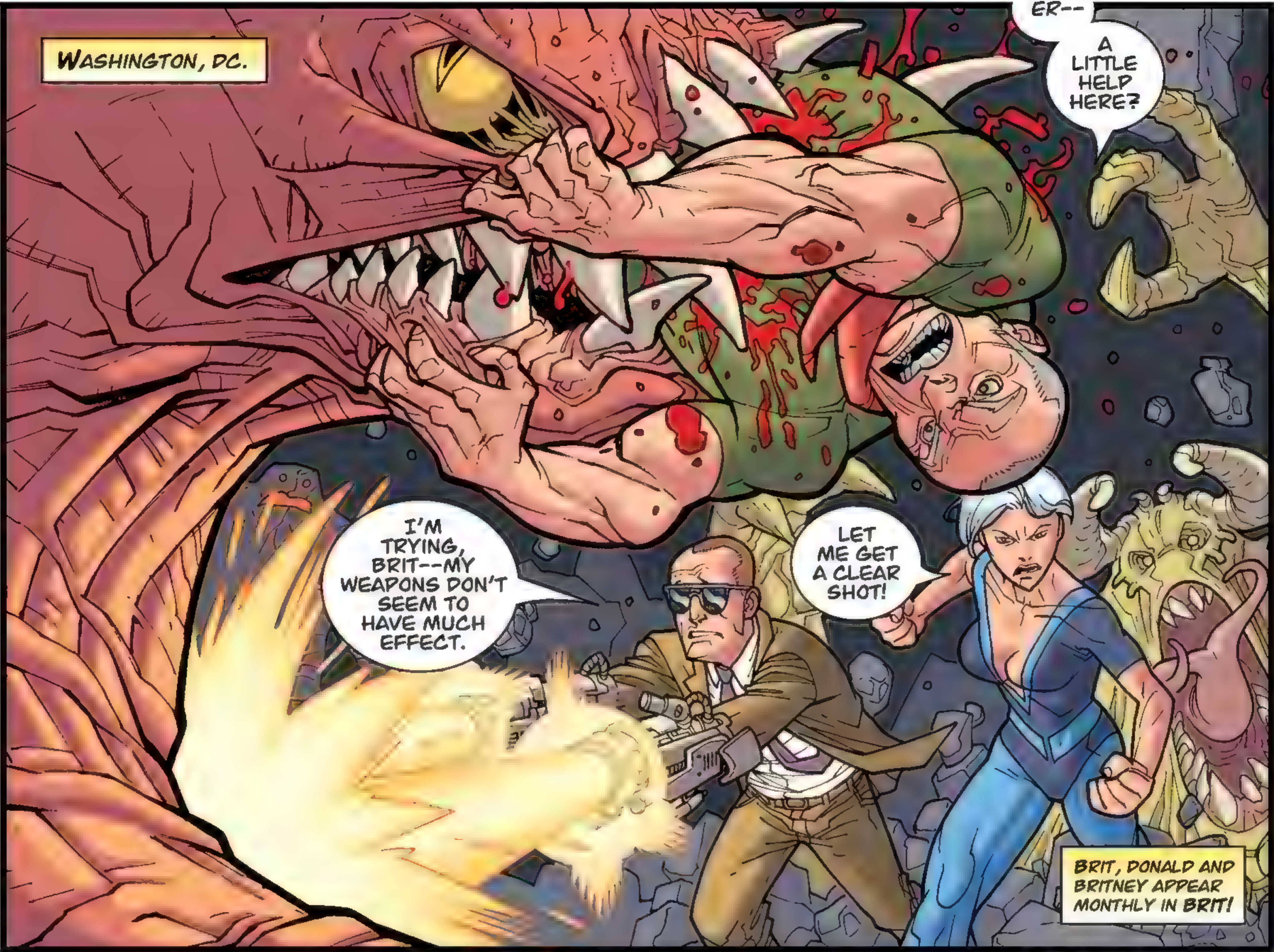


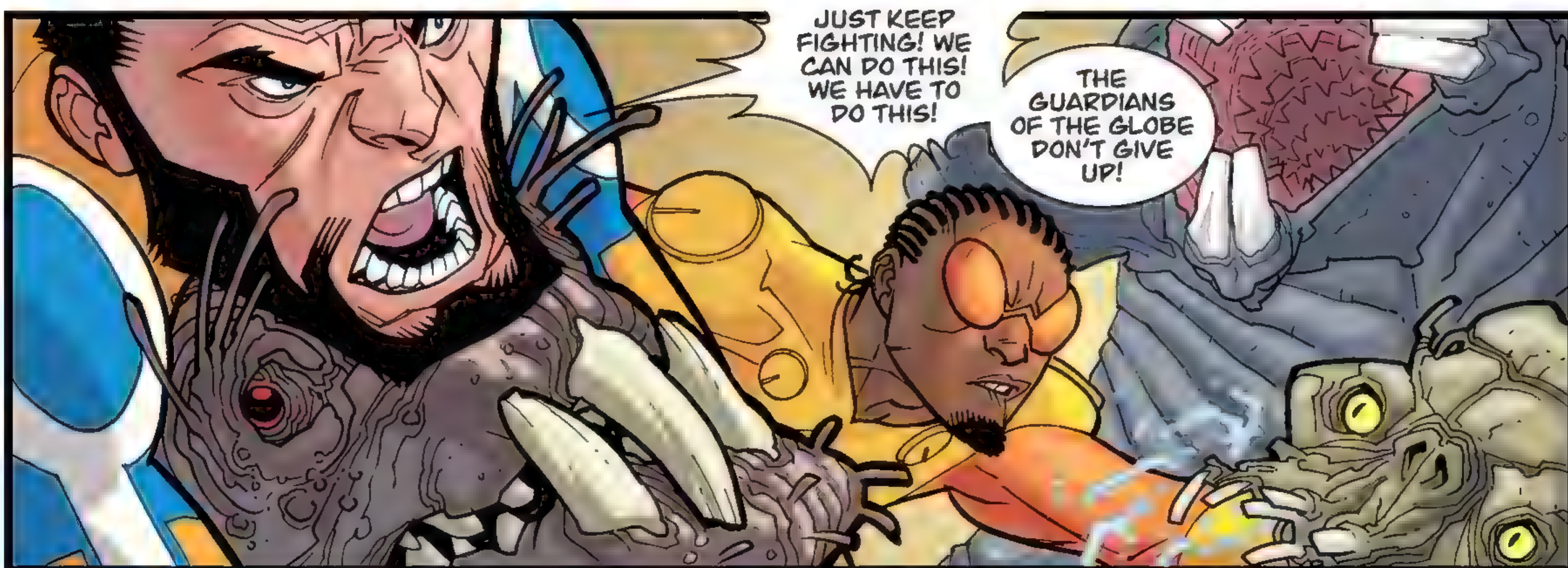
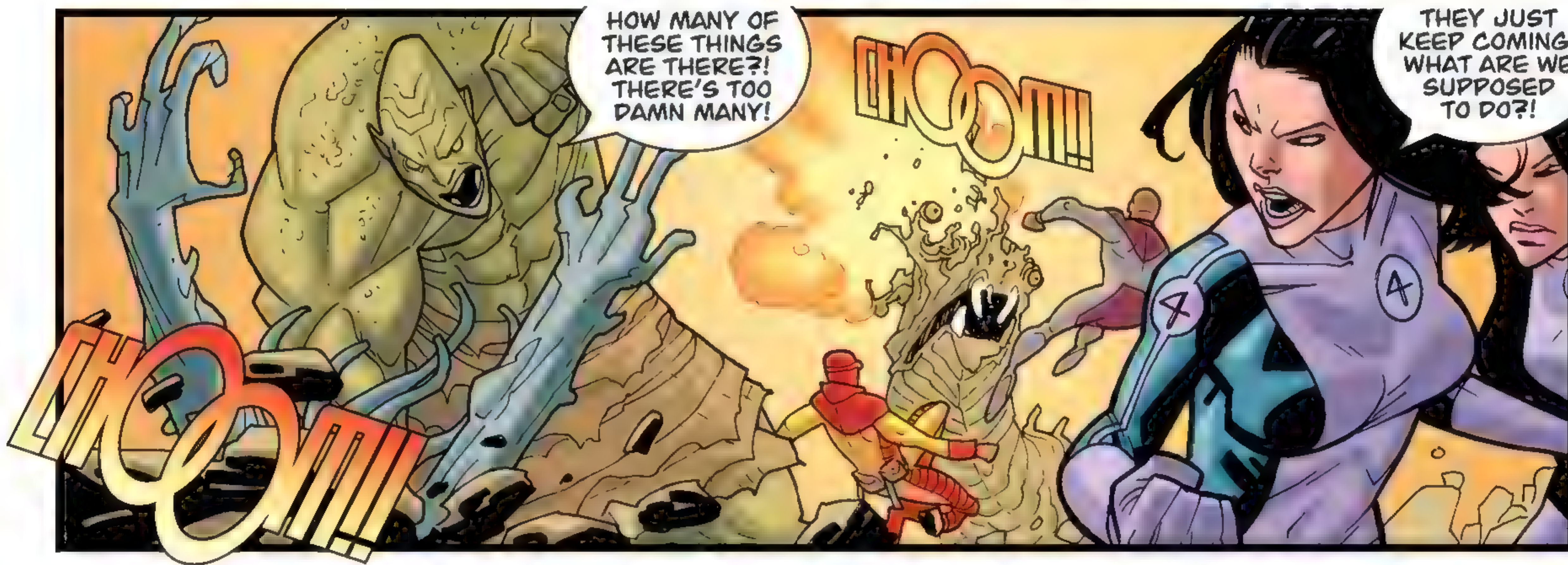
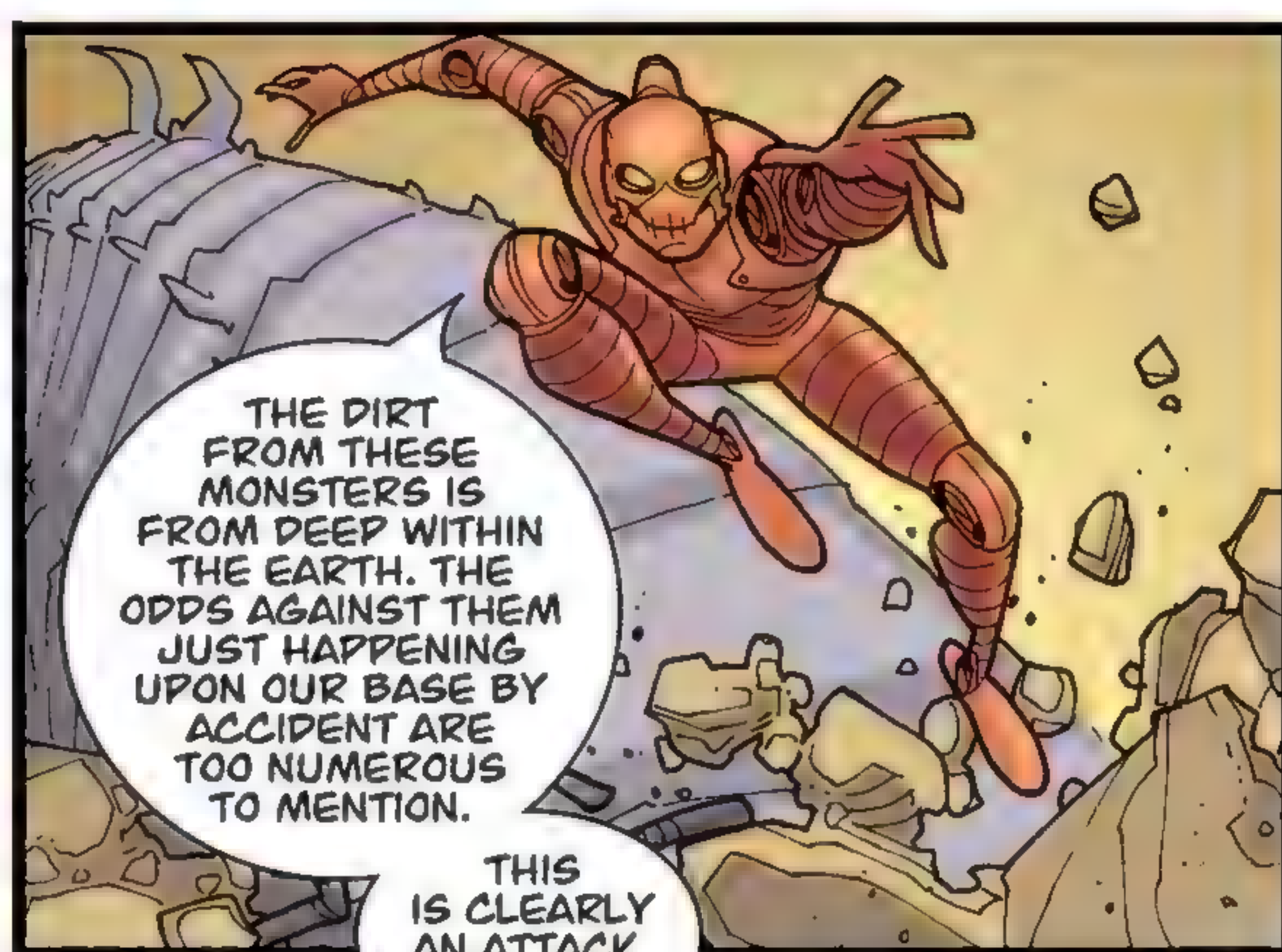


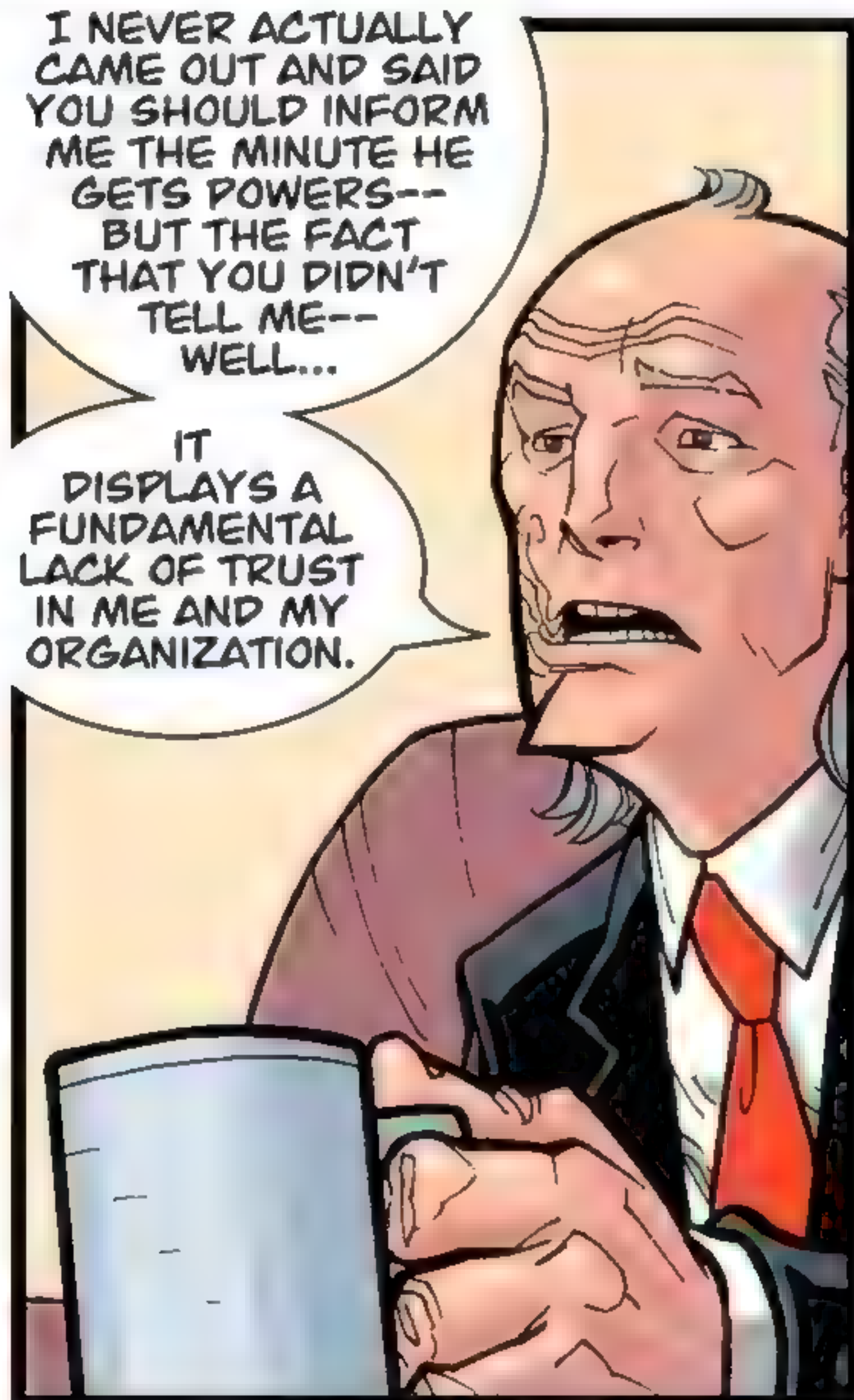
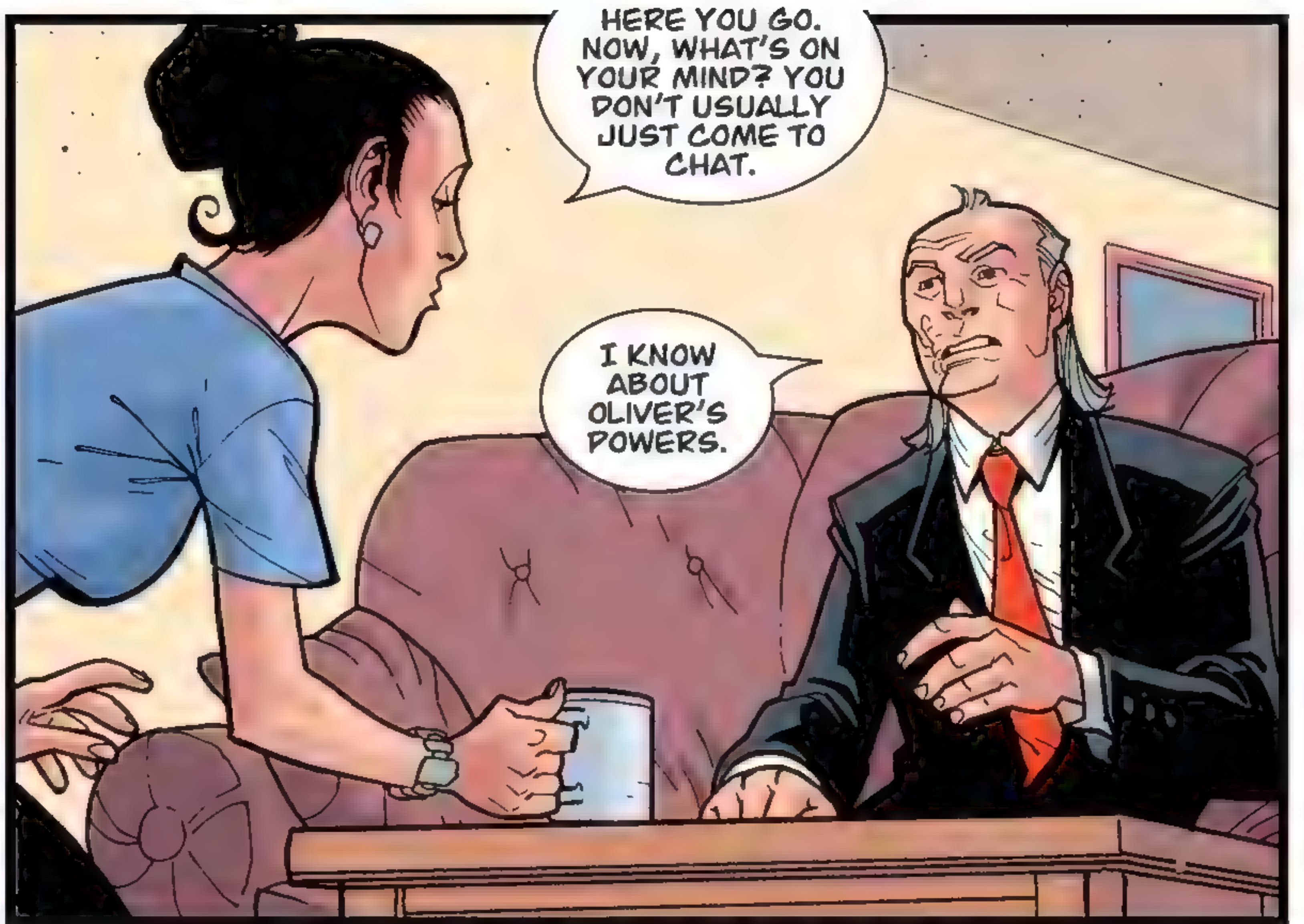
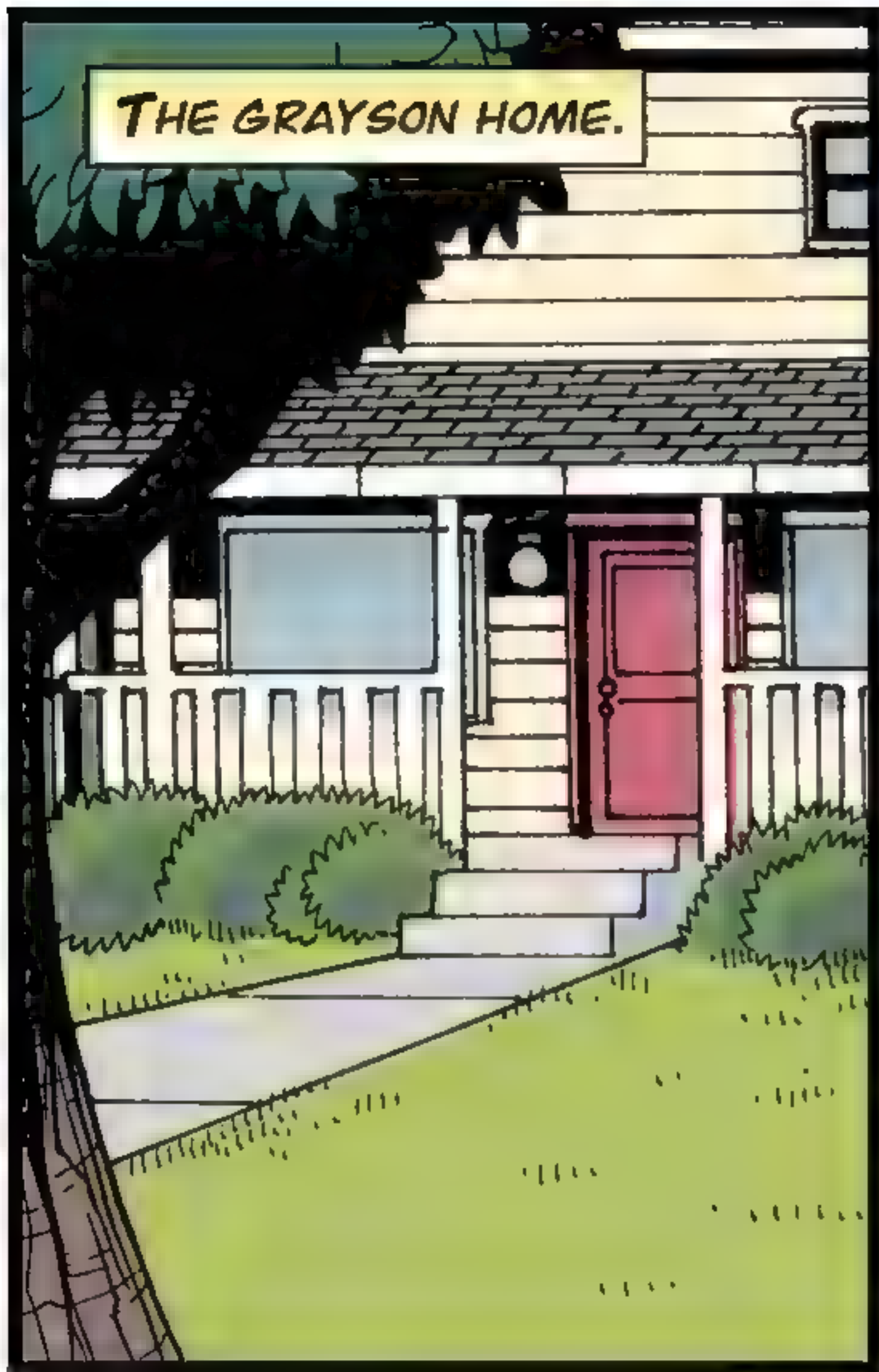


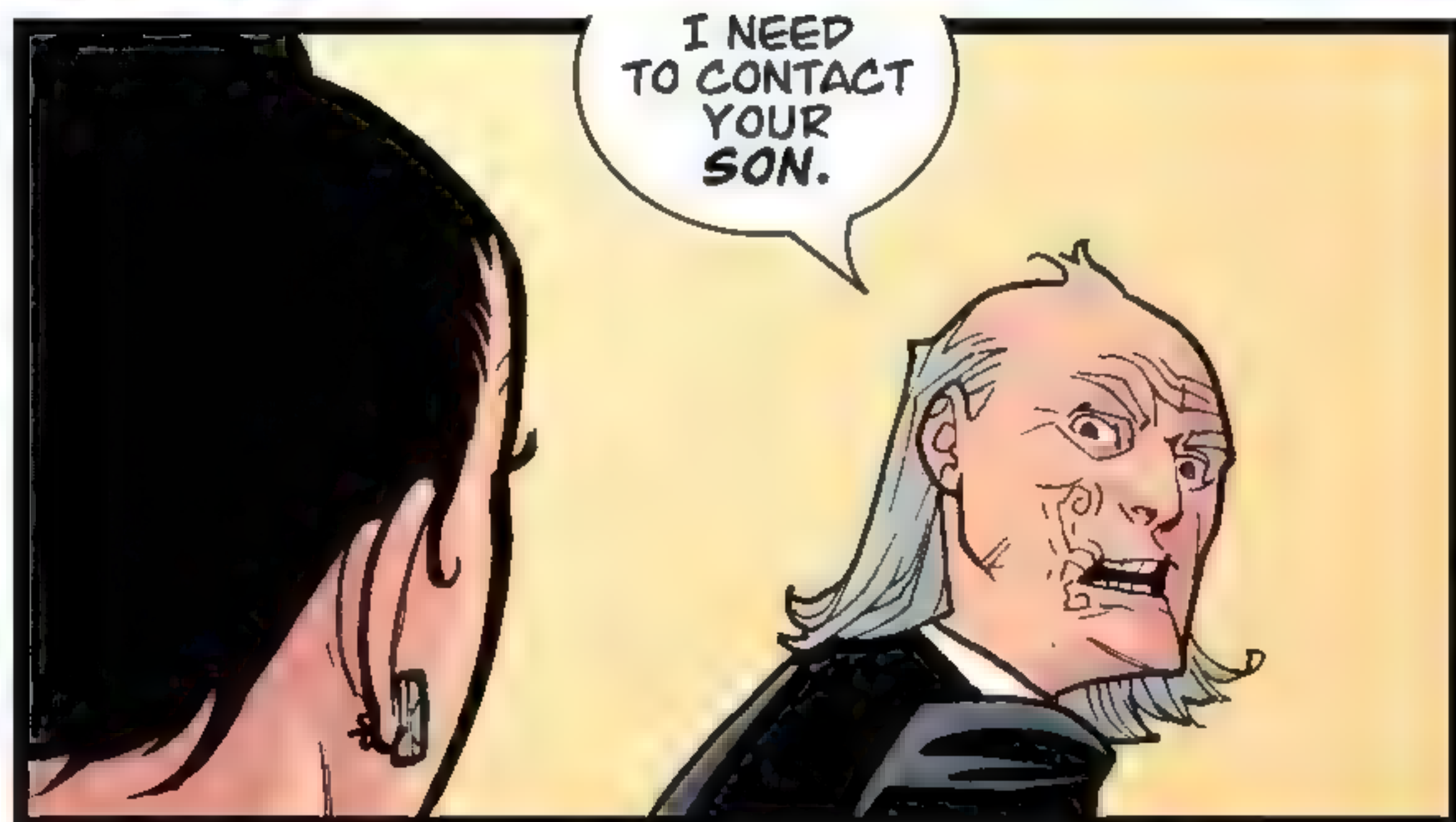
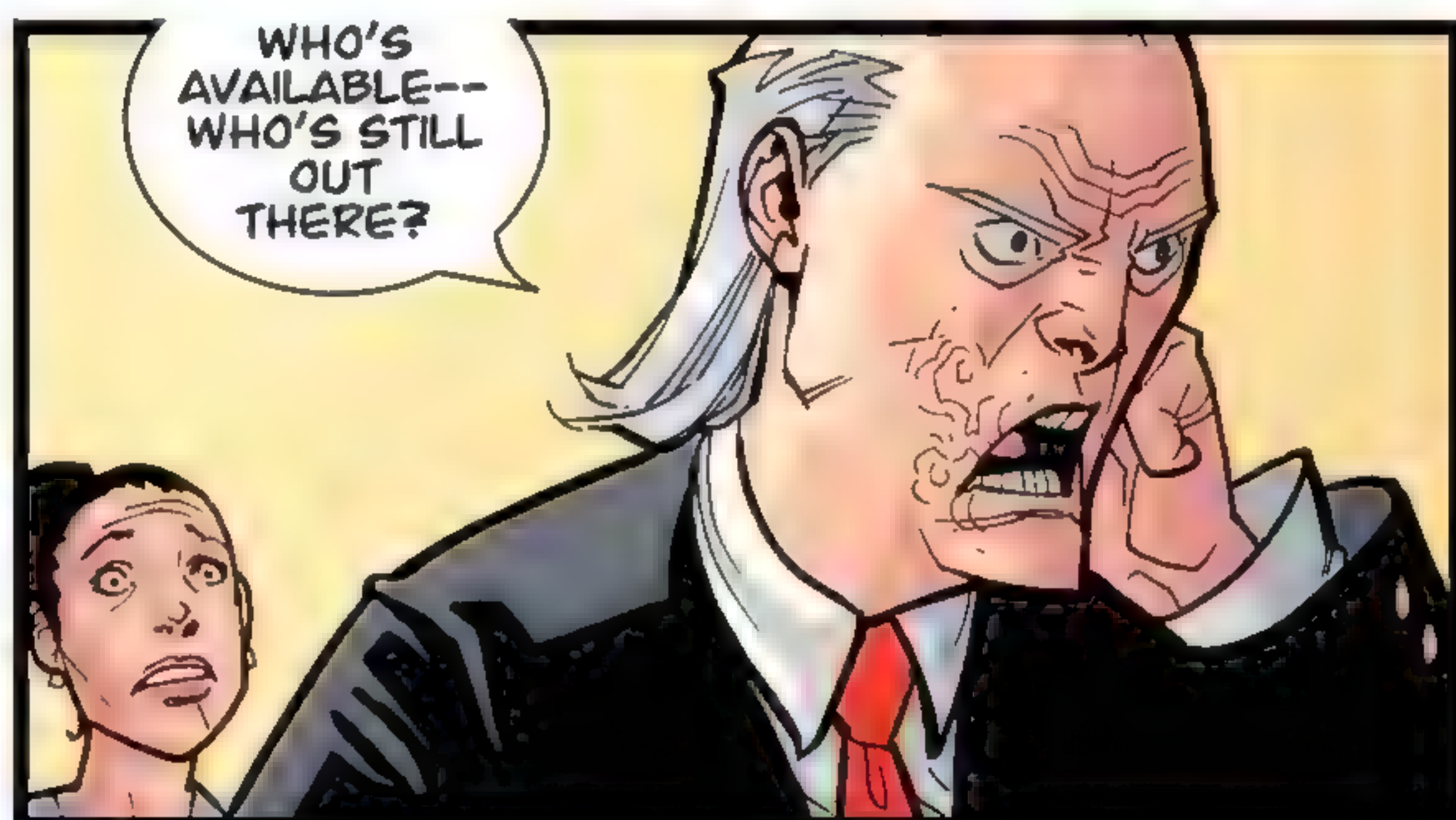
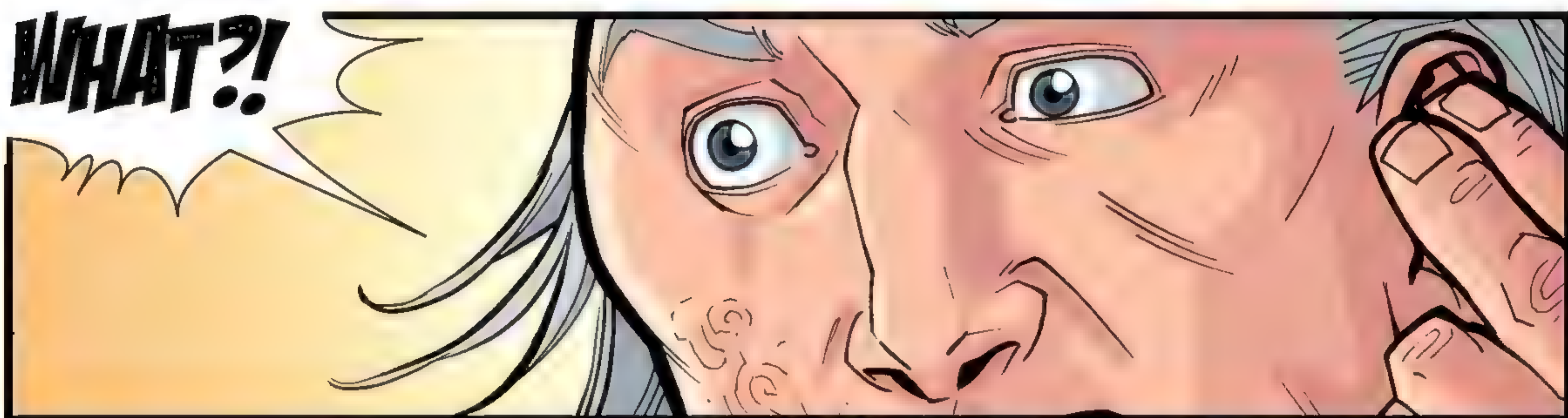
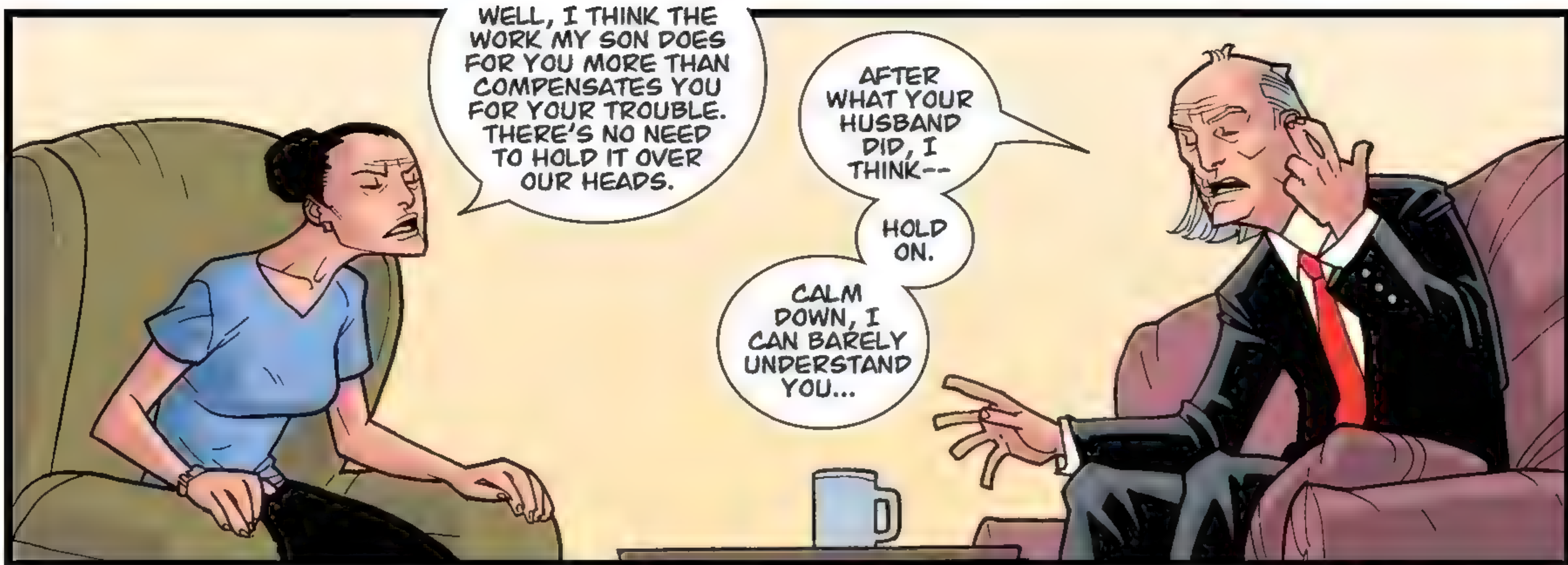












AFRICA.

DO YOU
KNOW HOW
HARD IT WAS
FOR ME TO
FIND YOU?

NOT HARD
ENOUGH.





WHAT'S
THAT
SUPPOSED
TO MEAN?



YOU KNOW EXACTLY
WHAT THAT MEANS.
I'M NOT IN THE MOOD,
I'M KIND OF BUSY, AND
I REALLY DON'T THINK
I'M READY TO TALK
TO YOU JUST
YET.

EVE, CAN
WE JUST GO
SOMEWHERE
SO WE CAN
TA--

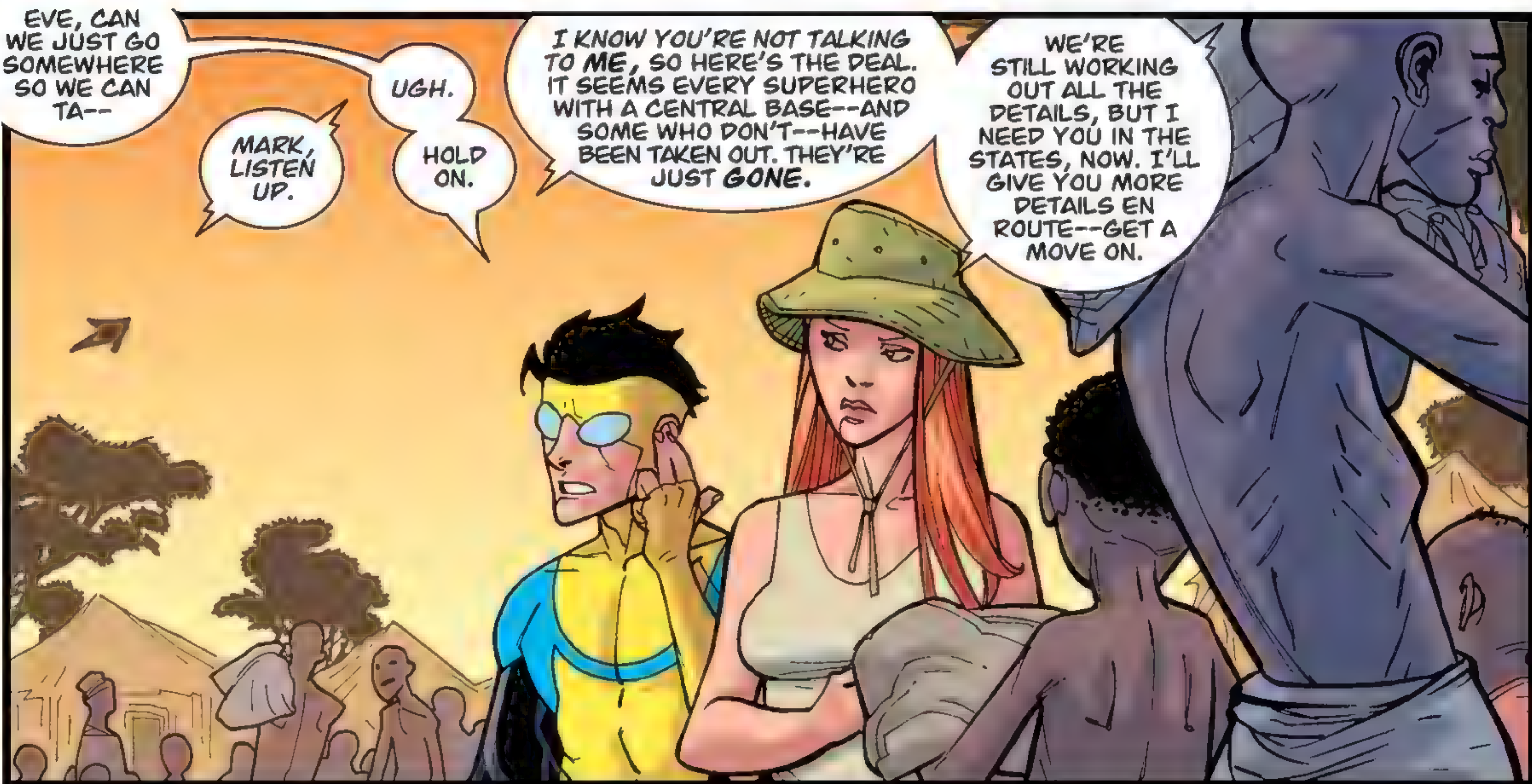
MARK,
LISTEN
UP.

UGH.

HOLD
ON.

I KNOW YOU'RE NOT TALKING
TO ME, SO HERE'S THE DEAL.
IT SEEMS EVERY SUPERHERO
WITH A CENTRAL BASE--AND
SOME WHO DON'T--HAVE
BEEN TAKEN OUT. THEY'RE
JUST GONE.

WE'RE
STILL WORKING
OUT ALL THE
DETAILS, BUT I
NEED YOU IN THE
STATES, NOW. I'LL
GIVE YOU MORE
DETAILS EN
ROUTE--GET A
MOVE ON.



I'M SORRY,
SOMETHING
HAS COME UP.
I GOTTA--

WAIT,
HOW BIG IS
IT? IS IT,
Y'KNOW... EARTH
THREATENING?



SEEMS PRETTY
BAD, YEAH.
WHY--DO YOU
WANNA
HELP?

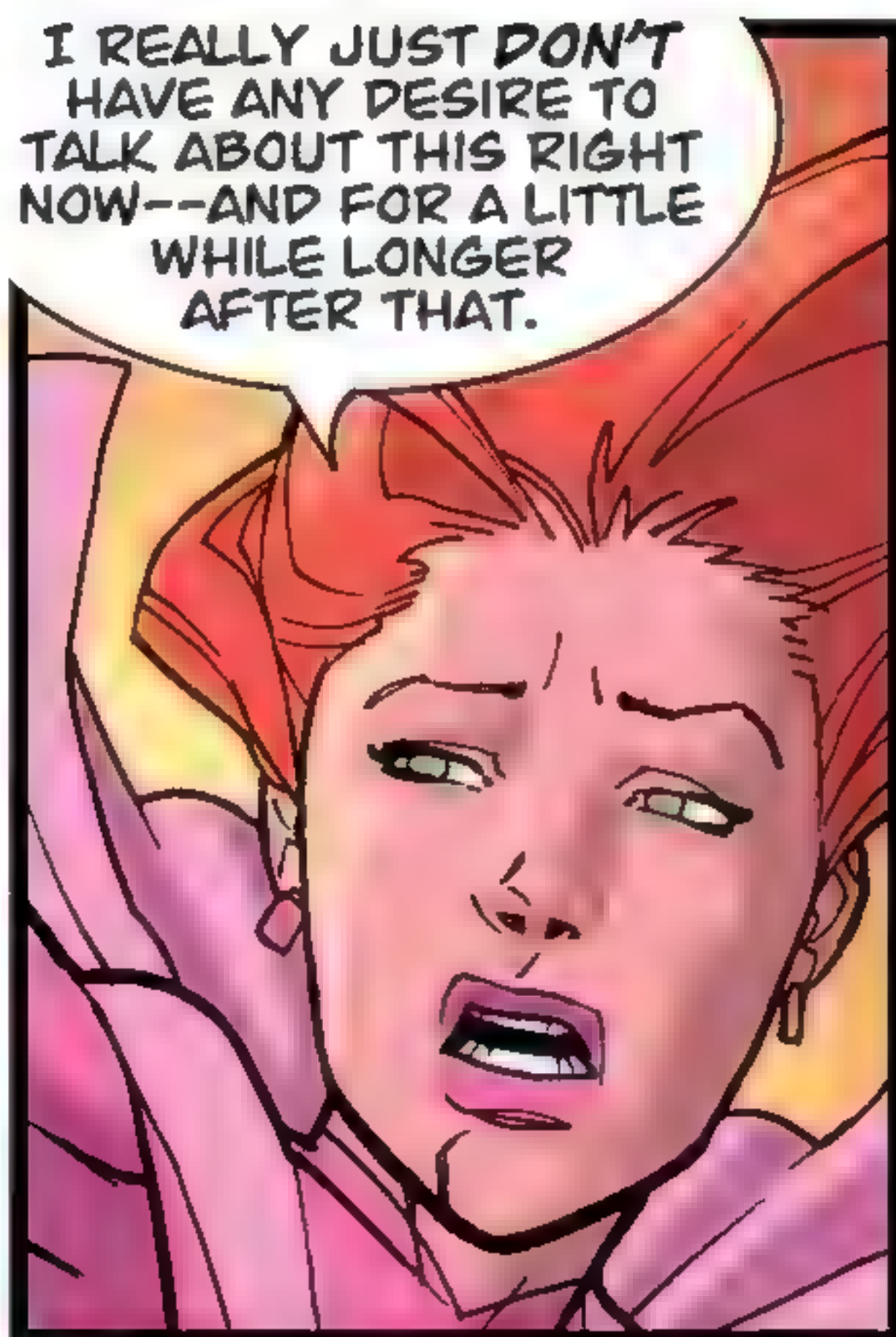
YEAH,
I--I
THINK I
SHOULD.

C'MON,
THEN.

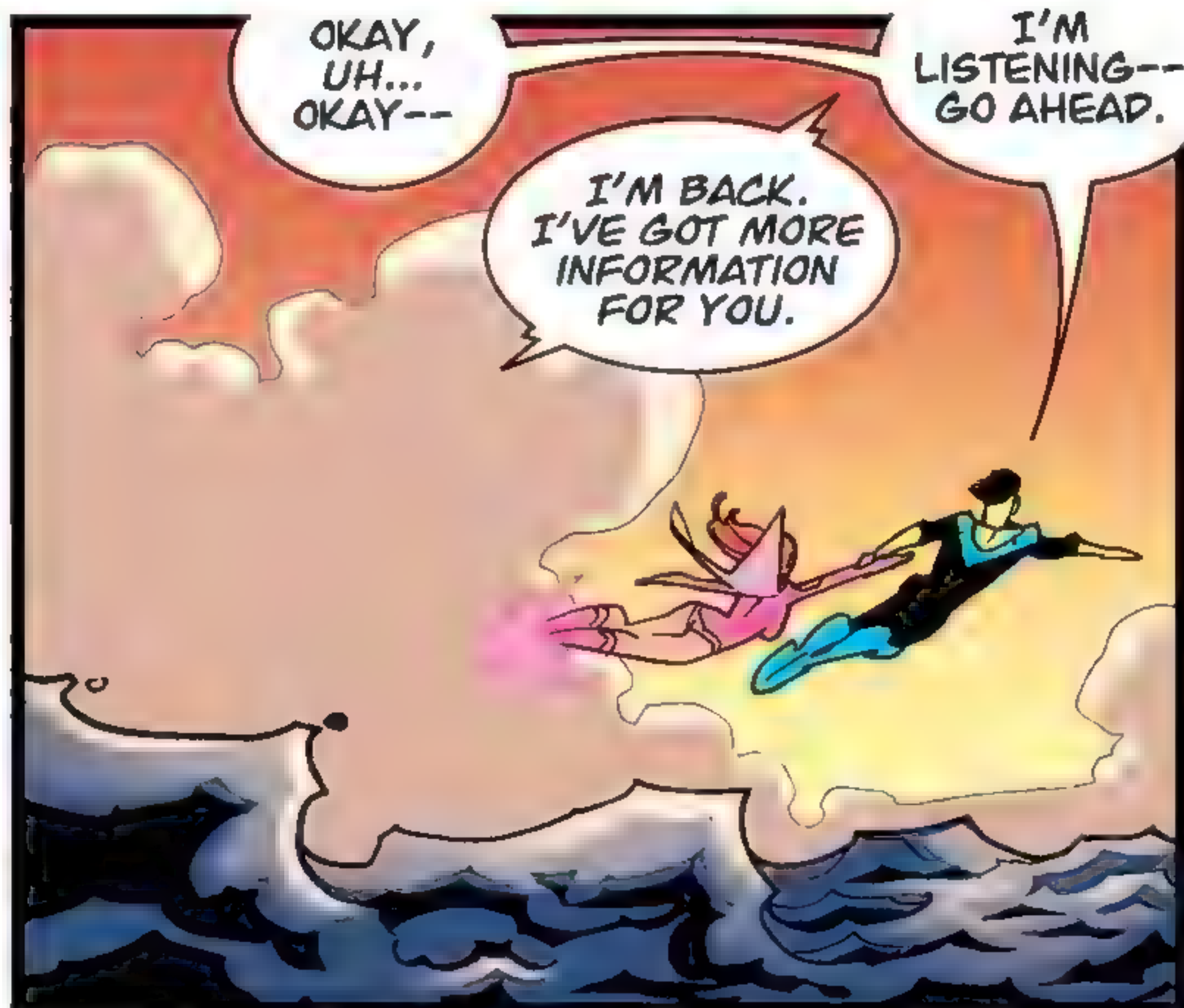




I'M SORRY,
EVE. I DIDN'T
MEAN TO---



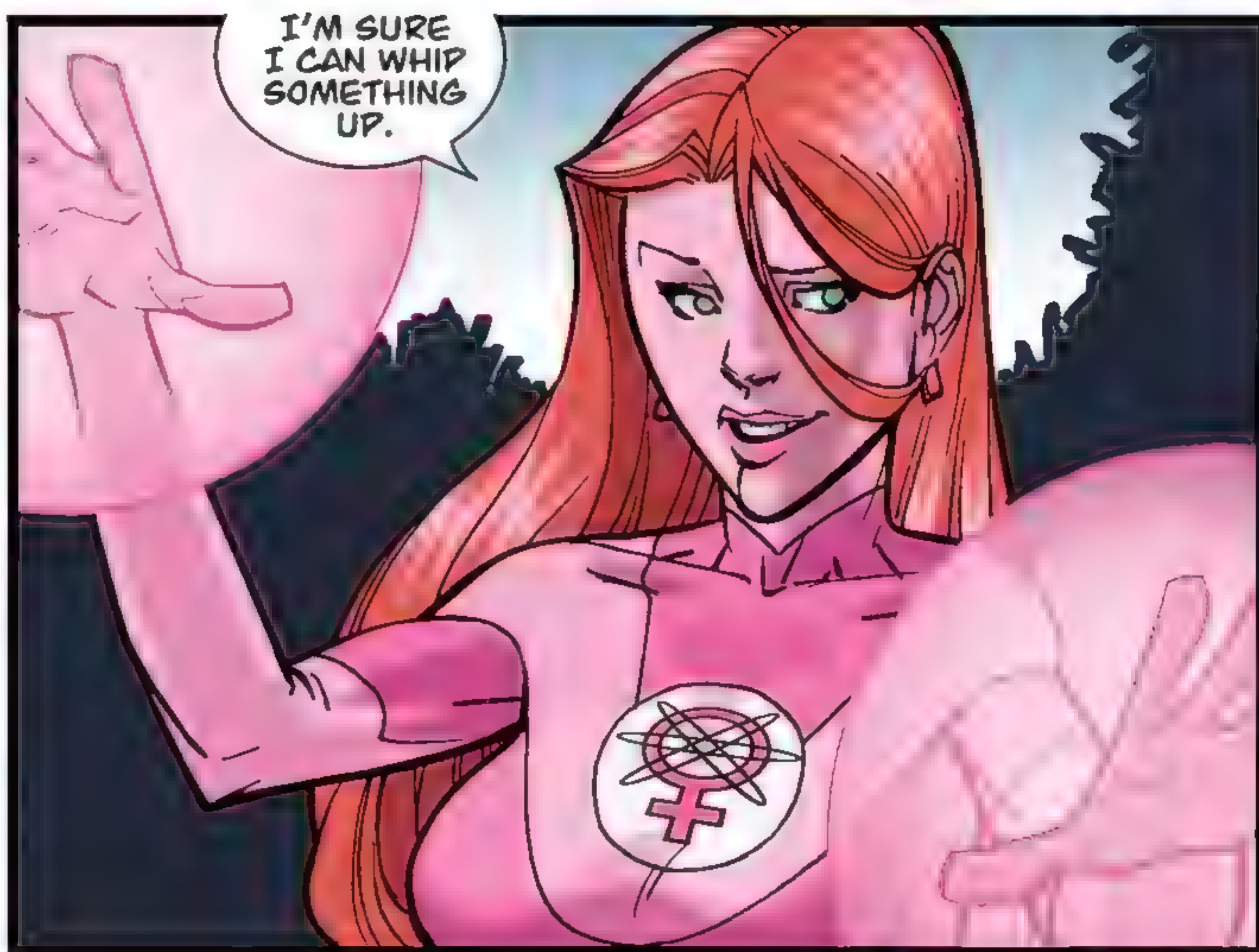
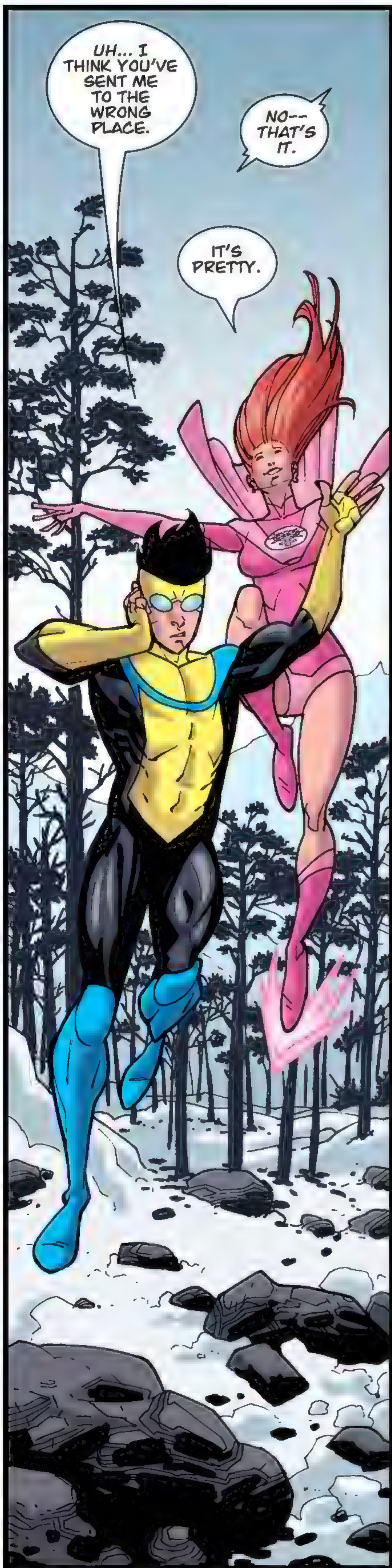
I REALLY JUST DON'T
HAVE ANY DESIRE TO
TALK ABOUT THIS RIGHT
NOW--AND FOR A LITTLE
WHILE LONGER
AFTER THAT.



OKAY,
UH...
OKAY--

I'M
LISTENING--
GO AHEAD.

I'M BACK.
I'VE GOT MORE
INFORMATION
FOR YOU.





YOU'RE NOT LAUGHING NOW, ARE YOU?!

ARE YOU?!

IT IS YOU WHO LOOK LIKE FOOLS, THIS TIME! IT IS YOU WHO IS LAUGHED AT!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

I'M JUST--I'M BLOWN AWAY BY HOW EASY ALL THIS WAS. ONCE I REALIZED I COULD STILL SPEAK TO THE LEGIONS OF UNDEREARTH--MY PEOPLE... IT ALL CAME TOGETHER.

FOR CREATURES THAT TRAVEL THE CORE OF THE EARTH, COMMUNICATING WITH LITTLE MORE THAN VIBRATION--FINDING YOUR SECRET STRONGHOLDS AND SANCTUARIES WAS CHILD'S PLAY!

I KNEW THAT SOME OF YOU WOULD BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD-- BUT REALLY, THIS STEP OF THE PLAN WAS ONLY MEANT TO THIN YOU OUT!

I DIDN'T EXPECT TO GET ALL OF YOU!!

ARROGANT JERK!

WE'LL SEE HOW CONFIDENT YOU ARE AFTER--

FLOOM!

IRK!

ACTUALLY-- I MIGHT HAVE A BETTER IDEA TO-- UNGH!

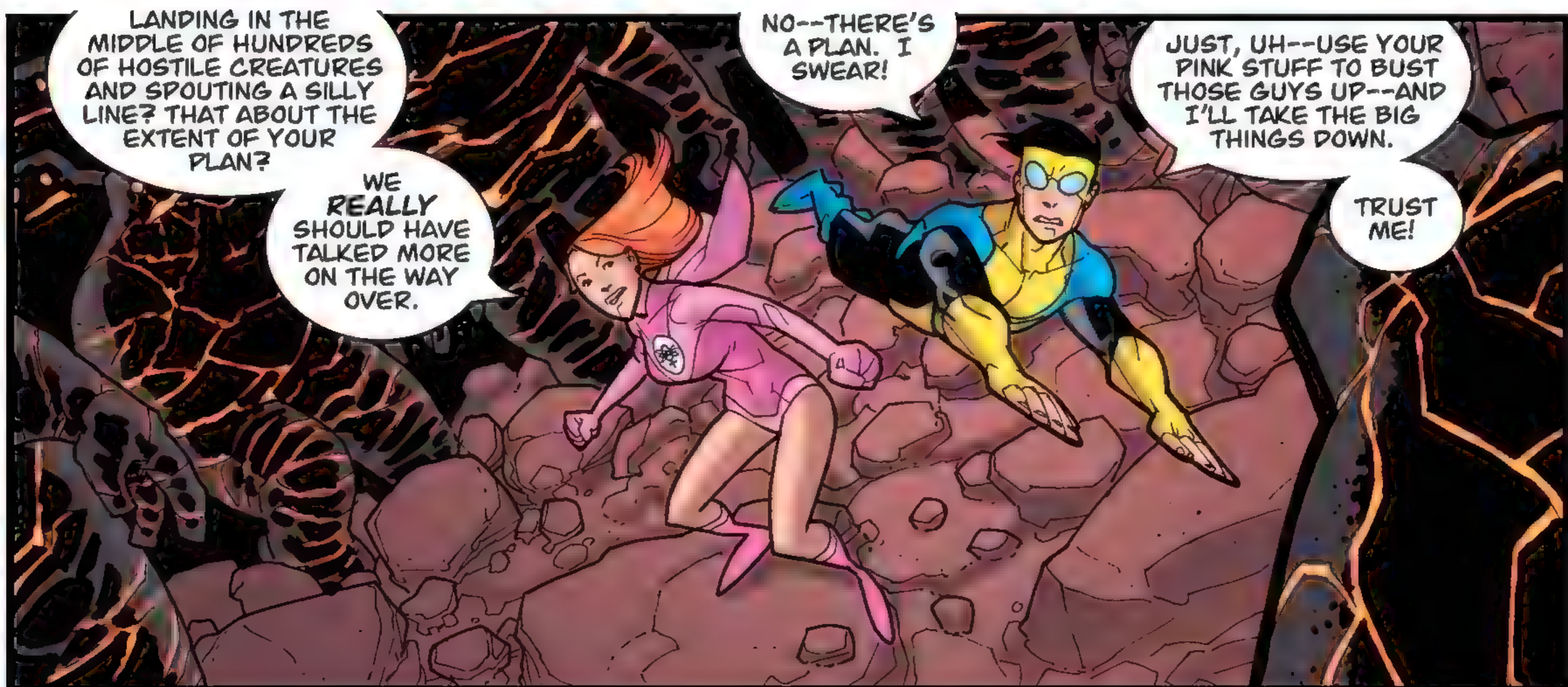
I WOULDN'T HOLD OUT MUCH HOPE FOR ESCAPE IF I WERE YOU. THE SUBSTANCE YOU ARE IN IS VERY STRONG--VERY, VERY STRONG.

TRUE, SOME OF YOU COULD PROBABLY BURST THROUGH--BUT NOT WITHOUT CRUSHING THE PEOPLE ALSO CONTAINED WITHIN YOUR INDIVIDUAL GLOBES.

SO TAKE THAT INTO CONSIDERATION.

SO ESCAPE-- NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE. AND WE'RE MANY MILES BELOW EARTH'S SURFACE--SO THE CHANCES OF A RESCUE ARE--

LET ME JUST SAY I HAVE YOU ALL RIGHT WHERE I WANT YOU.



INVINCIBLE!



IF YOU GO INTO MIST FORM--I THINK I CAN GET US OUT OF HERE!



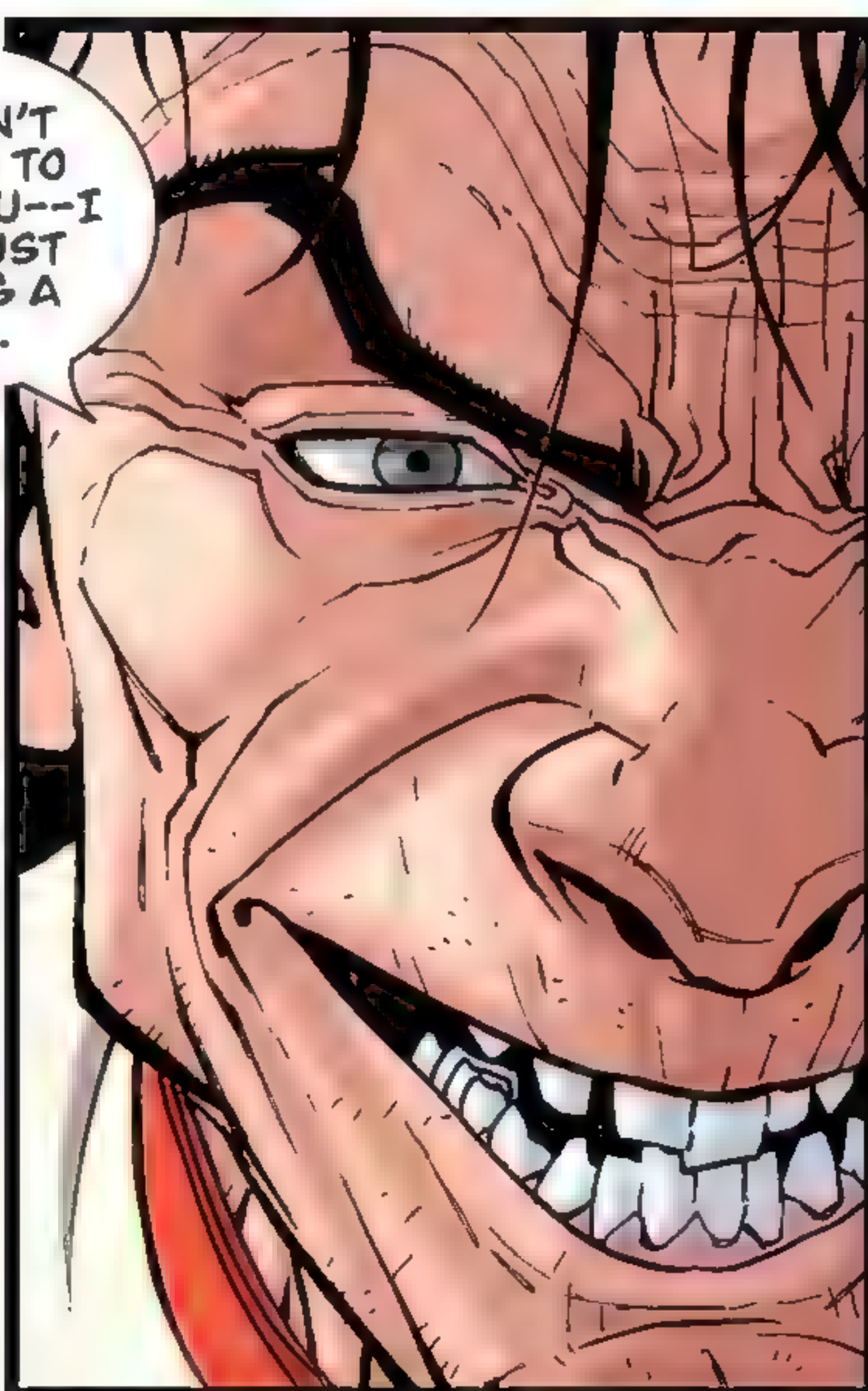
I'M GOING TO WEAR YOUR SKIN AS A TROPHY!



YOU KNOW, SEISMIC... I SEEM TO RECALL YOU PACKING A BIT MORE PUNCH THAN THAT--MAYBE IT'S JUST ME.

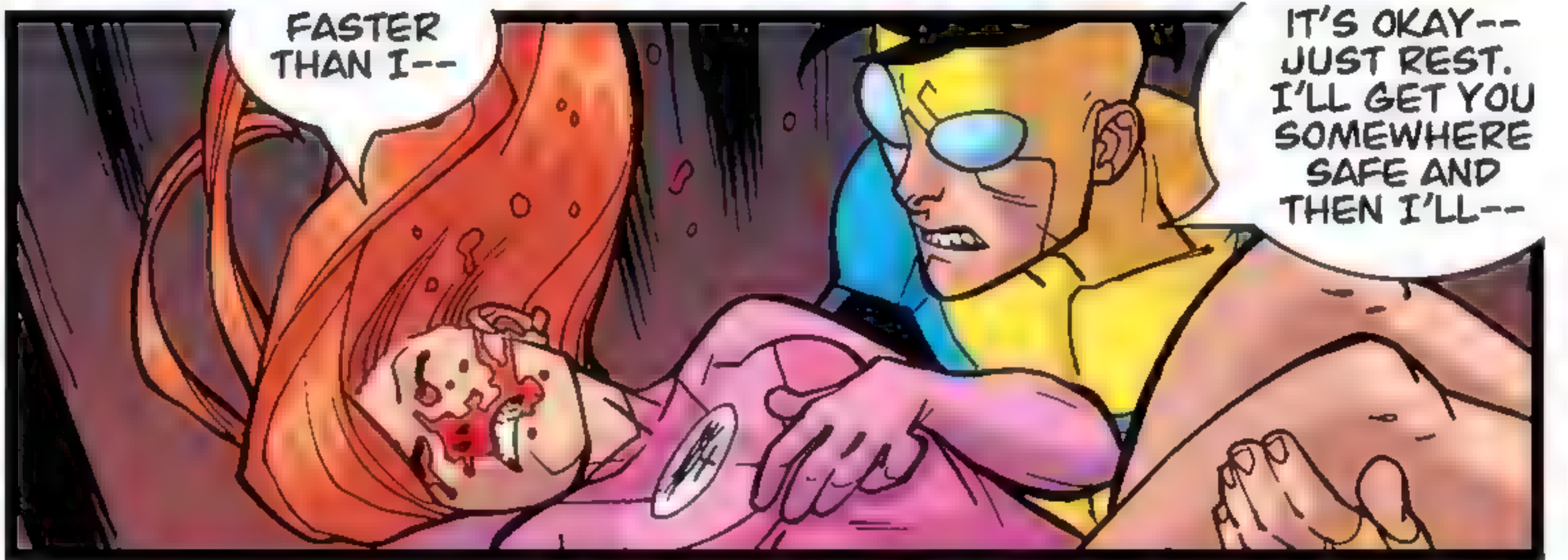
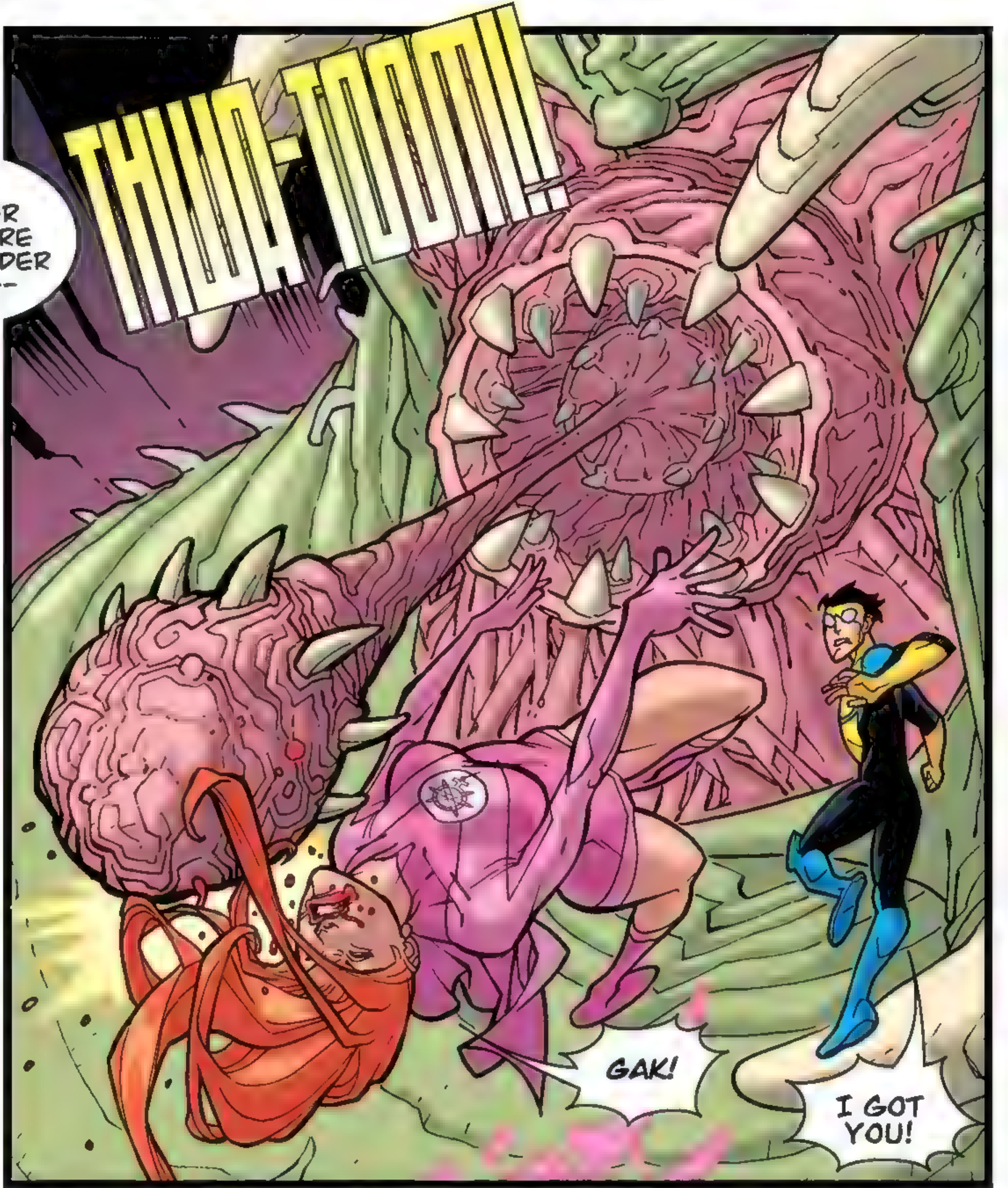


I WASN'T TRYING TO HURT YOU--I WAS JUST MAKING A CALL.





ARROW



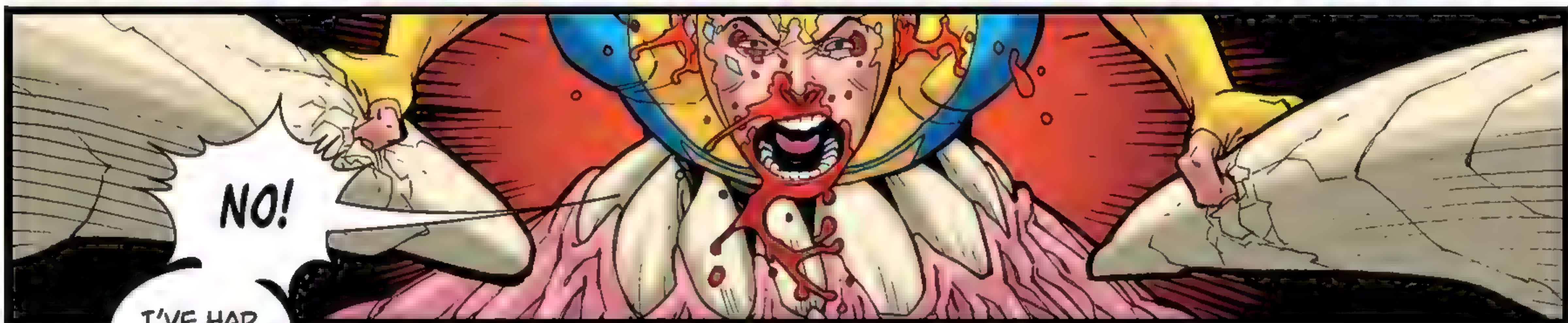
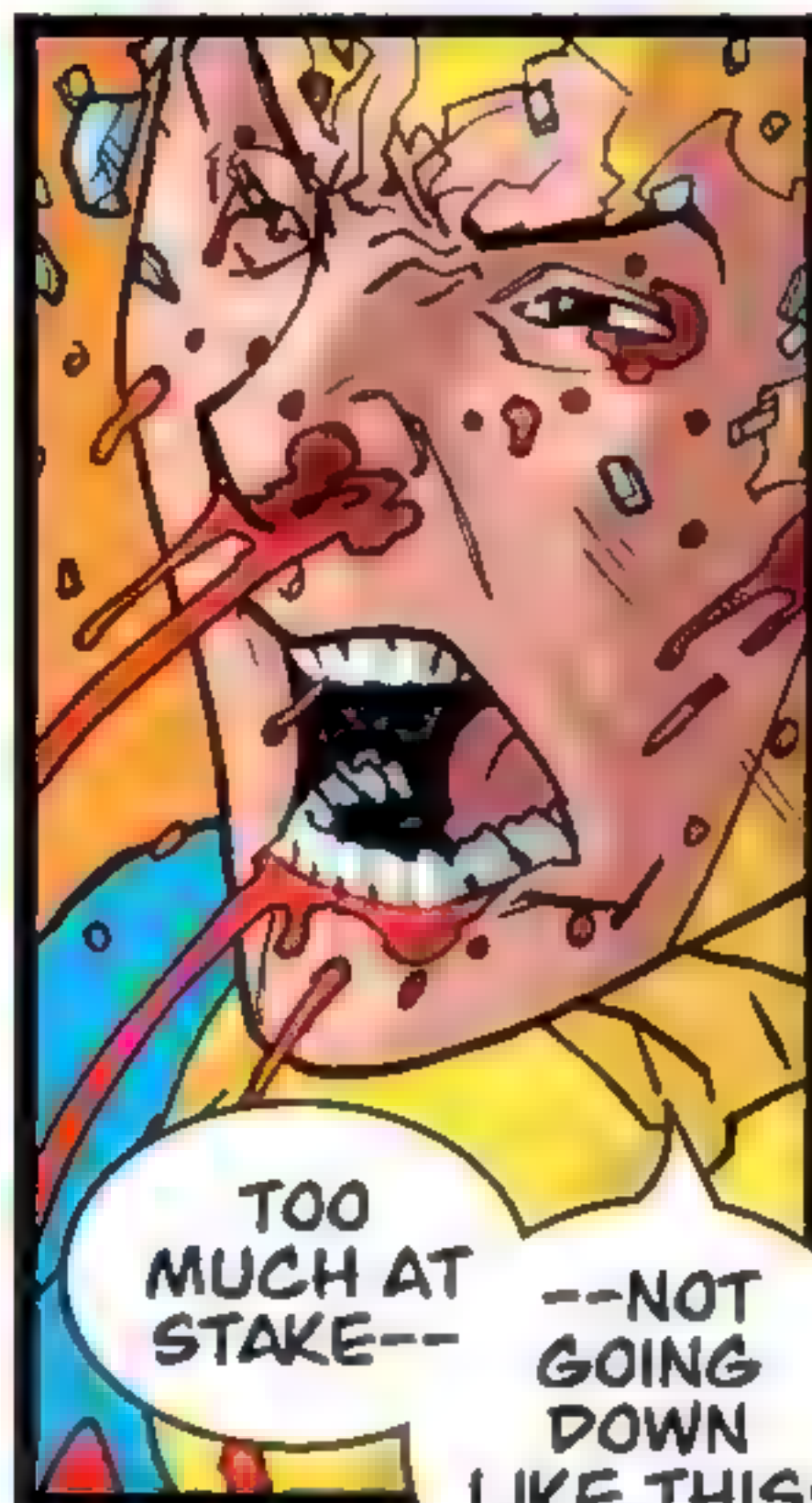
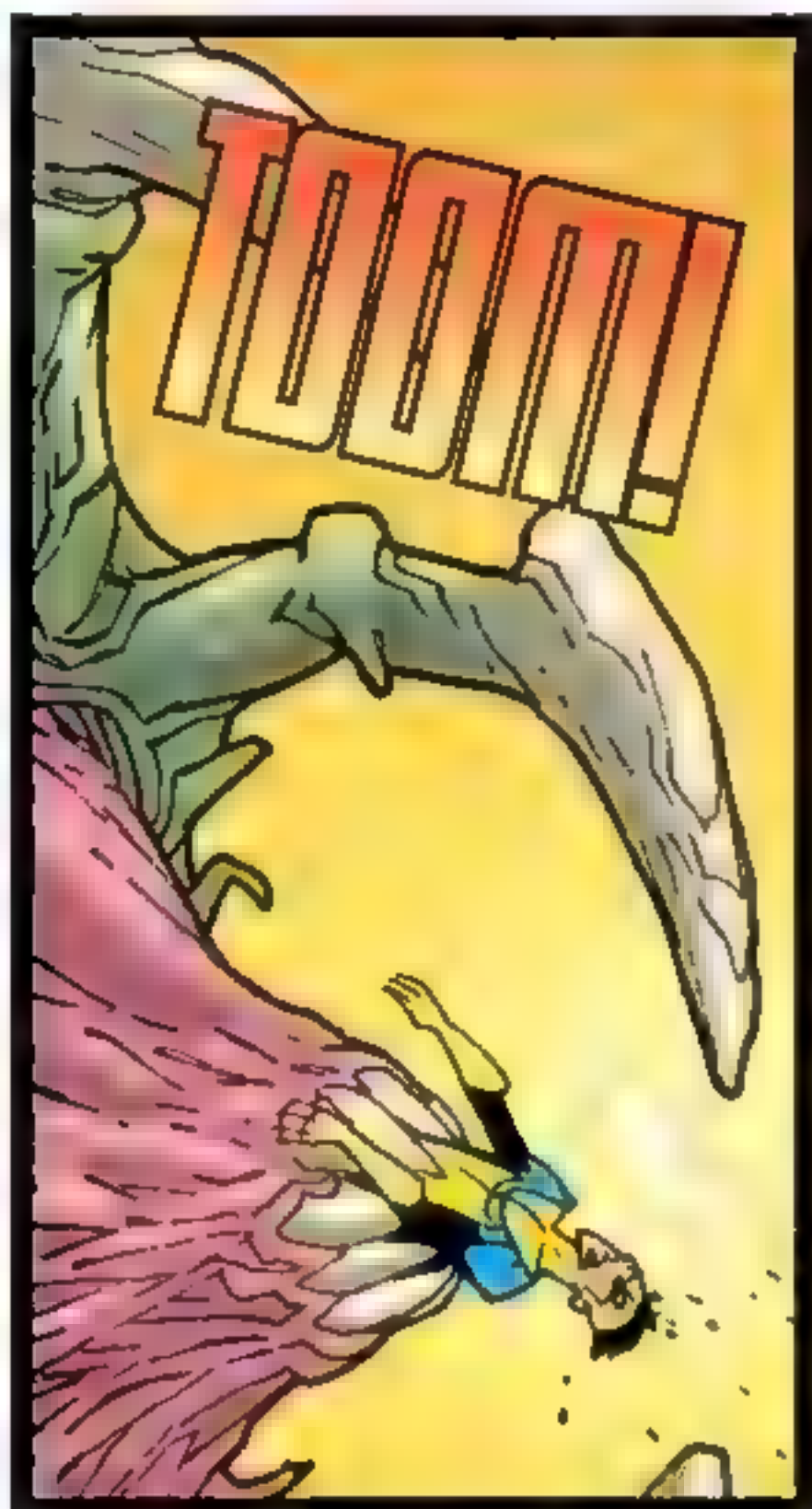




JEEZ,
YOU GUYS
ARE
TOUGH!



AGH--
TOO MUCH!
CAN'T--
GIVE UP!



NO!

I'VE HAD
ENOUGH--!



SHUKKI!



READY
TO GIVE
UP?

KOFF!

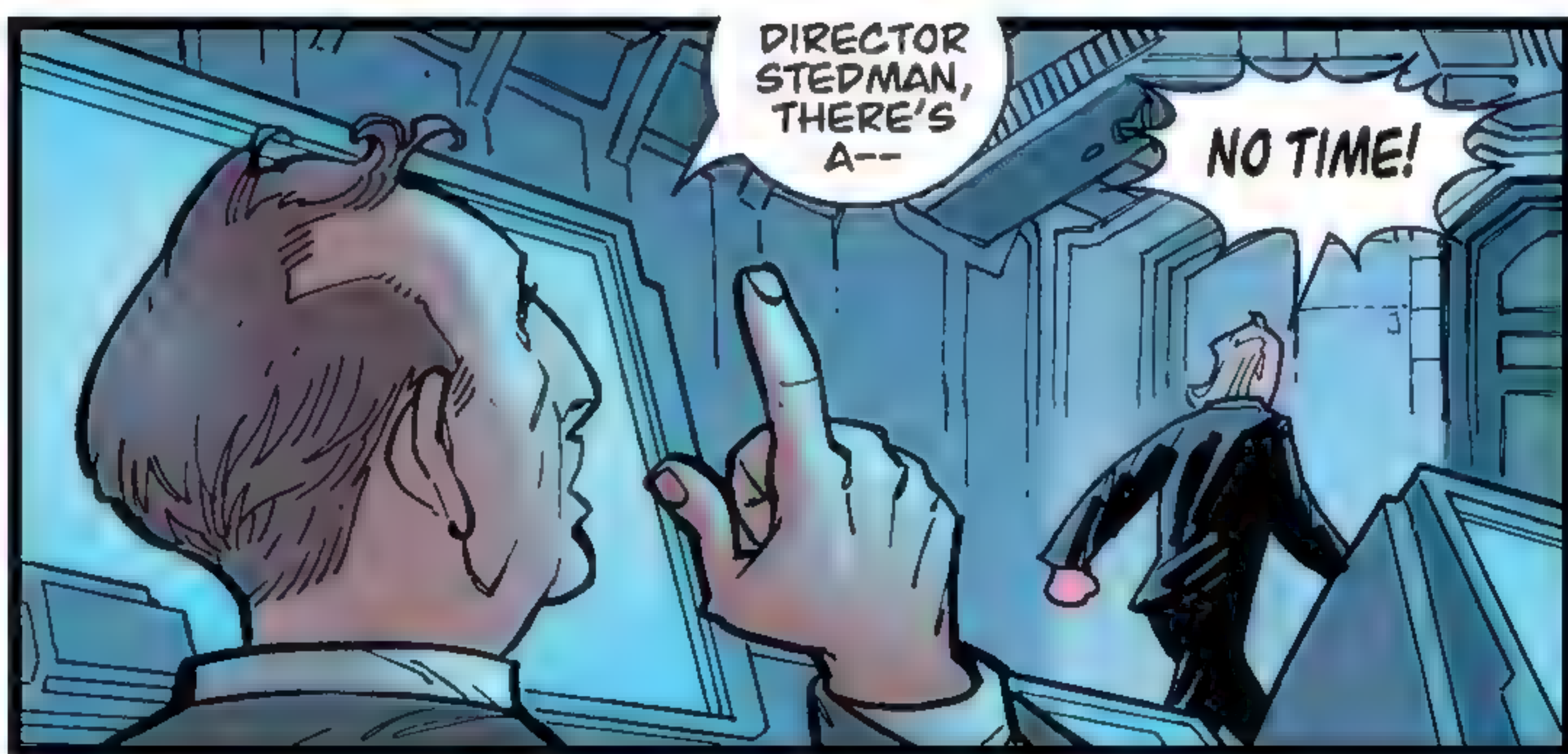
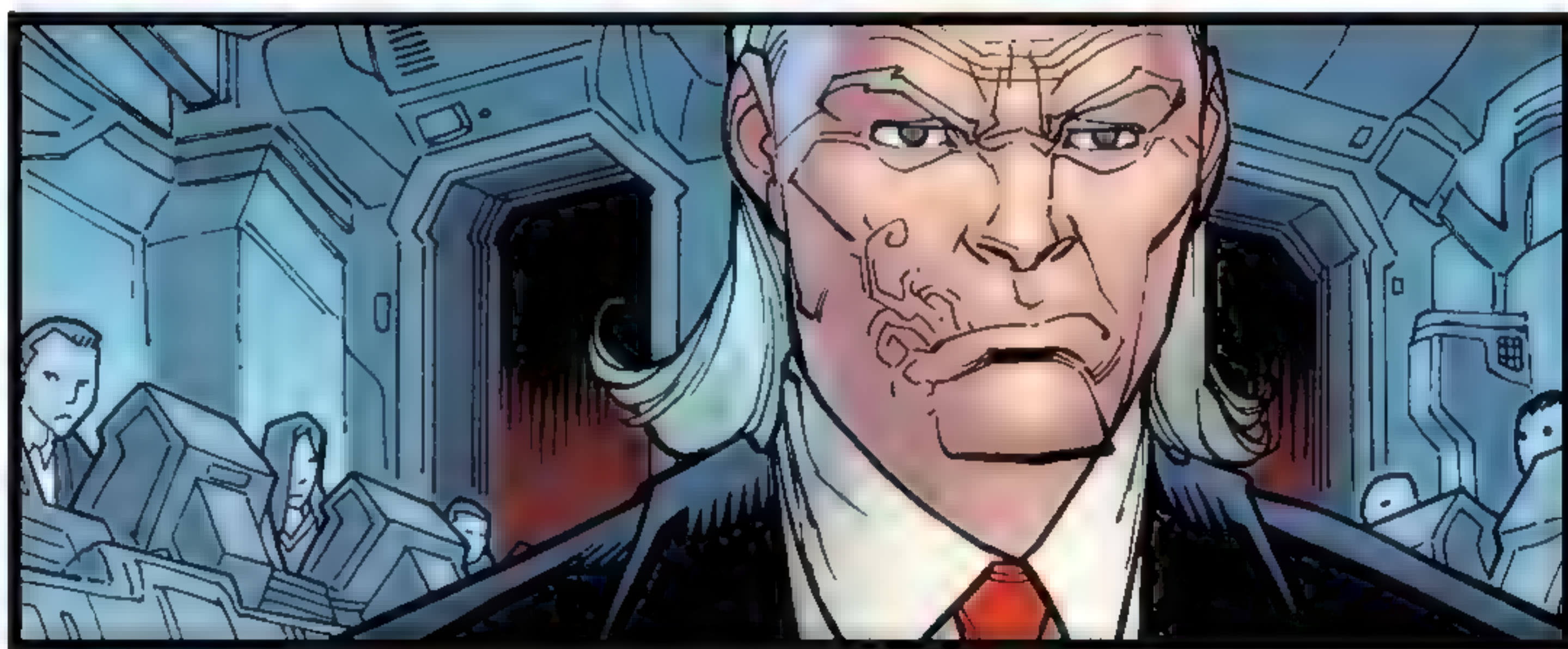
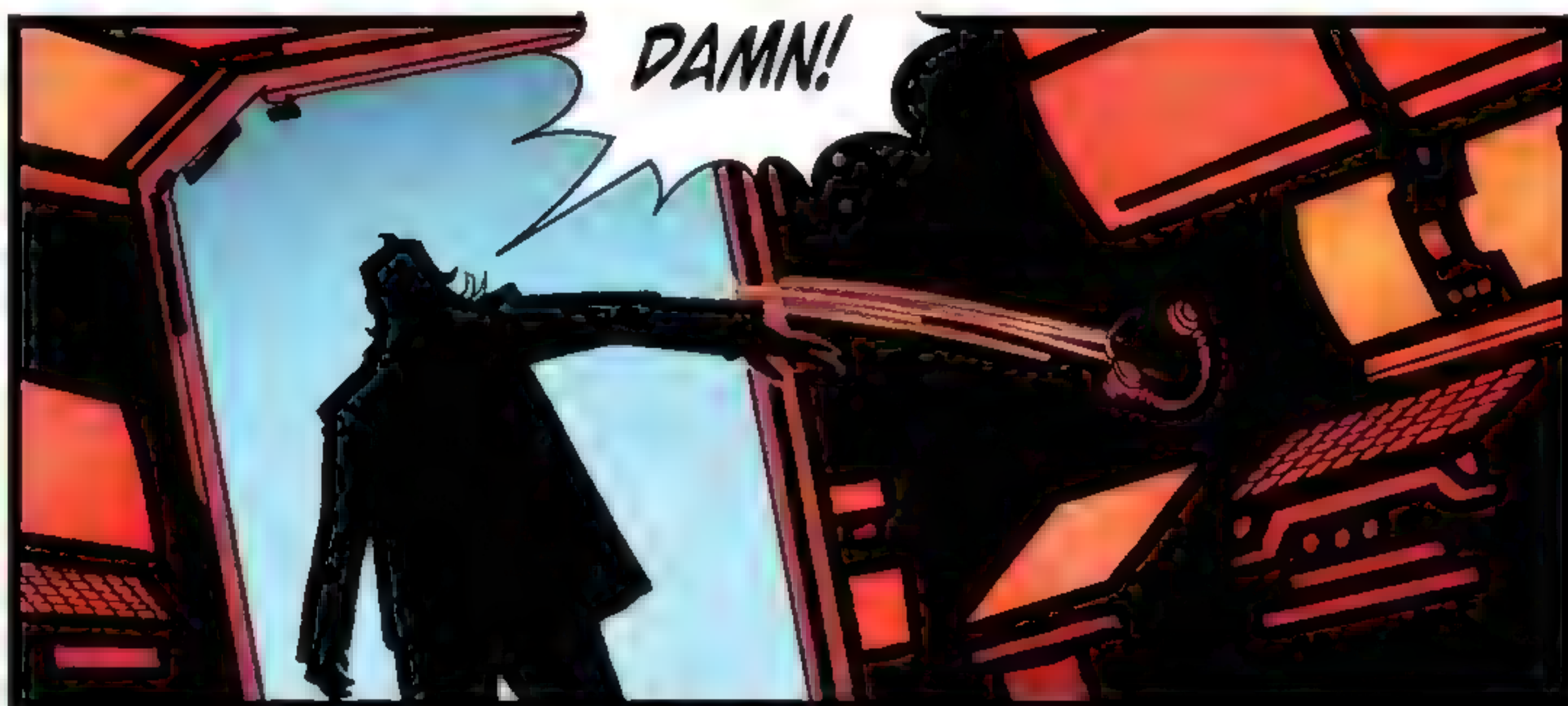
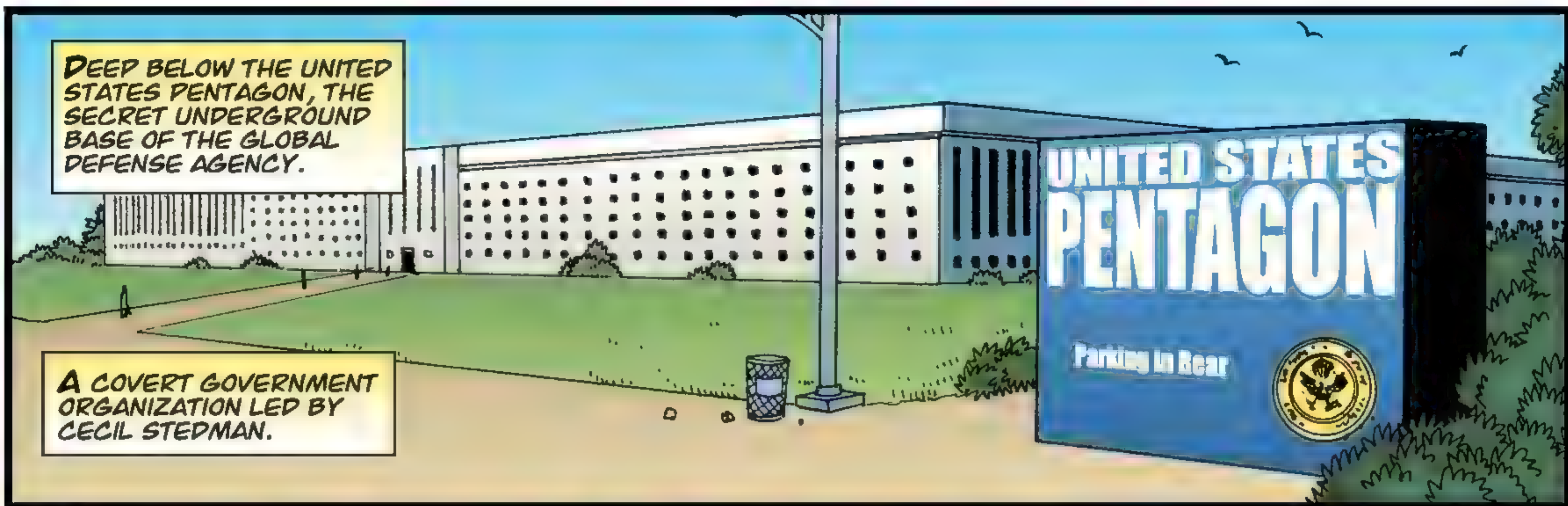
I GOT
PLENTY
MORE
WHERE
THAT--

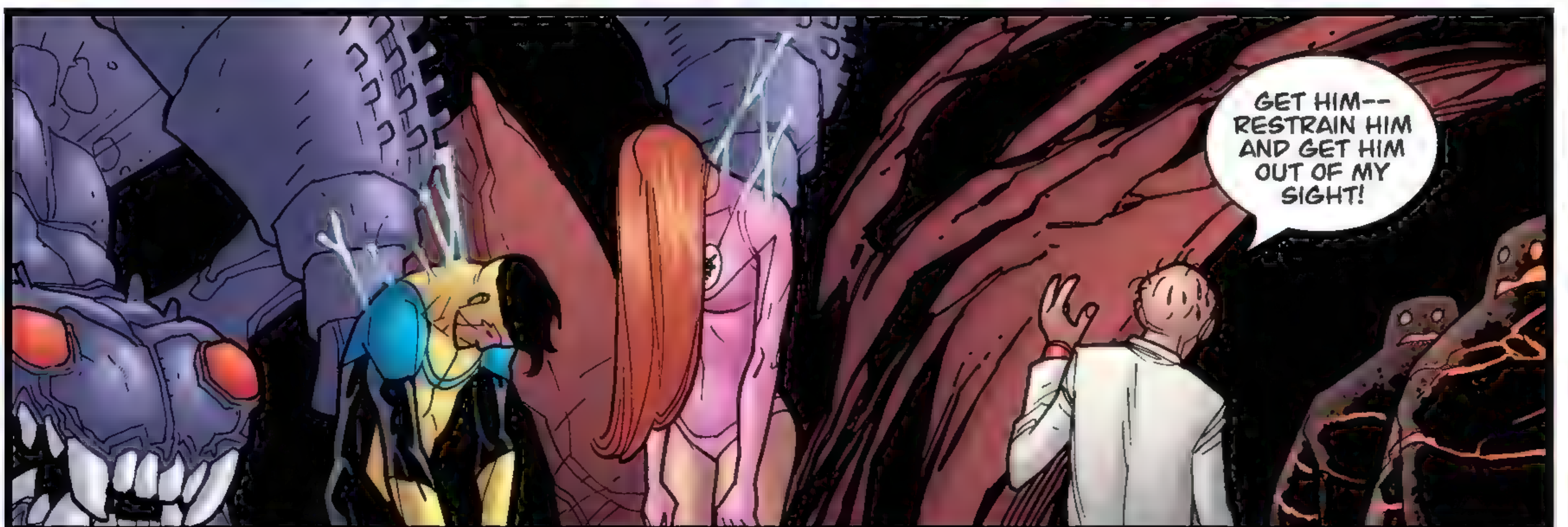
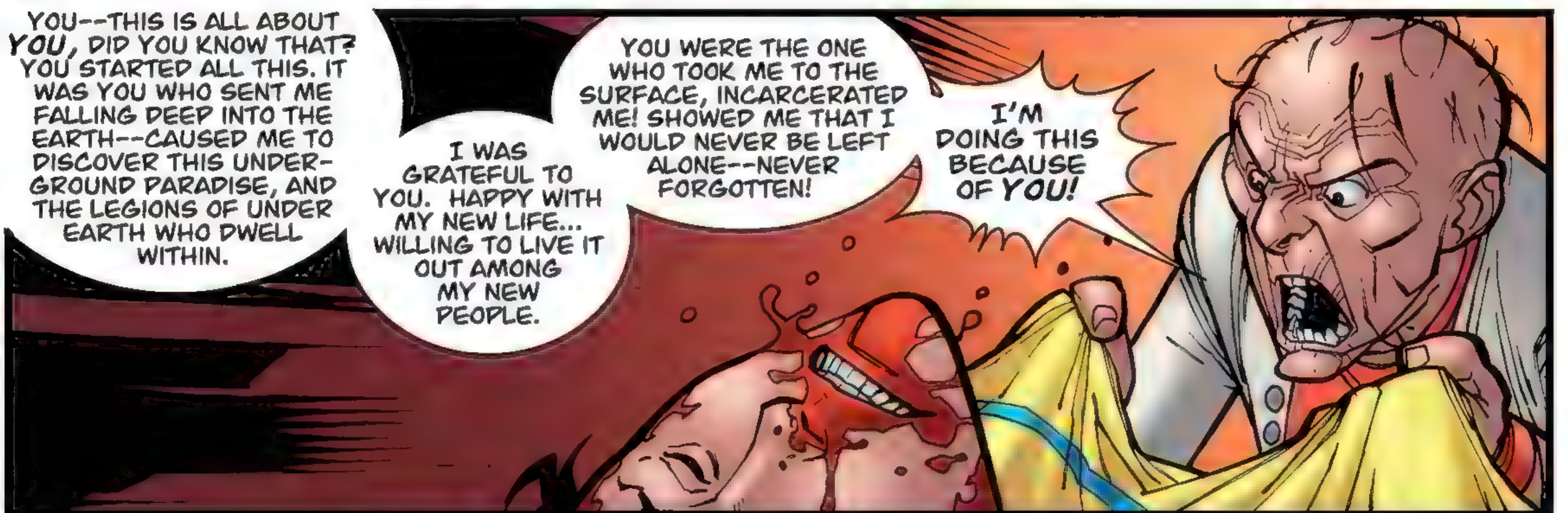


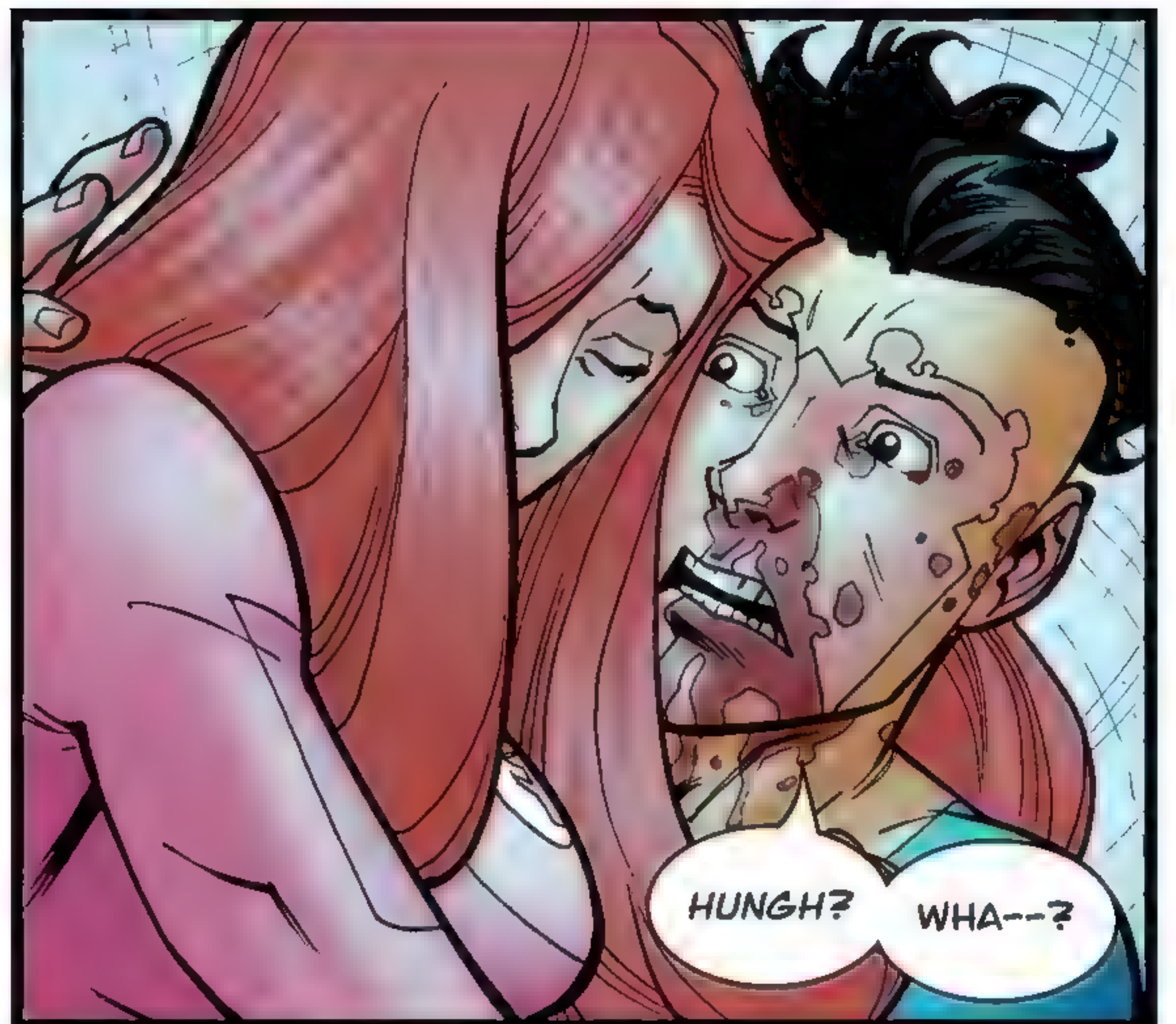


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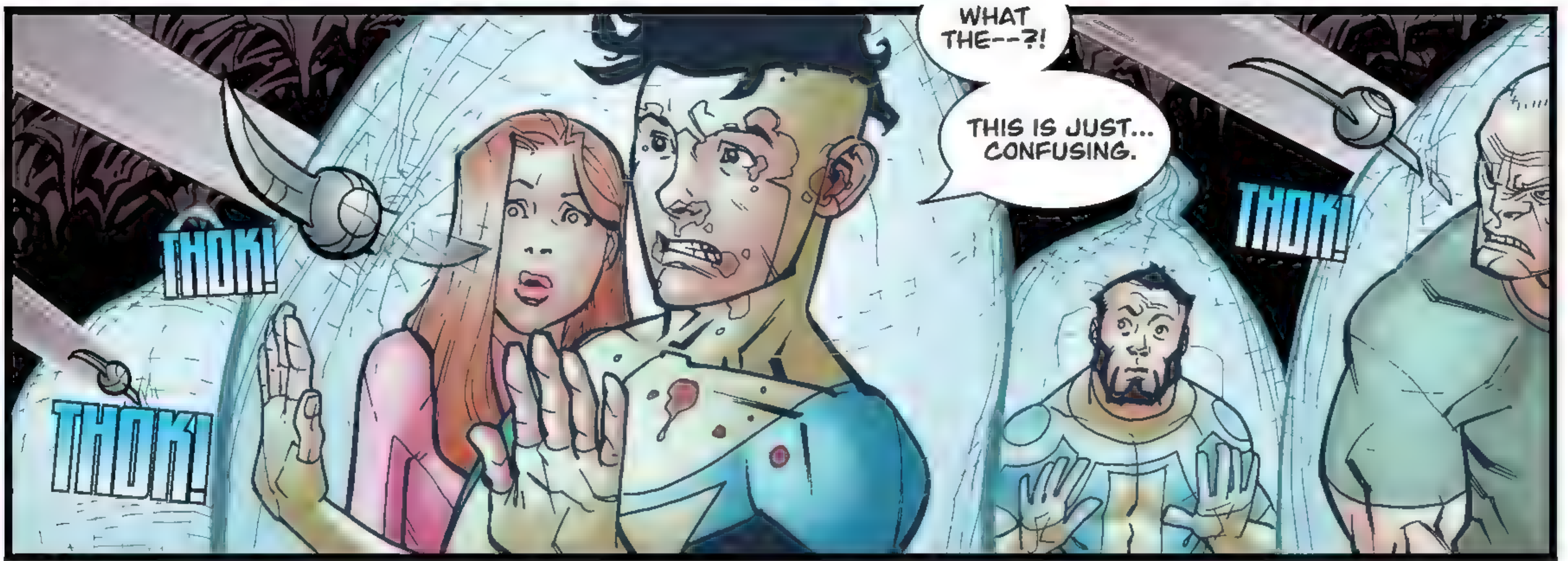


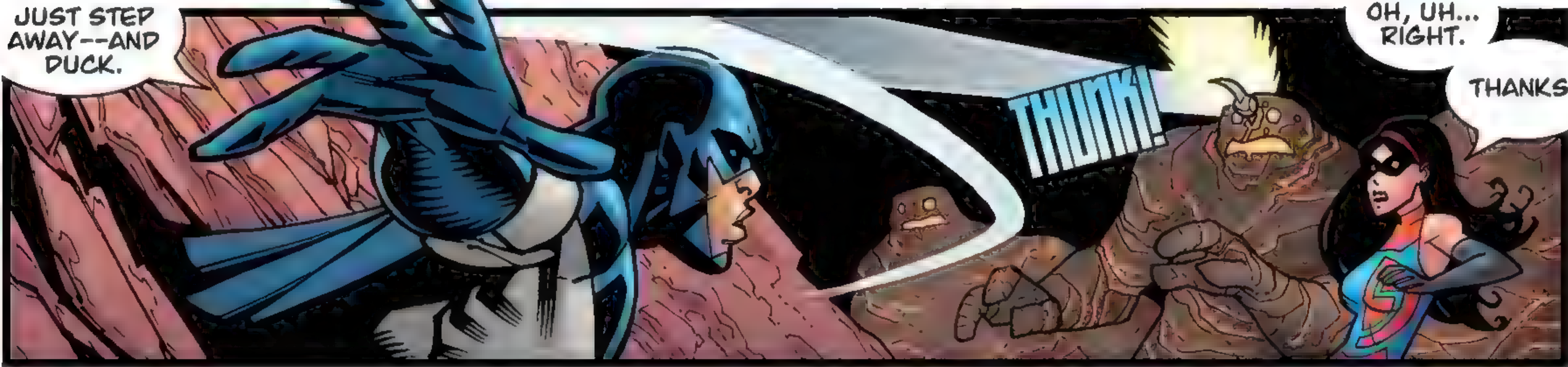






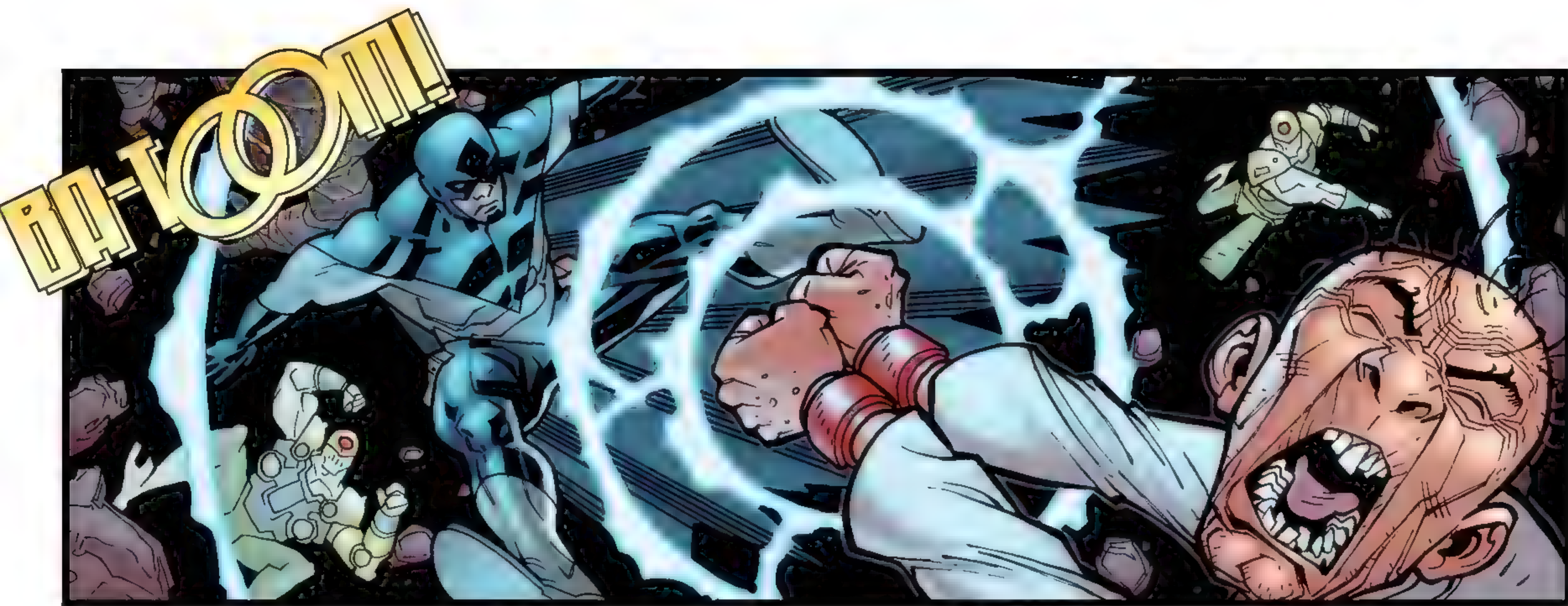
ATTACK!







WROOOOM!!!



THERE'S STILL SOME FIGHT LEFT IN THIS OLD DOG! BUT I'M NO FOOL--I CAN SEE THE WRITING ON THE WALL.

MAYBE THIS IS IT-- MAYBE IT'S ALL BUT OVER. BY WORKING TOGETHER, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO DEFEAT MY LEGIONS OF UNDER-EARTH!

BUT IF THIS IS IT, IF I'M GOING DOWN--I'M TAKING EVERY ONE OF YOU WITH ME!

I DON'T THINK SO.

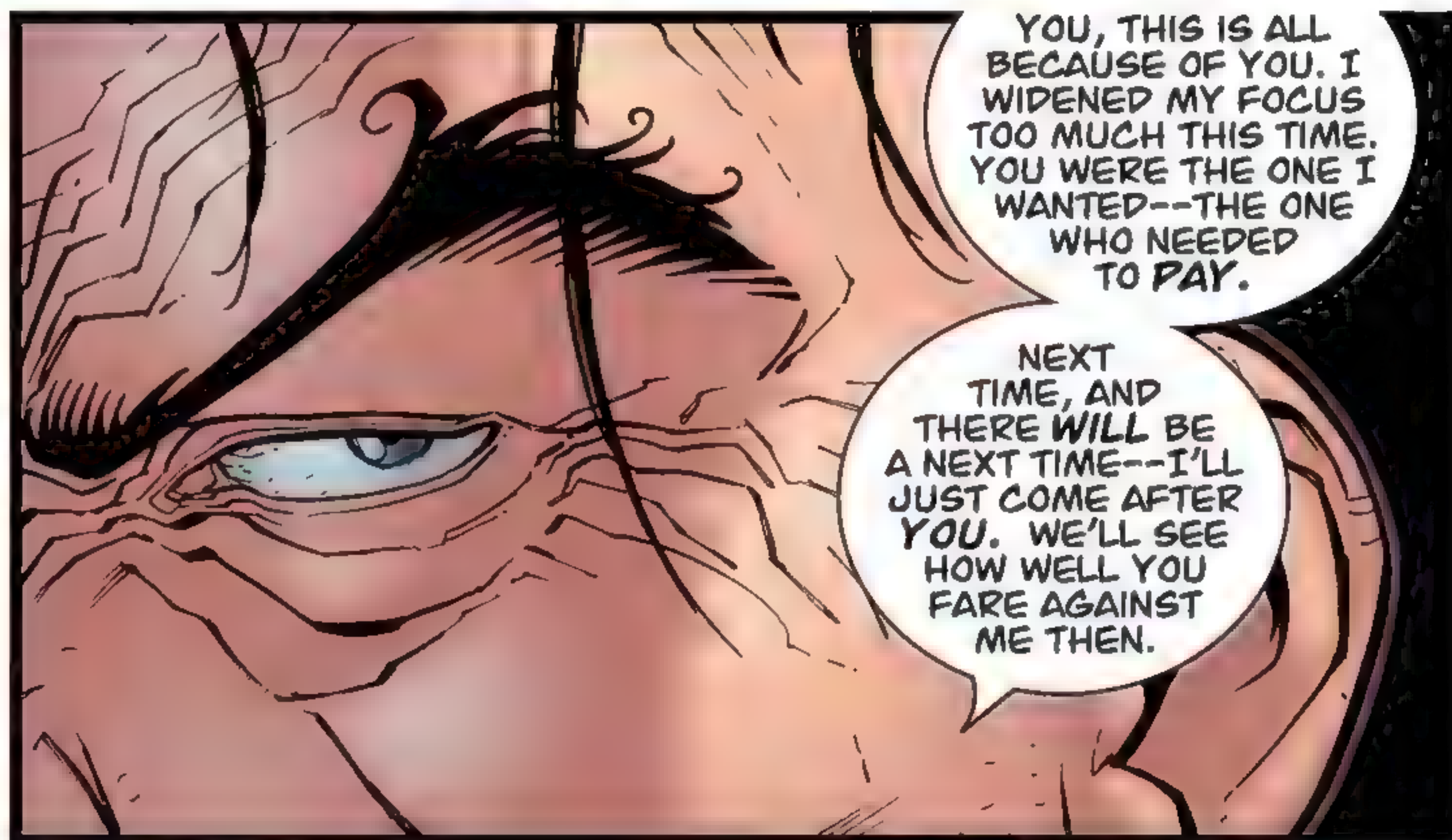


YOU!

YOU THINK YOU'RE FAST ENOUGH TO STOP ME BEFORE I BRING THIS CAVE DOWN ON EVERYONE?



I AM-- AND YOU KNOW I AM.



YOU, THIS IS ALL BECAUSE OF YOU. I WIDENED MY FOCUS TOO MUCH THIS TIME. YOU WERE THE ONE I WANTED--THE ONE WHO NEEDED TO PAY.

NEXT TIME, AND THERE WILL BE A NEXT TIME--I'LL JUST COME AFTER YOU. WE'LL SEE HOW WELL YOU FARE AGAINST ME THEN.



OLD MAN, ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME PUNCH YOU?



I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU TRY.









STAND DOWN,
INVINCIBLE!

RIGHT
NOW!

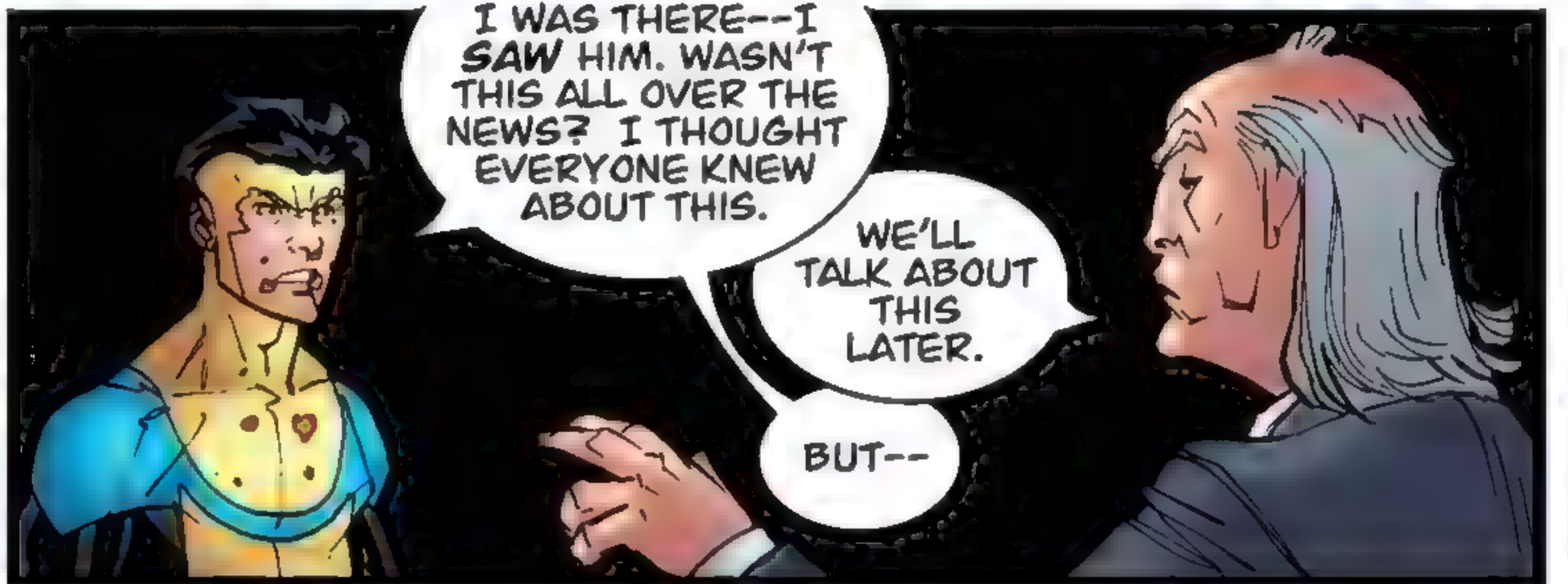


HE--HE
MURDERED PEOPLE.
HE WAS A COLD-
BLOODED KILLER.
WHY DOESN'T
ANYONE KNOW
ABOUT THIS?



I HAVE KNOWN
DARKWING FOR
SOME TIME, BACK
IN HIS DAYS AS
NIGHT BOY WHEN
HE WORKED WITH
THE ORIGINAL
DARKWING.

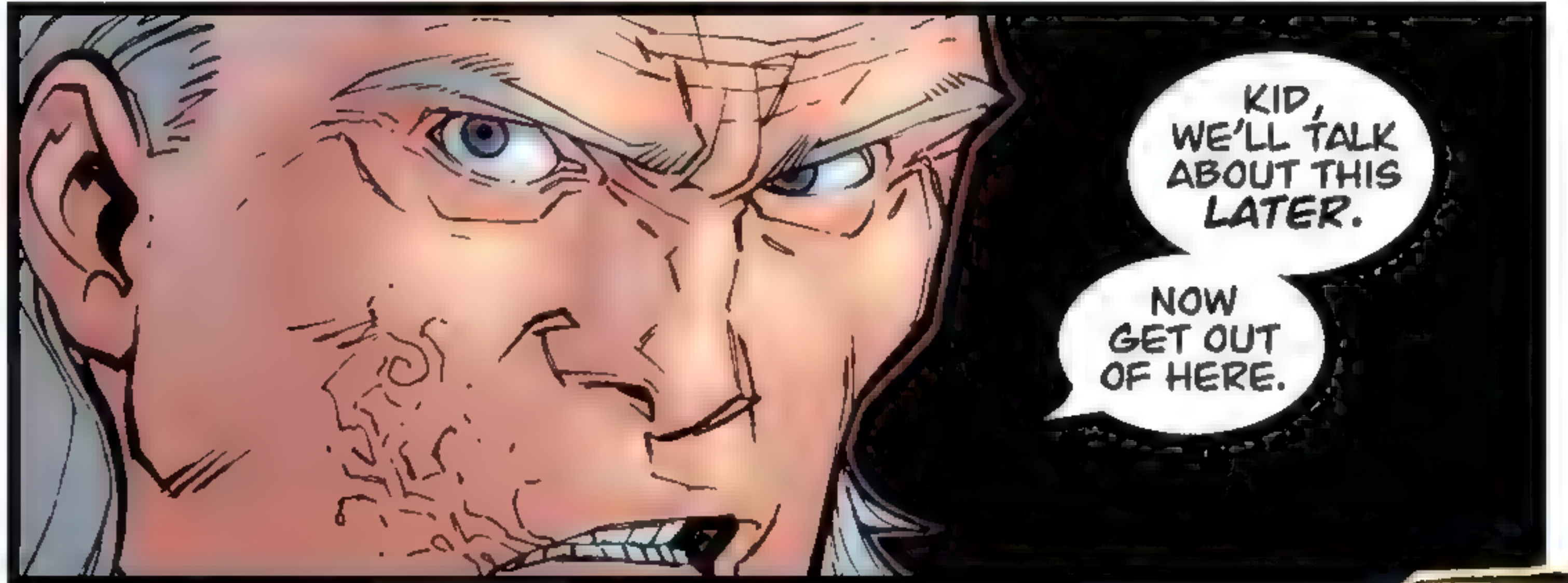
ARROGANT,
YES--BUT
NEVER A
KILLER.



I WAS THERE--I
SAW HIM. WASN'T
THIS ALL OVER THE
NEWS? I THOUGHT
EVERYONE KNEW
ABOUT THIS.

WE'LL
TALK ABOUT
THIS
LATER.

BUT--



KID,
WE'LL TALK
ABOUT THIS
LATER.

NOW
GET OUT
OF HERE.





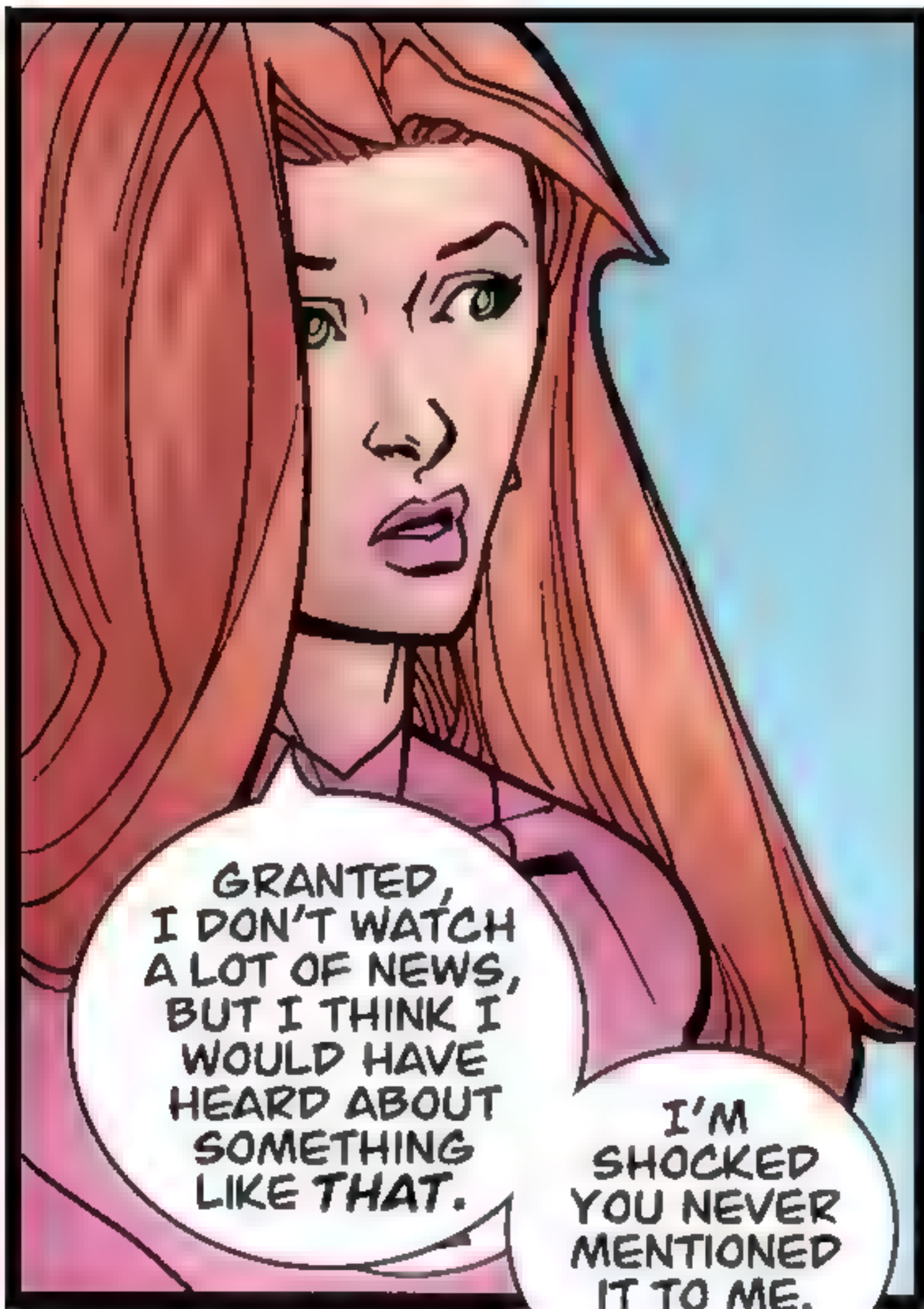
MARK?



WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT? ARE YOU OKAY?

ME? NO---NOT EVEN CLOSE. THAT GUY, DARKWING---I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

YOU HAD NO CLUE DARKWING WAS A MURDERER? YOU NEVER SAW IT ON THE NEWS?



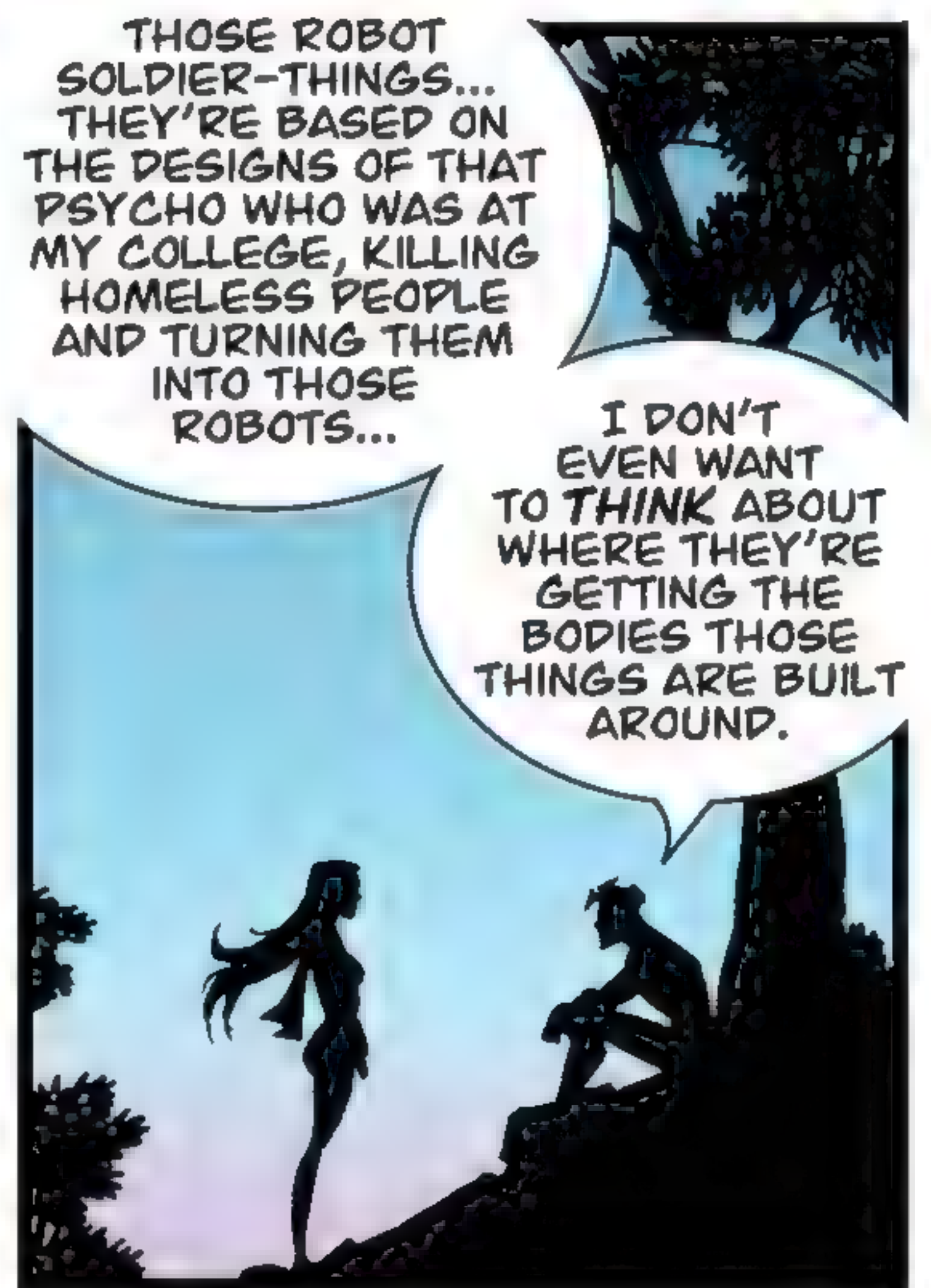
GRANTED, I DON'T WATCH A LOT OF NEWS, BUT I THINK I WOULD HAVE HEARD ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

I'M SHOCKED YOU NEVER MENTIONED IT TO ME.



I BROUGHT HIM IN A WHILE AGO---I FIGURED IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A BIG NEWS STORY.

SOMETHING ISN'T RIGHT HERE---THIS IS WEIRD.



THOSE ROBOT SOLDIER-THINGS... THEY'RE BASED ON THE DESIGNS OF THAT PSYCHO WHO WAS AT MY COLLEGE, KILLING HOMELESS PEOPLE AND TURNING THEM INTO THOSE ROBOTS...

I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT WHERE THEY'RE GETTING THE BODIES THOSE THINGS ARE BUILT AROUND.



WHAT'S WRONG?

I THINK I'VE MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.

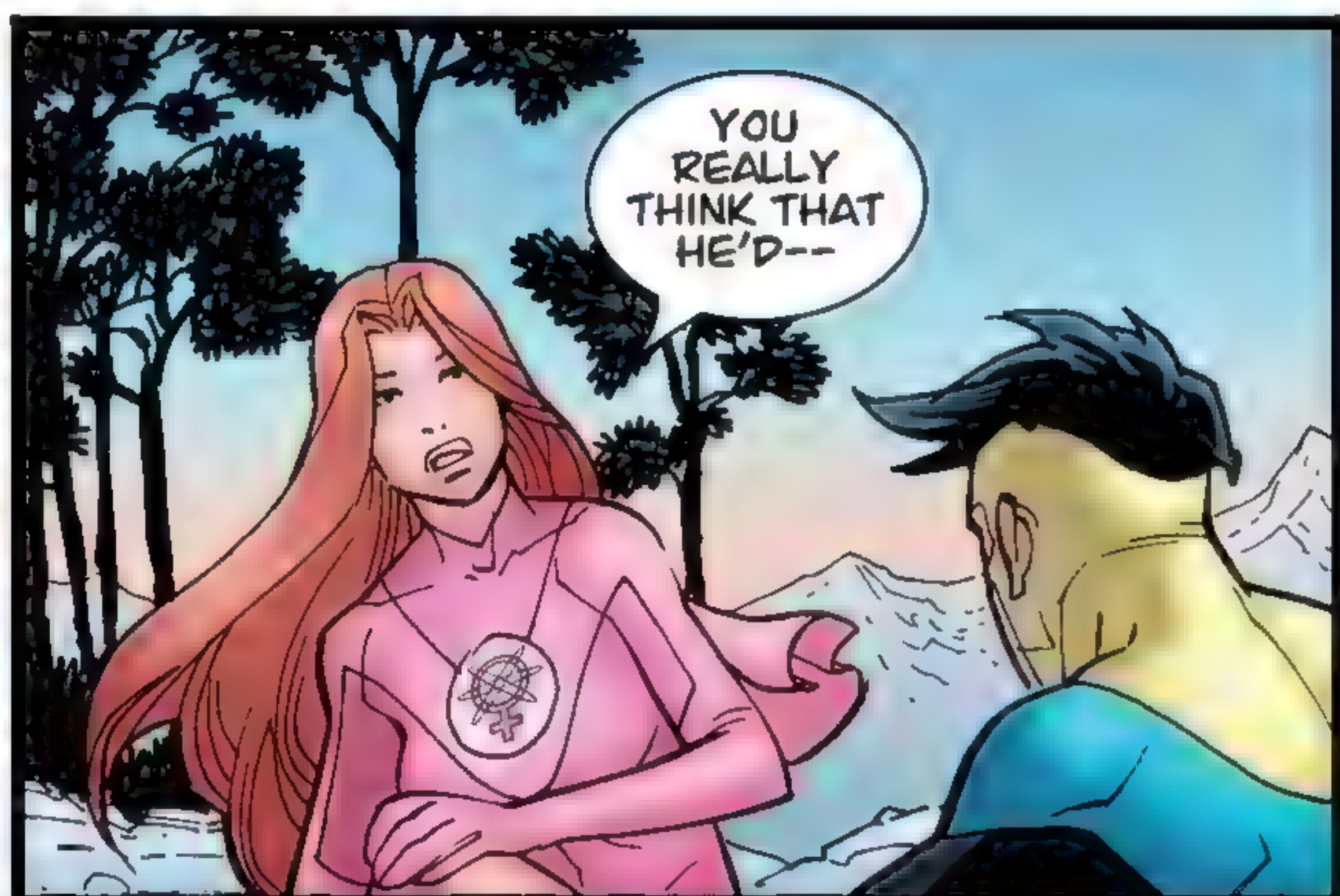
IF THE NEWS HAD BROADCAST ANYTHING ABOUT DARKWING, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE ONLY ONE TO ATTACK ONCE THOSE MONSTERS WERE DEFEATED.

THERE WAS A COVER UP--THE NEWS NEVER WENT PUBLIC.

CECIL STEDMAN HEADS UP THE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY--THEY CAN DO ANYTHING IN THE NAME OF "GLOBAL DEFENSE."

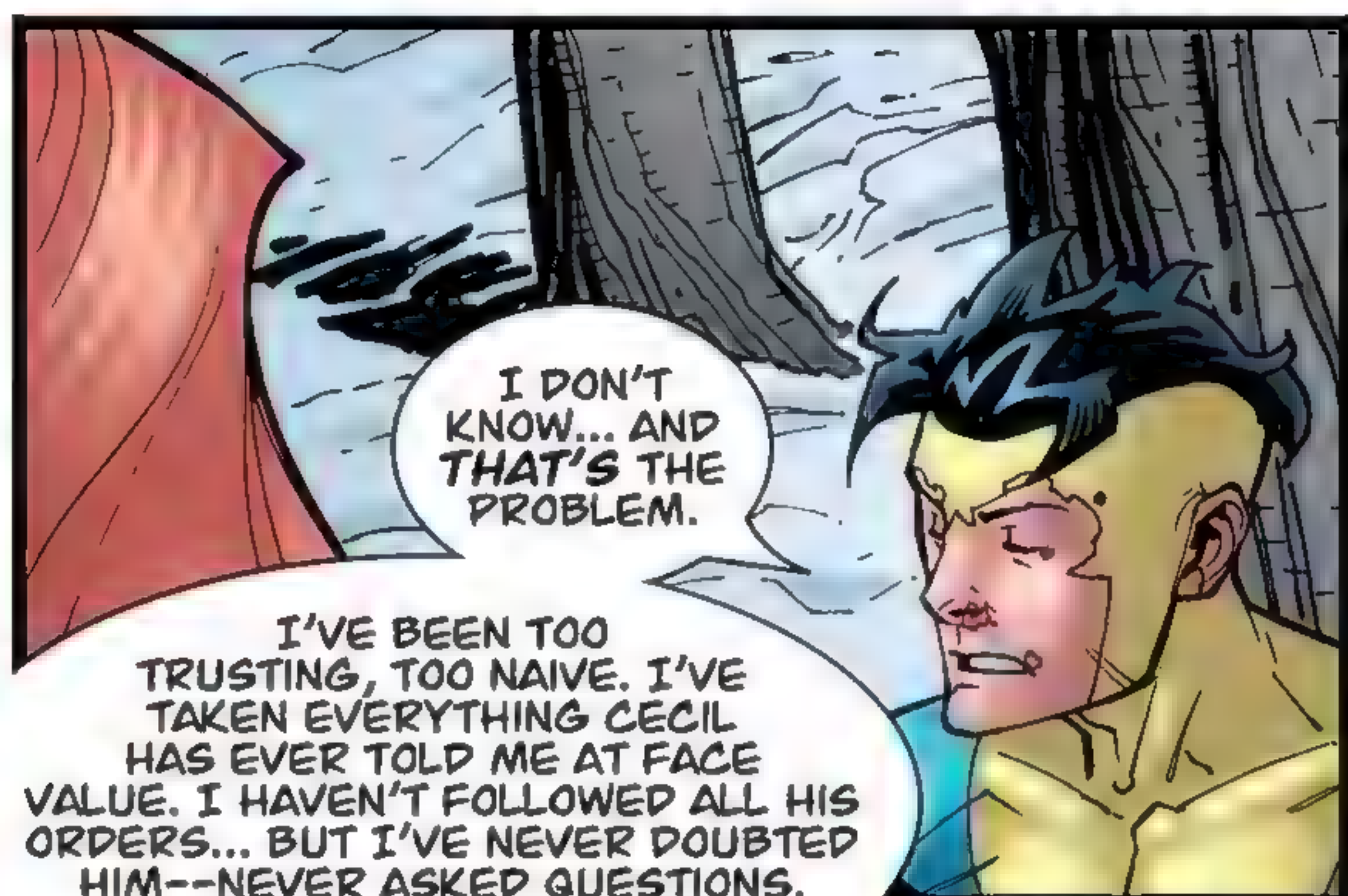


YOU REALLY THINK THAT HE'D--



I DON'T KNOW... AND THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

I'VE BEEN TOO TRUSTING, TOO NAIVE. I'VE TAKEN EVERYTHING CECIL HAS EVER TOLD ME AT FACE VALUE. I HAVEN'T FOLLOWED ALL HIS ORDERS... BUT I'VE NEVER DOUBTED HIM--NEVER ASKED QUESTIONS.



CAN YOU GET YOURSELF BACK HOME?

YEAH, SURE.

AND LATER-- AFTER I'M DONE, I WANT TO COME VISIT--CLEAR THINGS UP BETWEEN US. I DON'T LIKE THIS... TENSION.

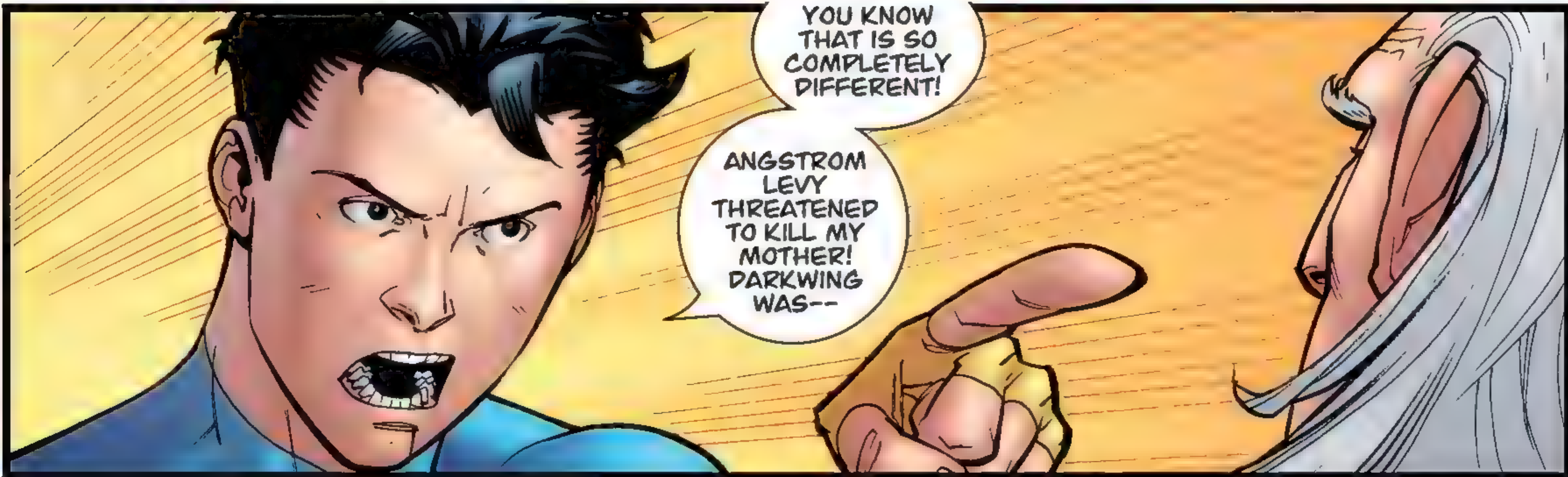
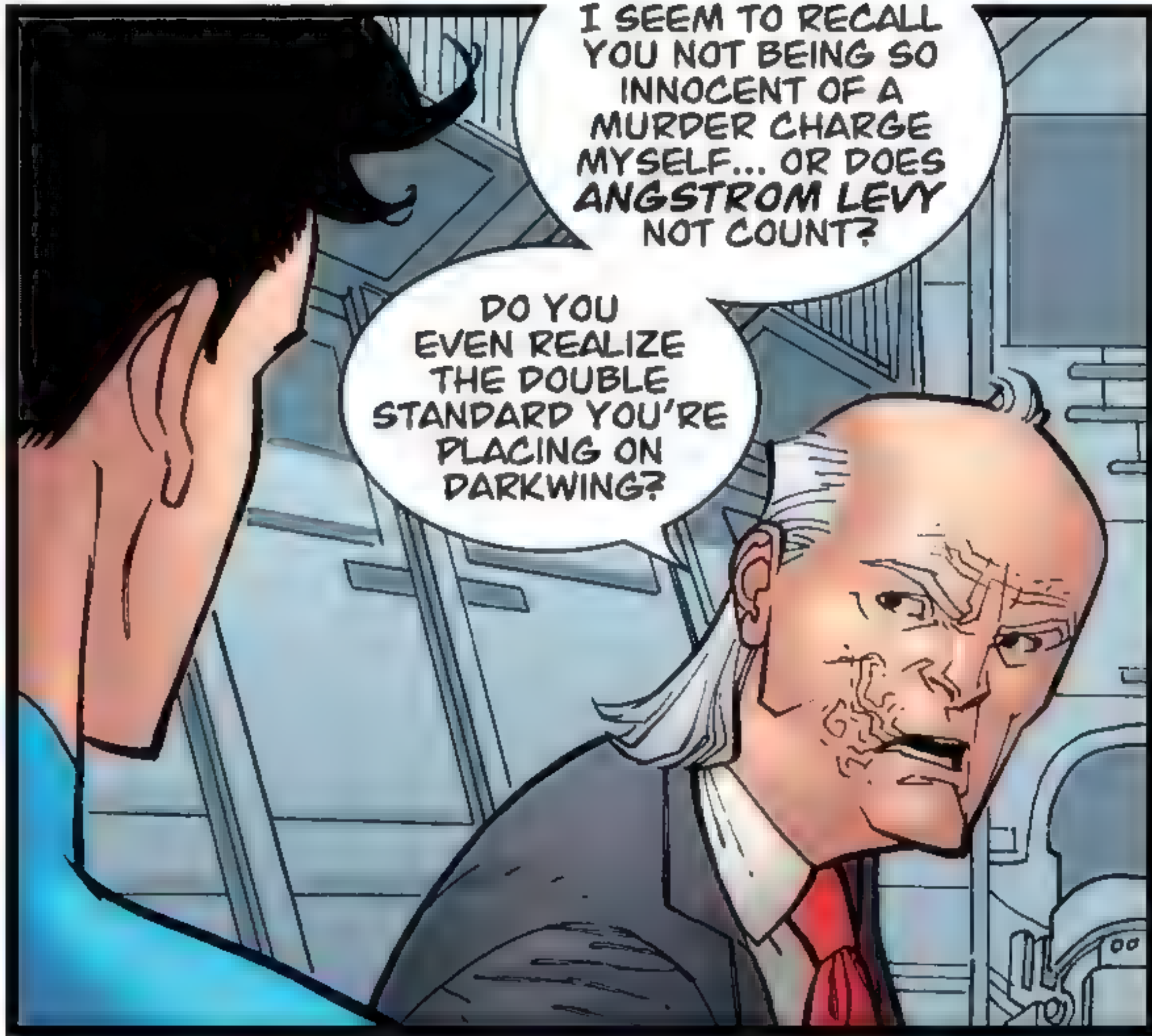
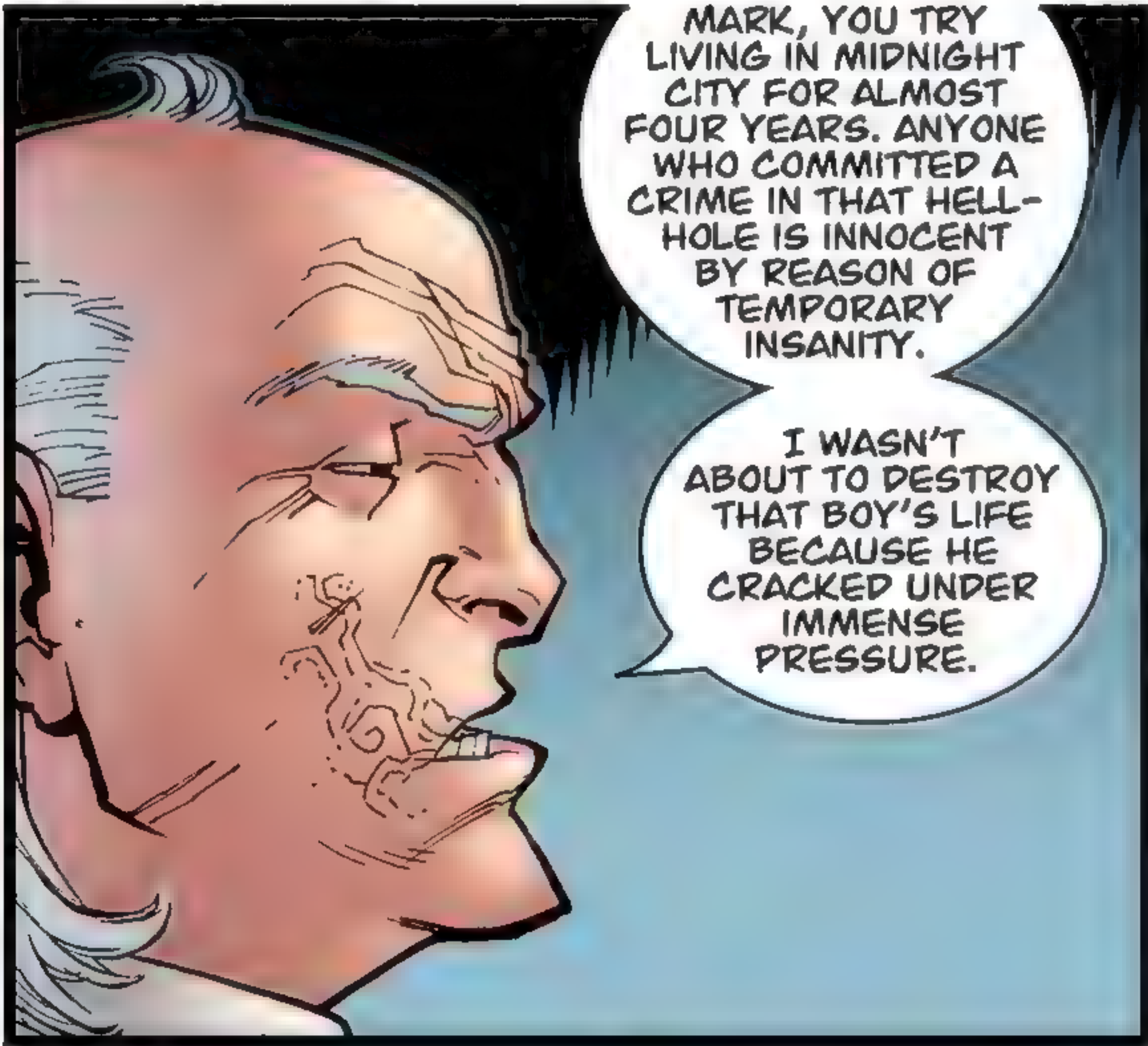
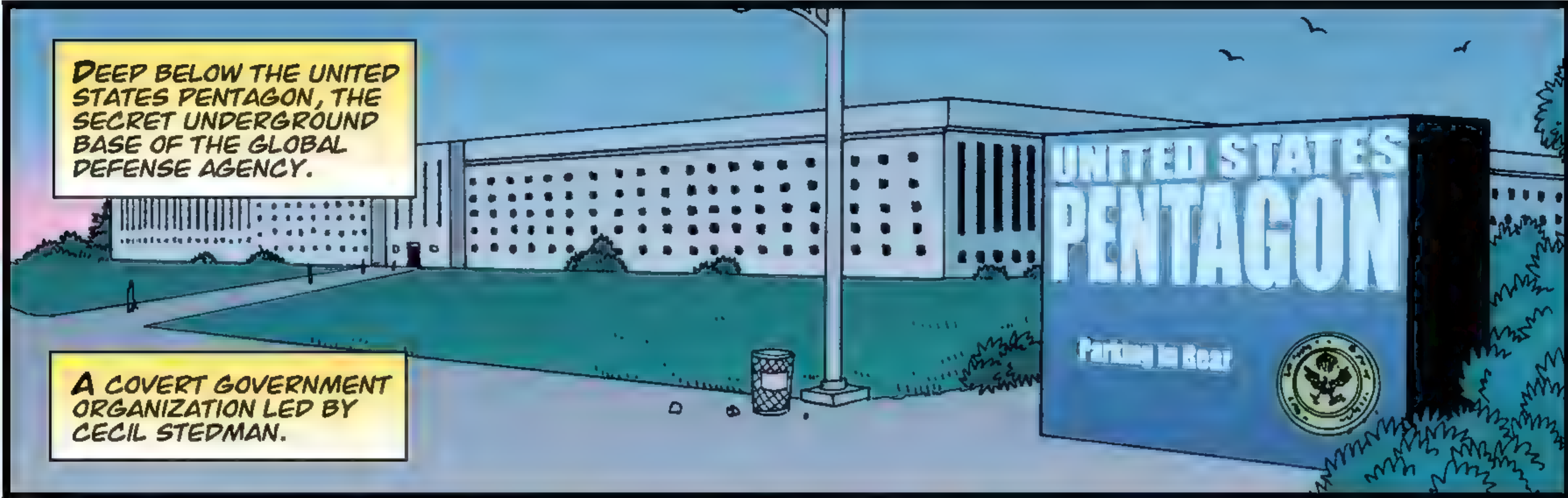
I'D UH, I'D LIKE THAT, MARK. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW?

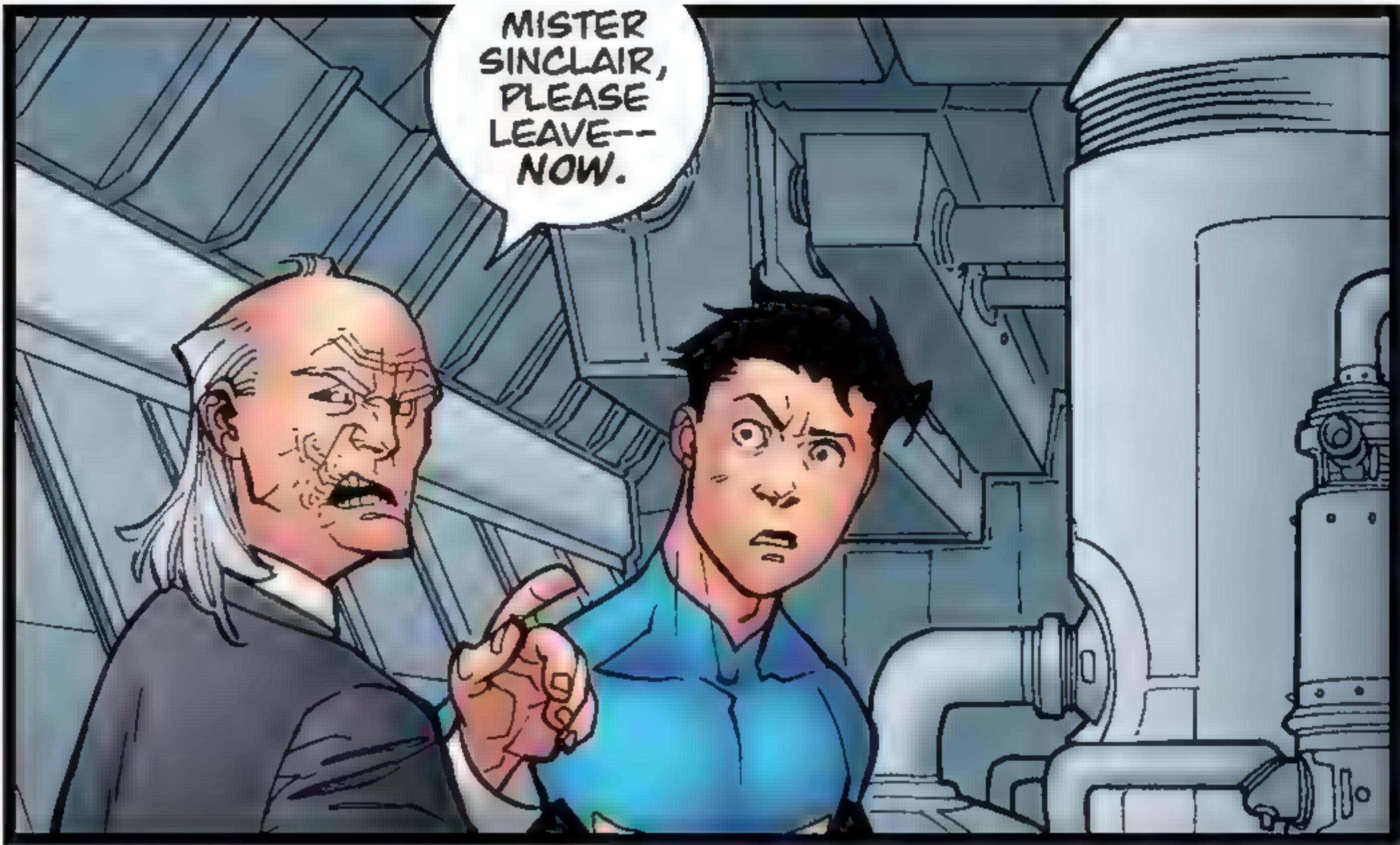


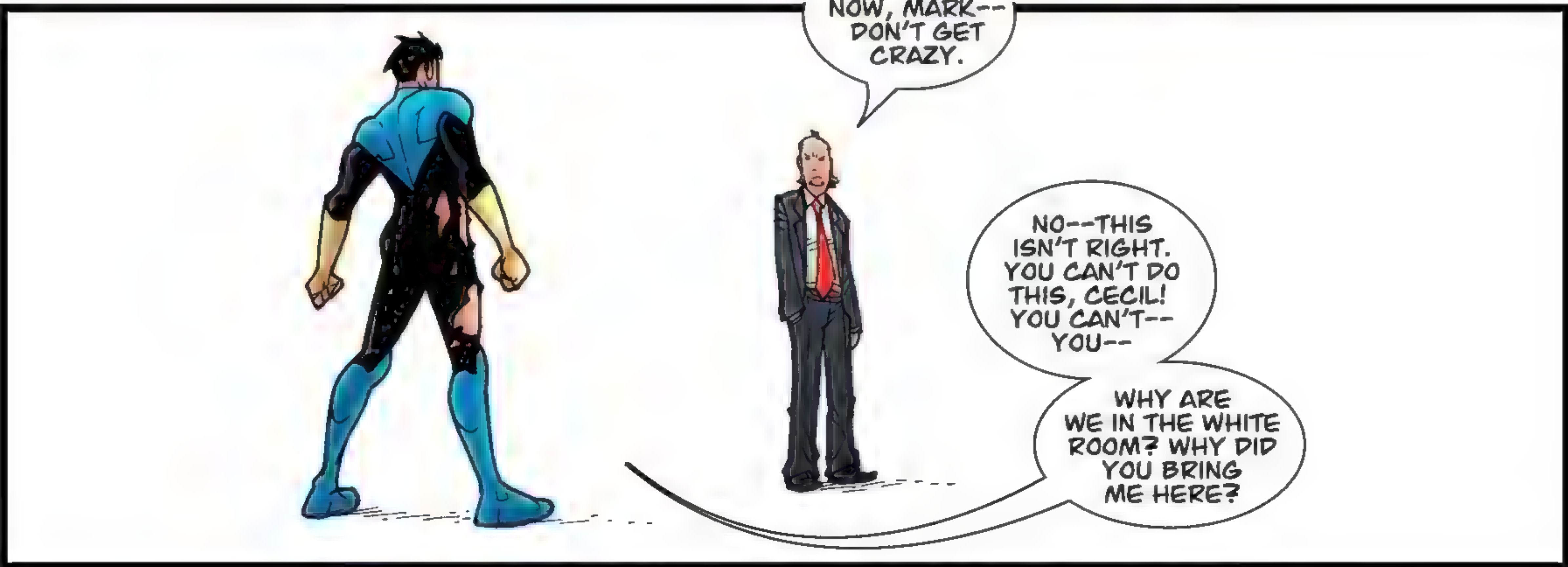
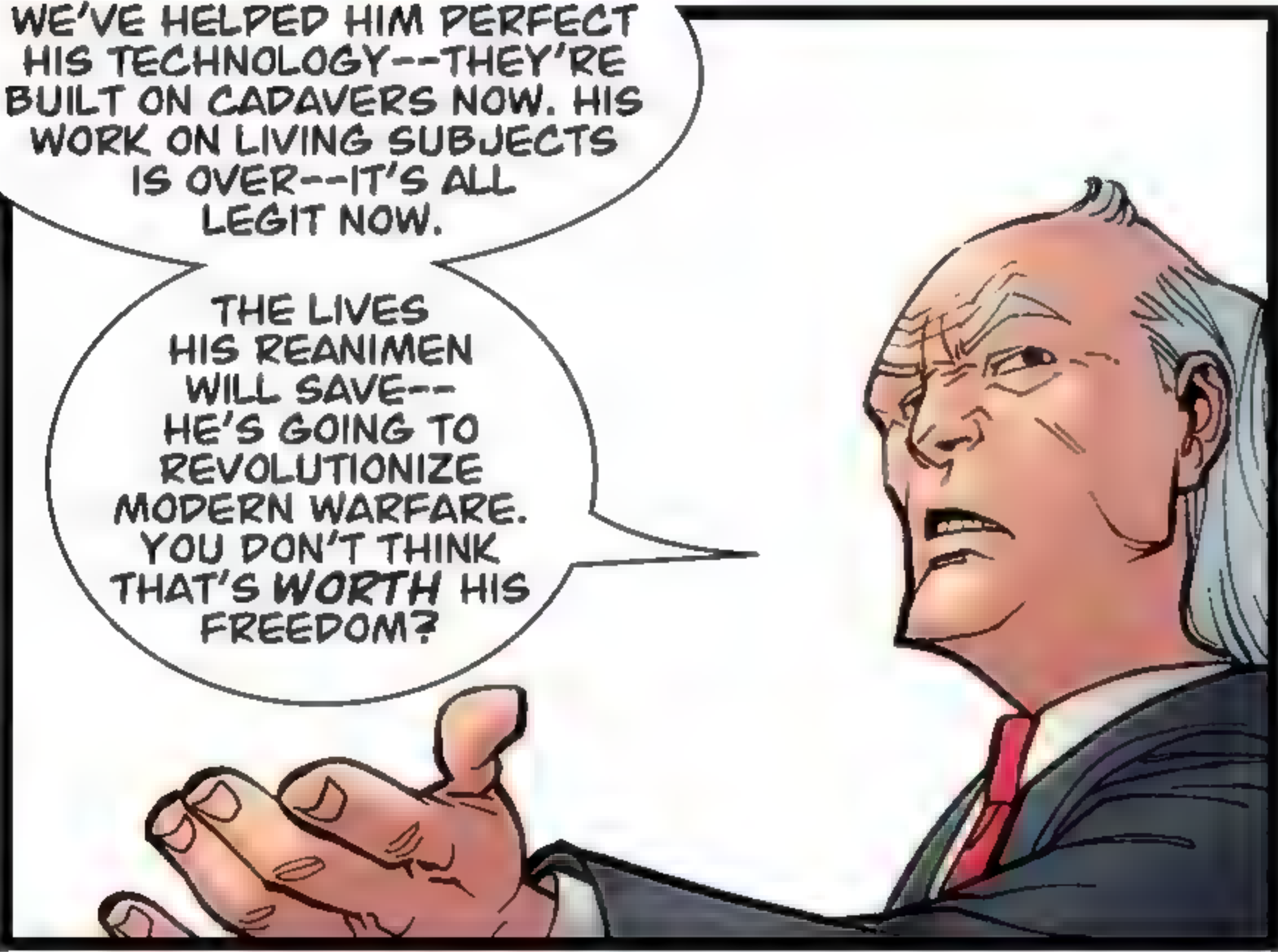
ASK SOME OF THOSE QUESTIONS...

...WHETHER I WANT TO KNOW THE ANSWERS OR NOT.









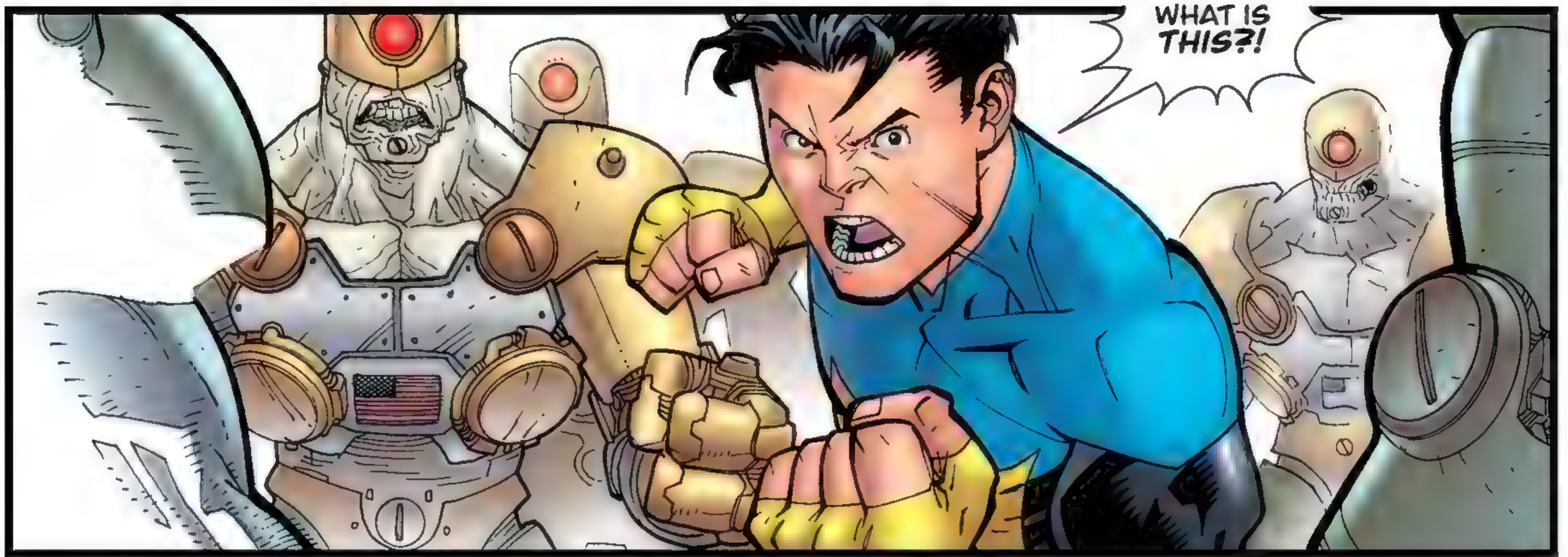
FOR THE
ELEMENT OF
SURPRISE.

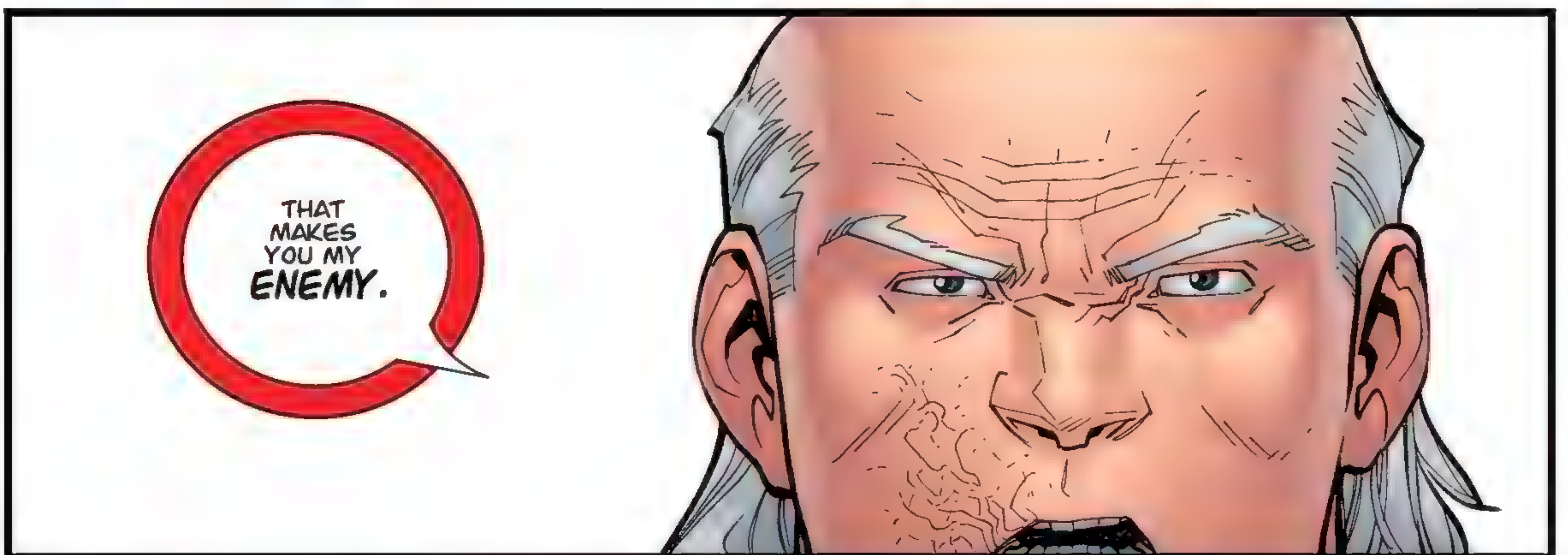
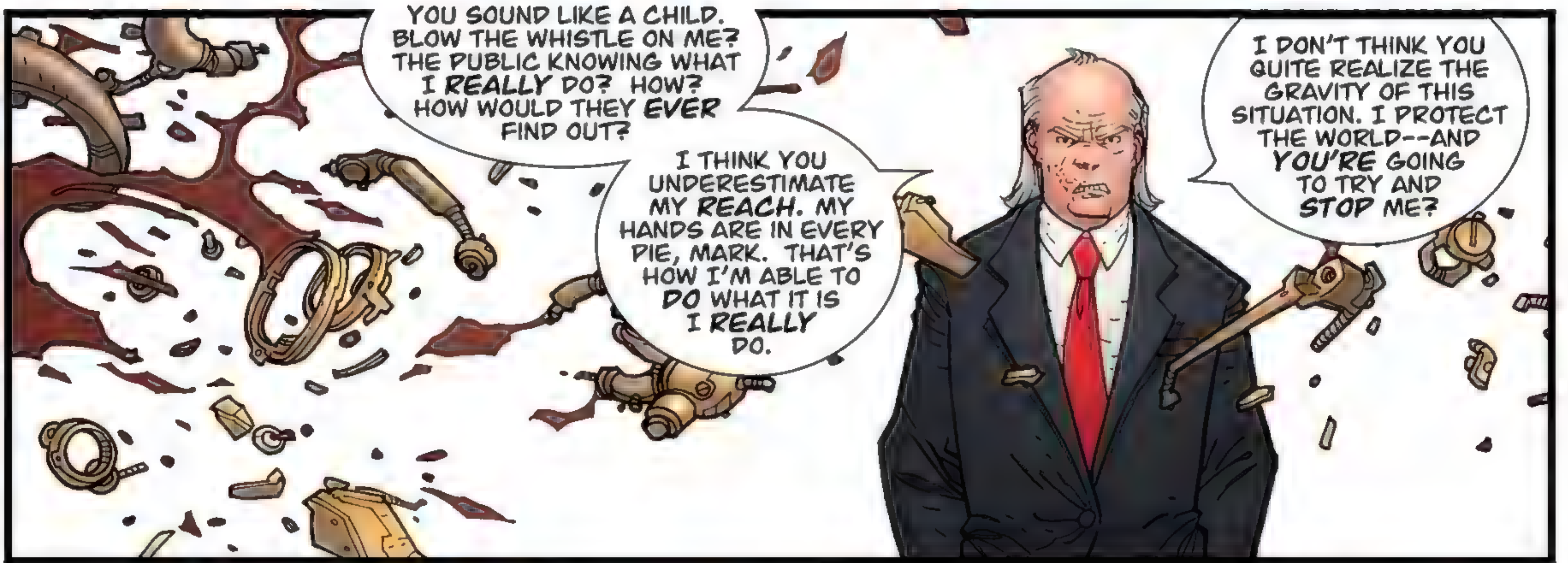


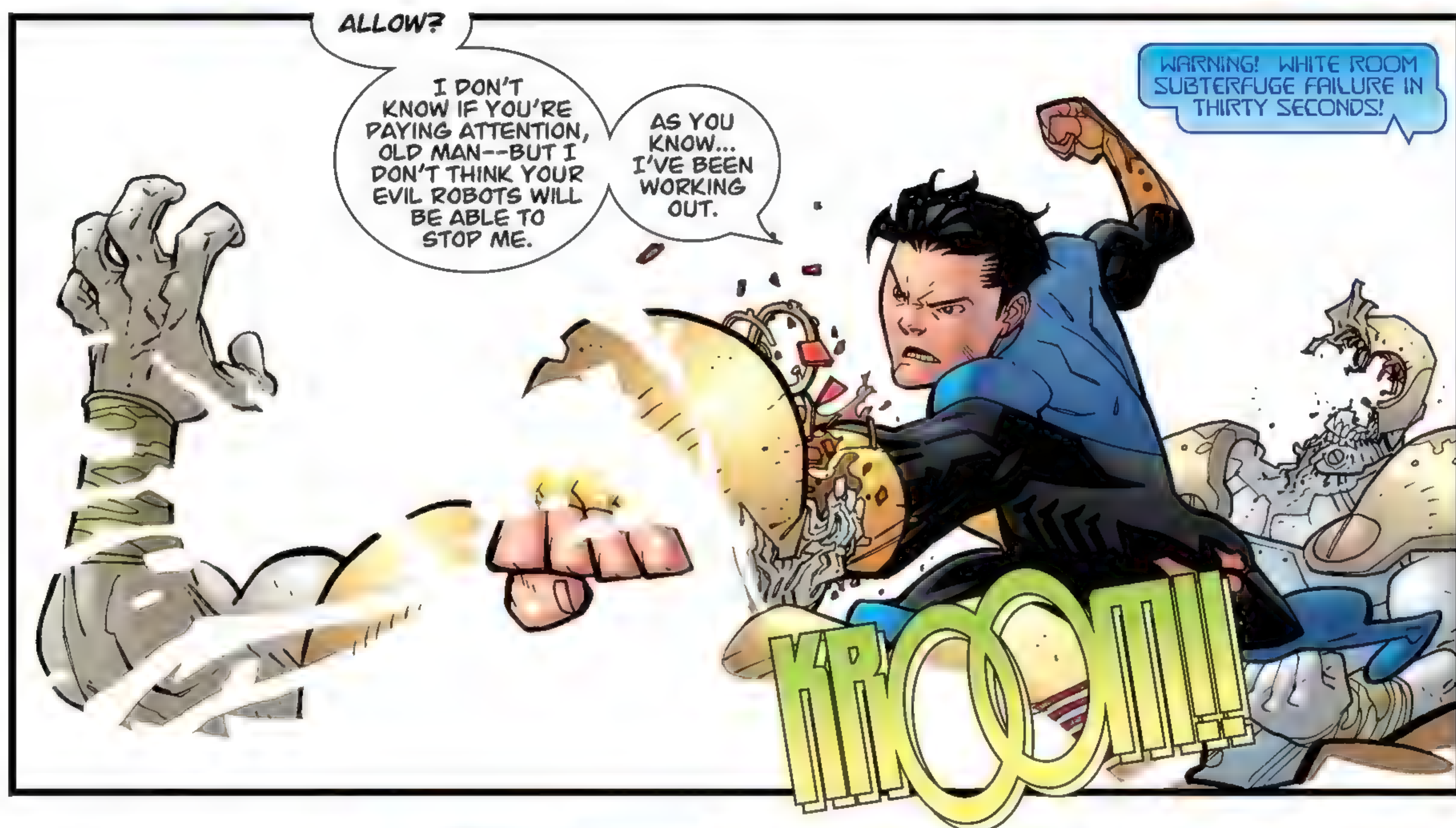


CHAPTER 50











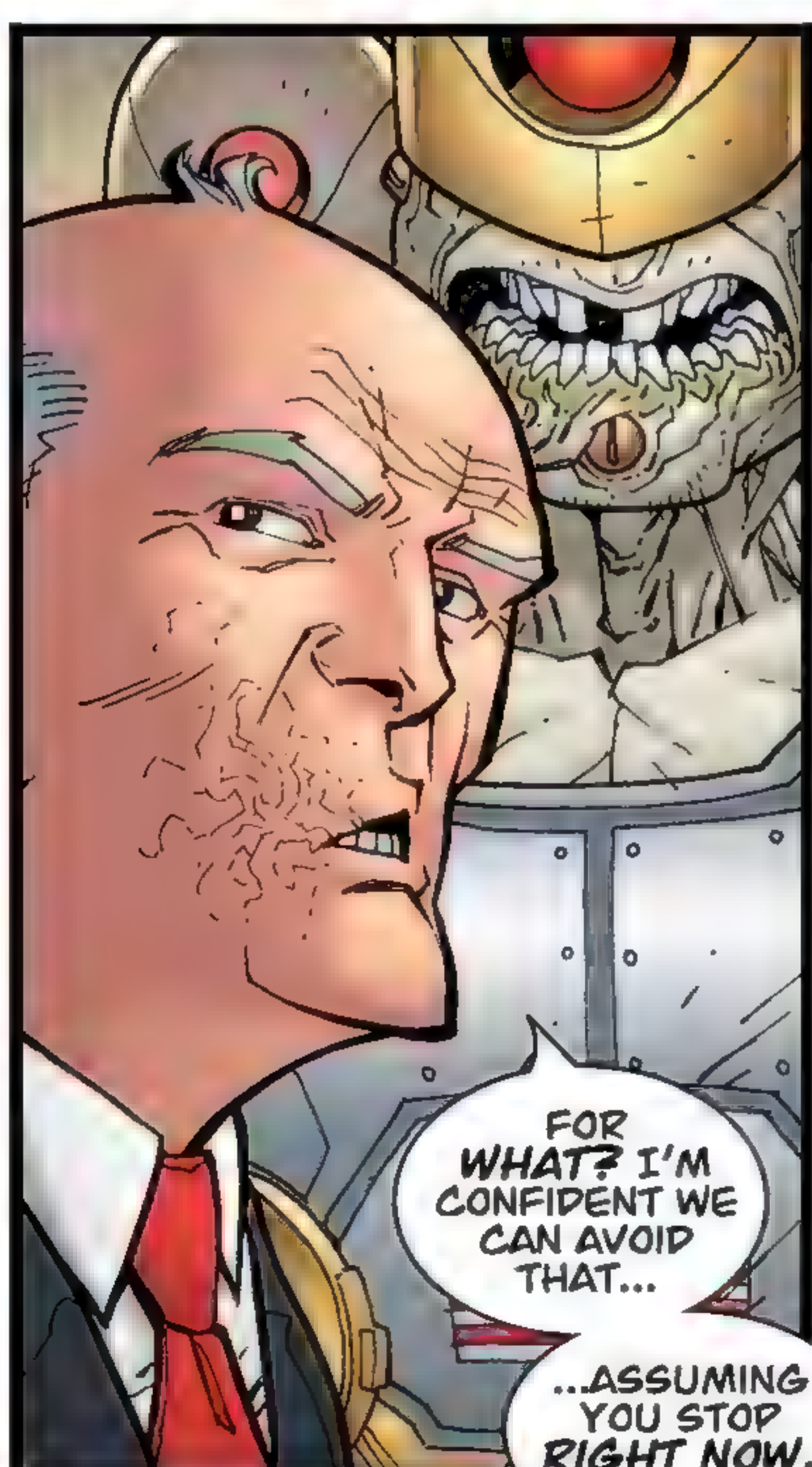
UH...

YEAH,
WE COULD
BE HERE ALL
DAY AT THE
RATE YOU'RE
GOING.

SO WHY
DON'T YOU
JUST GIVE
UP?



THEN
WHAT? ARE
YOU GOING
TO ARREST
ME?



FOR
WHAT? I'M
CONFIDENT WE
CAN AVOID
THAT...

...ASSUMING
YOU STOP
RIGHT NOW.



THEN WHAT? WE JUST
FORGET THIS EVER
HAPPENED? FORGET
YOU'VE GOT DOCTOR
FRANKENSTEIN RUNNING
FREE--MAKING ZOMBIE
SOLDIERS--PRETEND
YOU'RE NOT HIRING
MURDERERS?!

HOW
ABOUT THIS--
YOU ARREST D.A.
SINCLAIR AND
DARKWING--AND
I'LL THINK ABOUT
STANDING
DOWN.



IF YOU'RE NOT GOING
TO CONTINUE WORKING
FOR ME--THEN I'LL
NEED THEM MORE
THAN EVER.

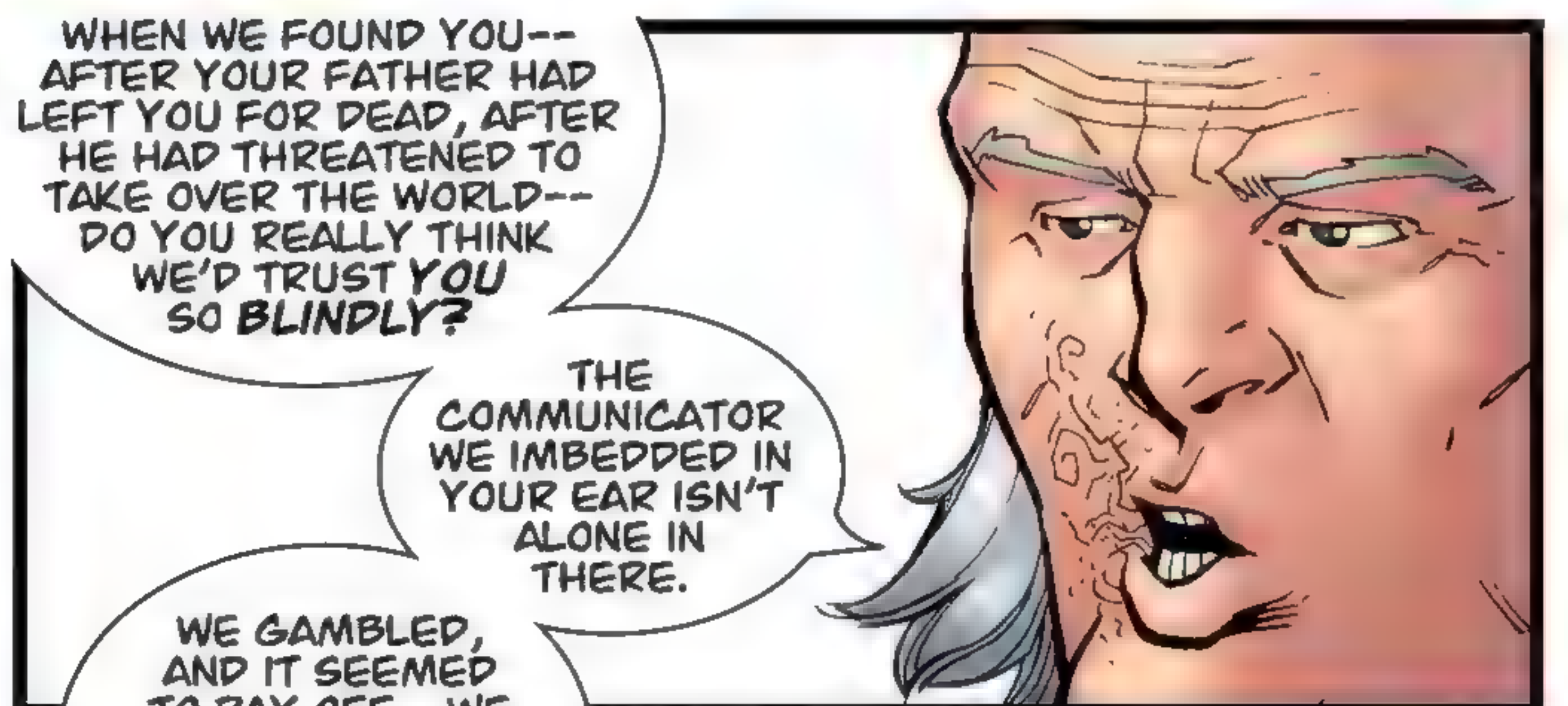
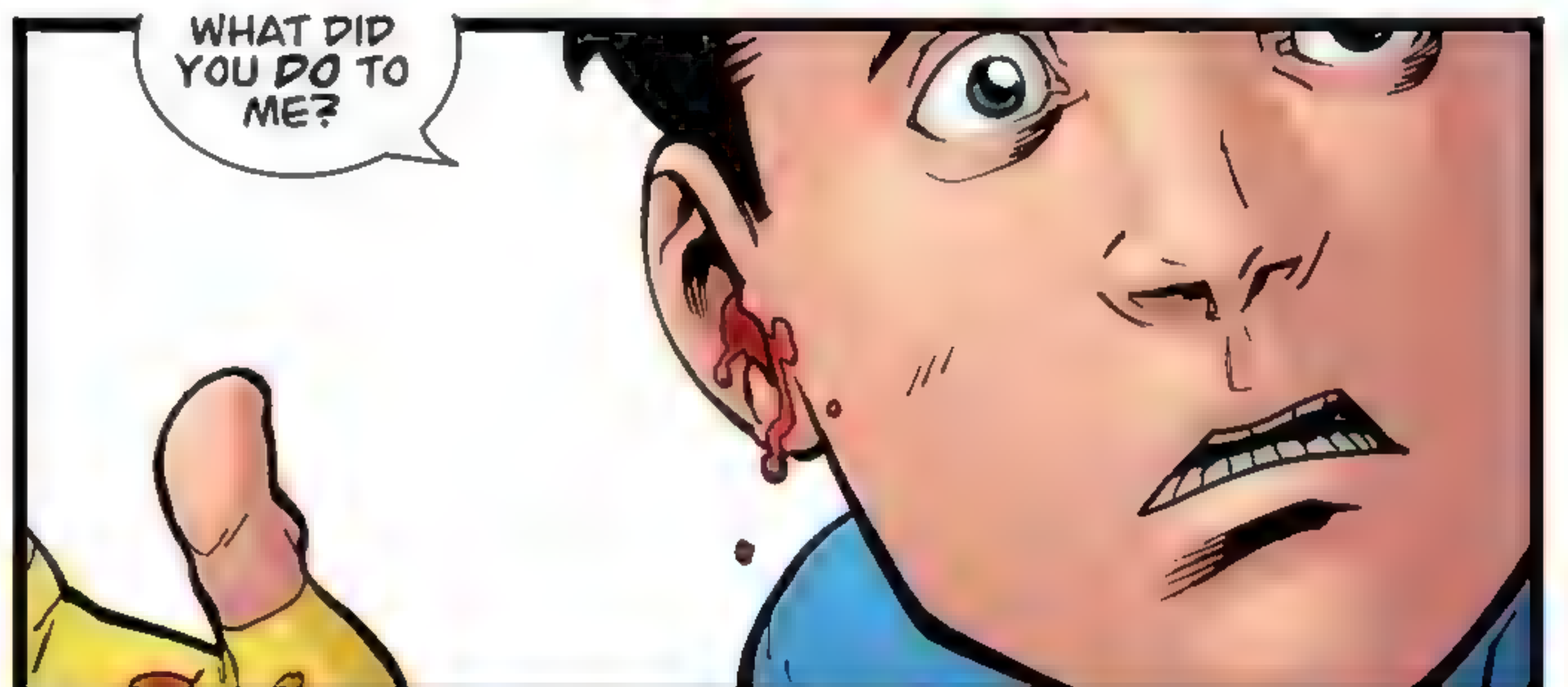
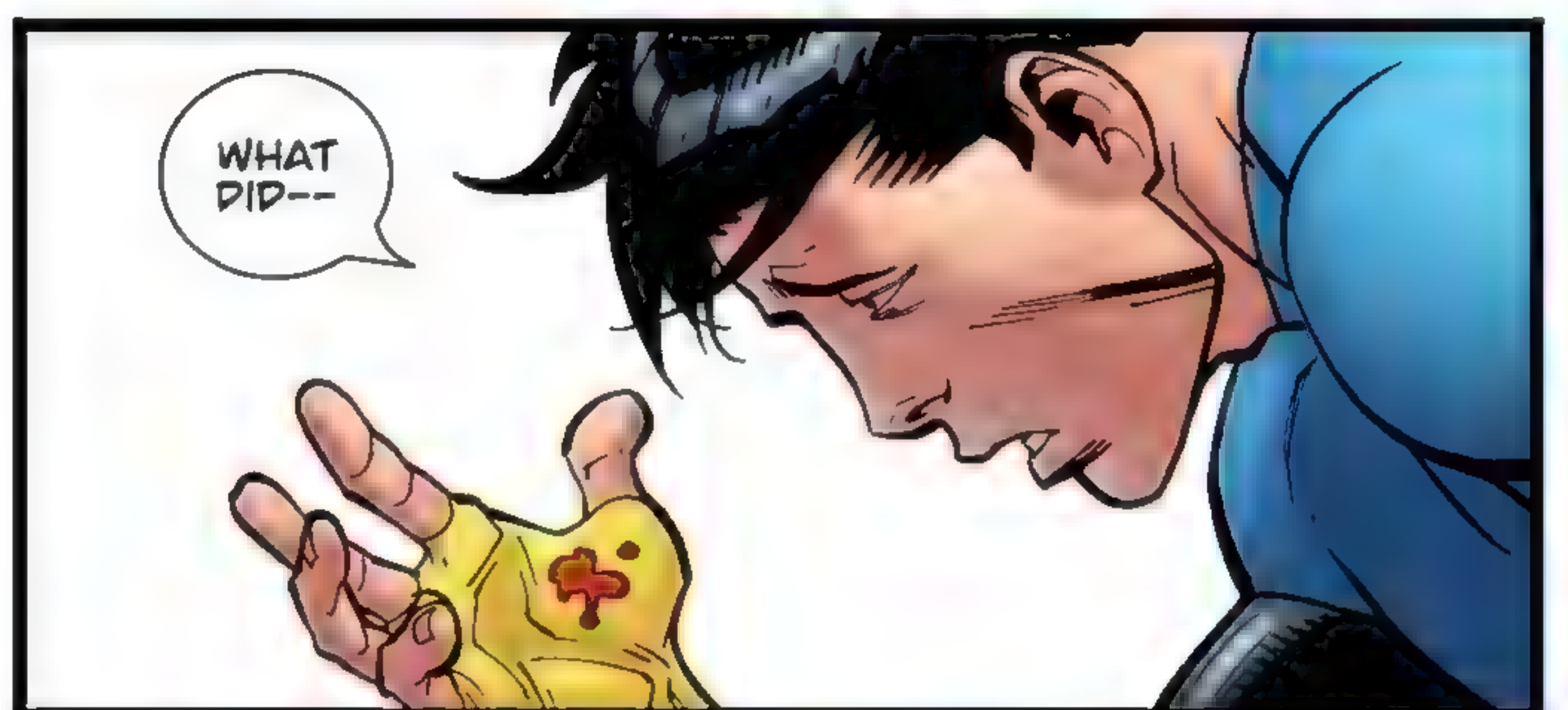
NO, I'M
SORRY THAT
ME WORKING WITH
THEM INTERFERES
WITH YOUR STRICT
VIEWS ON RIGHT AND
WRONG THAT ARE
BORN OUT OF A NEED
TO PROVE YOU'RE NOT
YOUR FATHER--BUT
I WON'T STOP
WORKING WITH
THEM ANY TIME
SOON.



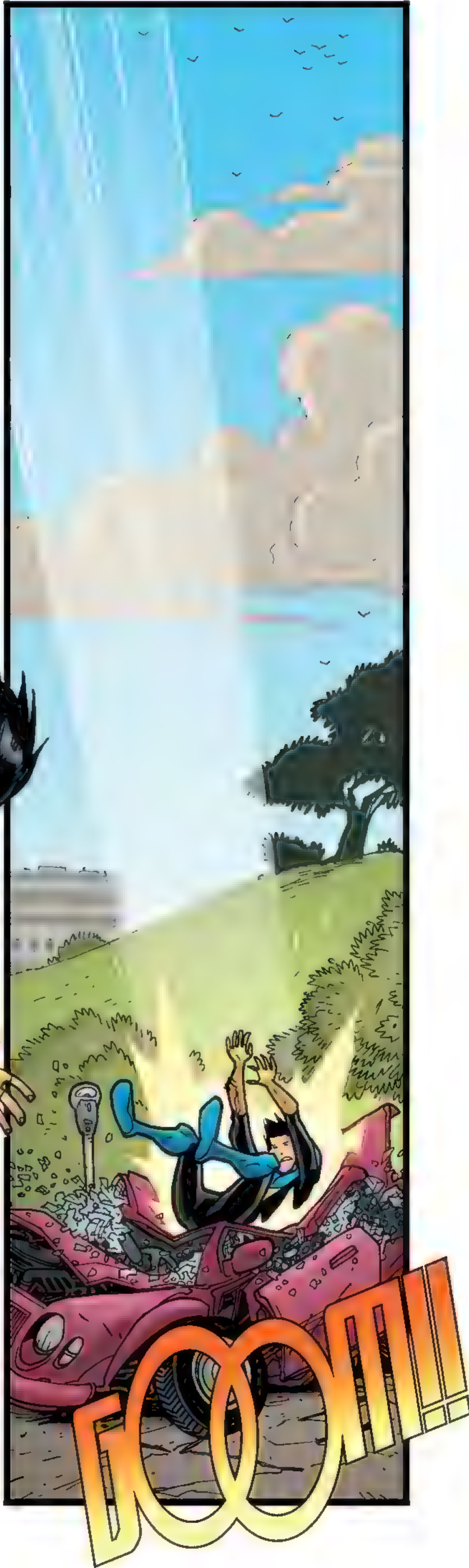
THEN I
GUESS I'VE
GOT A LOT OF
ROBOTS TO
DESTROY--
BECAUSE I'M
SURE AS HELL
NOT GOING
TO JUST
SURRENDER.

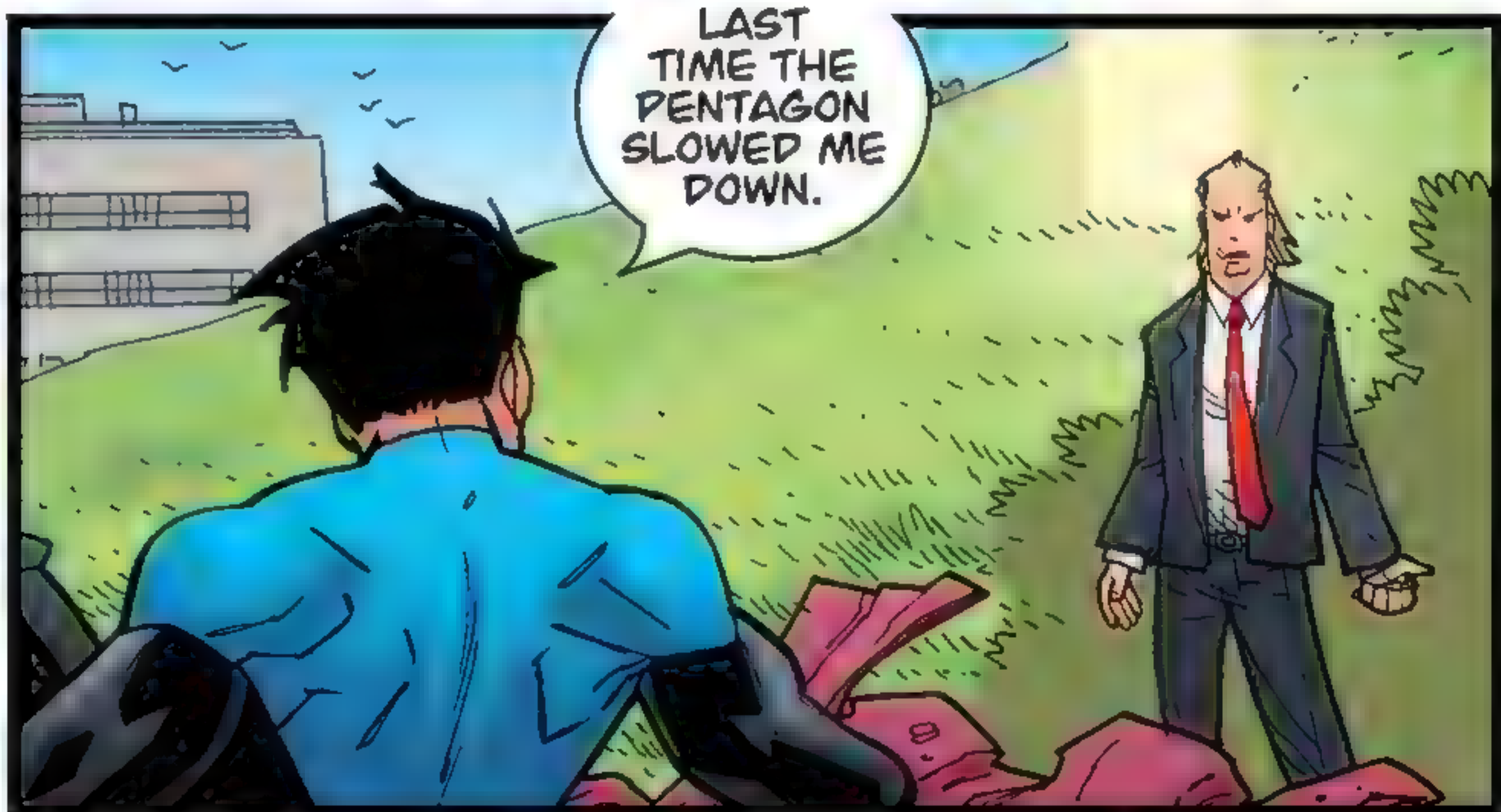
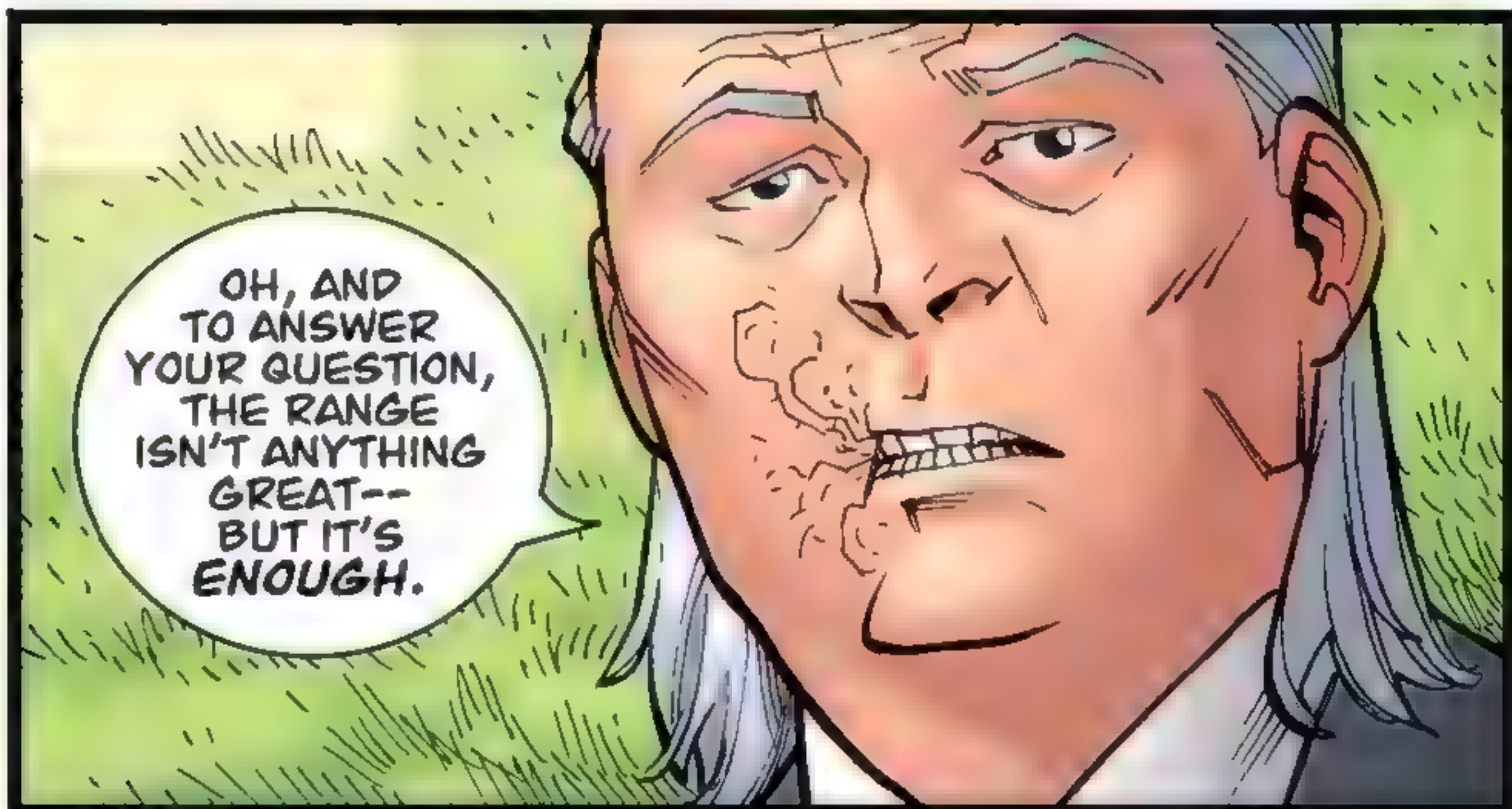
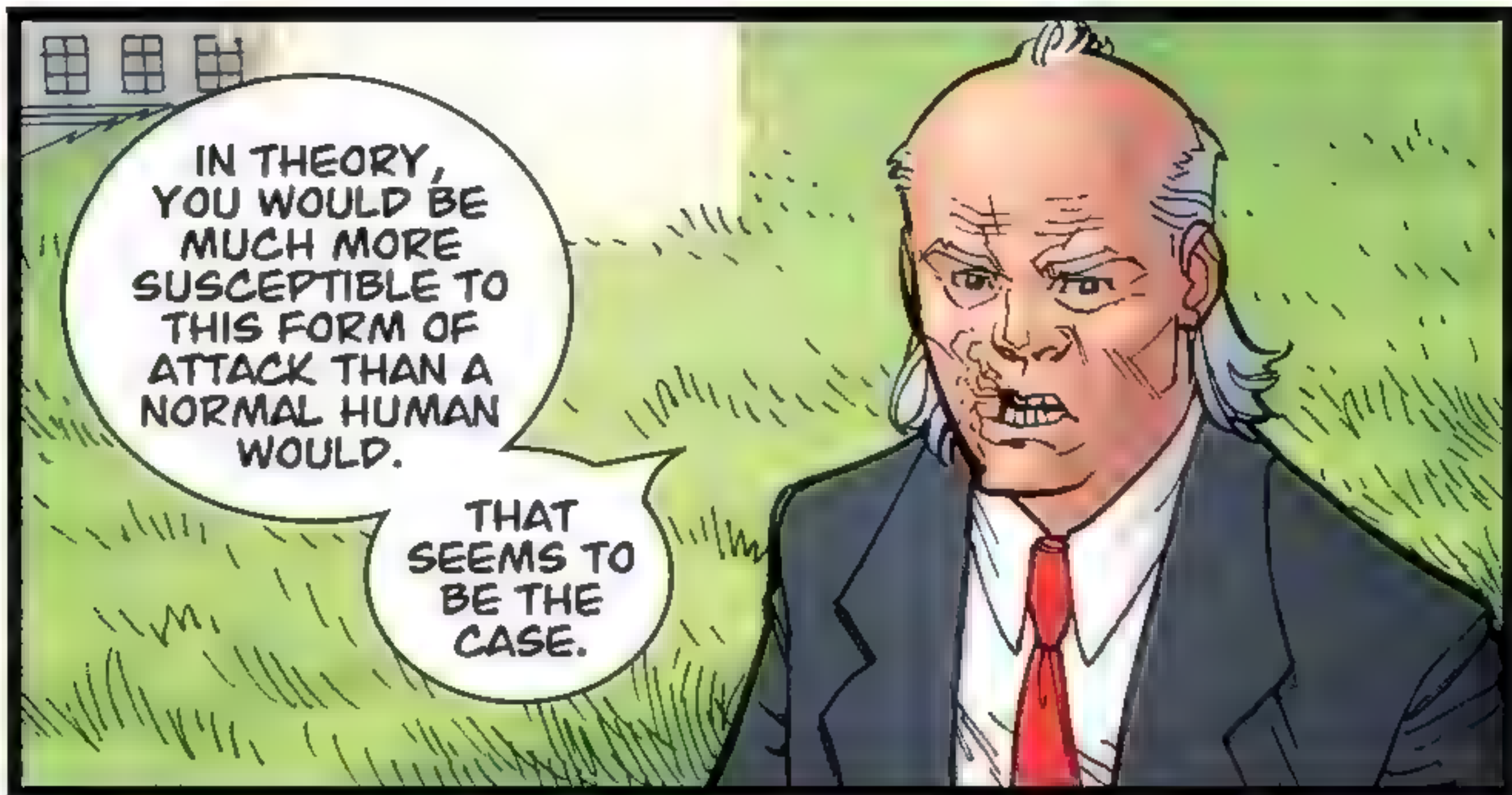
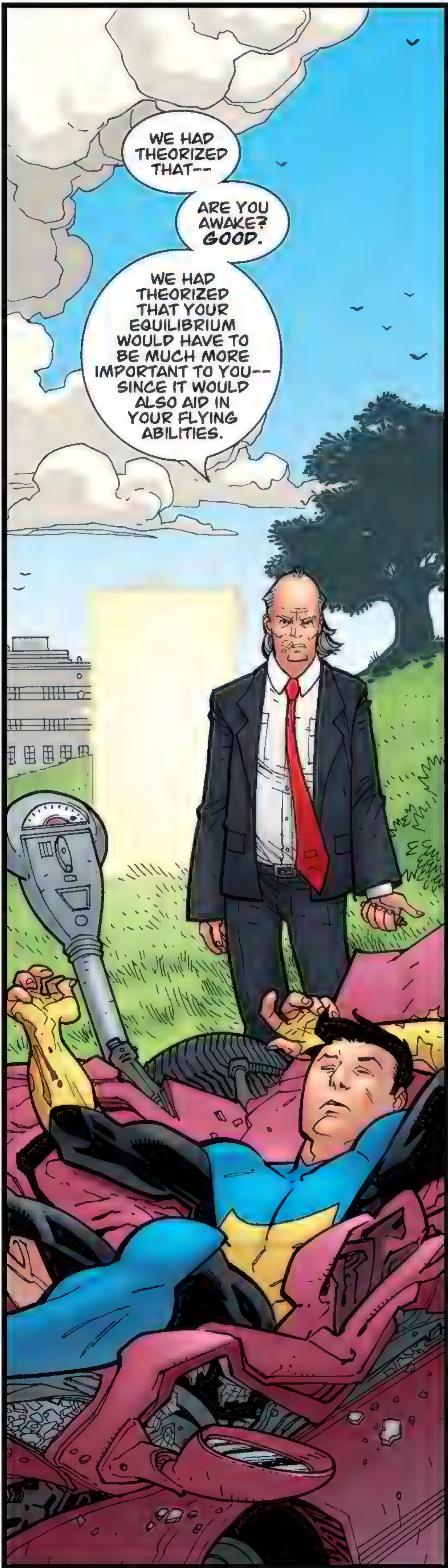


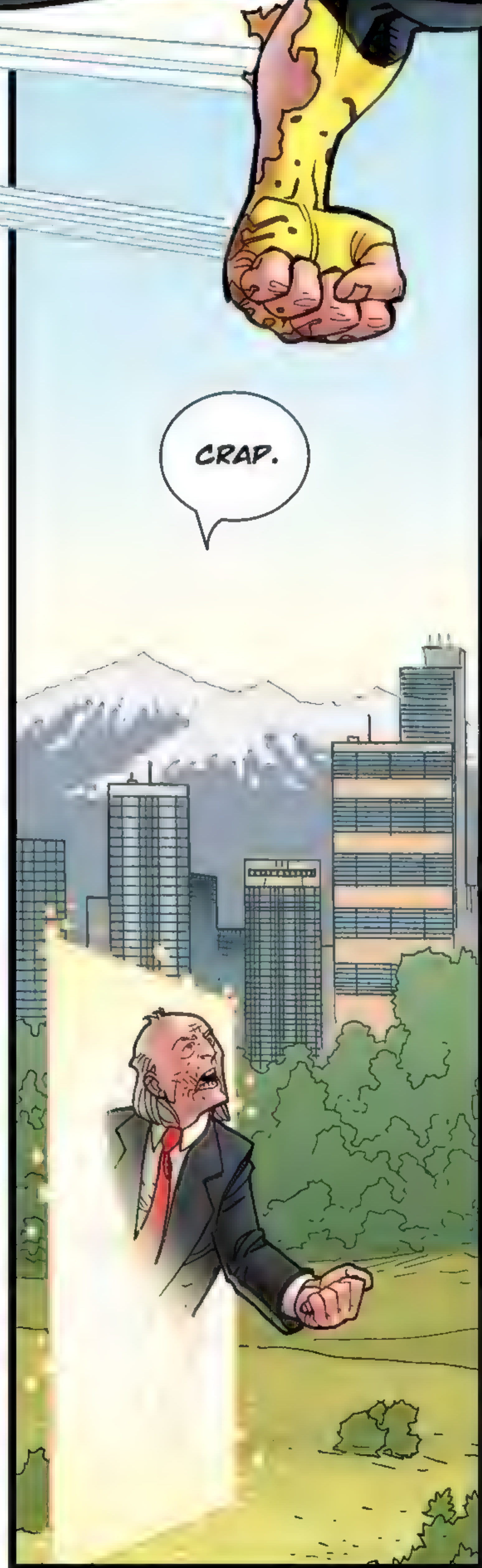
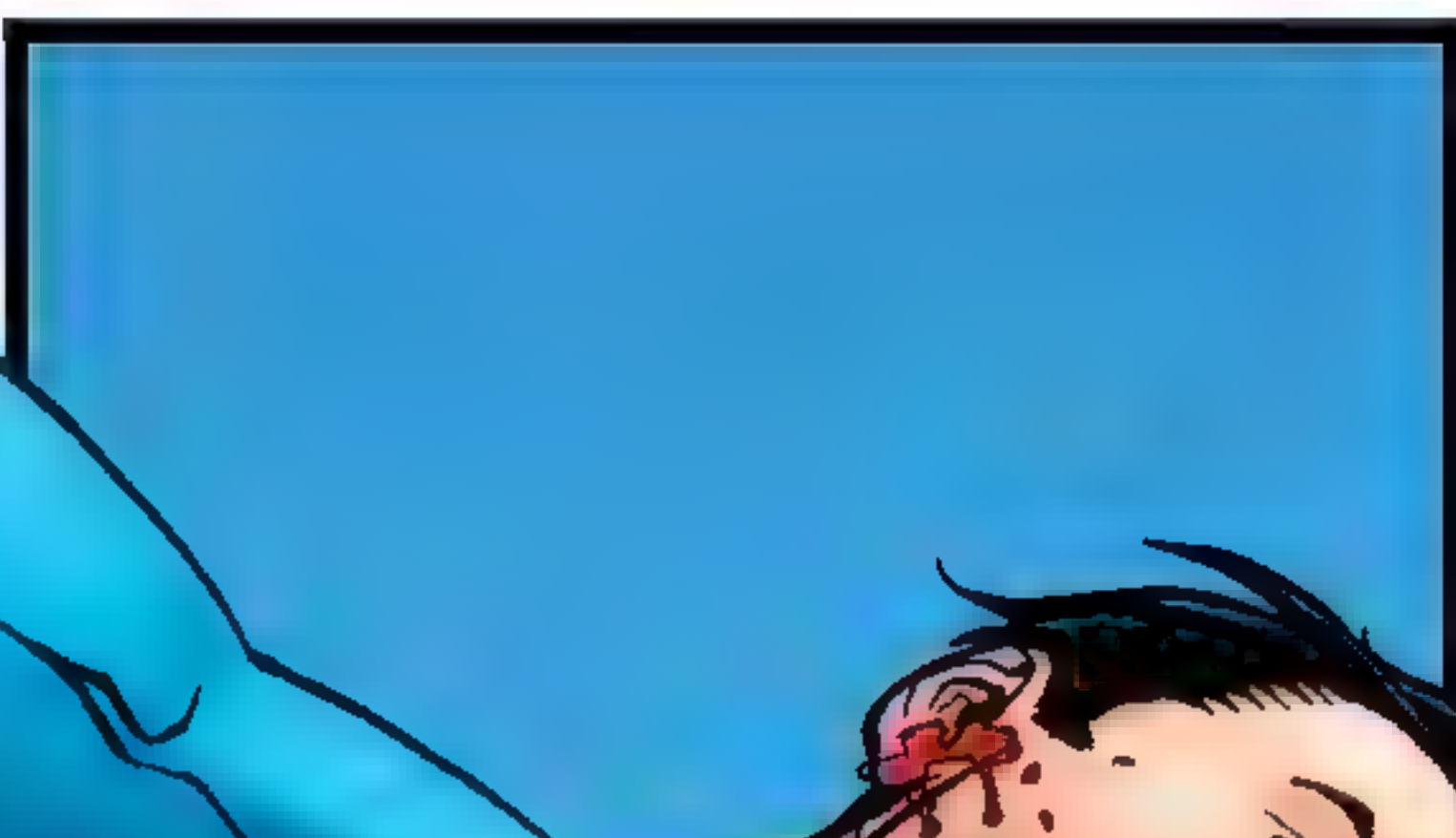
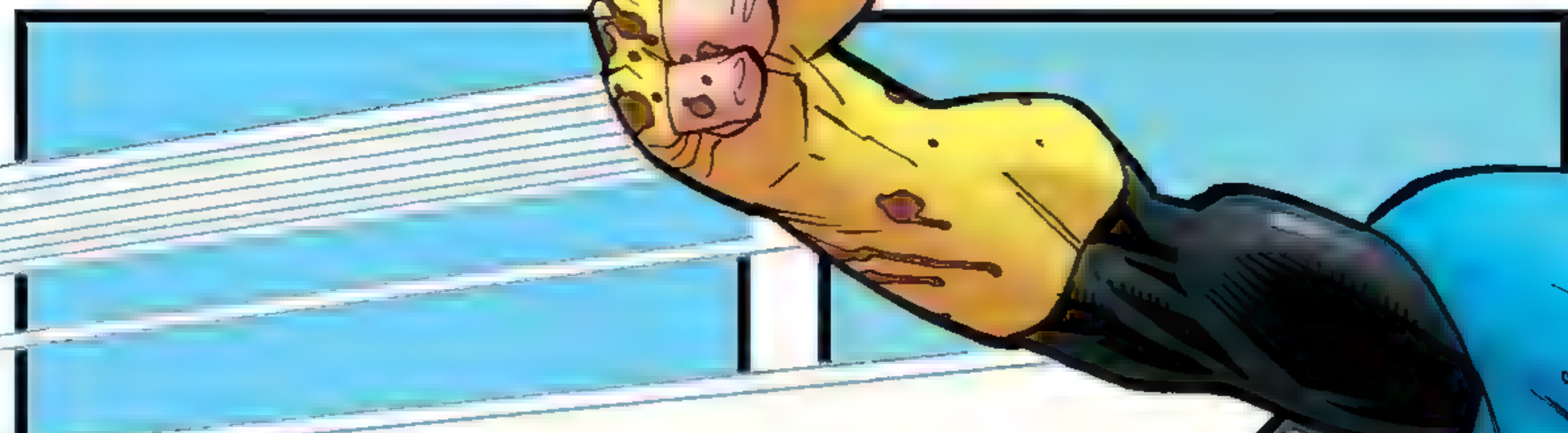
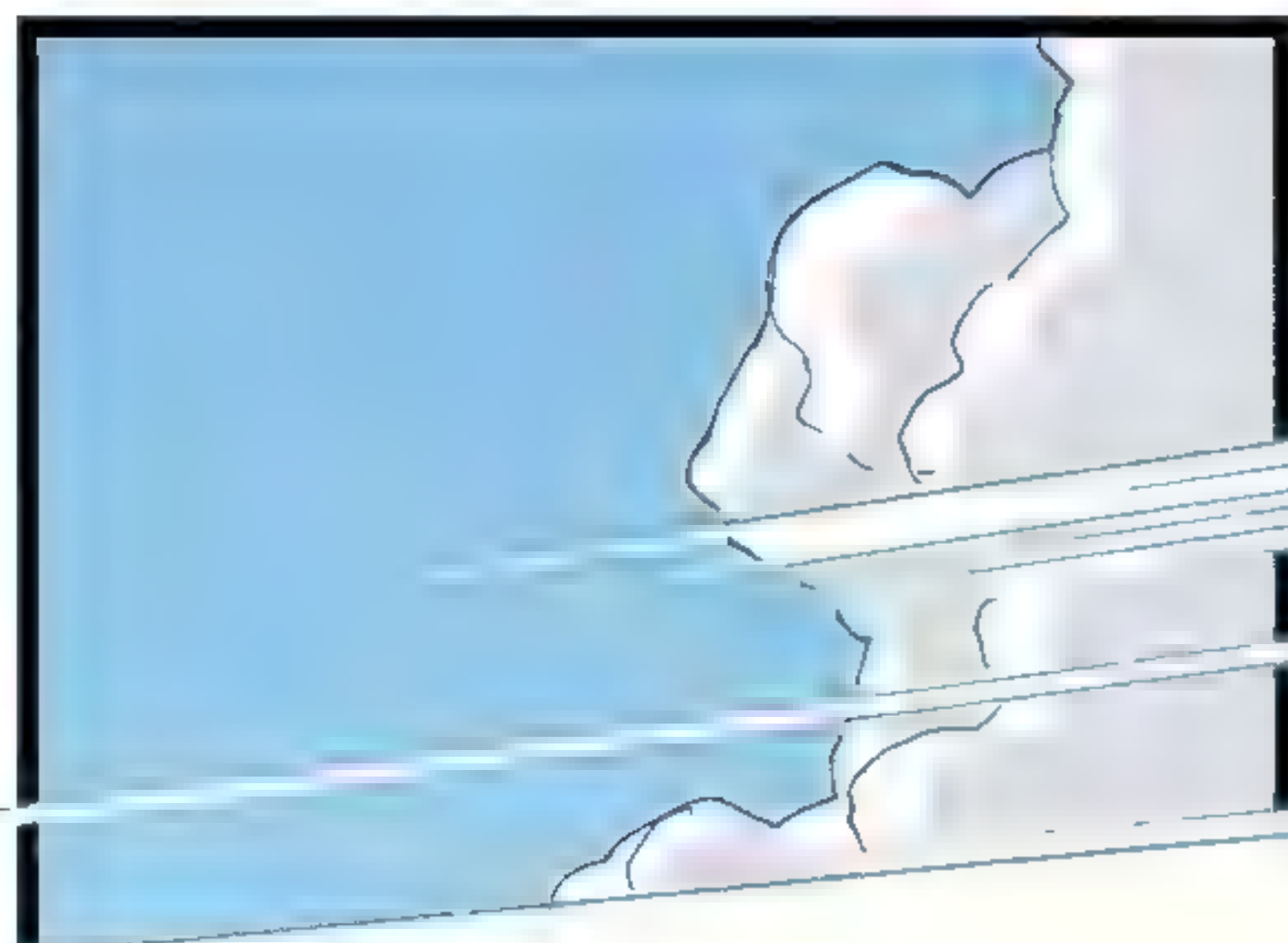
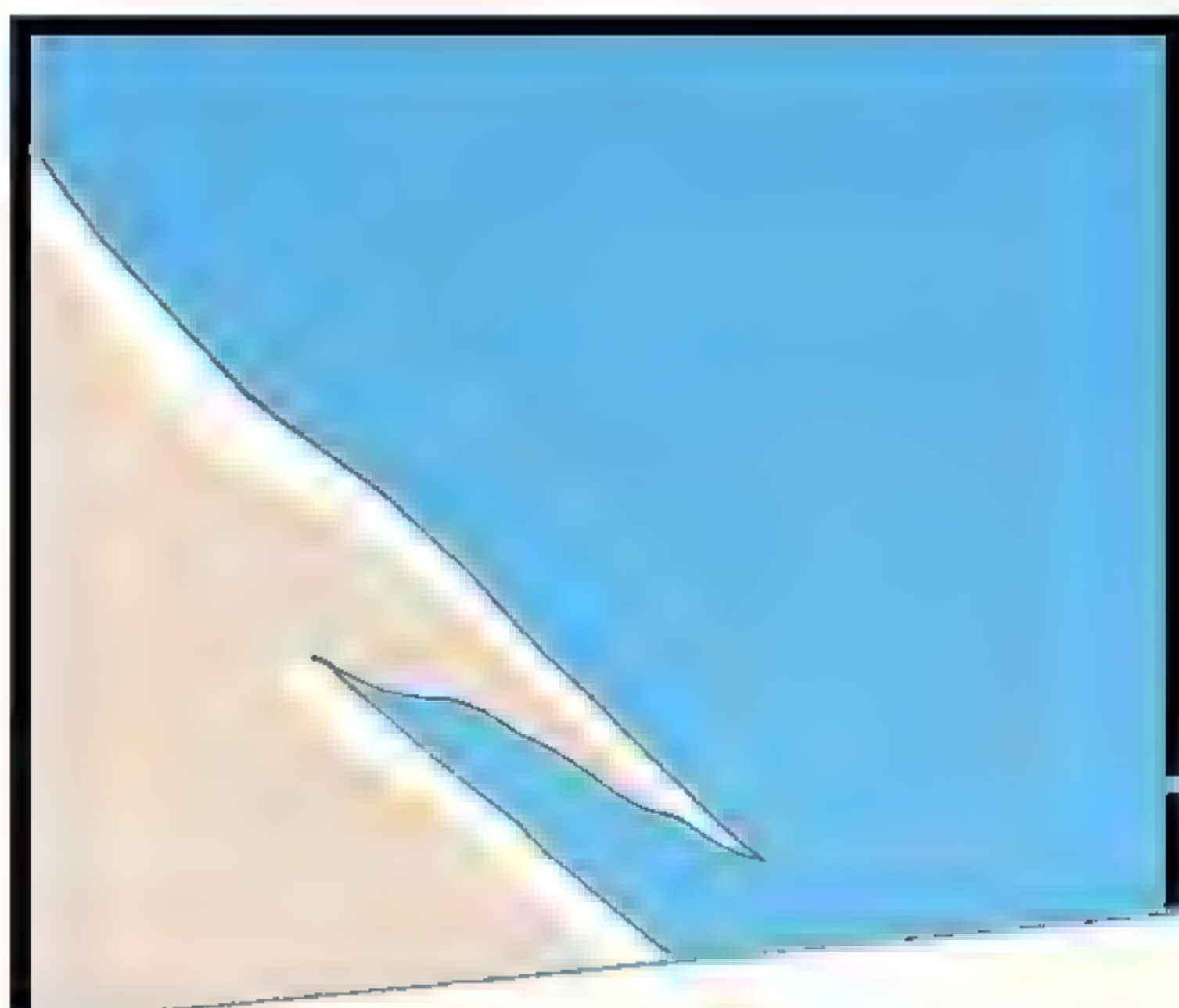
ACTUALLY, I THINK
YOU'VE COST THE
AMERICAN TAXPAYERS
QUITE ENOUGH ALREADY.
I'VE GOT A MUCH MORE
EFFICIENT WAY OF
KEEPING YOU IN
CHECK.



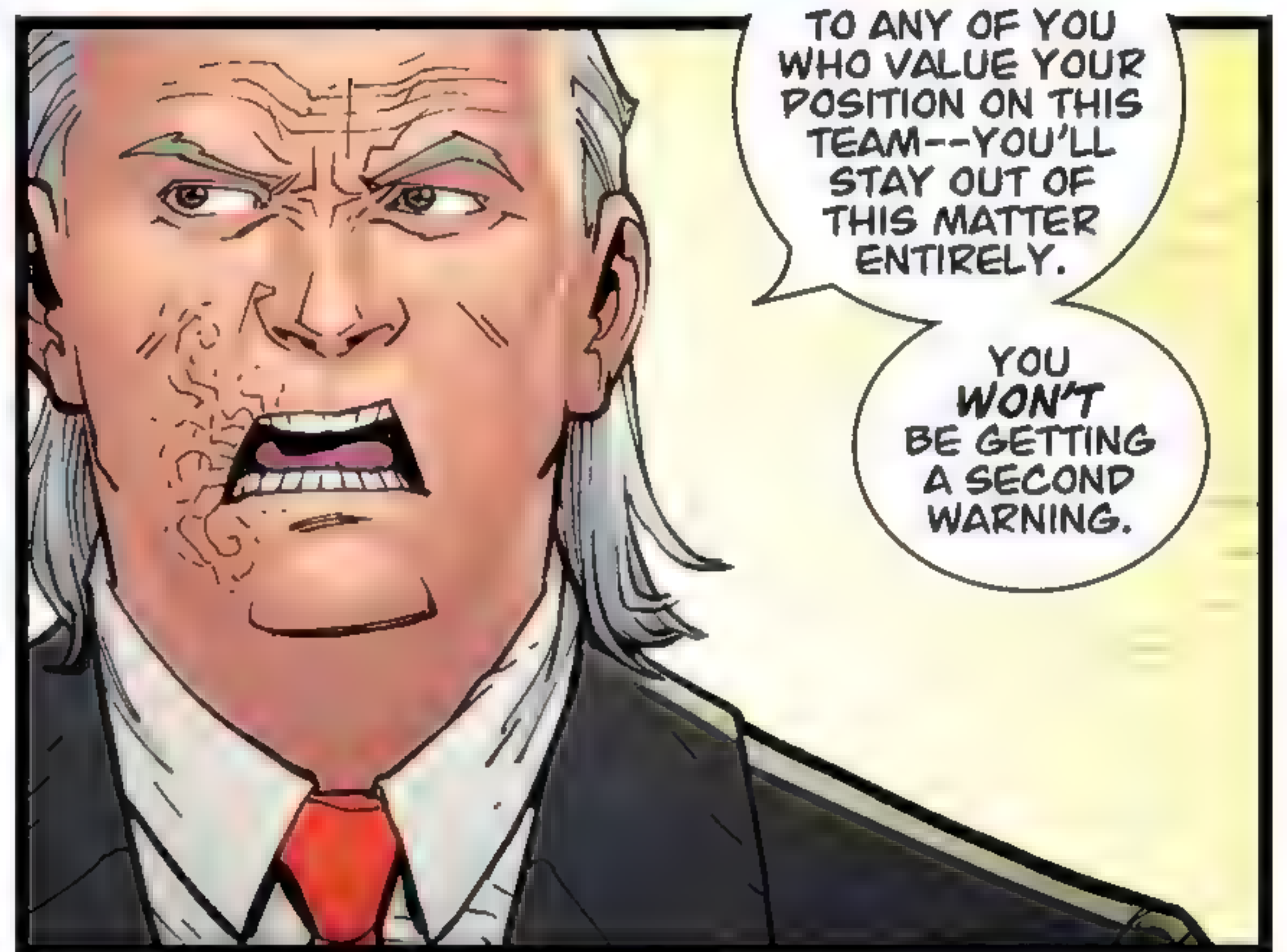
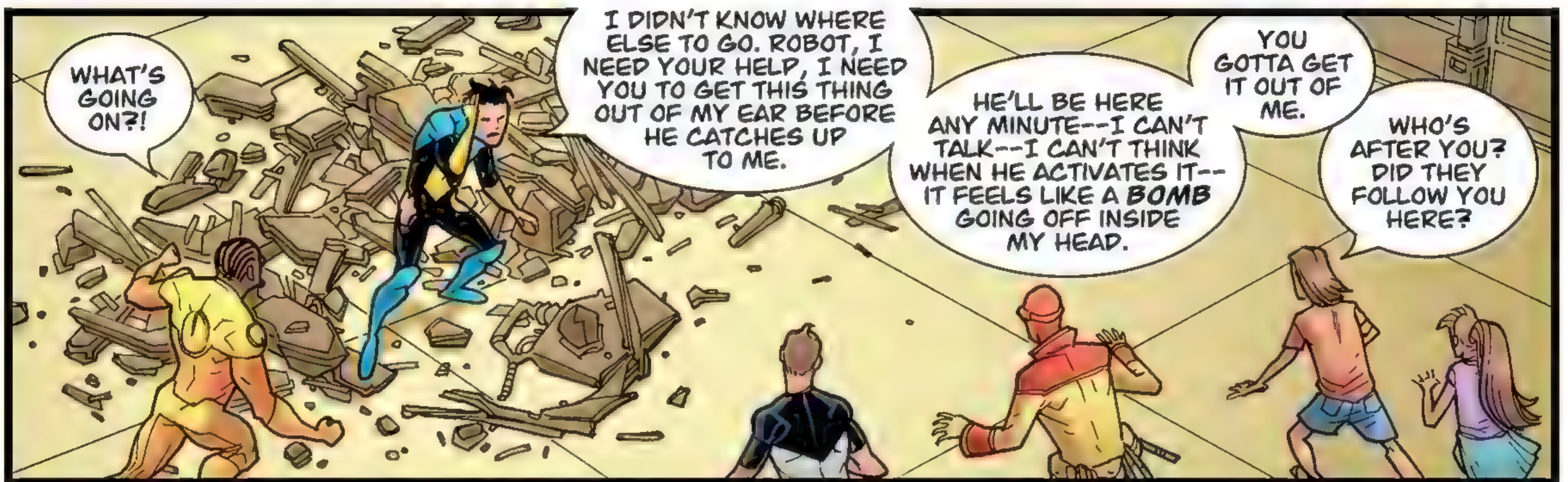


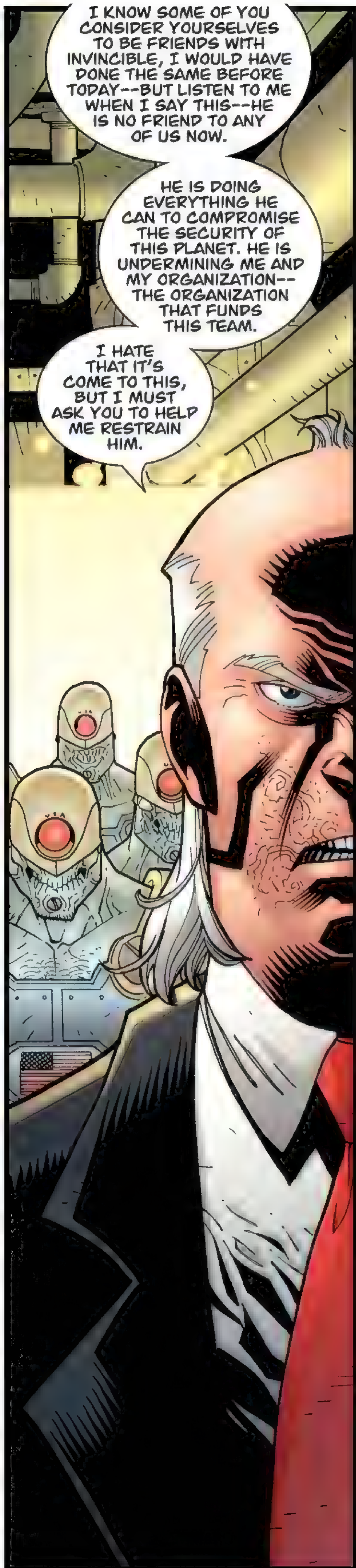












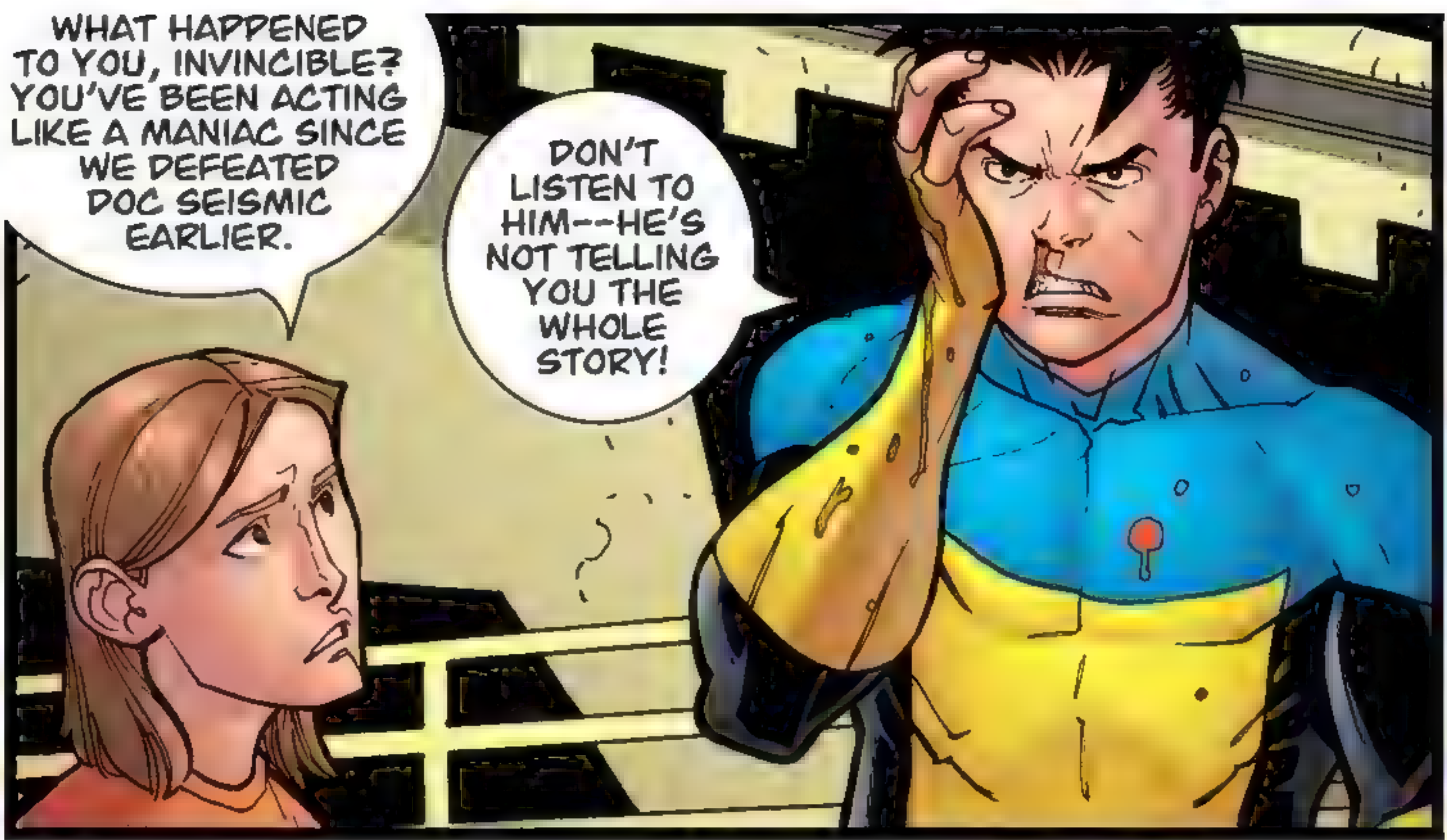
I KNOW SOME OF YOU CONSIDER YOURSELVES TO BE FRIENDS WITH INVINCIBLE, I WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME BEFORE TODAY--BUT LISTEN TO ME WHEN I SAY THIS--HE IS NO FRIEND TO ANY OF US NOW.

HE IS DOING EVERYTHING HE CAN TO COMPROMISE THE SECURITY OF THIS PLANET. HE IS UNDERMINING ME AND MY ORGANIZATION--THE ORGANIZATION THAT FUNDS THIS TEAM.

I HATE THAT IT'S COME TO THIS, BUT I MUST ASK YOU TO HELP ME RESTRAIN HIM.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, INVINCIBLE? YOU'VE BEEN ACTING LIKE A MANIAC SINCE WE DEFEATED DOC SEISMIC EARLIER.

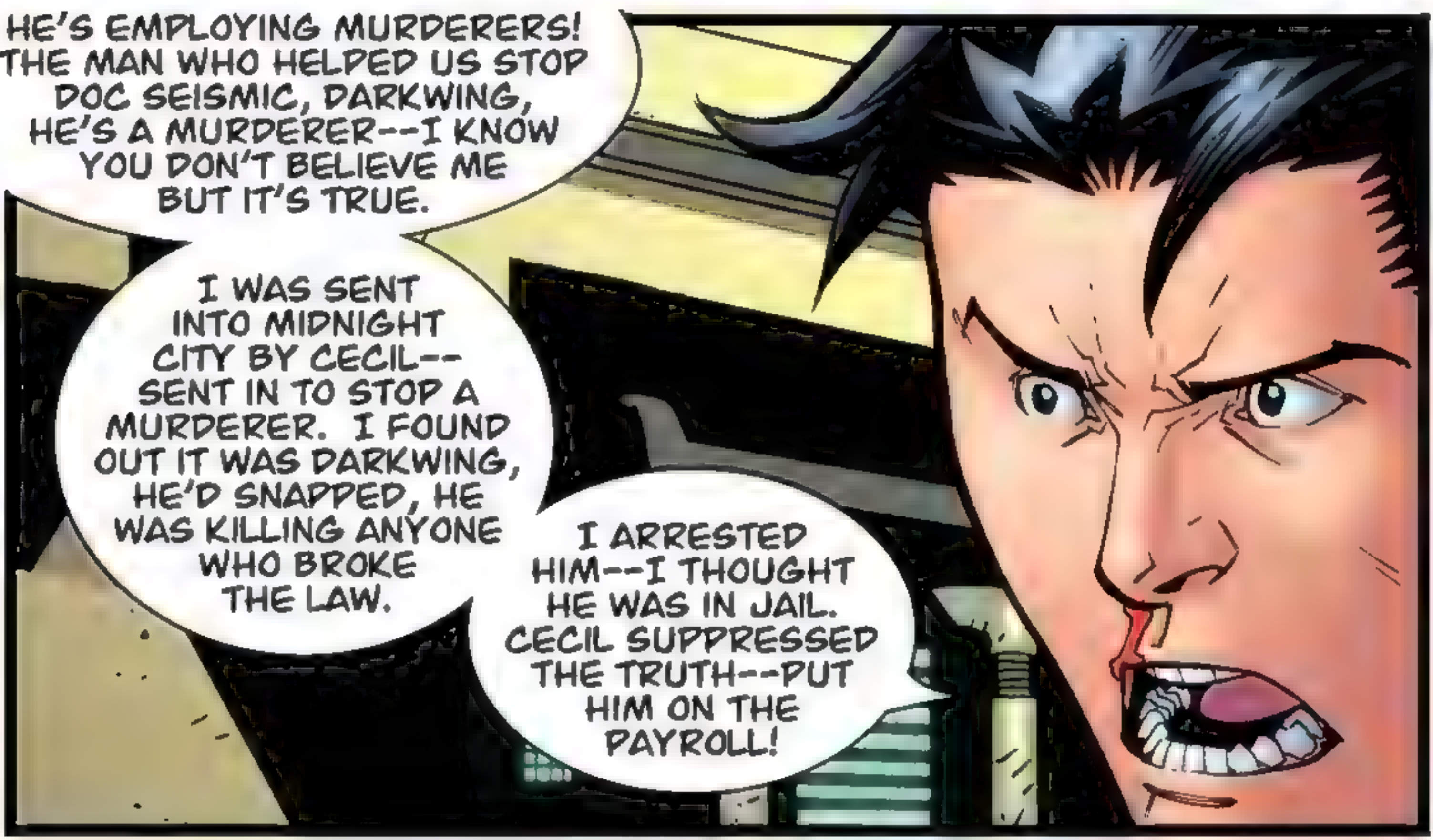
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM--HE'S NOT TELLING YOU THE WHOLE STORY!



HE'S EMPLOYING MURDERERS! THE MAN WHO HELPED US STOP DOC SEISMIC, DARKWING, HE'S A MURDERER--I KNOW YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME BUT IT'S TRUE.

I WAS SENT INTO MIDNIGHT CITY BY CECIL--SENT IN TO STOP A MURDERER. I FOUND OUT IT WAS DARKWING, HE'D SNAPPED, HE WAS KILLING ANYONE WHO BROKE THE LAW.

I ARRESTED HIM--I THOUGHT HE WAS IN JAIL. CECIL SUPPRESSED THE TRUTH--PUT HIM ON THE PAYROLL!



I KNOW DARKWING. HE WAS ALWAYS ARROGANT, EVEN HATEFUL... BUT I DON'T SEE HIM BEING A MURDERER.

THESE ROBOTS--THESE REANIMEN HE'S GOT WITH HIM. THEY WERE INVENTED BY A MAN WHO BUILT THEM AROUND HOMELESS PEOPLE AND COLLEGE STUDENTS--MY FRIENDS. THEY ATTACKED MY COLLEGE CAMPUS TWICE--YOU HAD TO SEE THAT ON THE NEWS!

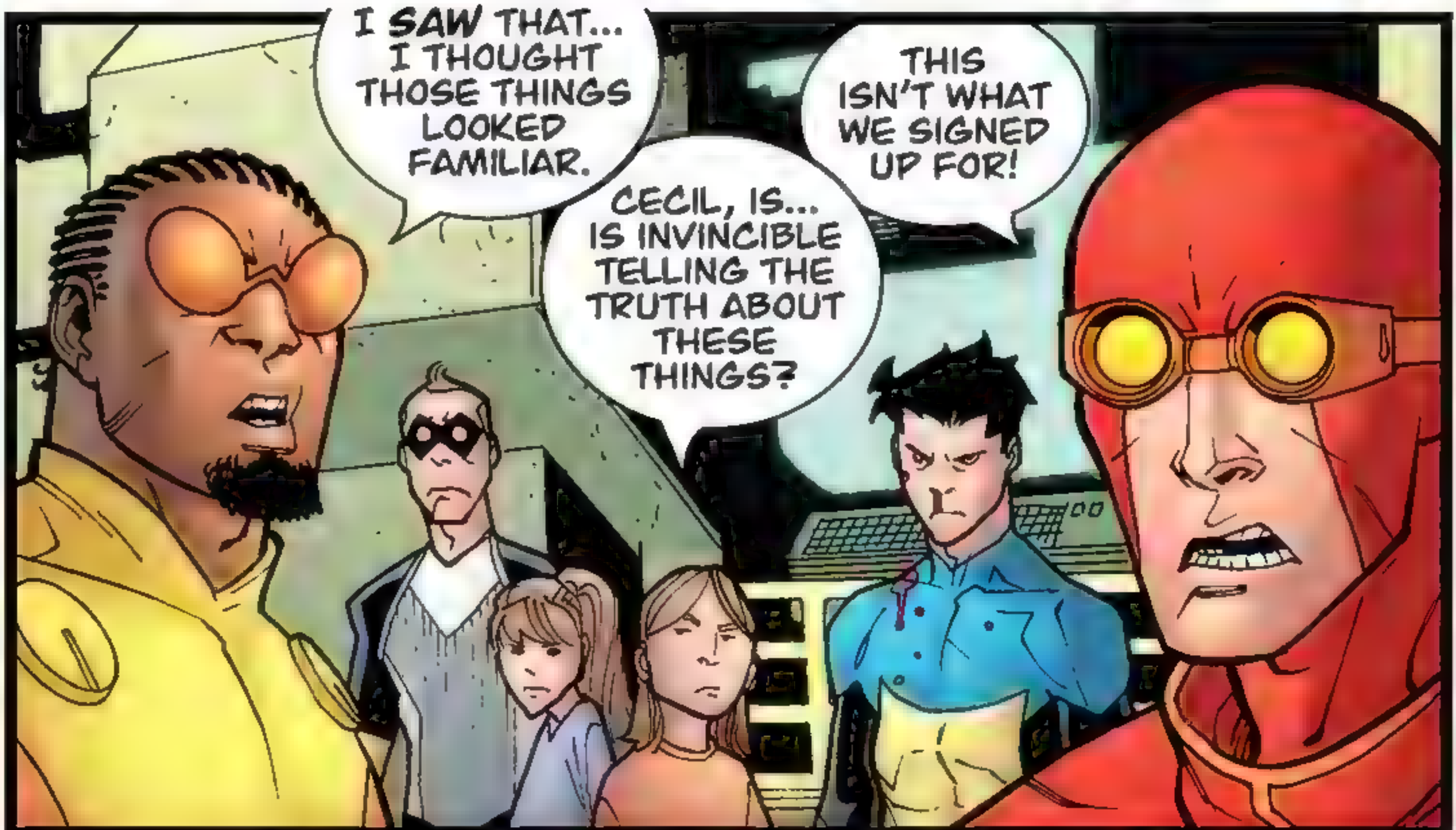
HE KILLED MORE THAN A DOZEN PEOPLE PERFECTING THOSE MONSTROSITIES.

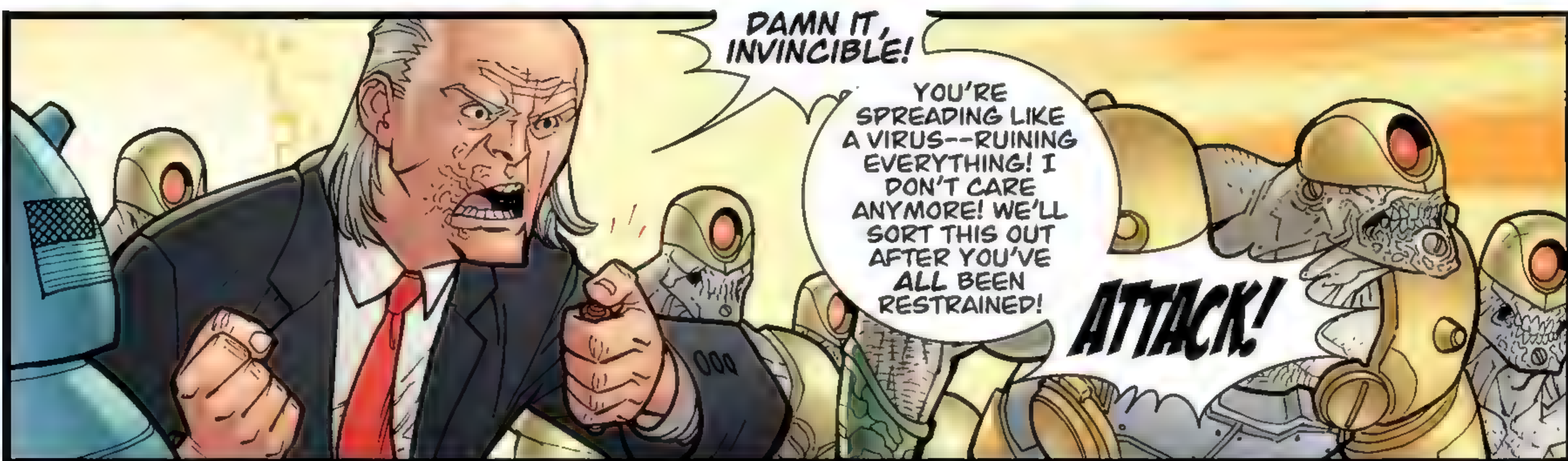
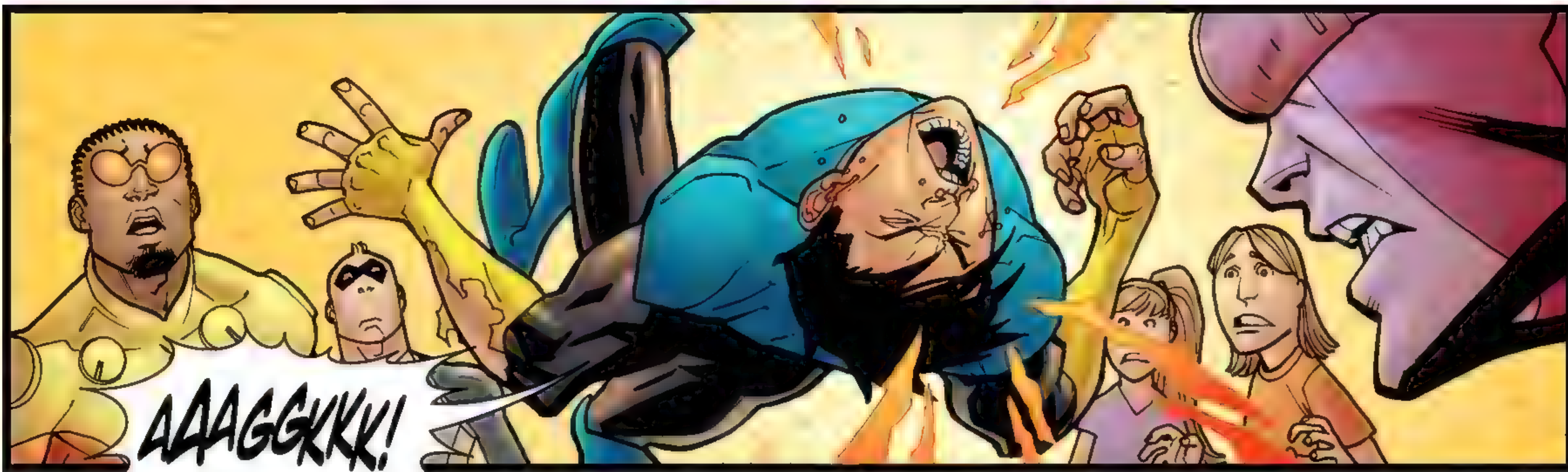


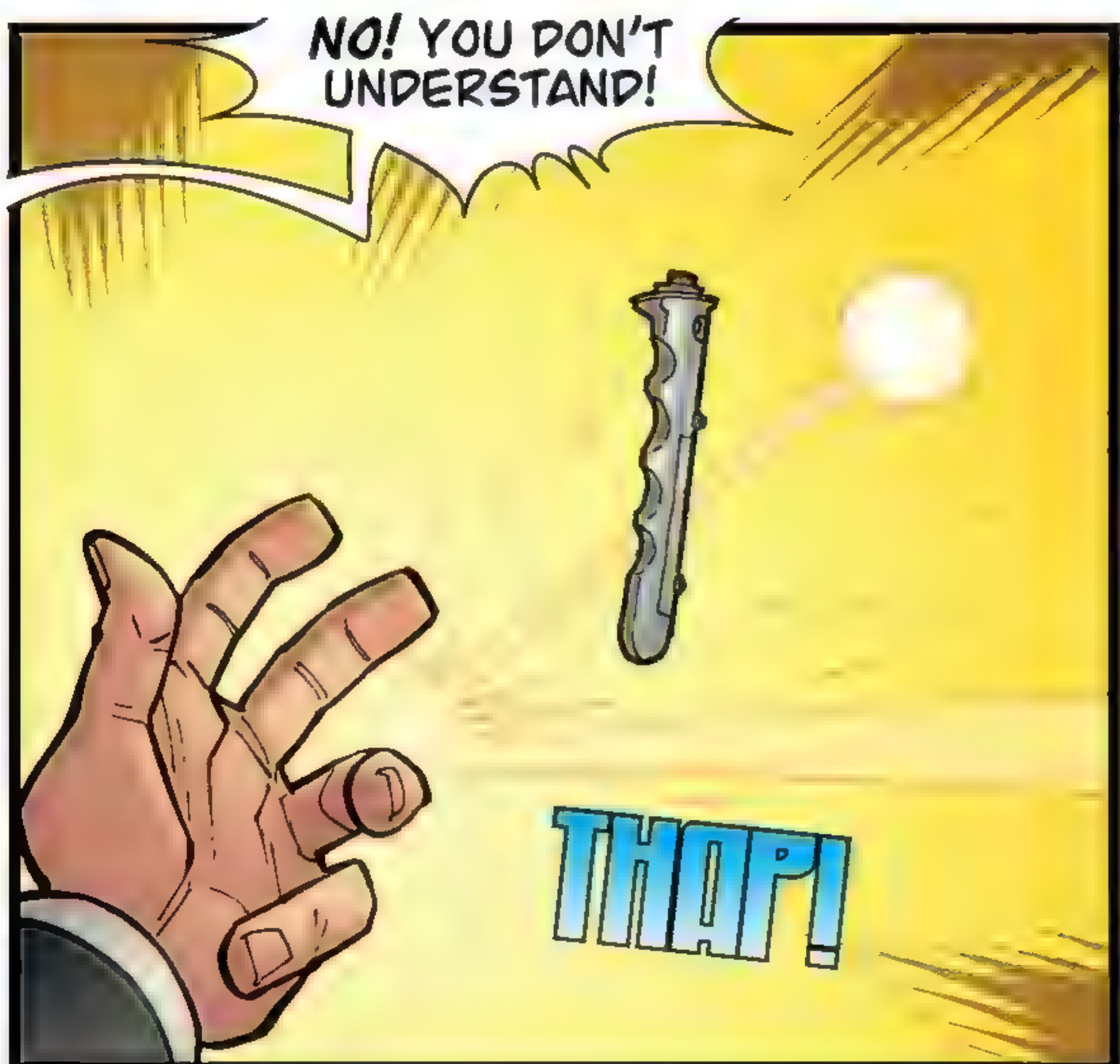
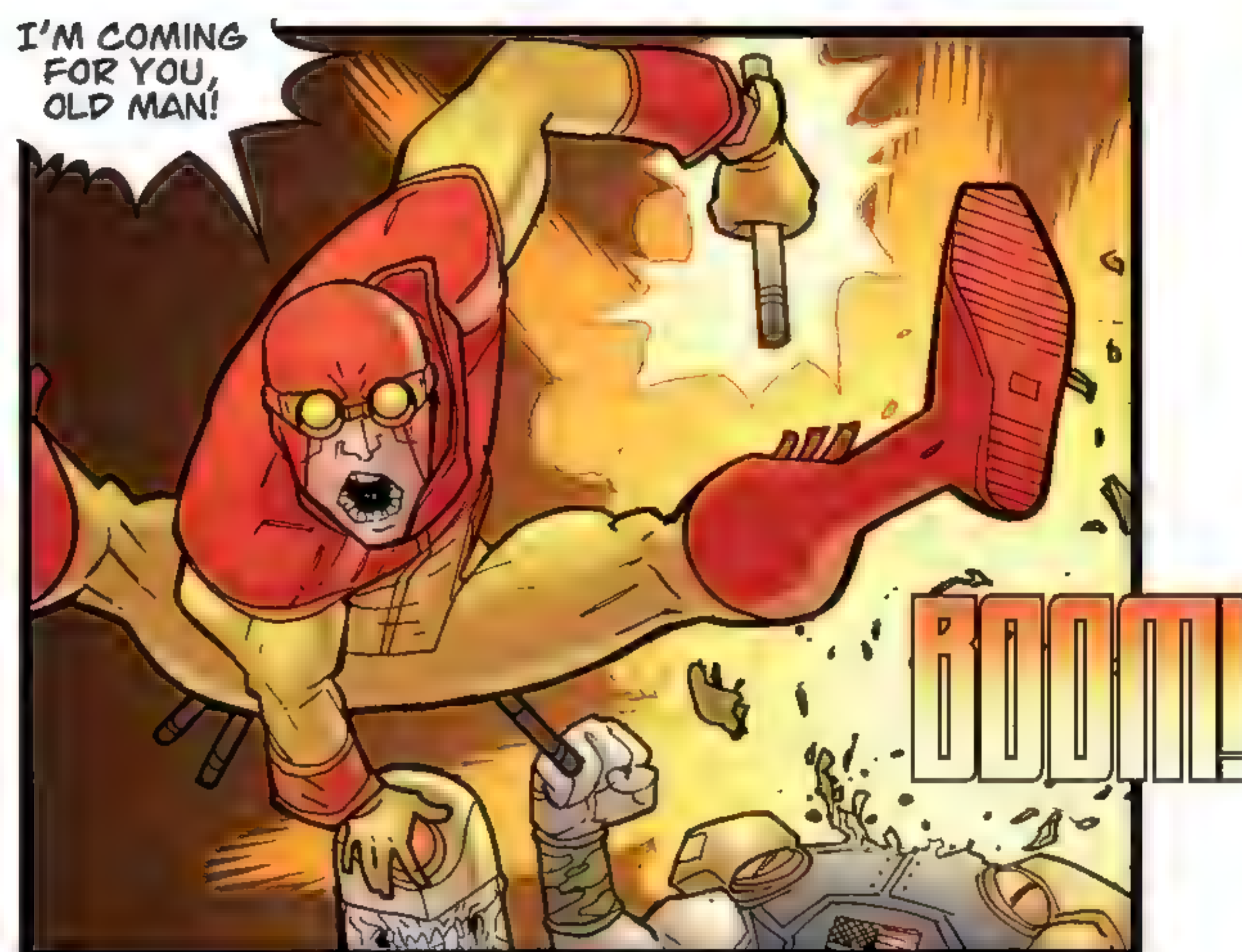
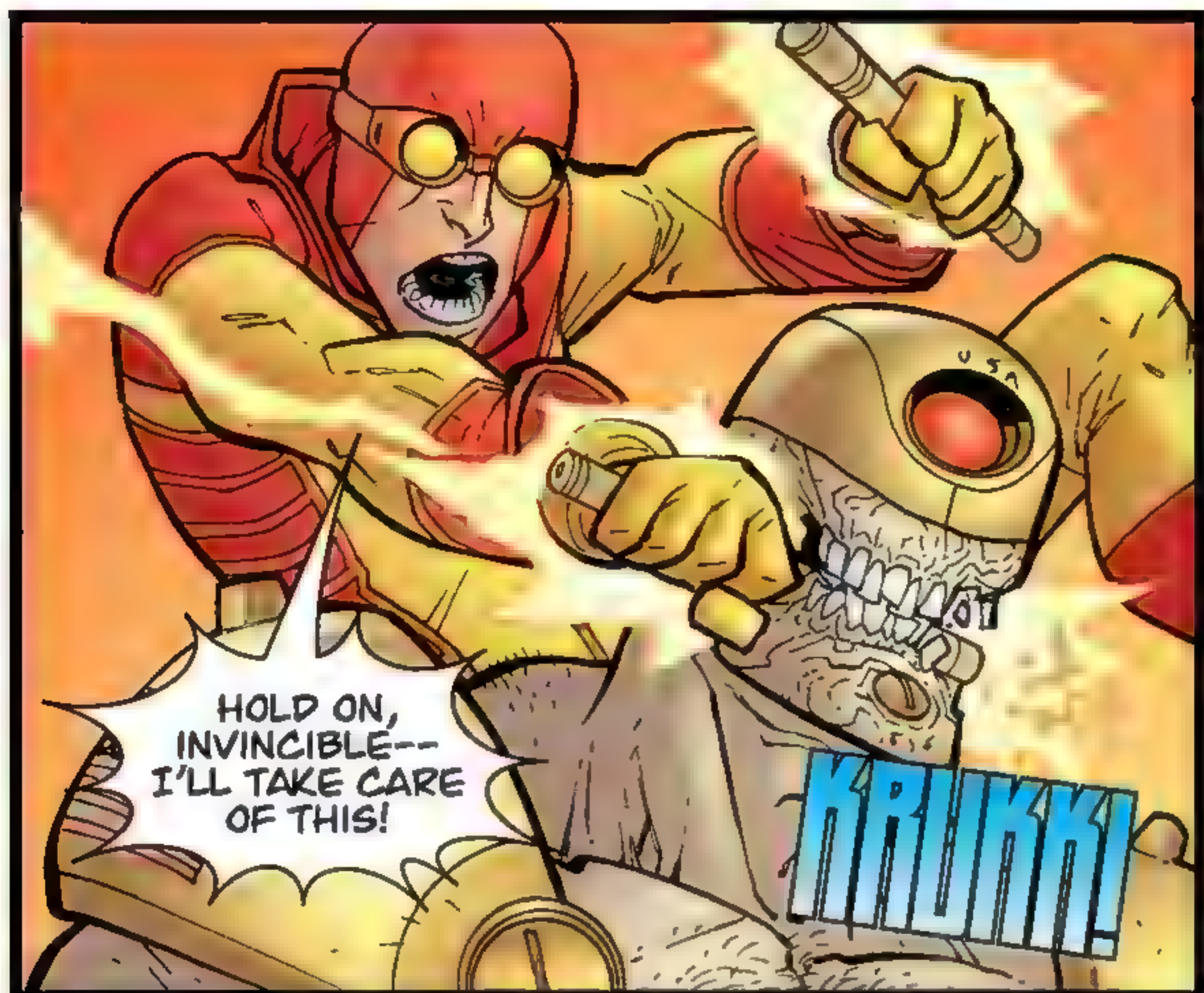
I SAW THAT... I THOUGHT THOSE THINGS LOOKED FAMILIAR.

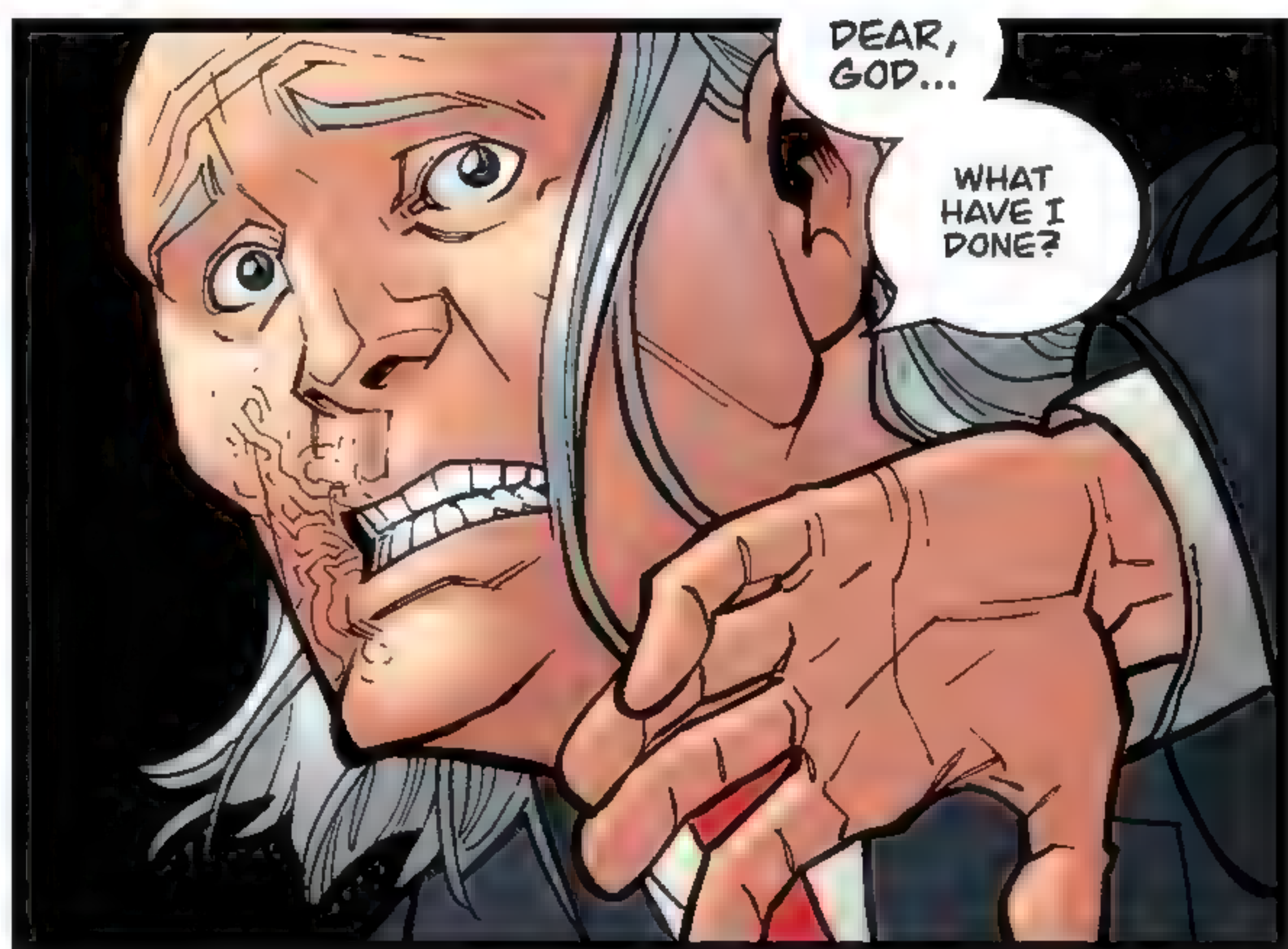
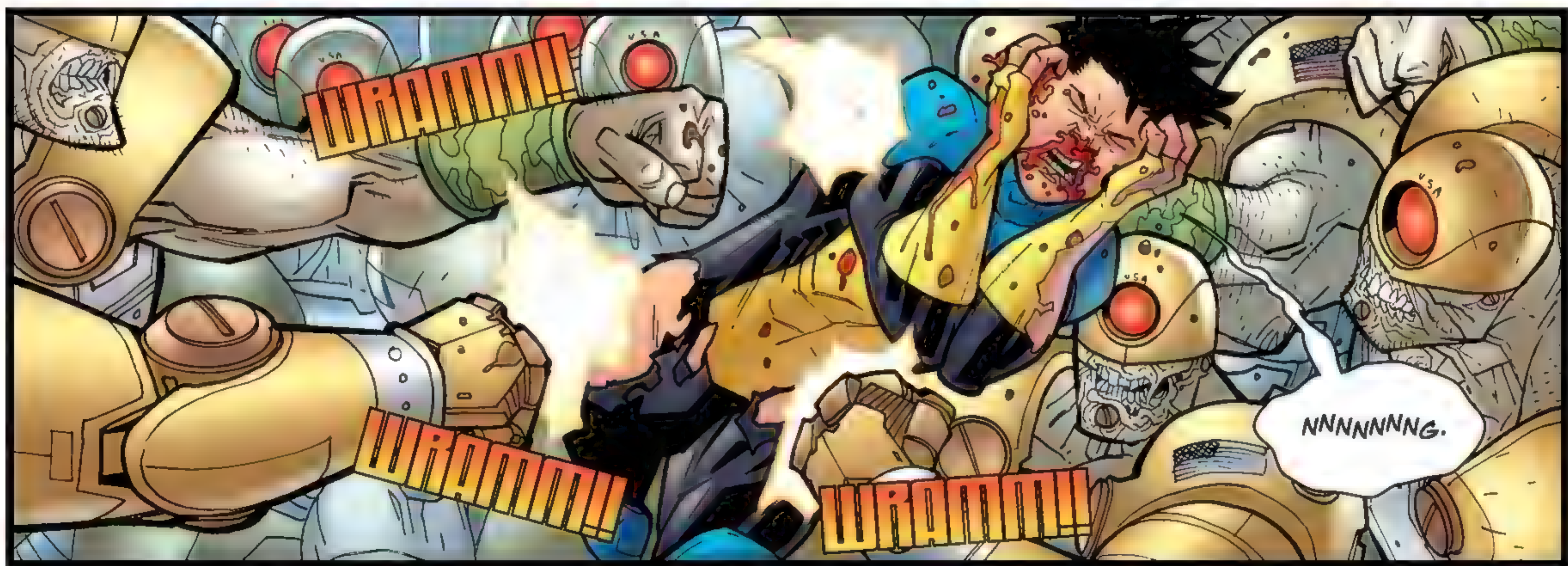
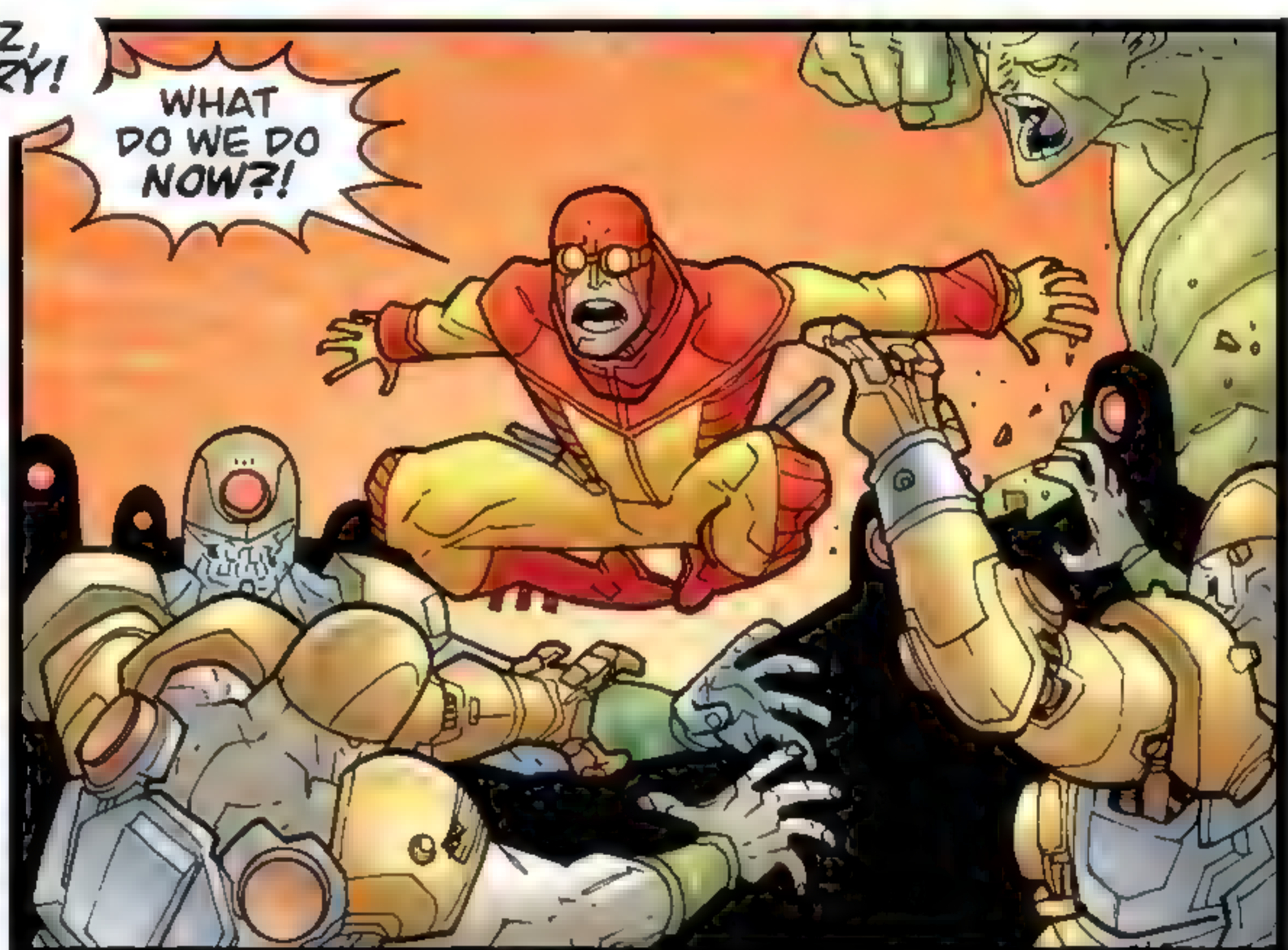
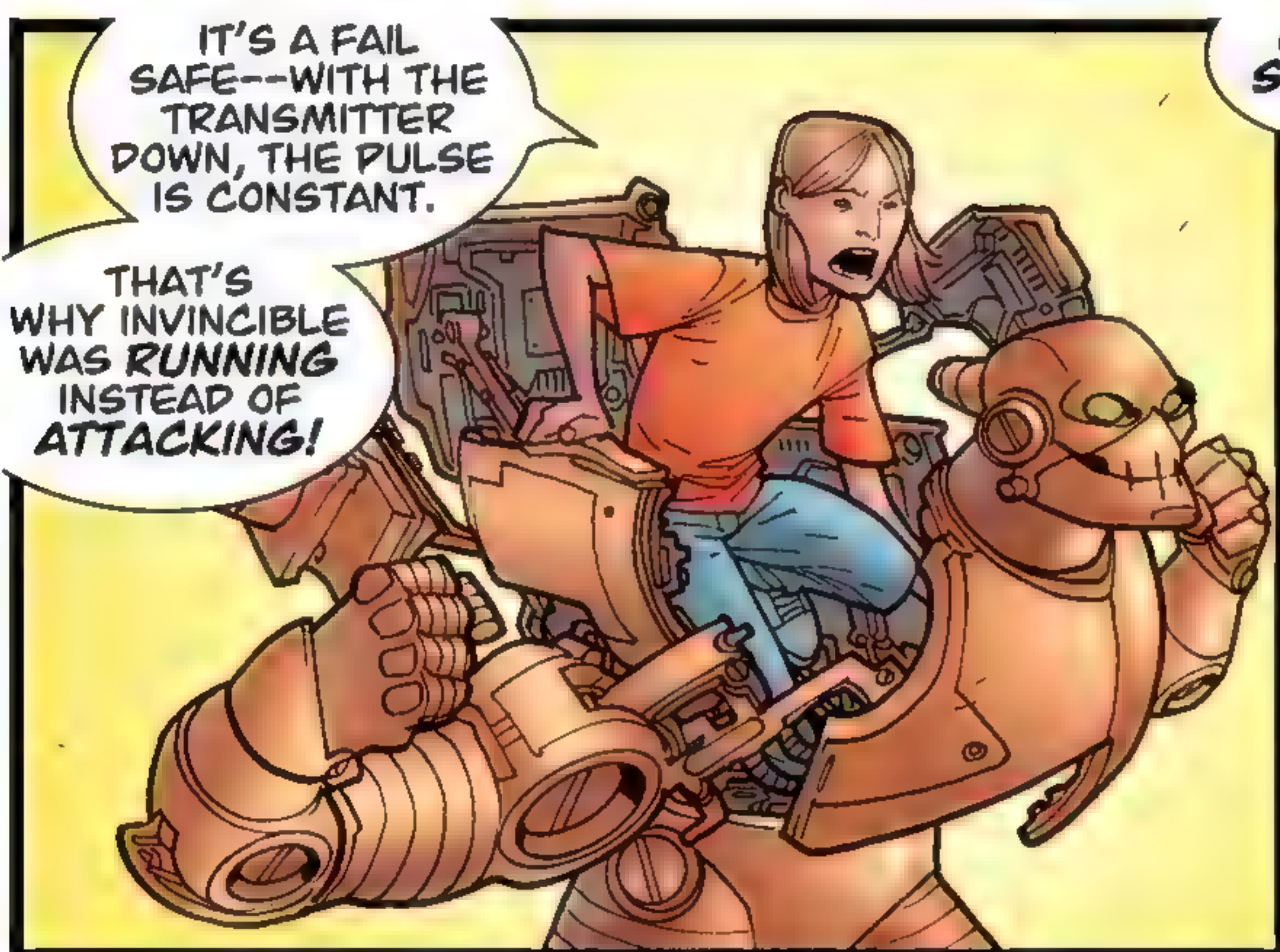
THIS ISN'T WHAT WE SIGNED UP FOR!

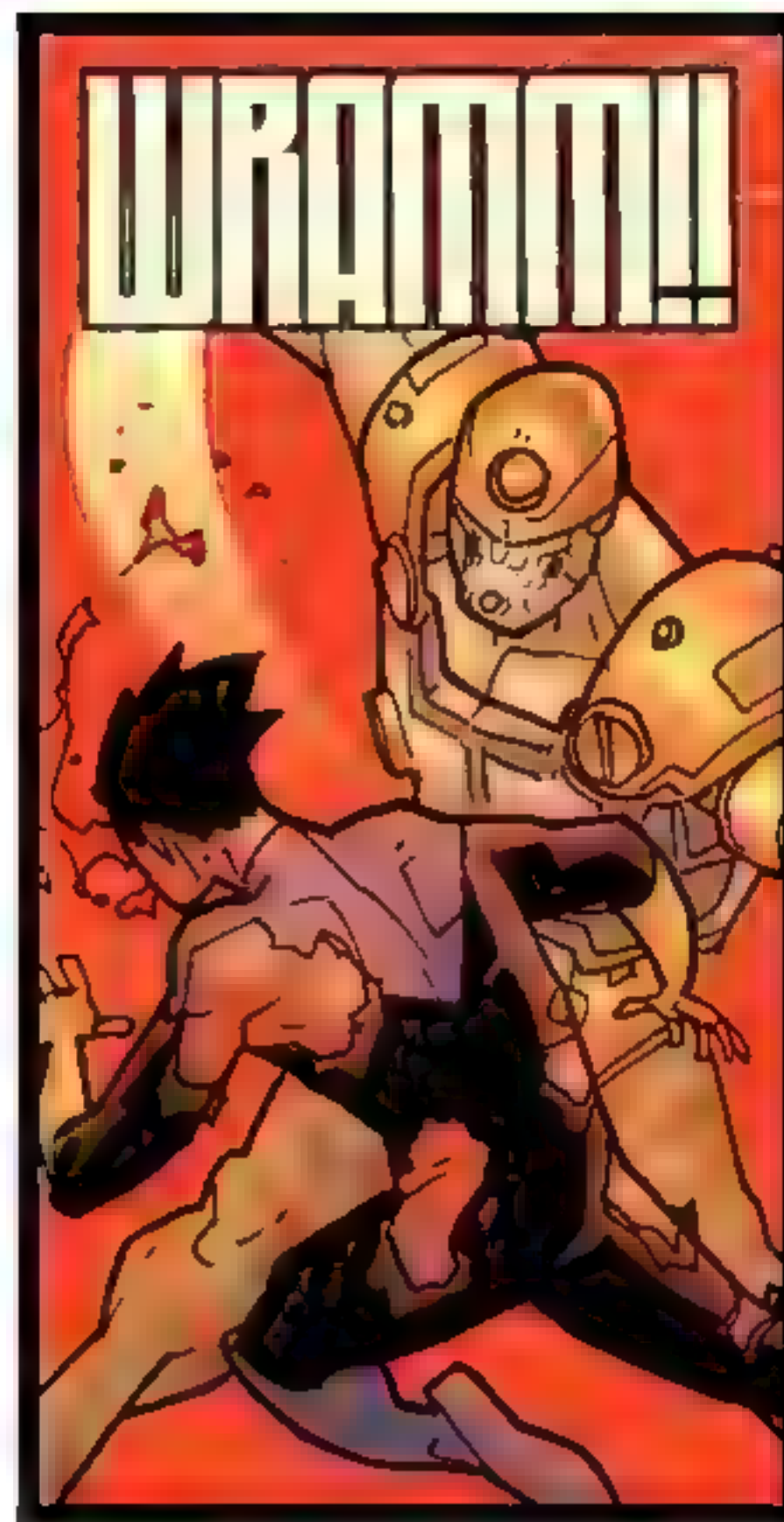
CECIL, IS... IS INVINCIBLE TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT THESE THINGS?

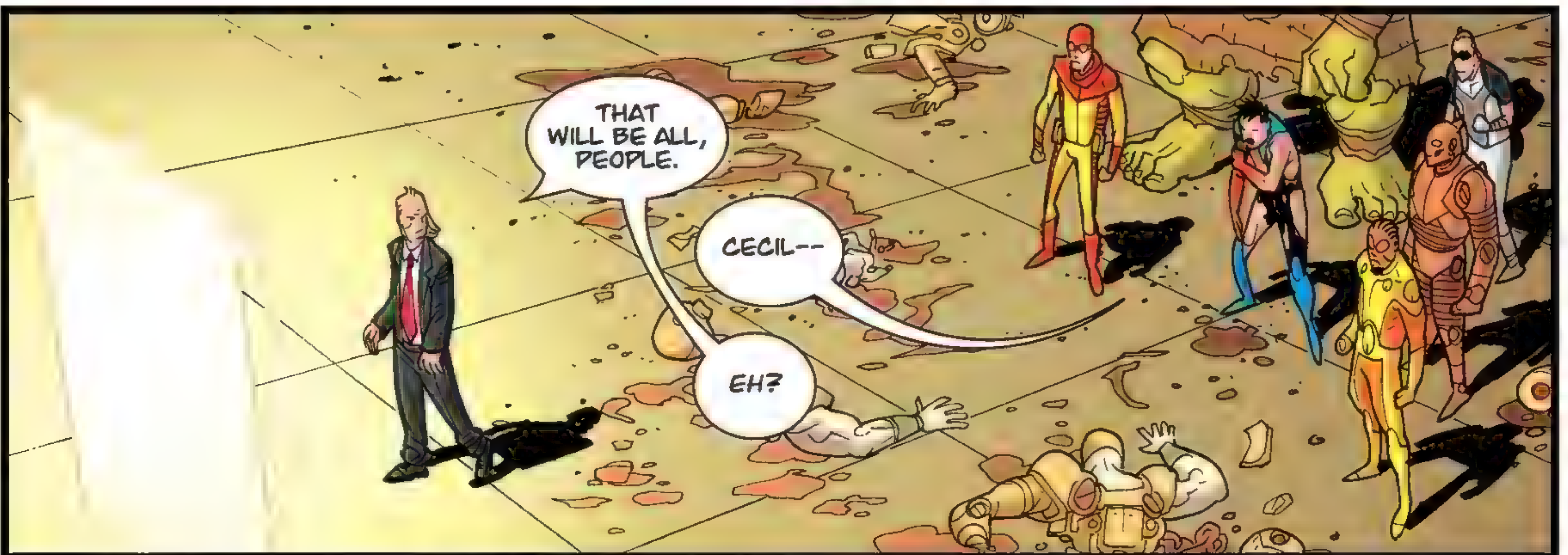
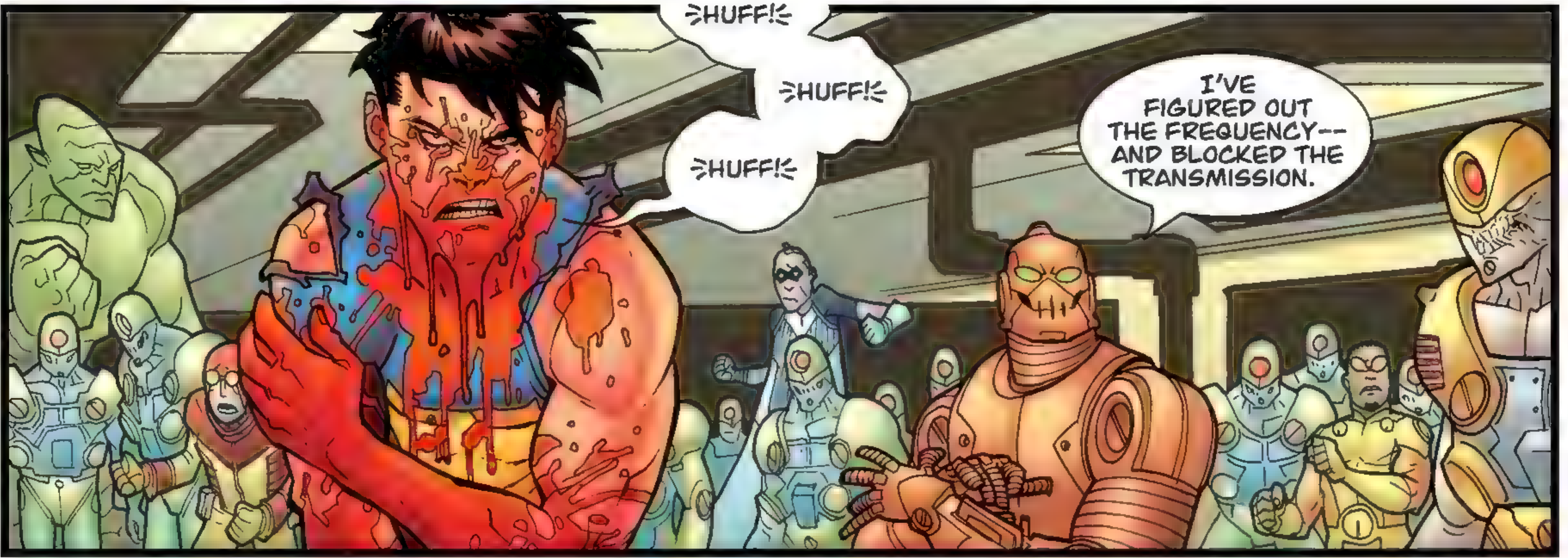


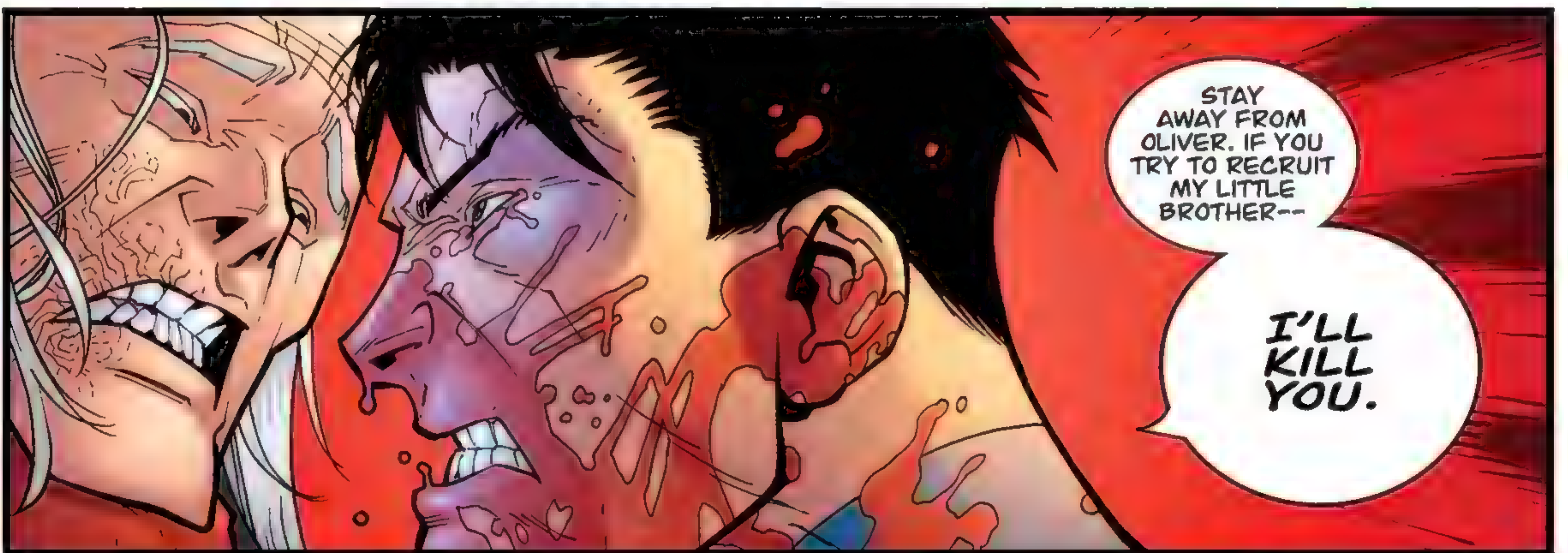


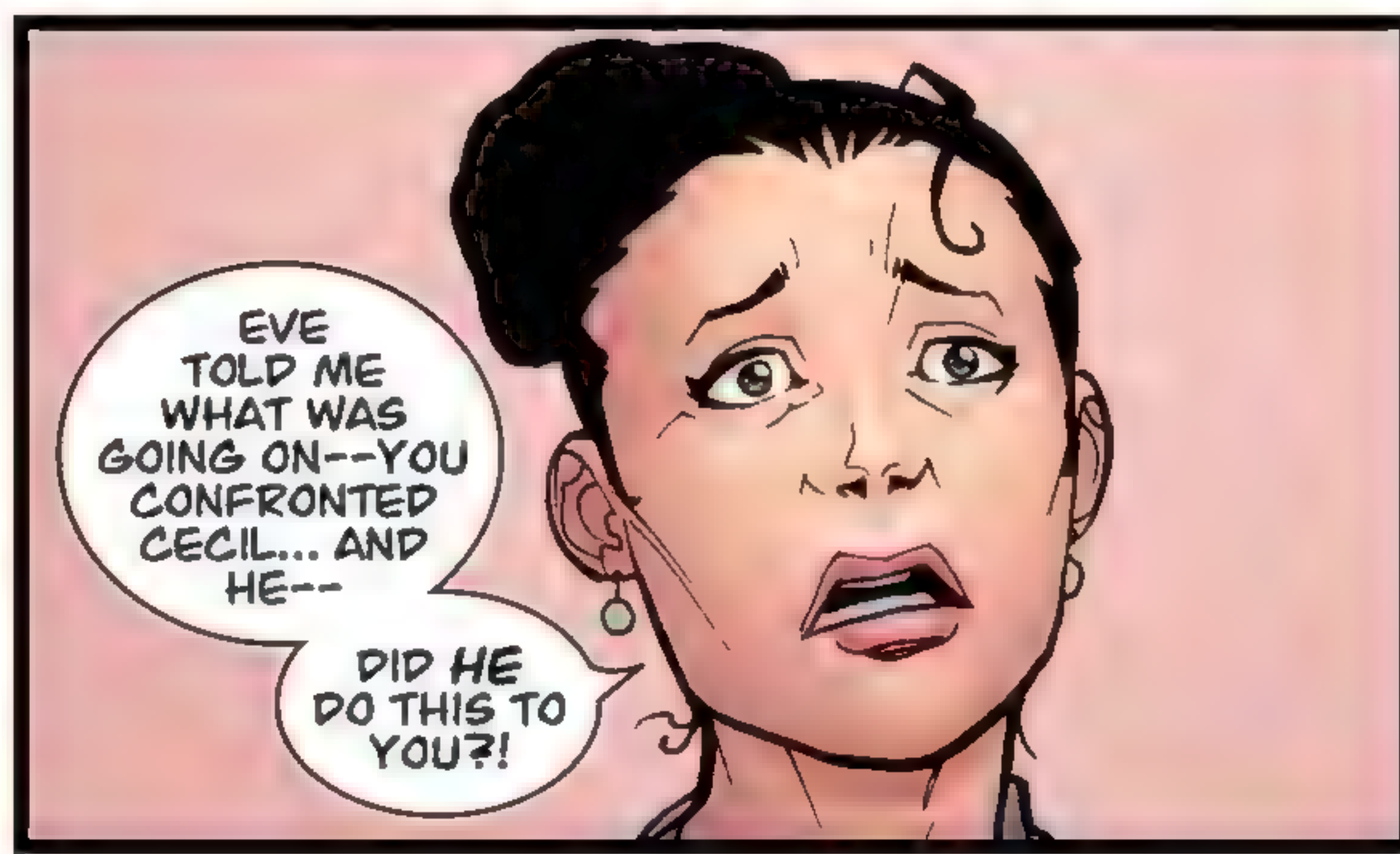
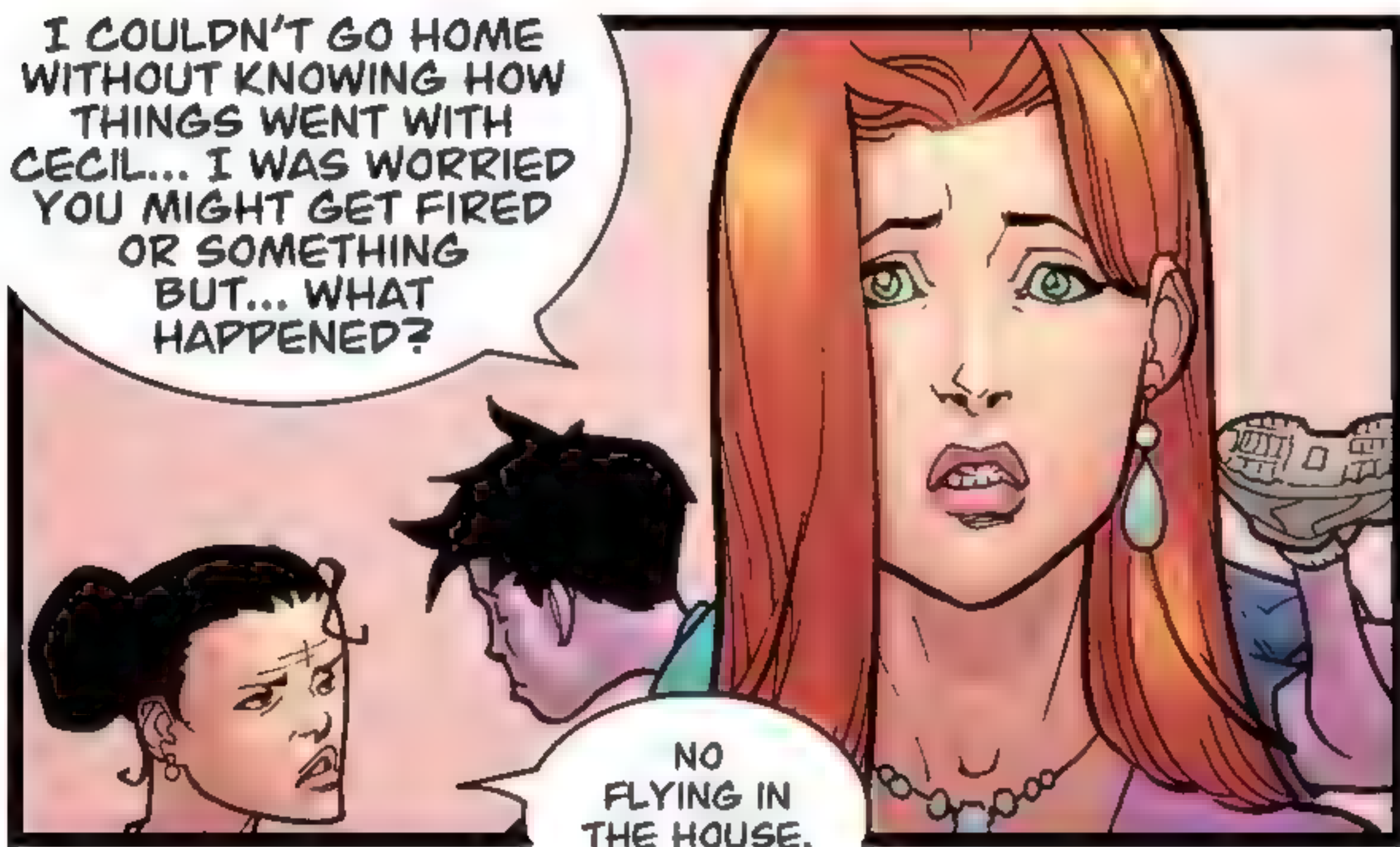
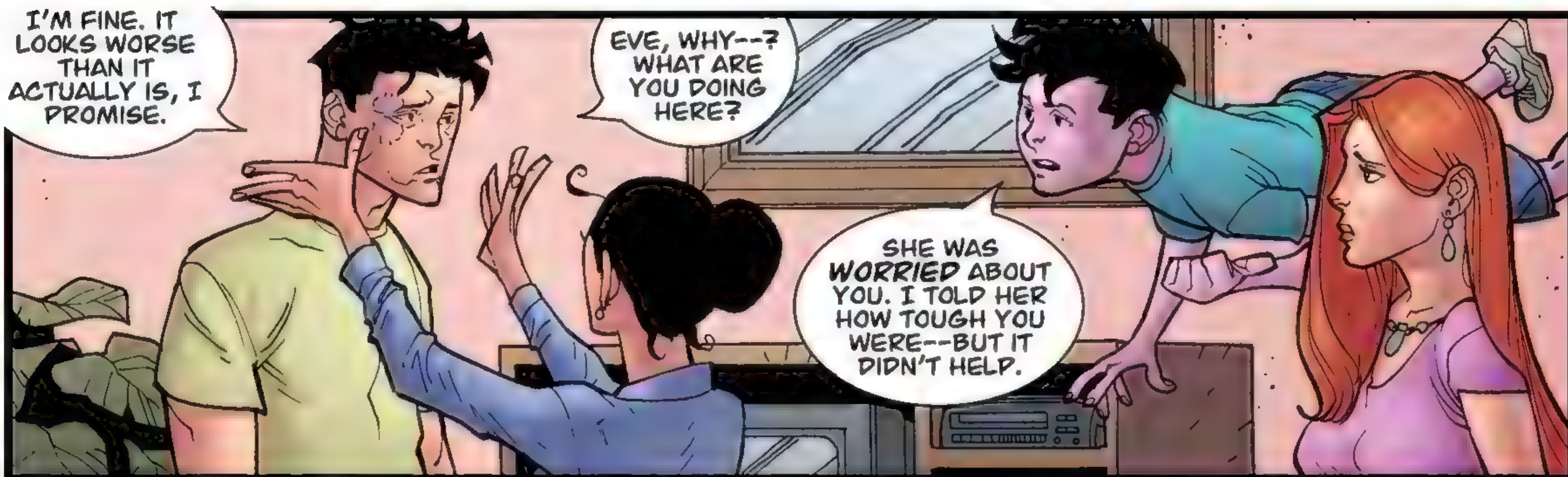
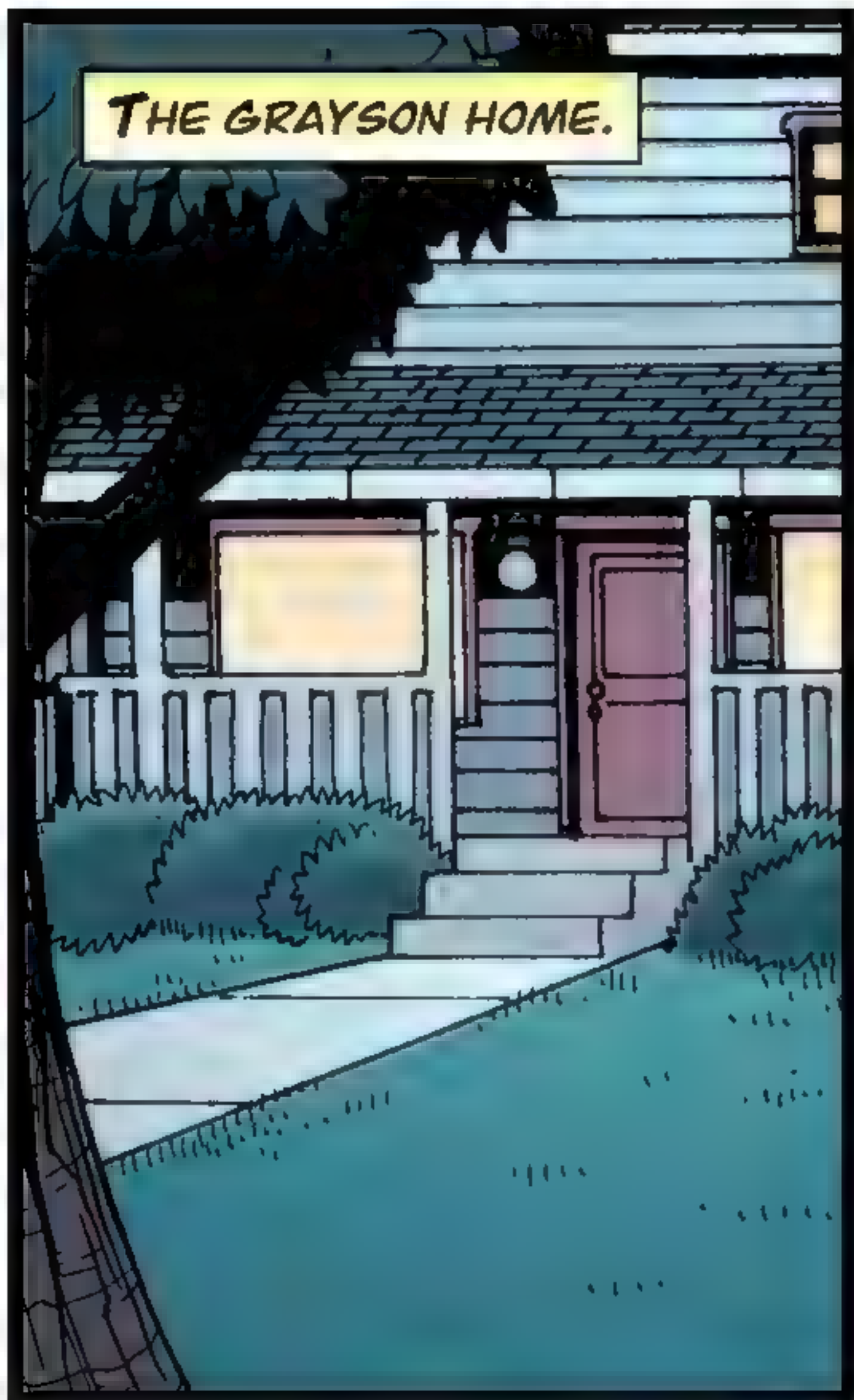


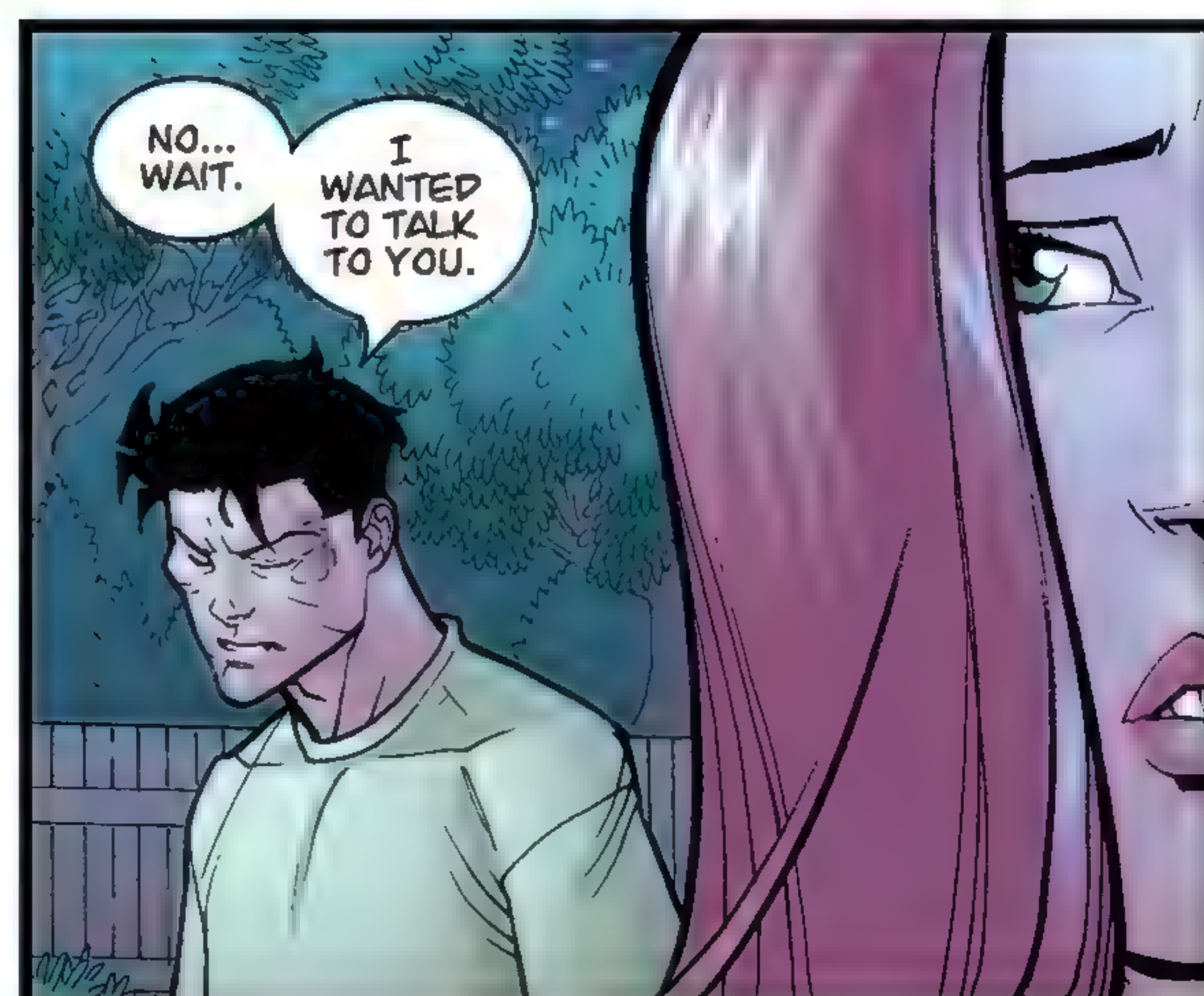
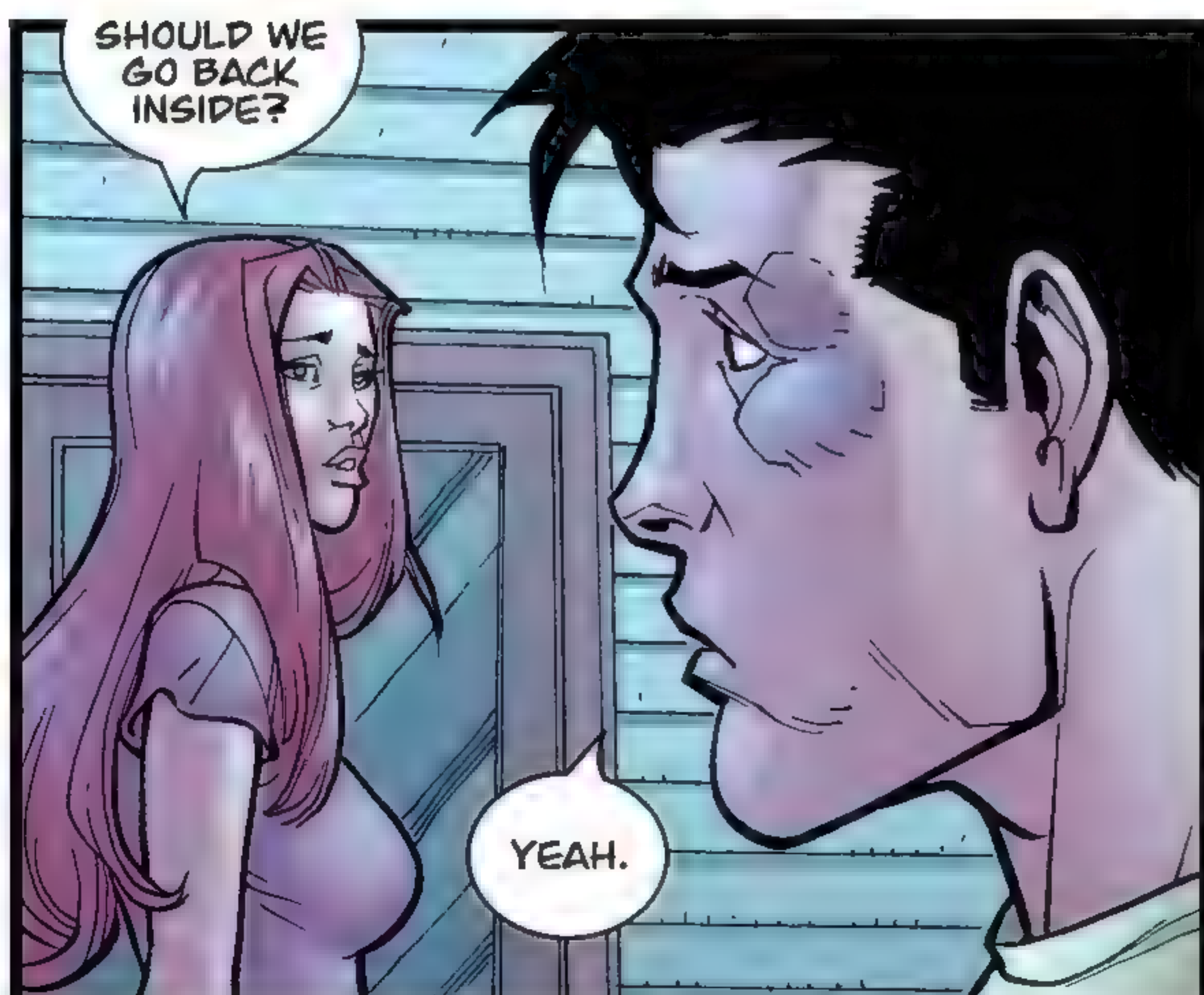
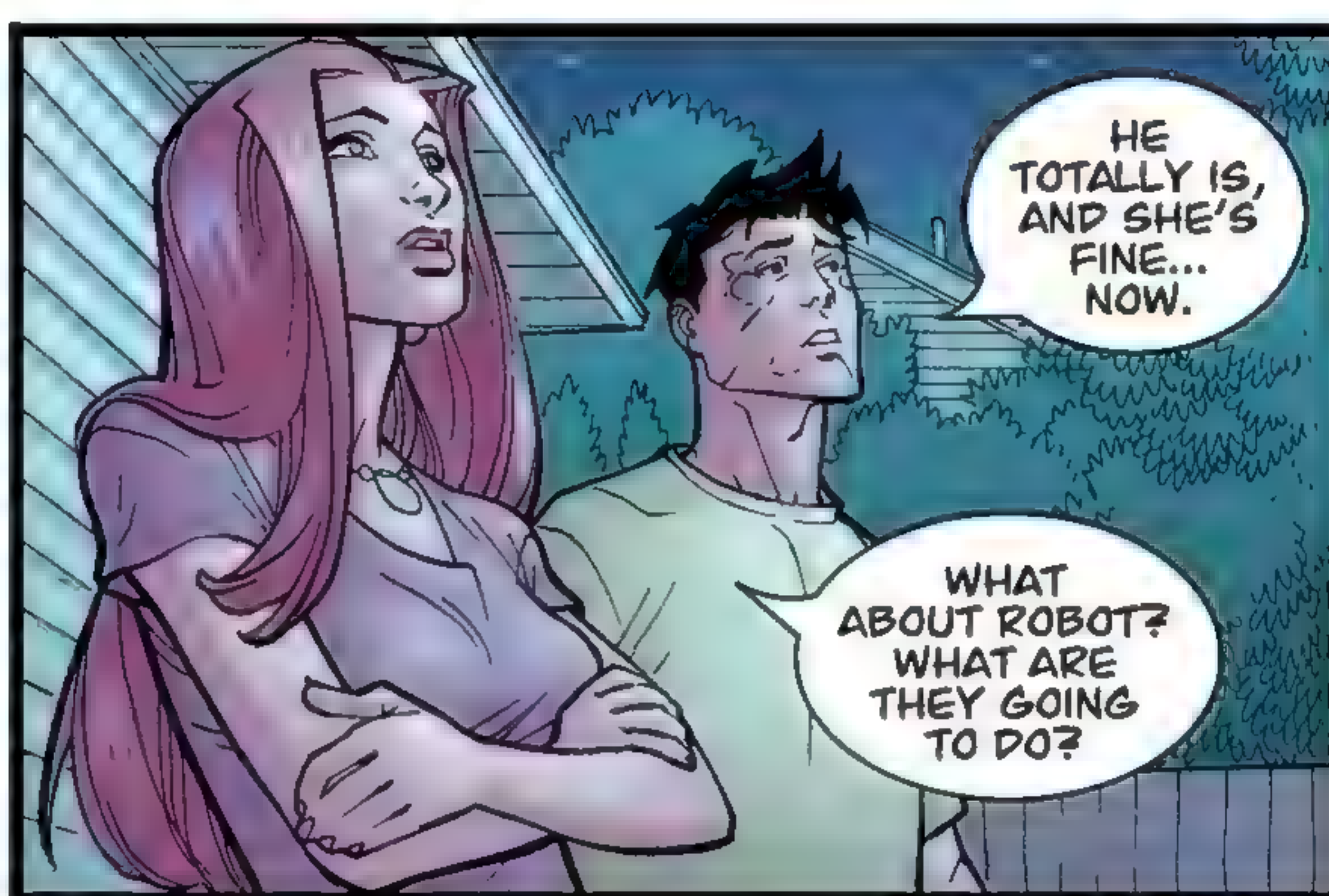


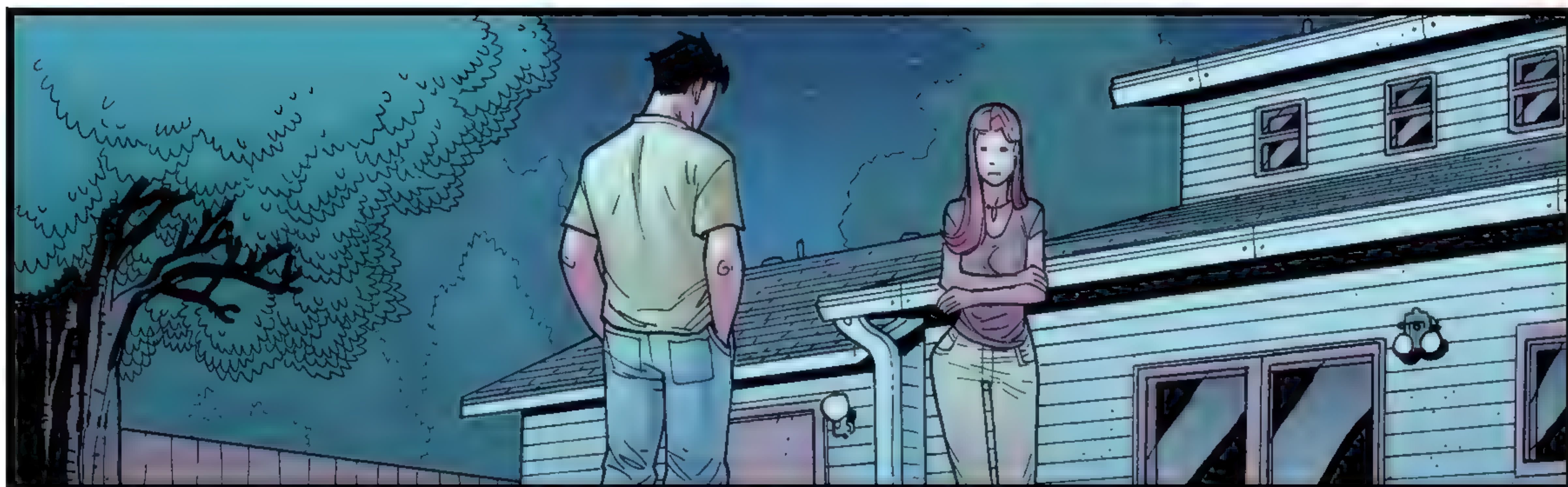
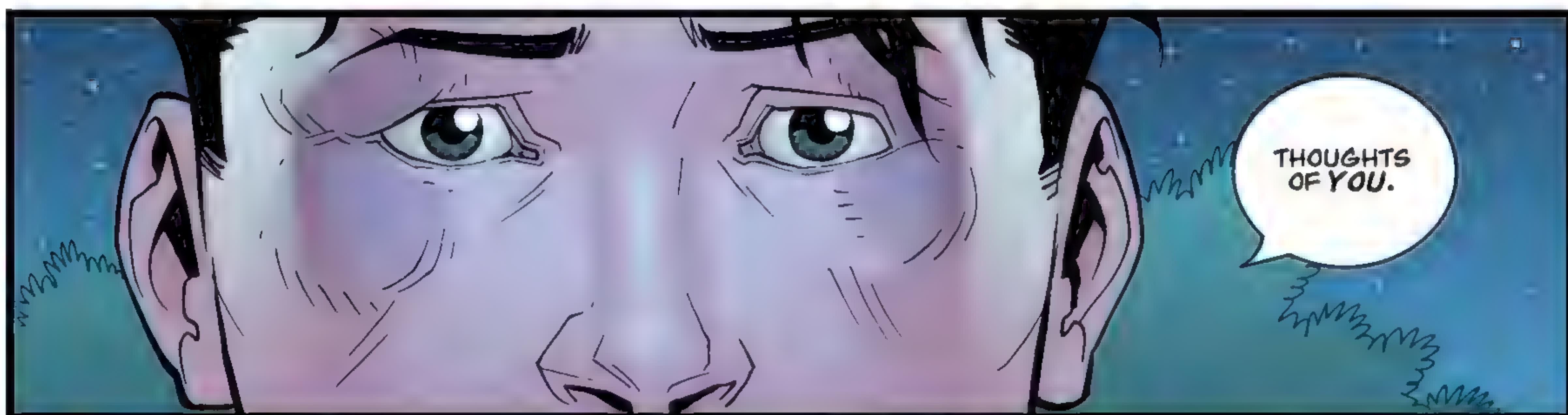


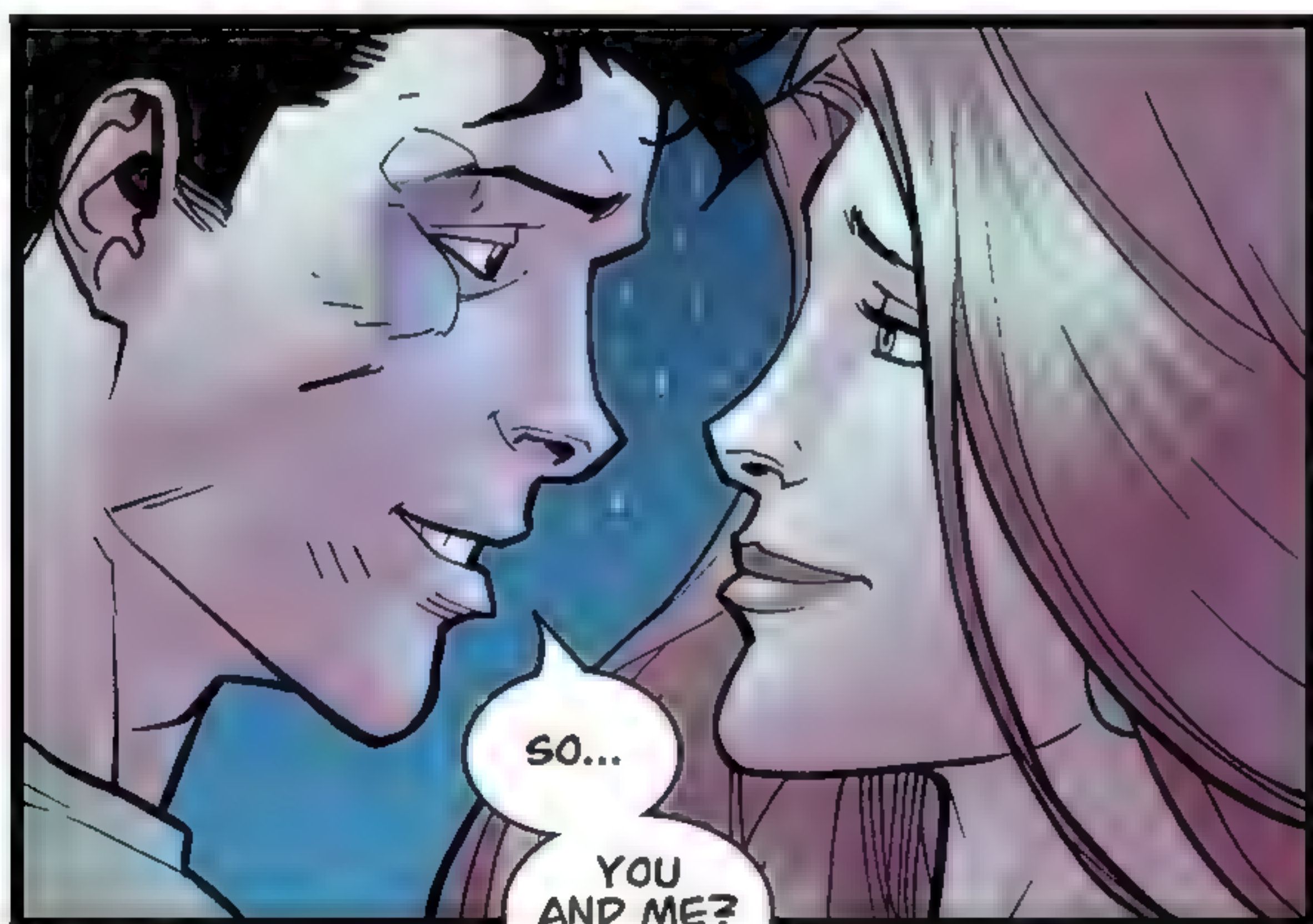






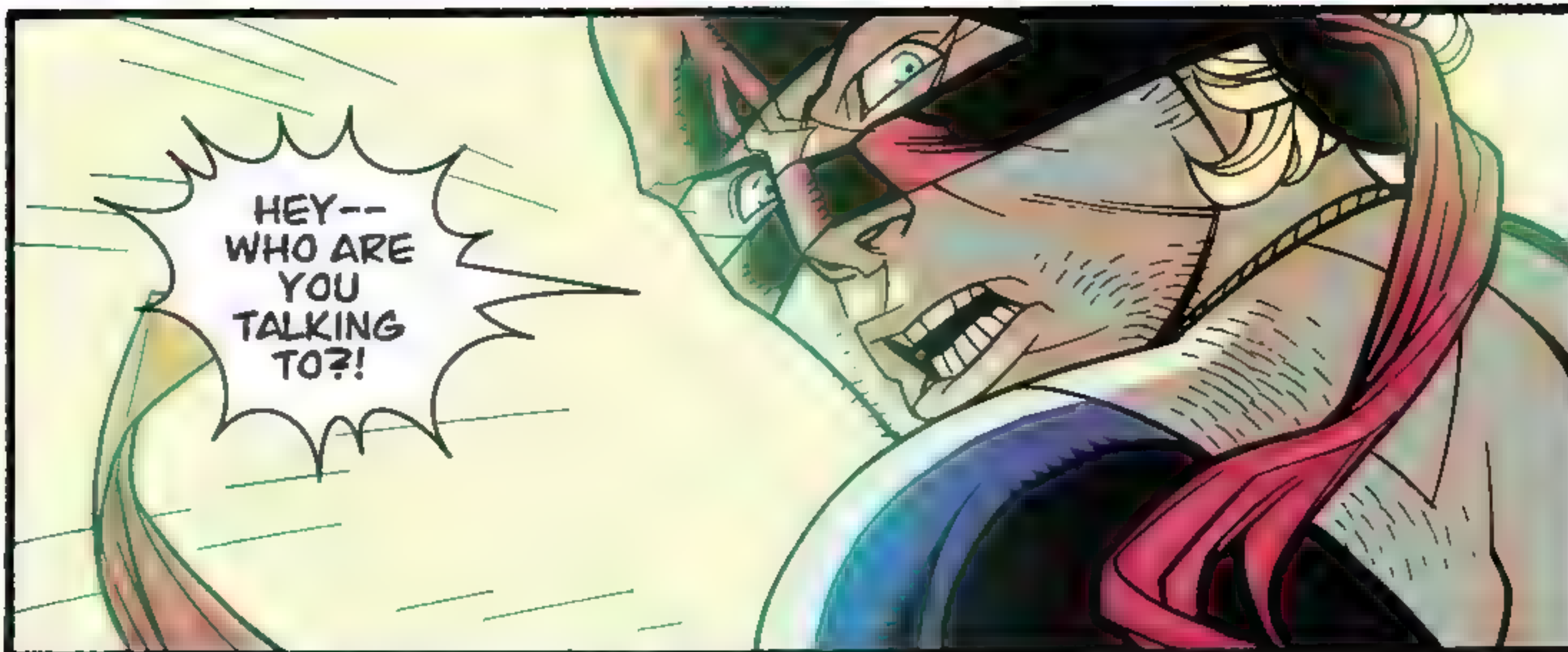
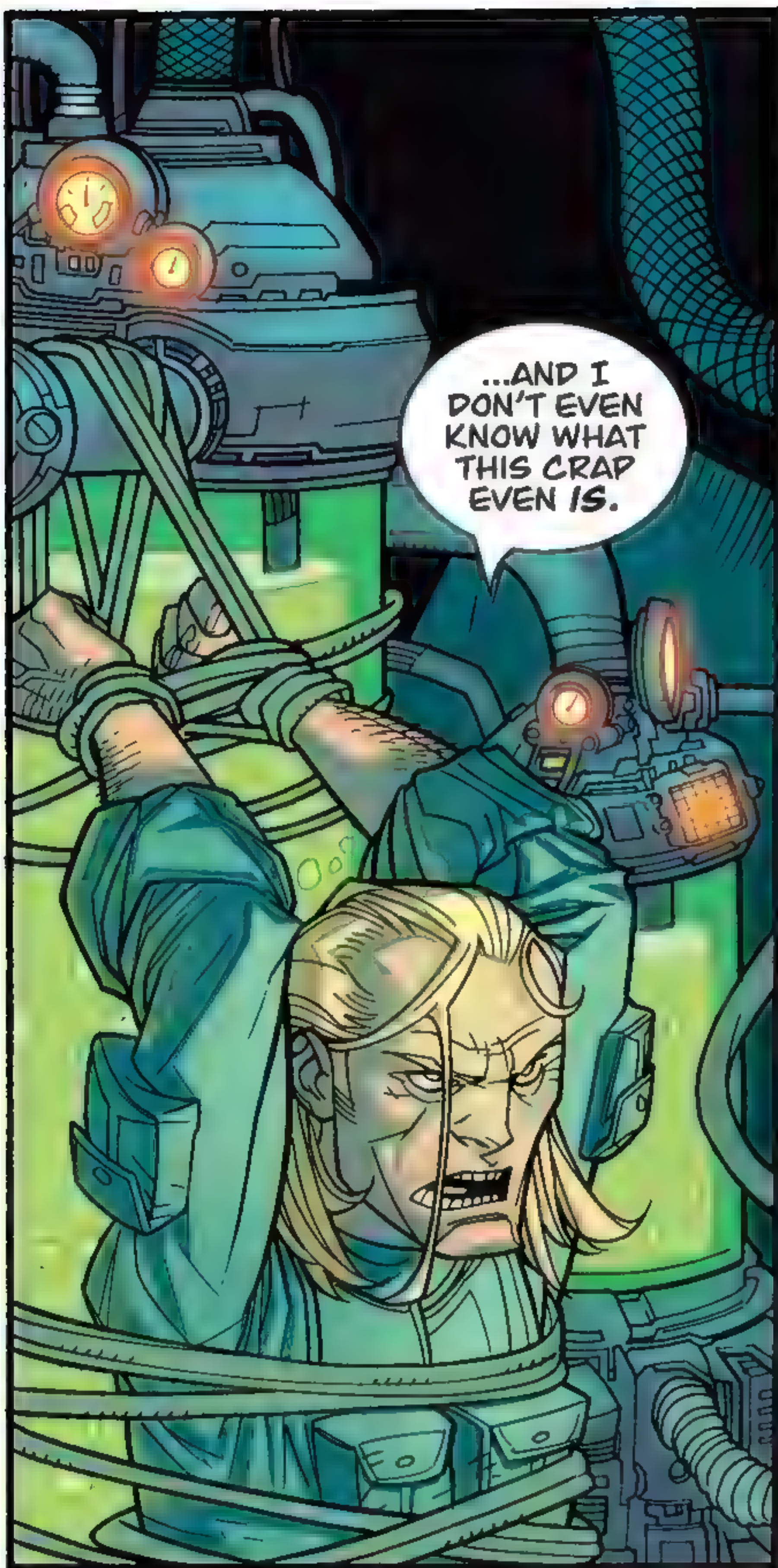


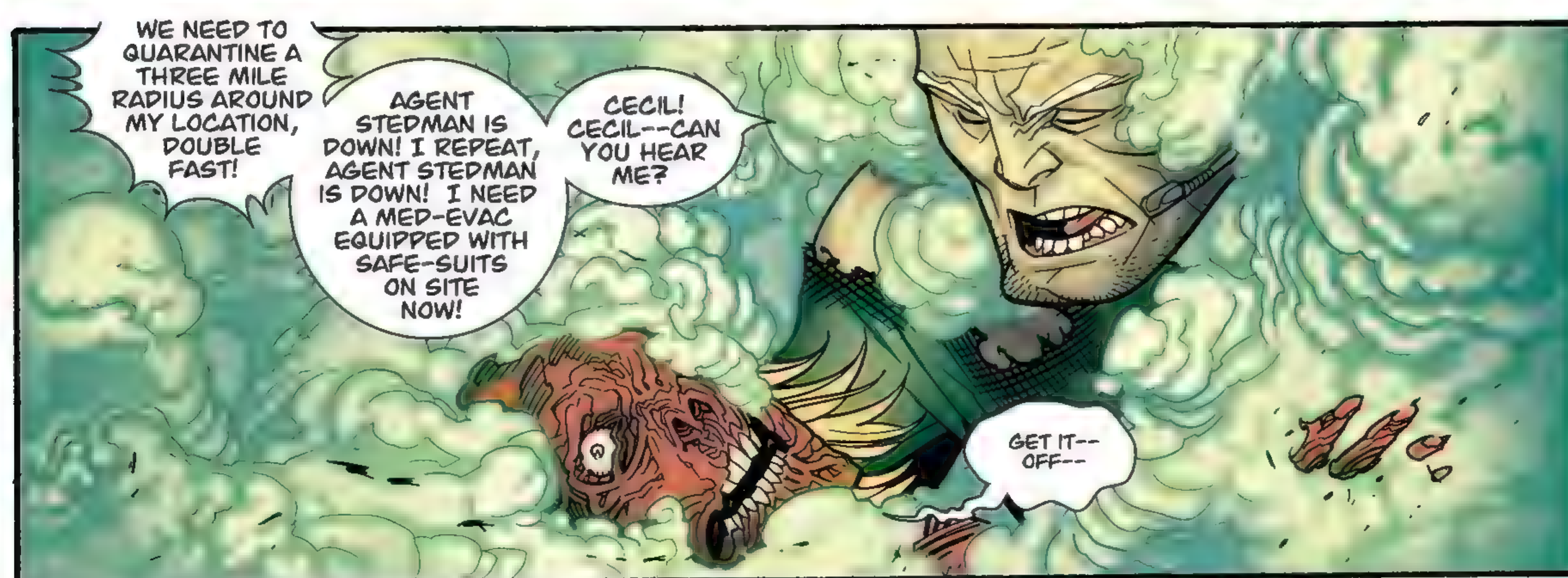
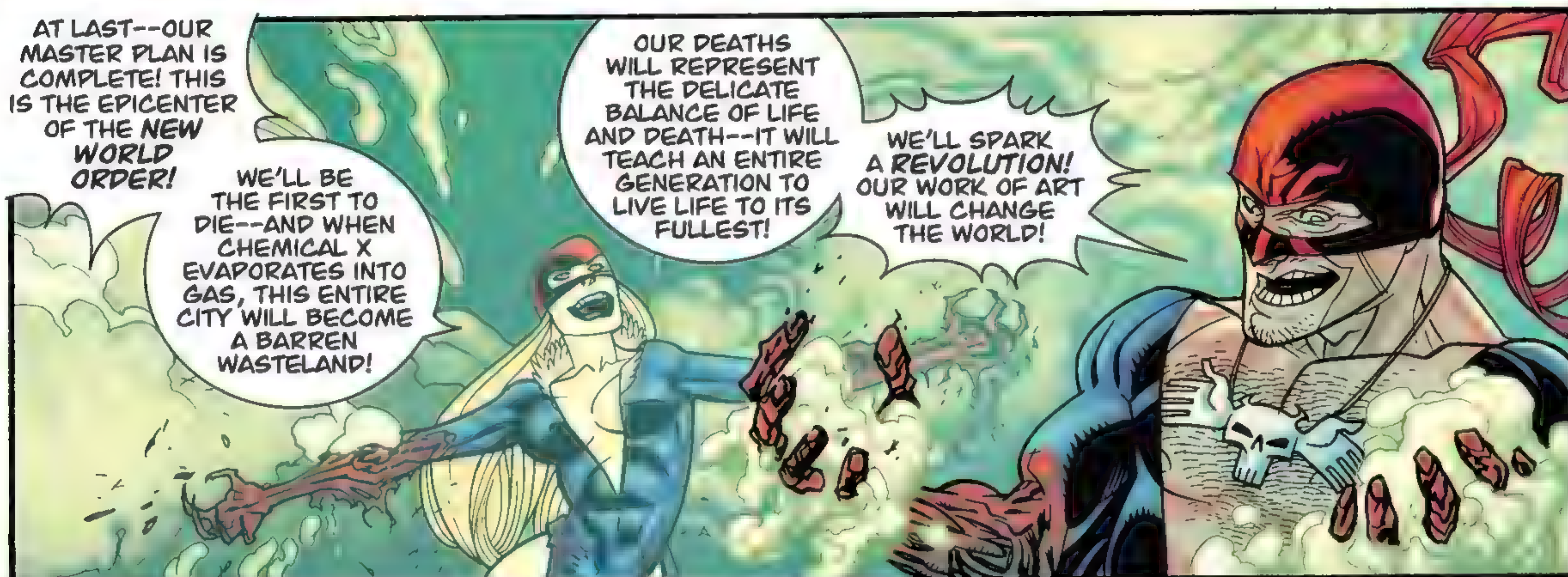


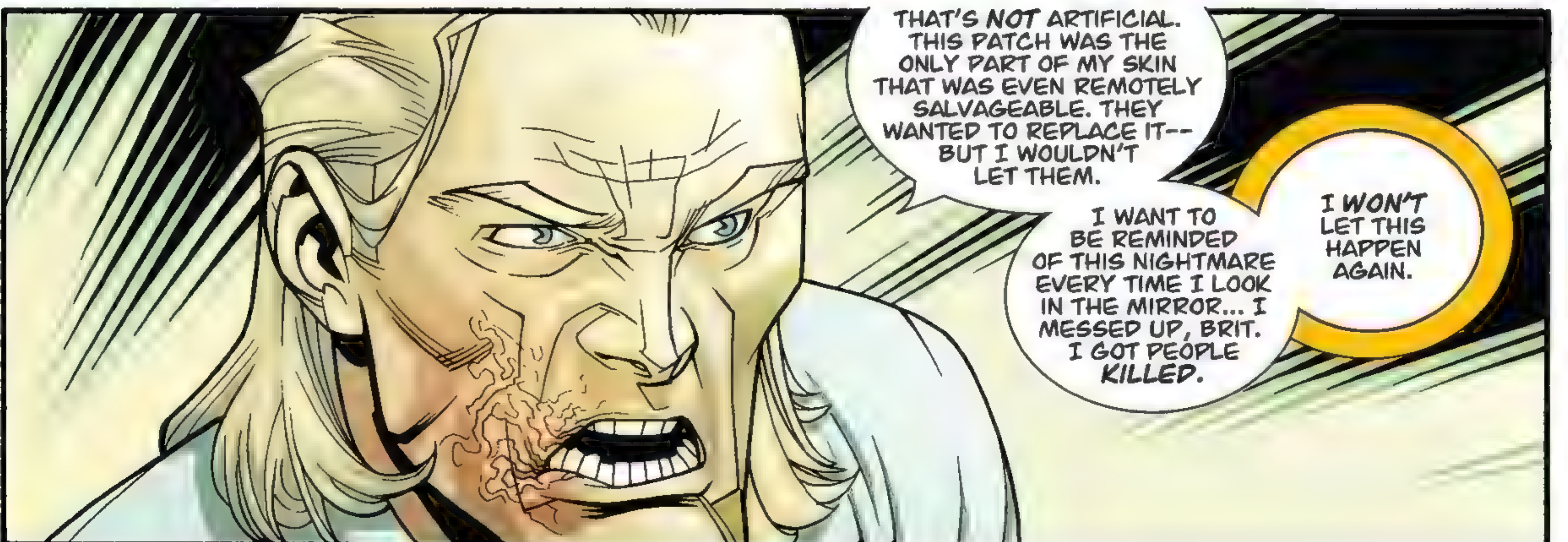
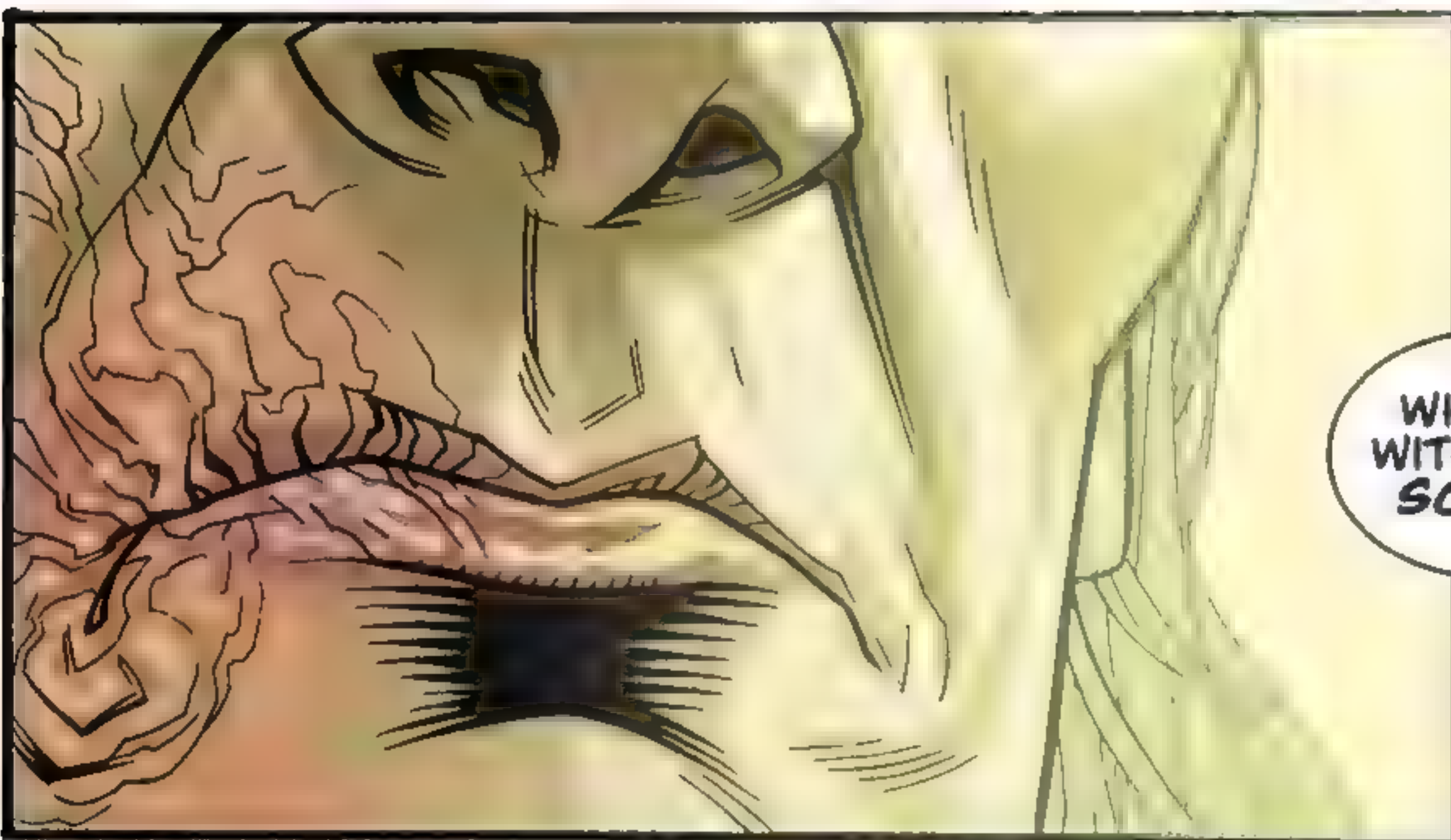
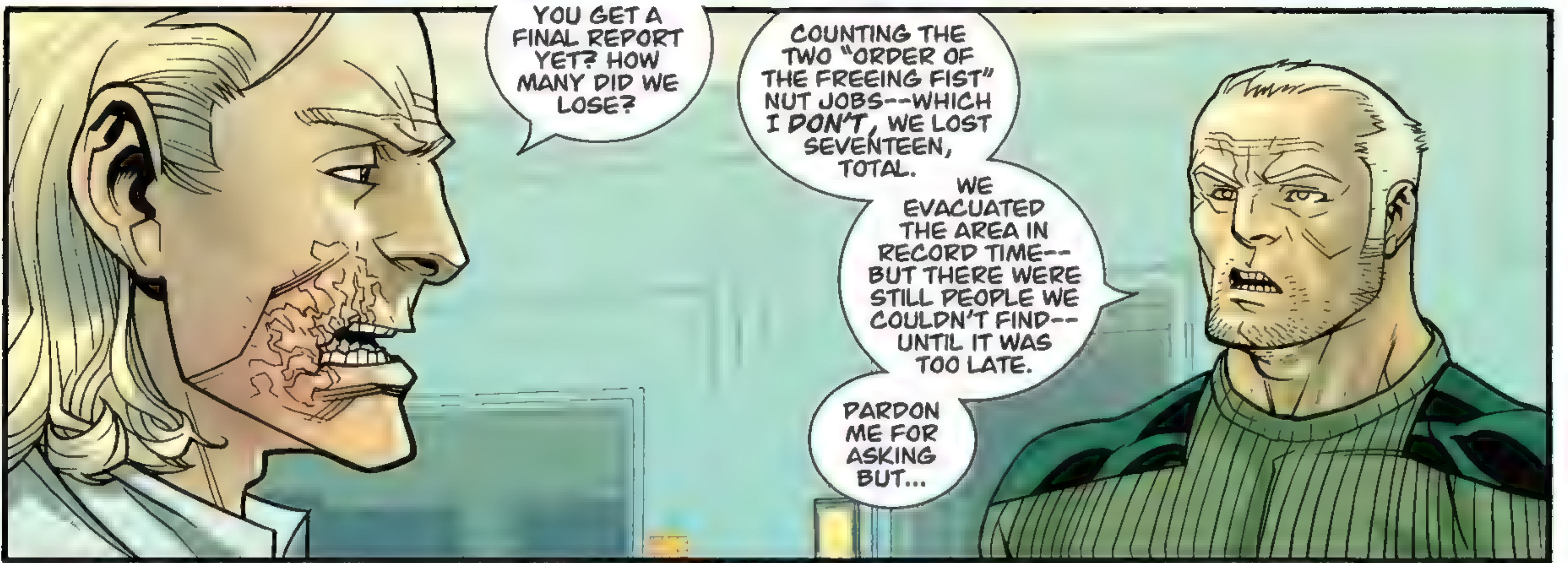
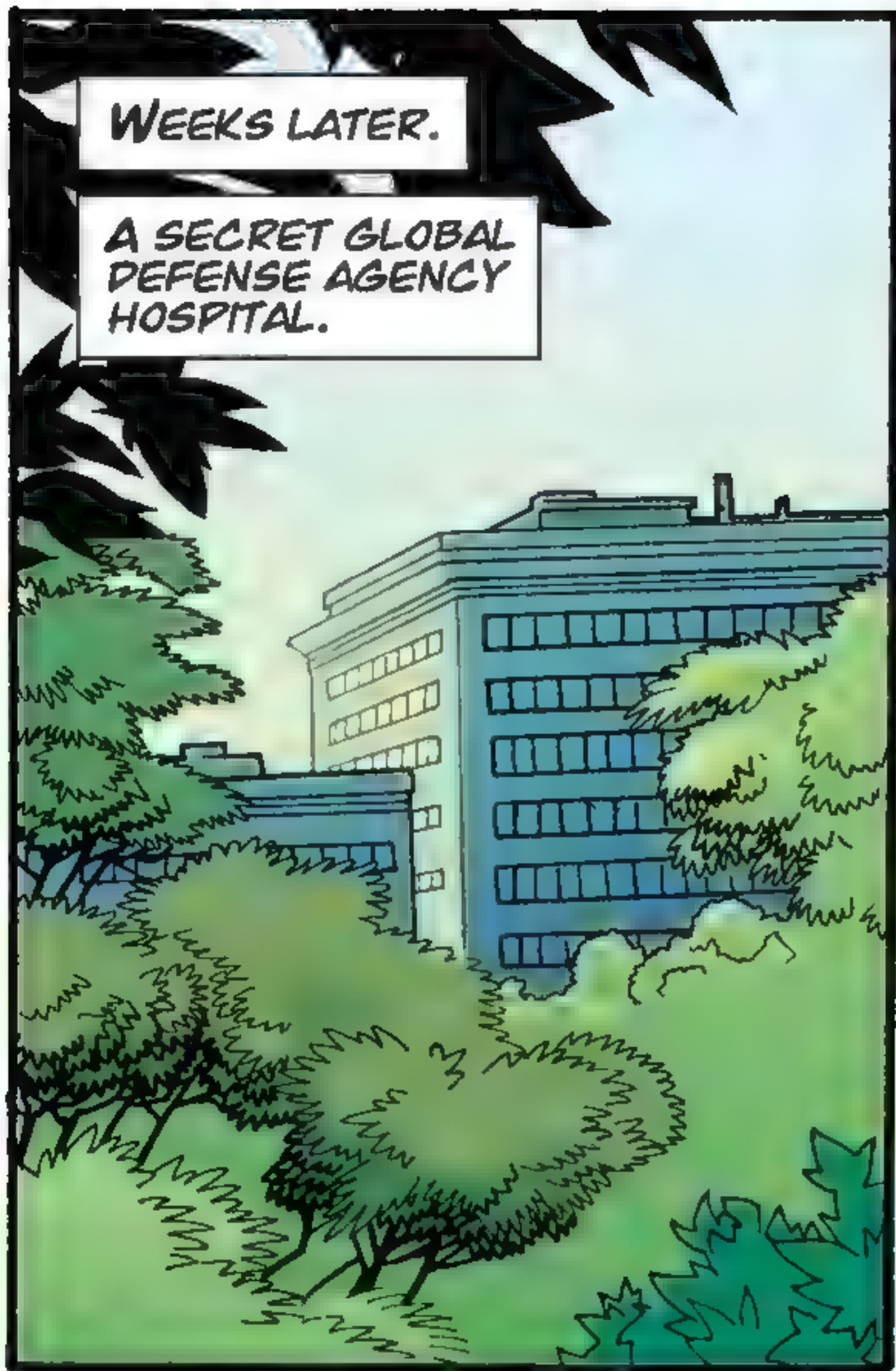


AT LONG LAST--THE SECRET ORIGIN OF CECIL STEDMAN!

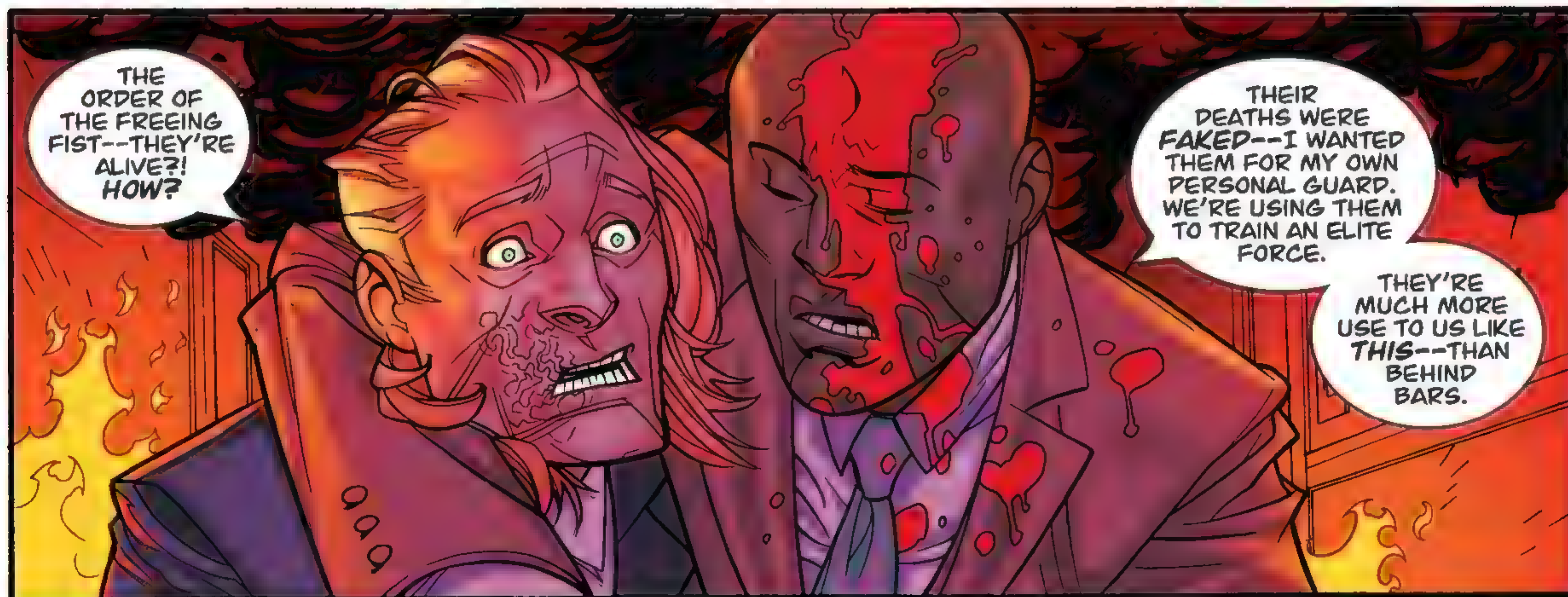


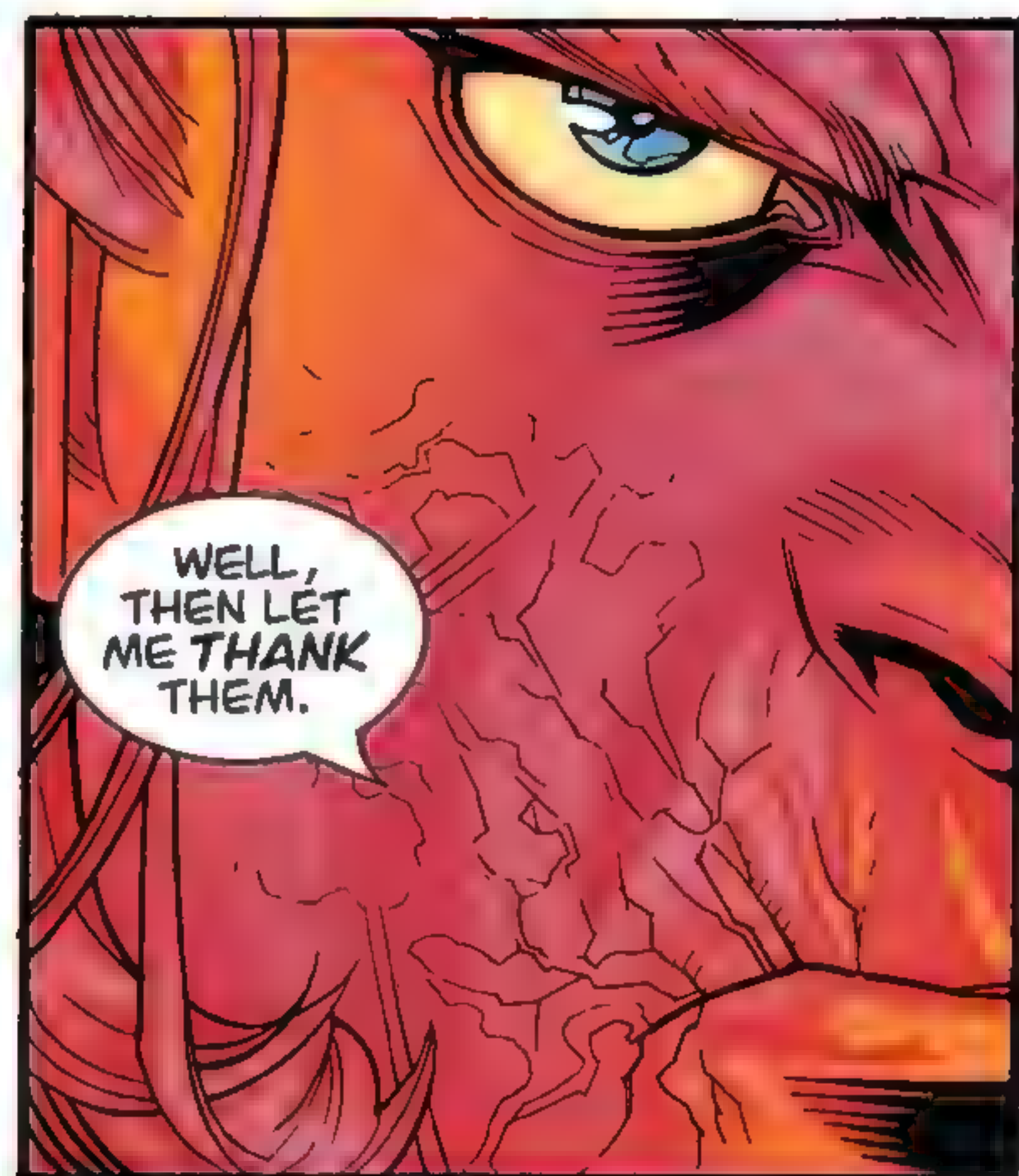












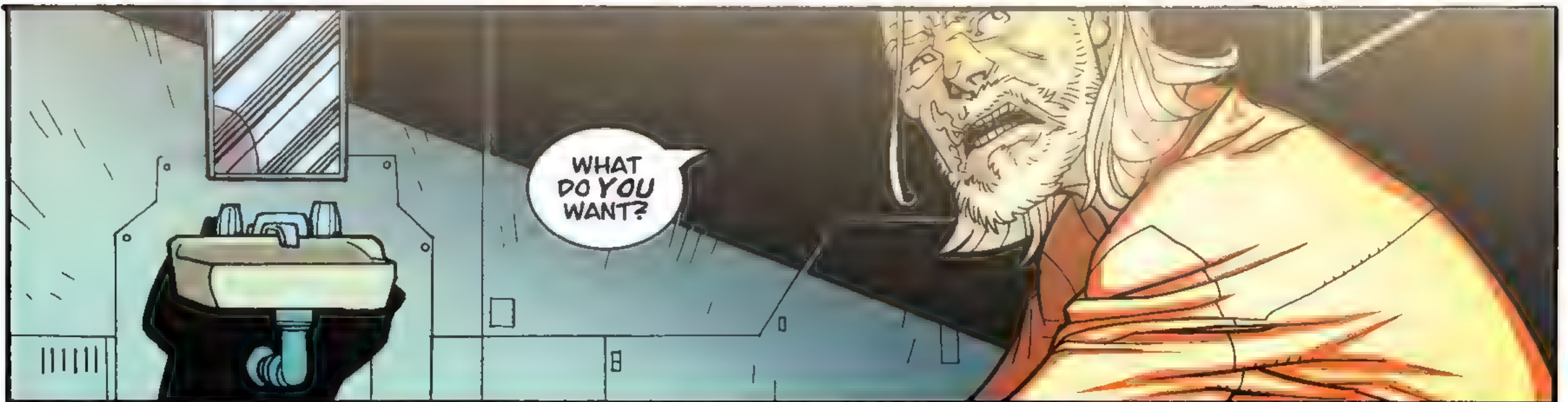


CECIL,
OLD FRIEND...
WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE?

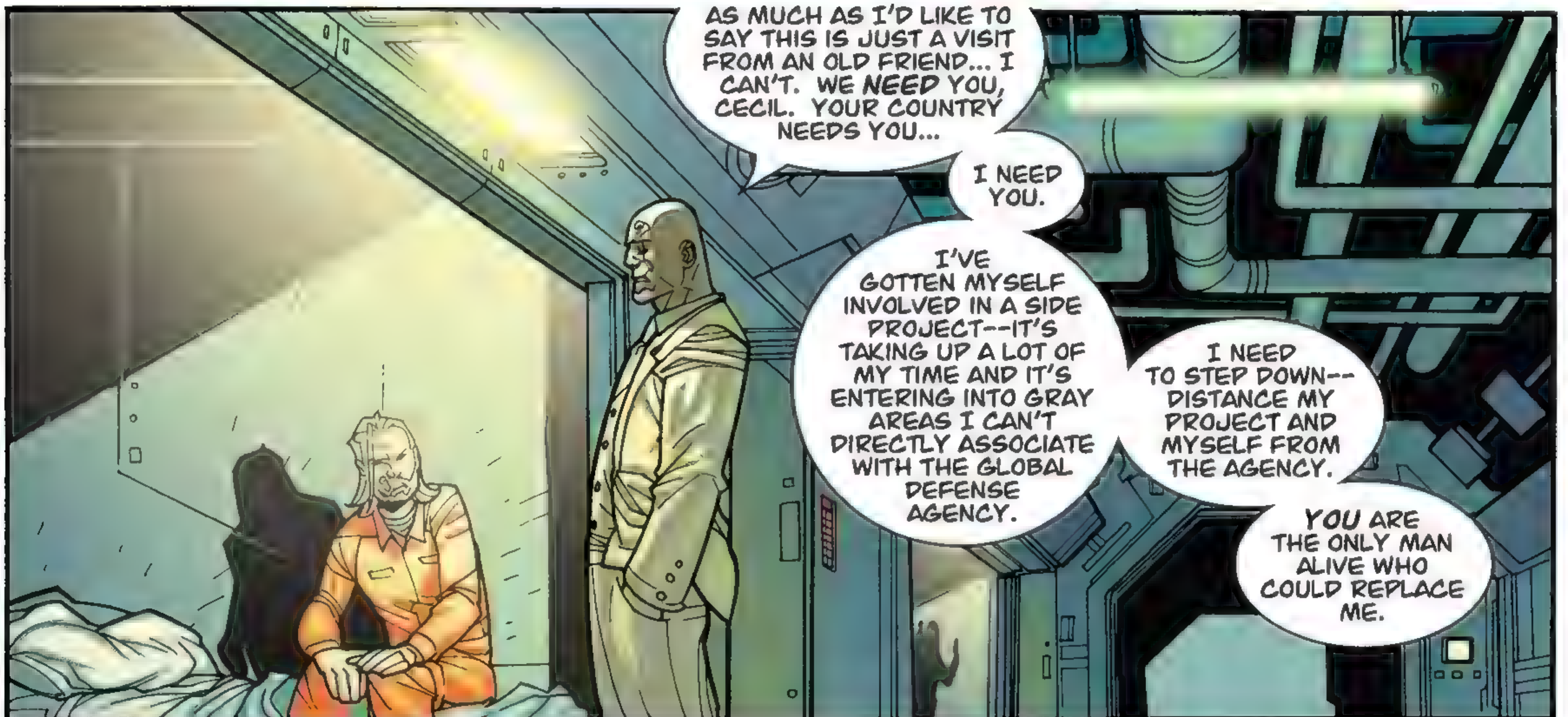


MONTHS
LATER.

STRONGHOLD
PENITENTIARY.



WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?



AS MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO
SAY THIS IS JUST A VISIT
FROM AN OLD FRIEND... I
CAN'T. WE NEED YOU,
CECIL. YOUR COUNTRY
NEEDS YOU...

I NEED
YOU.

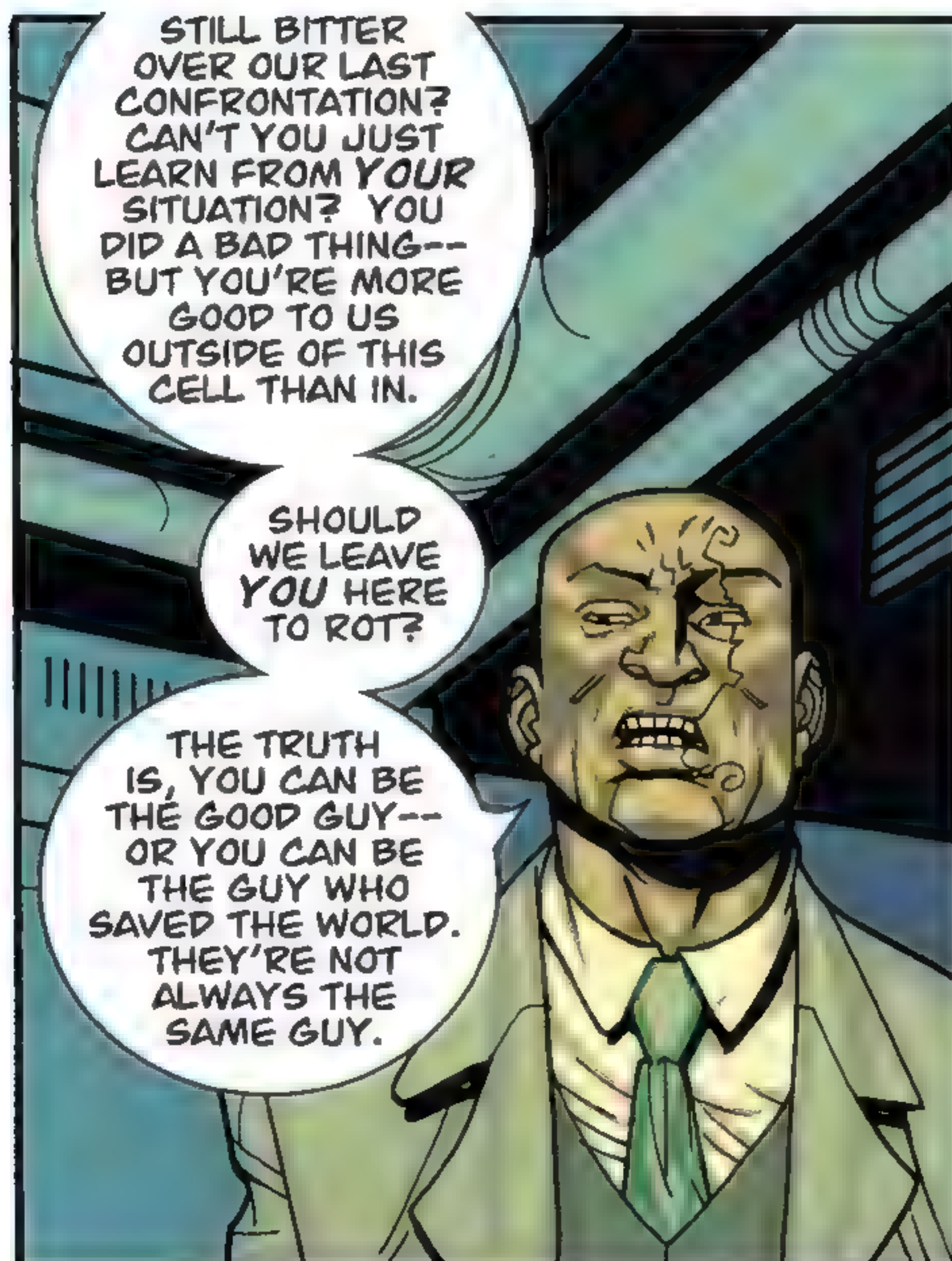
I'VE
GOTTEN MYSELF
INVOLVED IN A SIDE
PROJECT--IT'S
TAKING UP A LOT OF
MY TIME AND IT'S
ENTERING INTO GRAY
AREAS I CAN'T
DIRECTLY ASSOCIATE
WITH THE GLOBAL
DEFENSE
AGENCY.

I NEED
TO STEP DOWN--
DISTANCE MY
PROJECT AND
MYSELF FROM
THE AGENCY.

YOU ARE
THE ONLY MAN
ALIVE WHO
COULD REPLACE
ME.



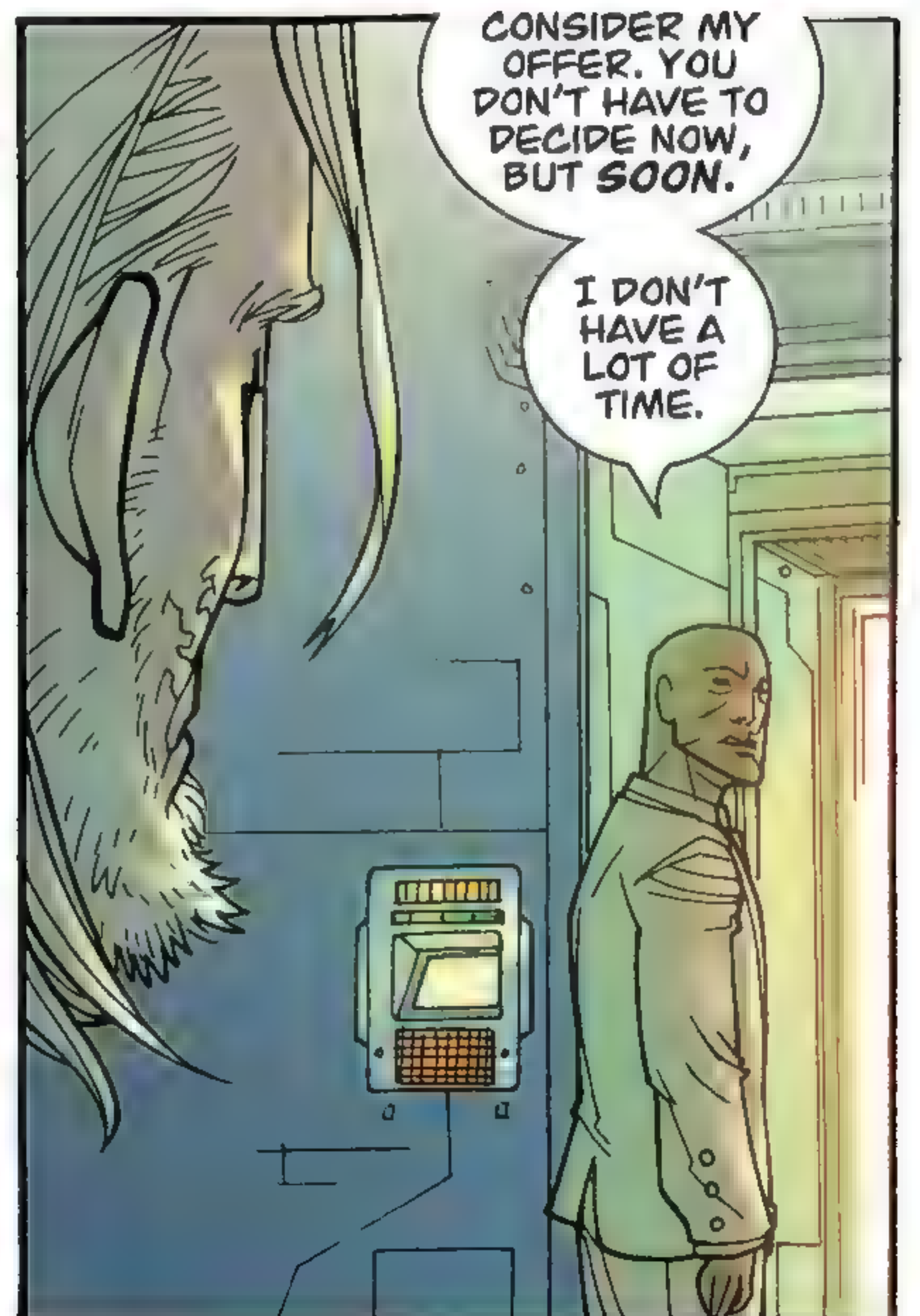
NO. I'M NOT
INTERESTED.



STILL BITTER
OVER OUR LAST
CONFRONTATION?
CAN'T YOU JUST
LEARN FROM YOUR
SITUATION? YOU
DID A BAD THING--
BUT YOU'RE MORE
GOOD TO US
OUTSIDE OF THIS
CELL THAN IN.

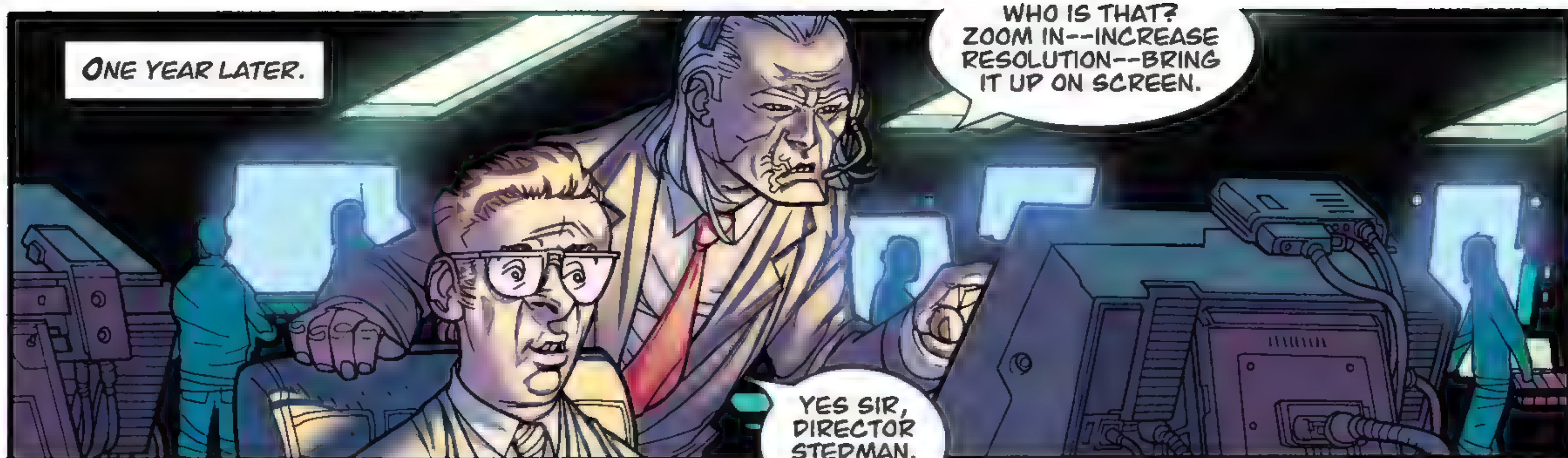
SHOULD
WE LEAVE
YOU HERE
TO ROT?

THE TRUTH
IS, YOU CAN BE
THE GOOD GUY--
OR YOU CAN BE
THE GUY WHO
SAVED THE WORLD.
THEY'RE NOT
ALWAYS THE
SAME GUY.



CONSIDER MY
OFFER. YOU
DON'T HAVE TO
DECIDE NOW,
BUT SOON.

I DON'T
HAVE A
LOT OF
TIME.





HMN?

EXCUSE ME, SIR. COULD I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU?



WHO ARE YOU?

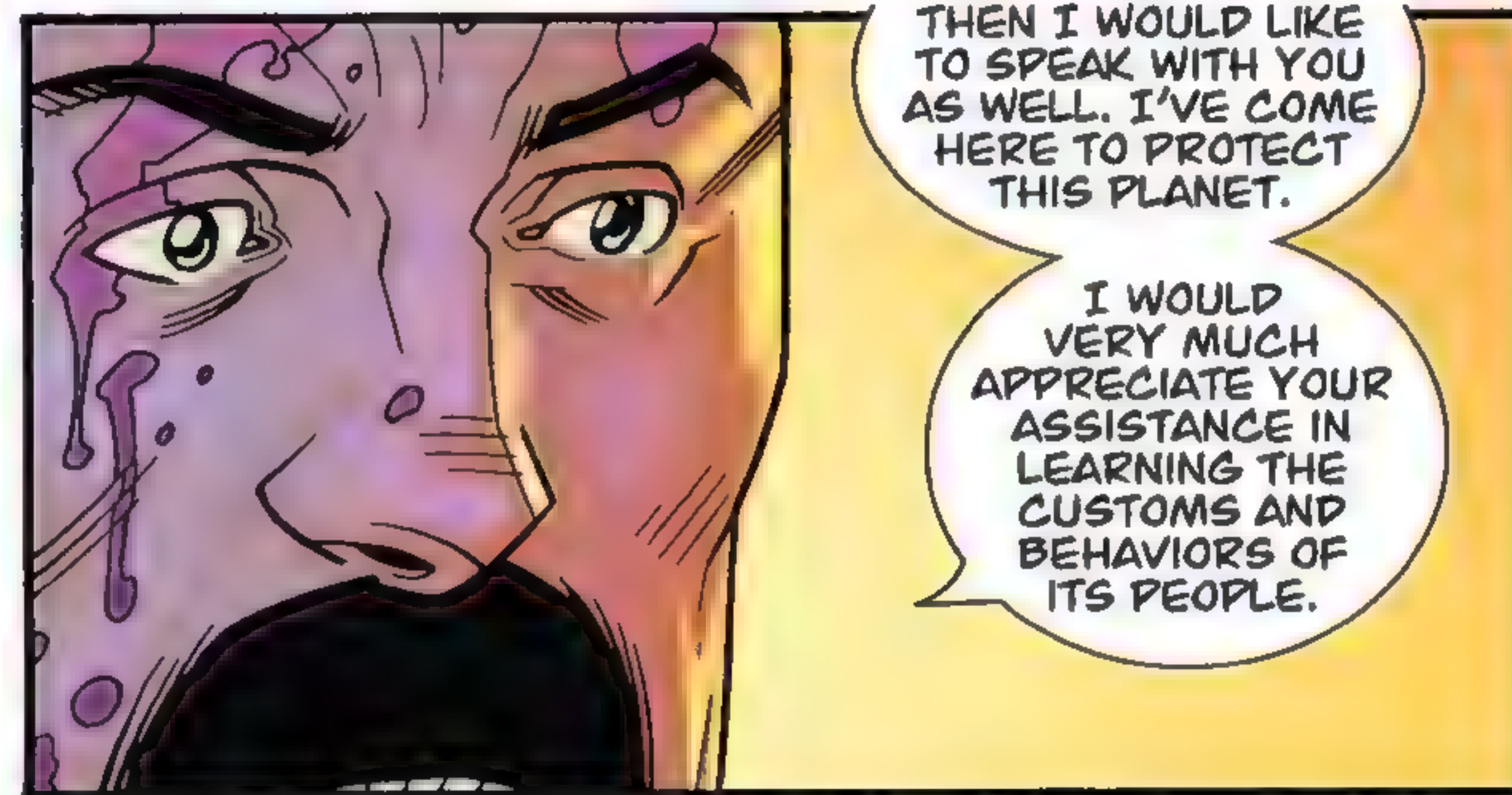


MY NAME IS CECIL STEPMAN, I'M THE HEAD OF THE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY. YOU'VE DISPLAYED A RANGE OF ABILITIES HERE TODAY THAT MY AGENCY WOULD DEEM--



GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY? YOU REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF THIS PLANET?

YES. YES I DO.



THEN I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK WITH YOU AS WELL. I'VE COME HERE TO PROTECT THIS PLANET.

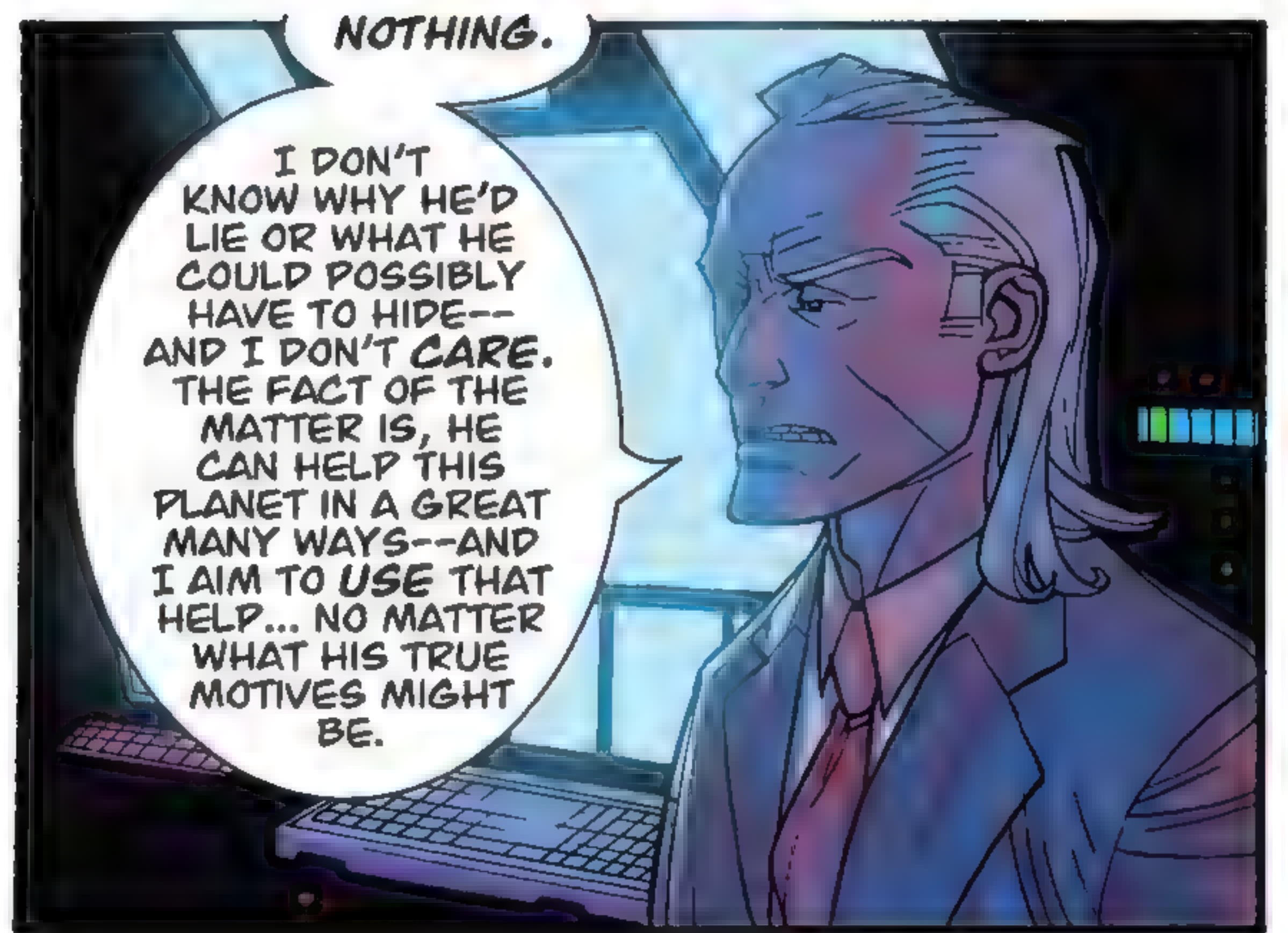
I WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANCE IN LEARNING THE CUSTOMS AND BEHAVIORS OF ITS PEOPLE.



THAT, I CAN DEFINITELY HELP YOU WITH--AS WELL AS YOUR MISSION IN GENERAL. YOU SEE, WE HAVE THE SAME JOB. COME BACK TO MY HEADQUARTERS WITH ME--IT'LL BE EASIER TO TALK THERE.

OKAY, BUT--

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT. MY PEOPLE WILL CLEAN IT UP.





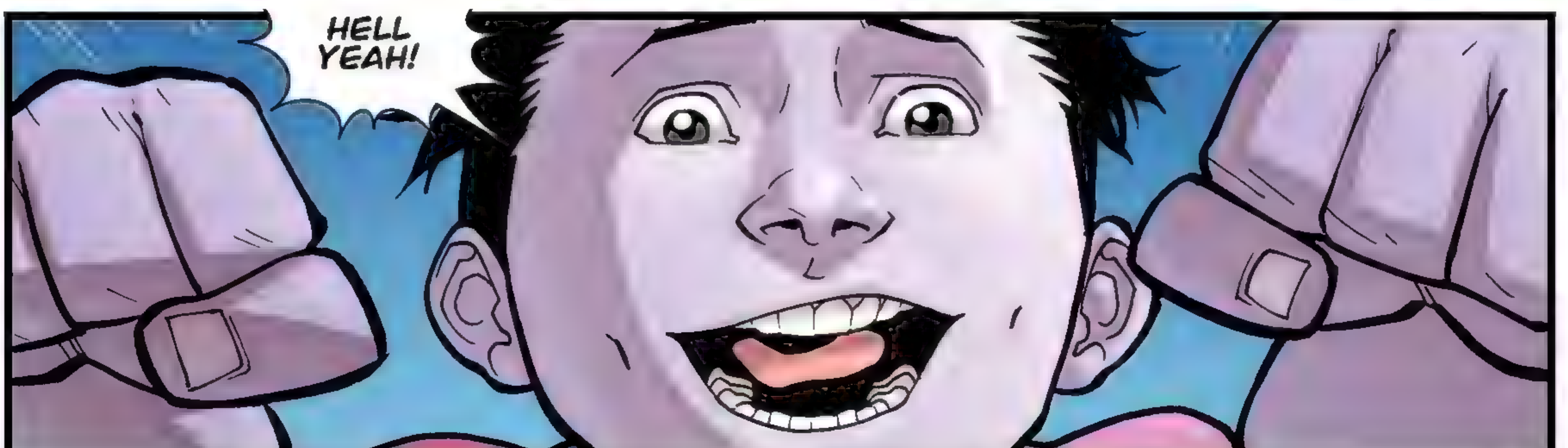
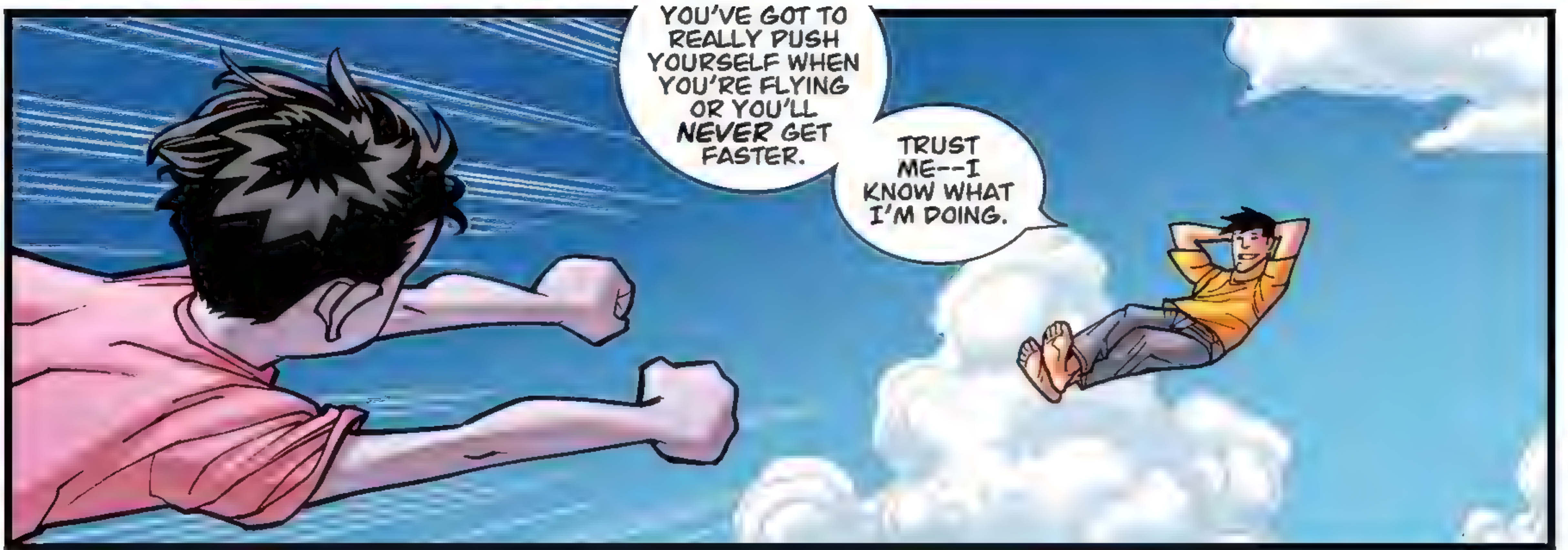
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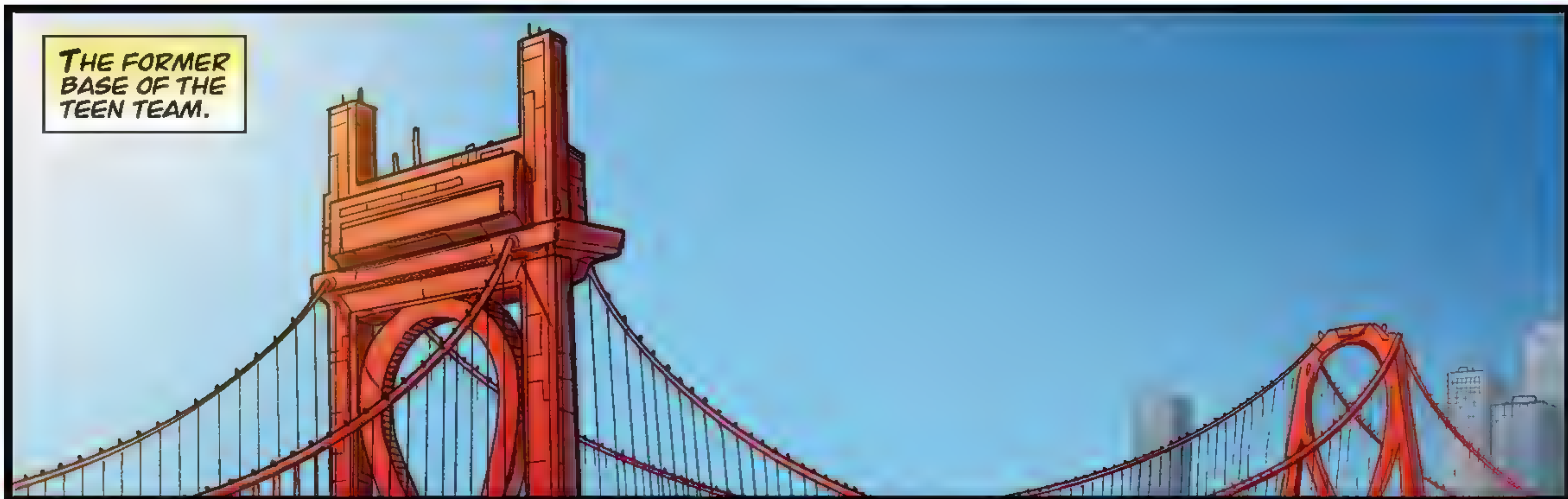




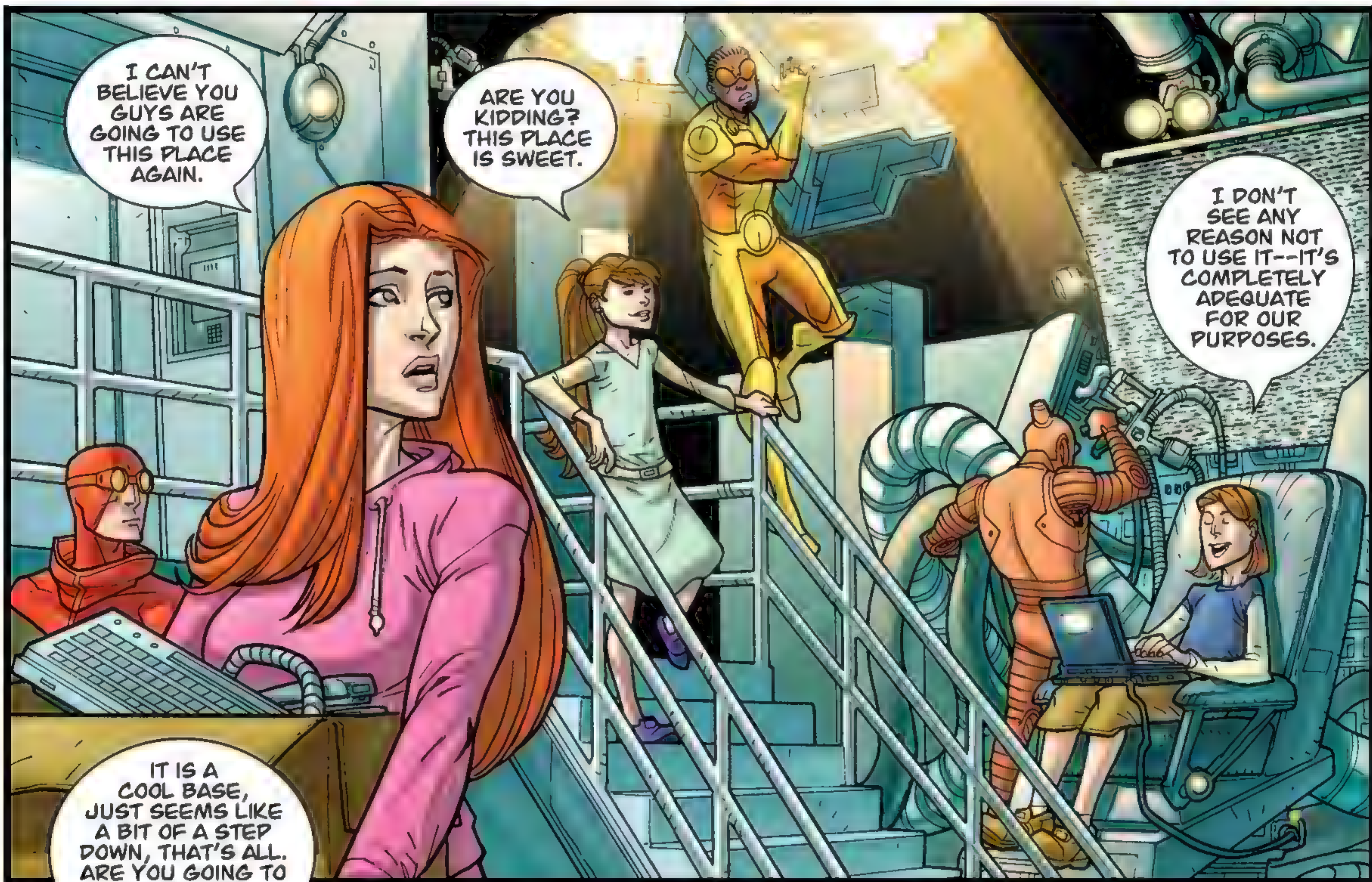
HEY!

**SLOW
DOWN!**





THE FORMER
BASE OF THE
TEEN TEAM.

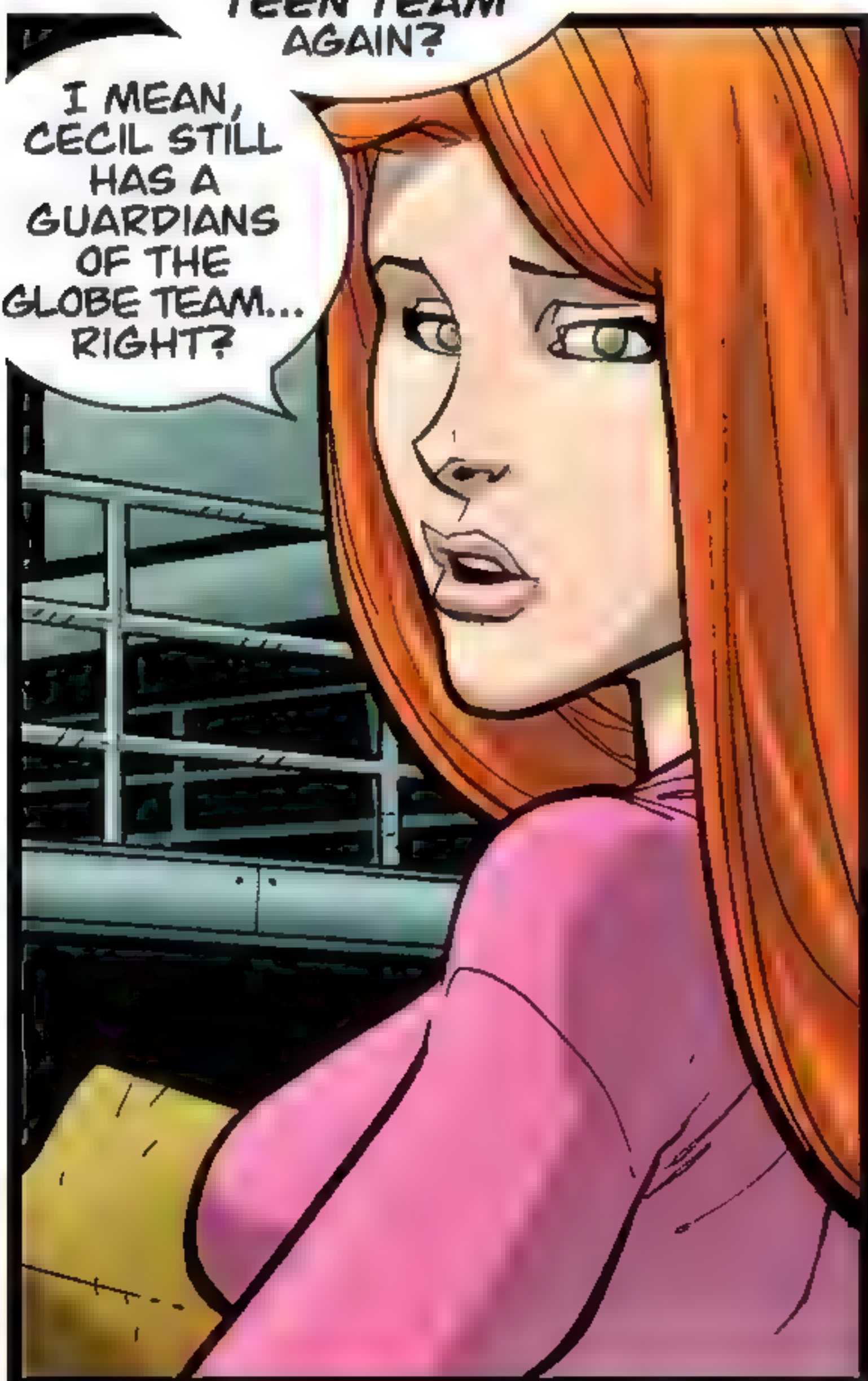


I CAN'T
BELIEVE YOU
GUYS ARE
GOING TO USE
THIS PLACE
AGAIN.

ARE YOU
KIDDING?
THIS PLACE
IS SWEET.

I DON'T
SEE ANY
REASON NOT
TO USE IT--IT'S
COMPLETELY
ADEQUATE
FOR OUR
PURPOSES.

IT IS A
COOL BASE,
JUST SEEMS LIKE
A BIT OF A STEP
DOWN, THAT'S ALL.
ARE YOU GOING TO
GO BY THE
TEEN TEAM
AGAIN?



I MEAN,
CECIL STILL
HAS A
GUARDIANS
OF THE
GLOBE TEAM...
RIGHT?



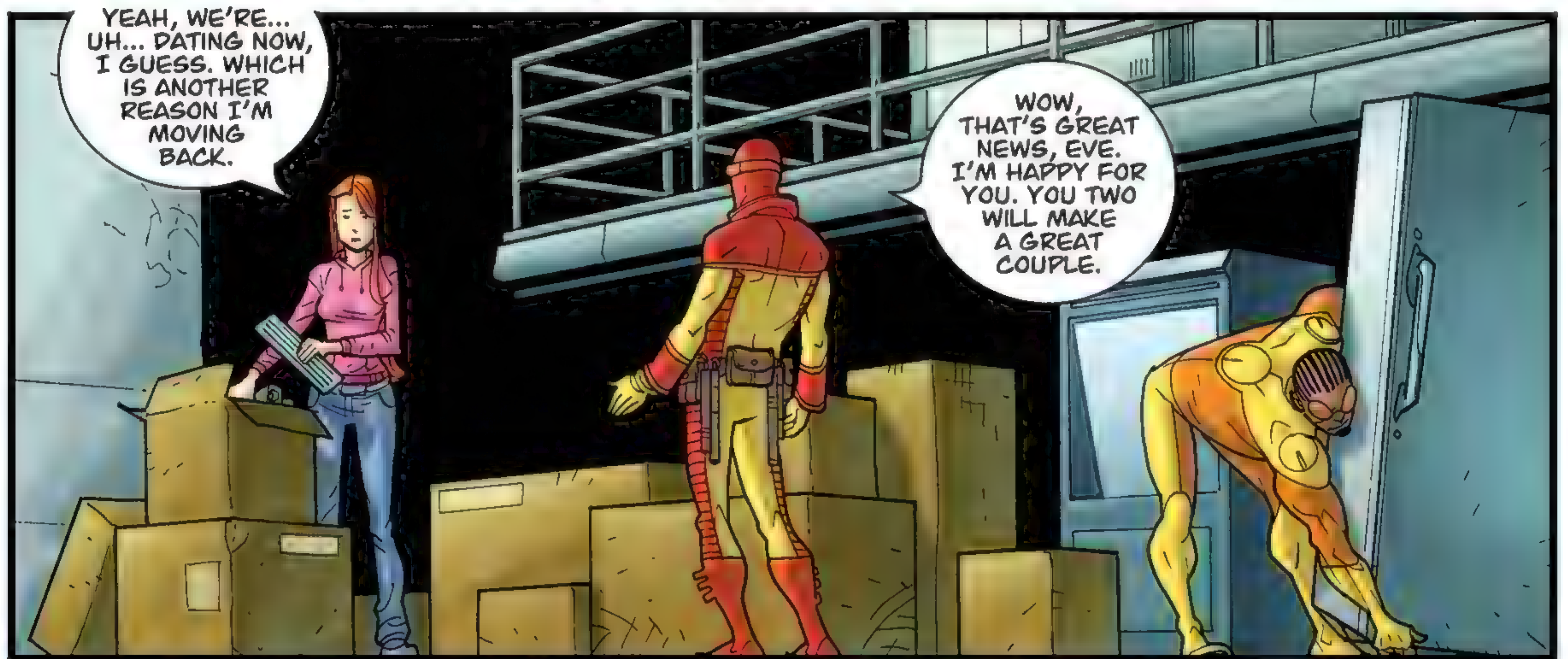
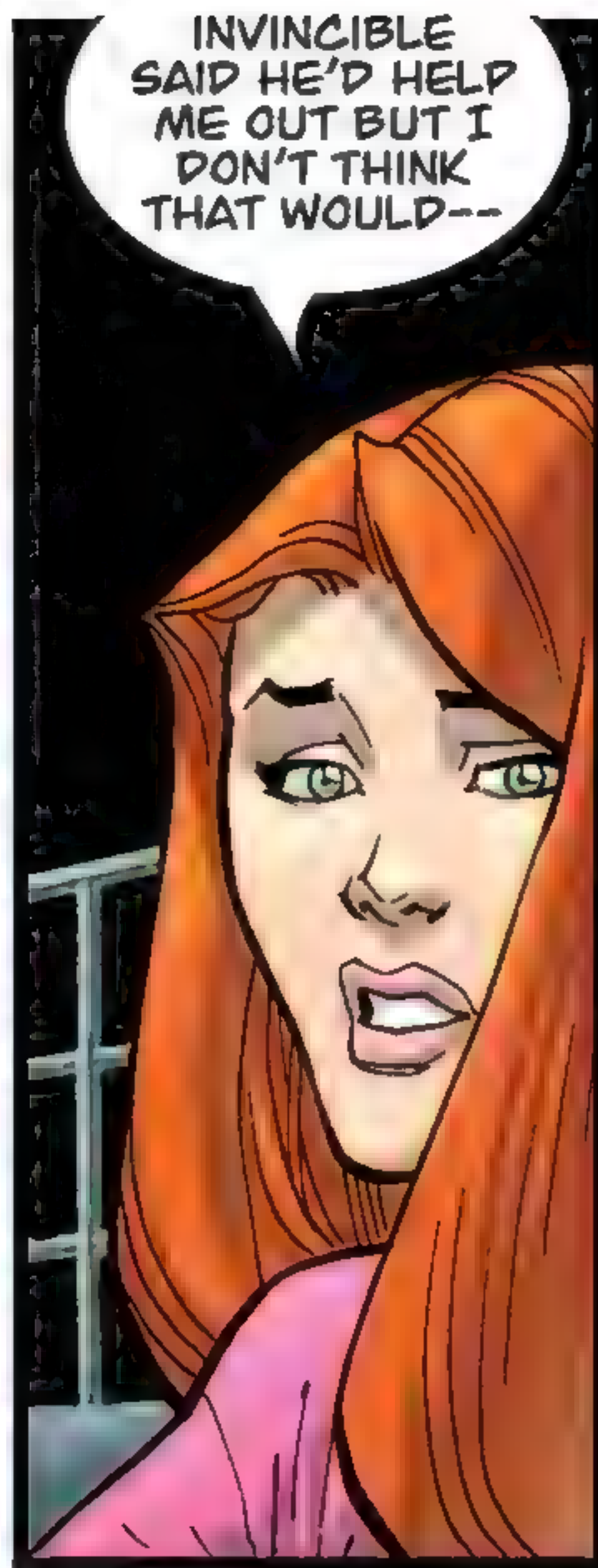
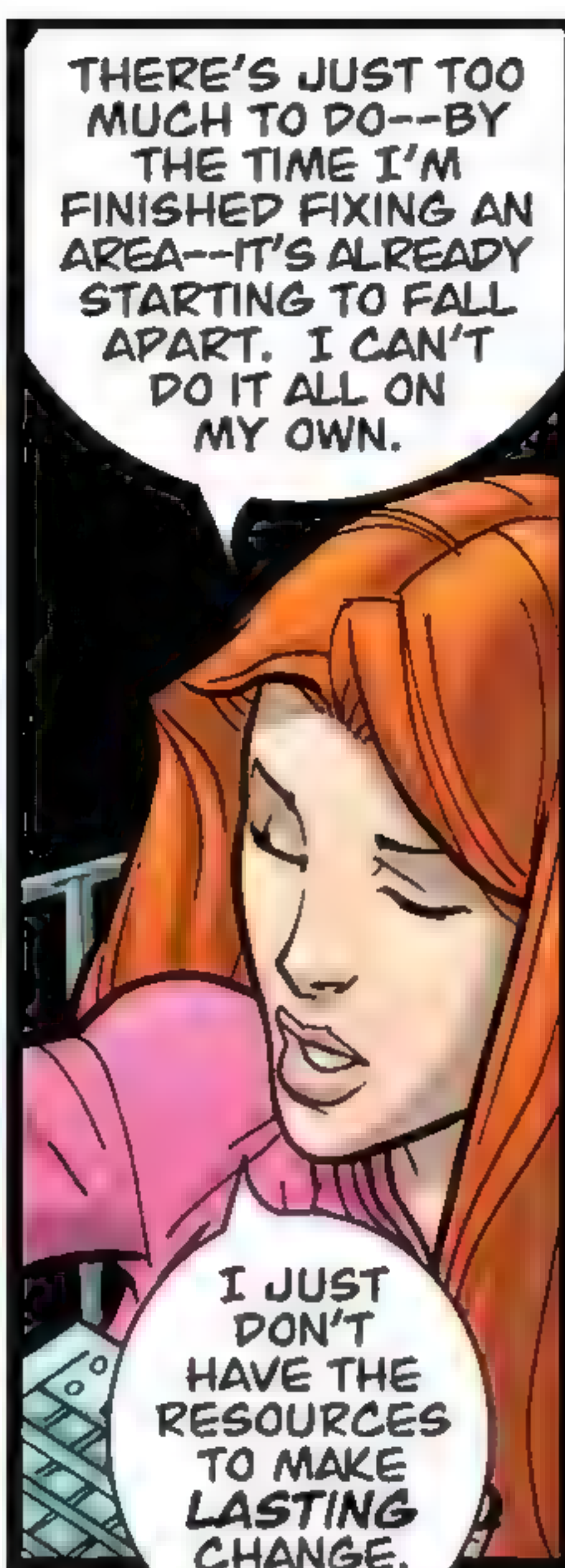
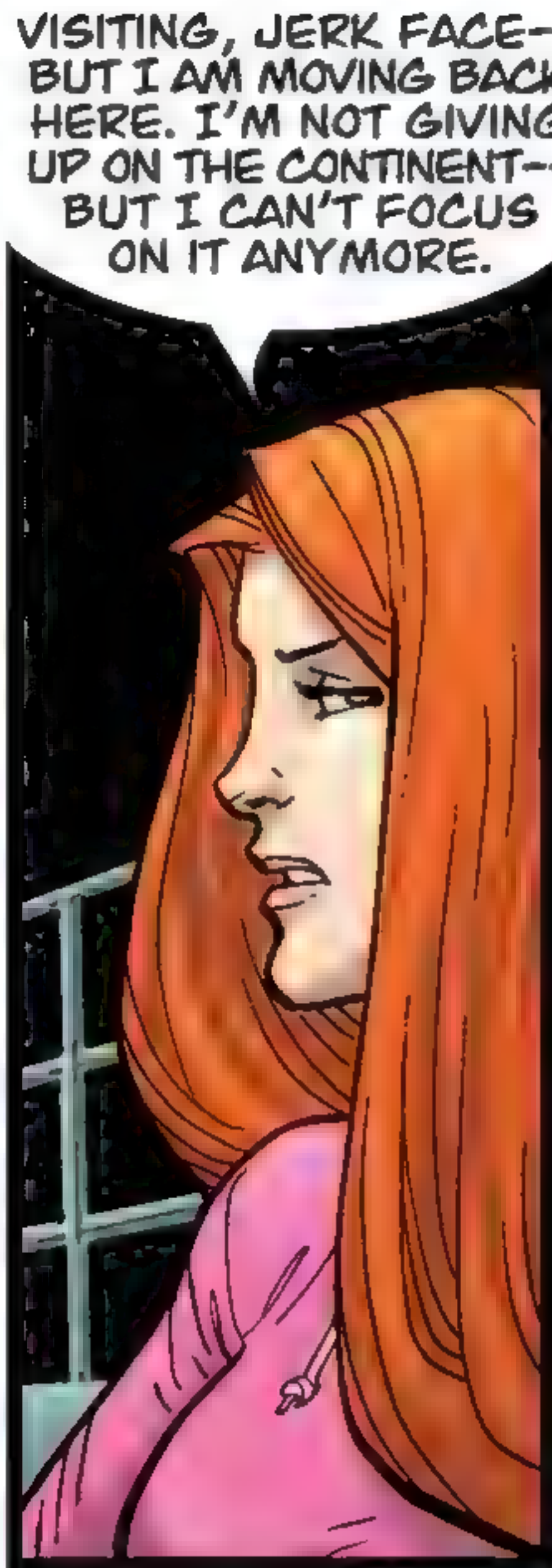
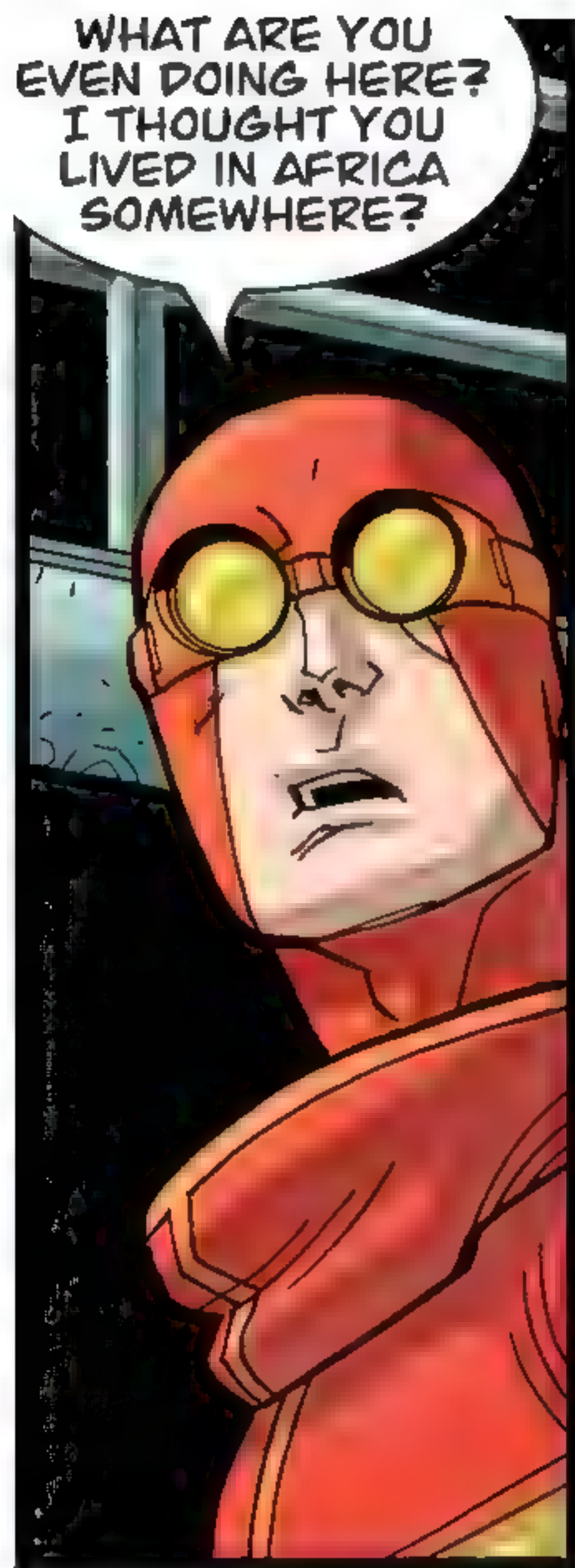
YEAH, I EXPECTED
MORE FROM KATE...
AND I CAN'T BELIEVE
SHAPESMITH STAYED
TOO--AFTER SEEING
WHAT CECIL DID TO
INVINCIBLE.

WE'RE
STILL
UNDECIDED
ON A NEW NAME.
I'VE GOT SOME
IDEAS... BUT
NOBODY LIKES
THEM.

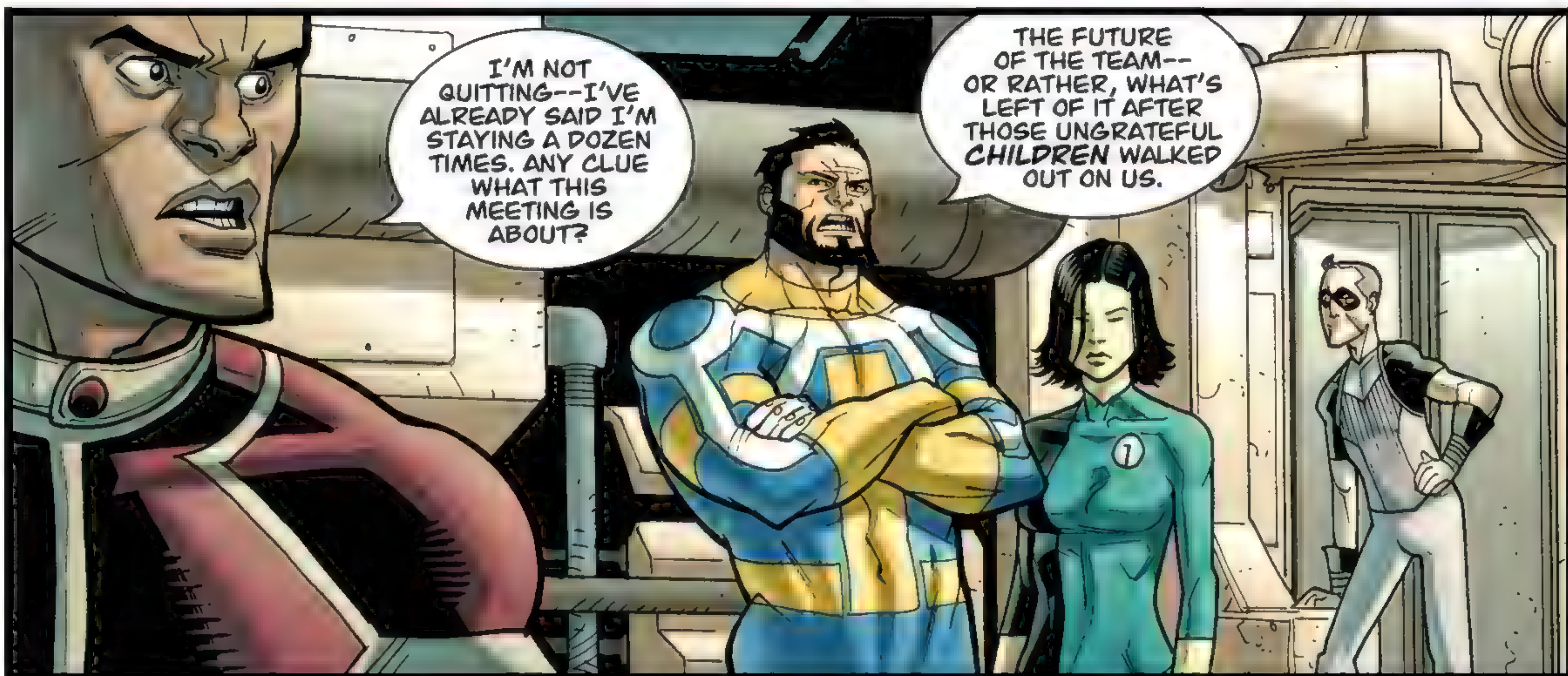
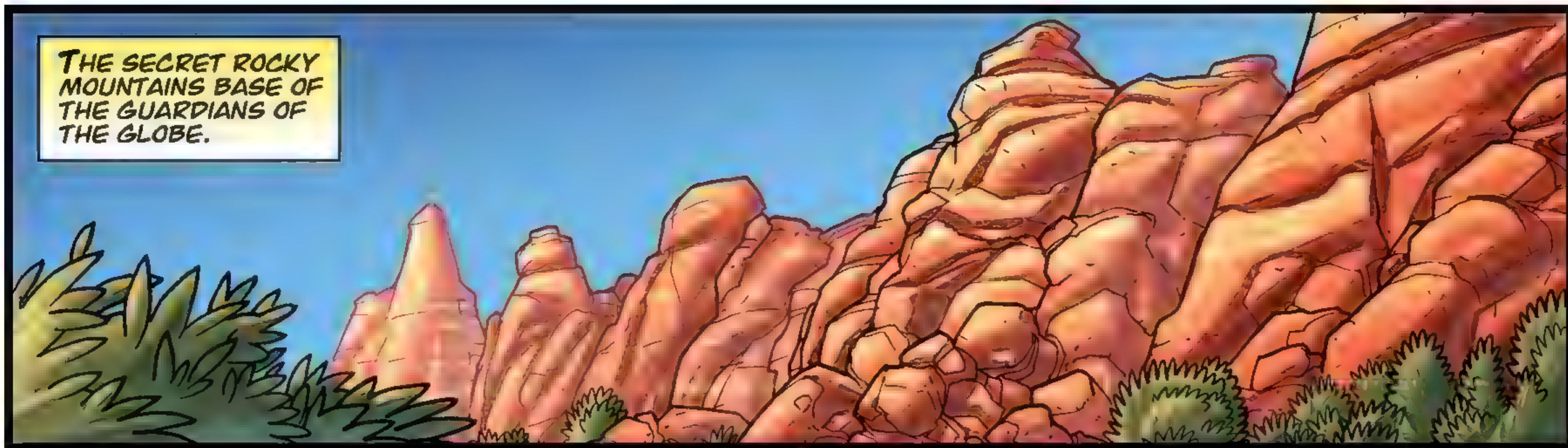


WE SURE
AS HELL AIN'T
GOING BY "THE
TEEN TEAM." AT
LEAST, NOT IF YOU
WANT ME ON
THE TEAM.

I BARELY
REMEMBER BEING
A TEENAGER--AND
JUST BEING AROUND
YOU KIDS MAKES ME FEEL
OLD ENOUGH AS IT IS.

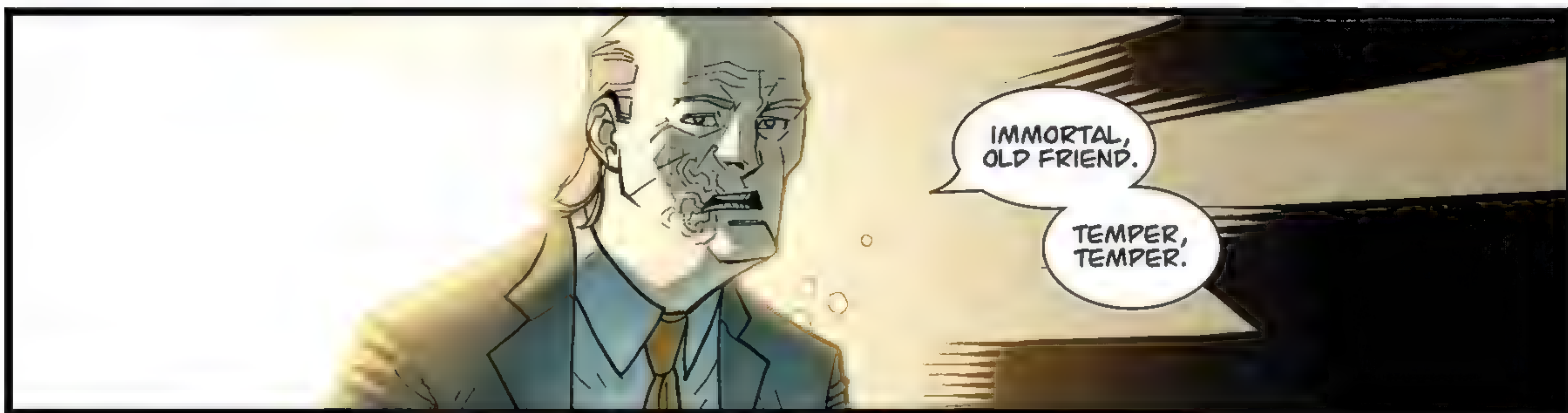


THE SECRET ROCKY MOUNTAINS BASE OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE.



I'M NOT QUITTING--I'VE ALREADY SAID I'M STAYING A DOZEN TIMES. ANY CLUE WHAT THIS MEETING IS ABOUT?

THE FUTURE OF THE TEAM-- OR RATHER, WHAT'S LEFT OF IT AFTER THOSE UNGRATEFUL CHILDREN WALKED OUT ON US.



IMMORTAL, OLD FRIEND.

TEMPER, TEMPER.



I KNOW IT'S QUITE A BLOW TO YOUR EGO--MINE TOO-- TO HAVE SUCH A MASSIVE EXODUS FROM THE TEAM, BUT TRUST ME, IN TIME-- YOU'LL SEE THAT WE'RE MUCH BETTER OFF WITHOUT THOSE WHO ARE NO LONGER WITH US.

THIS WAS NEVER A TEAM OF QUITTERS.

STILL, WE ARE A BIT SHORT HANDED, WHICH I HOPE TO REMEDY-- STARTING NOW.



THE SKYSCRAPER
HEADQUARTERS
OF TITAN.

THIS IS
NOT GOING
TO BE
EASY.

REGARDLESS, I FEEL
THE NEED TO REMIND
YOU THAT THE CLOCK IS
TICKING. MR. LIU IS A
HIGH-RANKING AND VERY
POWERFUL MEMBER OF THE
ORDER. HIS AGENT MULTI-
PAUL IS STILL IMPRISONED--
DESPITE HIS REQUEST
FOR YOU TO REMEDY
THAT.

YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
IN THE ORDER
IS NOT SET IN
STONE--IT WOULD
NOT TAKE MUCH
FOR THEM TO
ASK FOR YOUR
REMOVAL
AND--

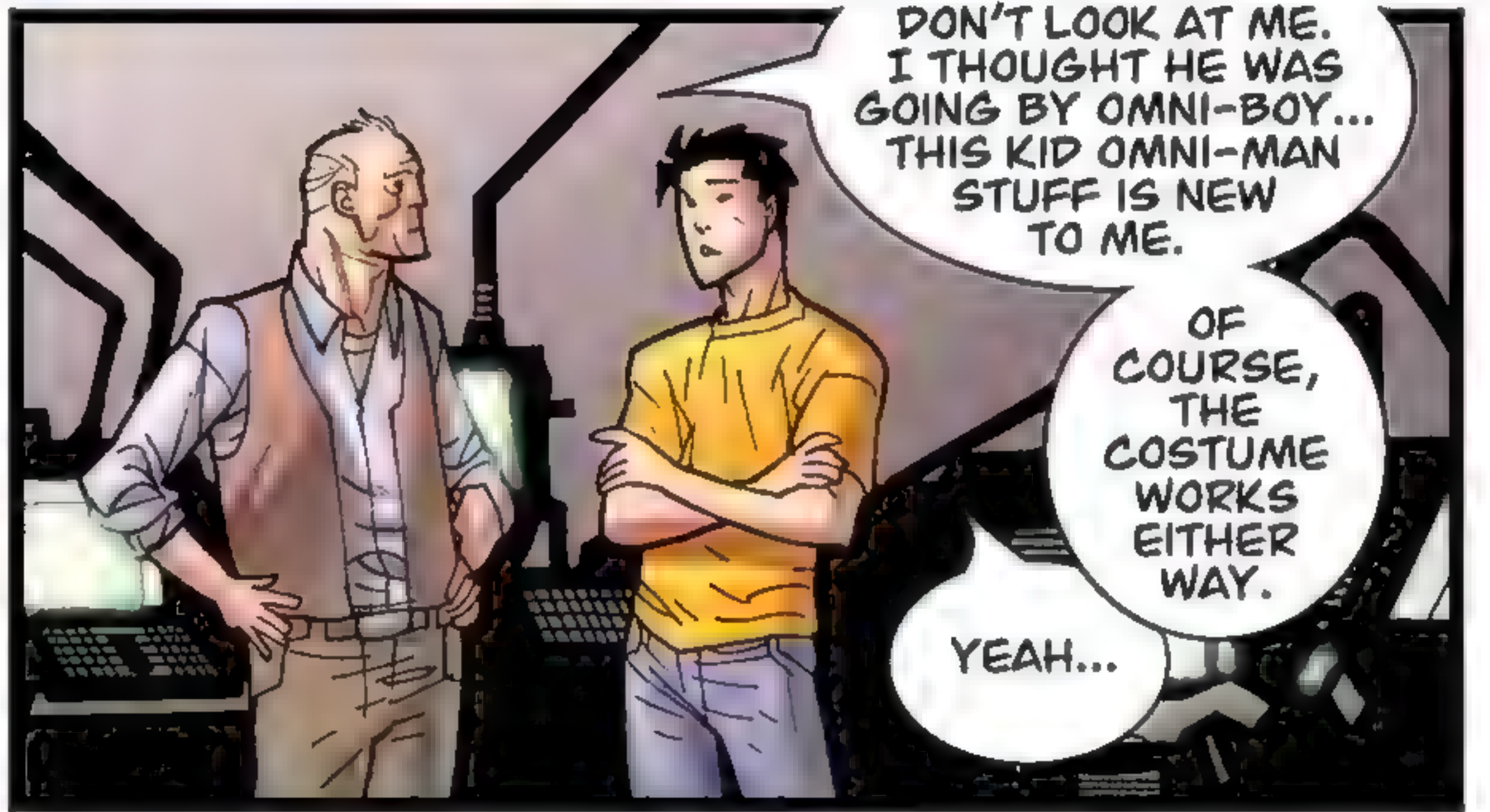
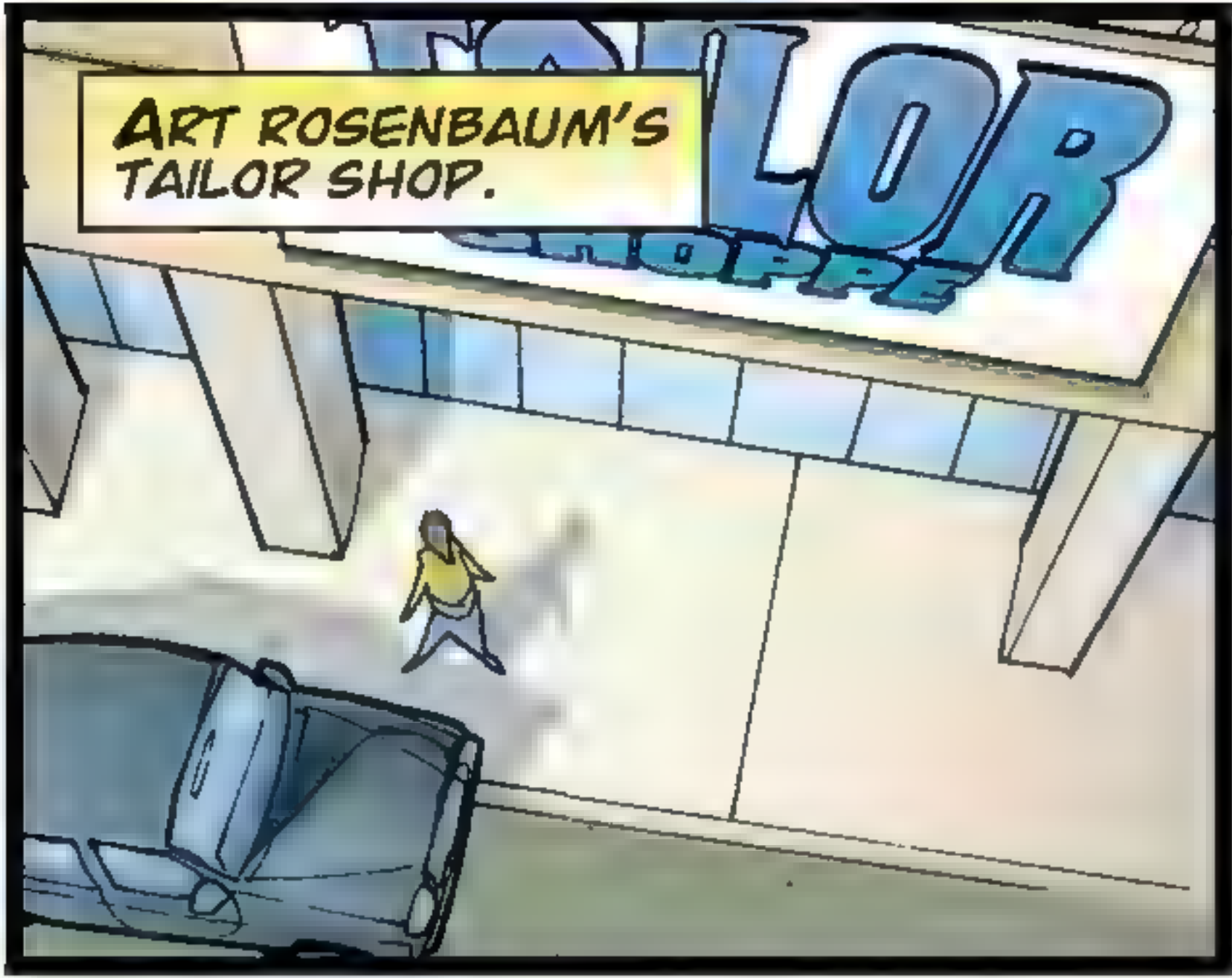
DO NOT ASSUME
I'M AS BLIND AS
MACHINE HEAD
WAS TO YOUR
TREACHEROUS
WAYS.

I WON'T
BE SO EASILY
OVERTAKEN.

KR-OOM!!!

U--
UNDERSTOOD.

I
THOUGHT
SO.





ART ISN'T GOING TO TELL YOU THIS, BECAUSE HE'S THE ONLY NORMAL PERSON ON THIS PLANET WHO DOESN'T HATE DAD...

...BUT YOU CAN'T HAVE "OMNI-MAN" IN YOUR NAME. YOU JUST CAN'T.

WHY NOT?



BECAUSE EVERYONE ON THIS PLANET HATES HIM!



HE'S MY FATHER AND I WANT TO HONOR HIM.

IF PEOPLE SEE ME HELPING THEM--SAVING THEM UNDER HIS NAME, WON'T THAT START TO REDEEM HIM?



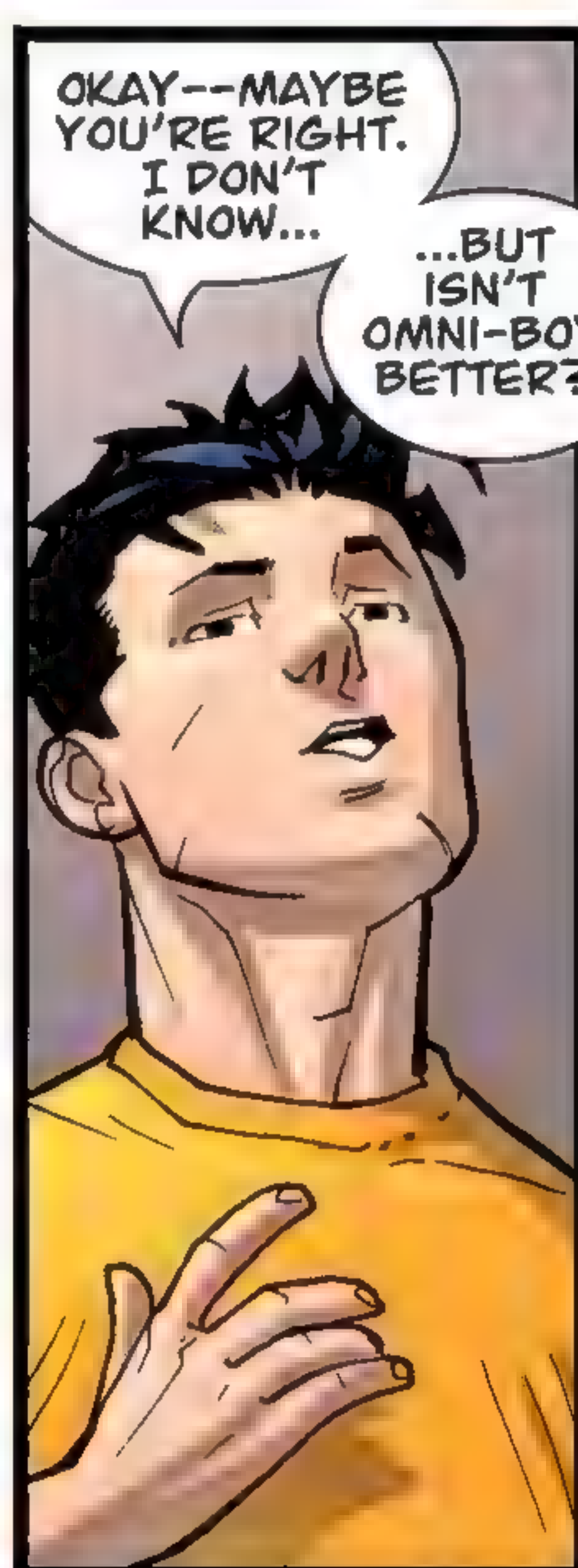
ISN'T THAT SOMETHING WE SHOULD BE TRYING TO DO?

MAYBE.



I KNOW WHAT HE DID HERE--BUT ON MY HOME WORLD, HE WAS A GREAT MAN, LOVED BY ALL. HE HELPED YOU PROTECT US.

HE'S GOOD NOW. I KNOW IT.



OKAY--MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. I DON'T KNOW...

...BUT ISN'T OMNI-BOY BETTER?

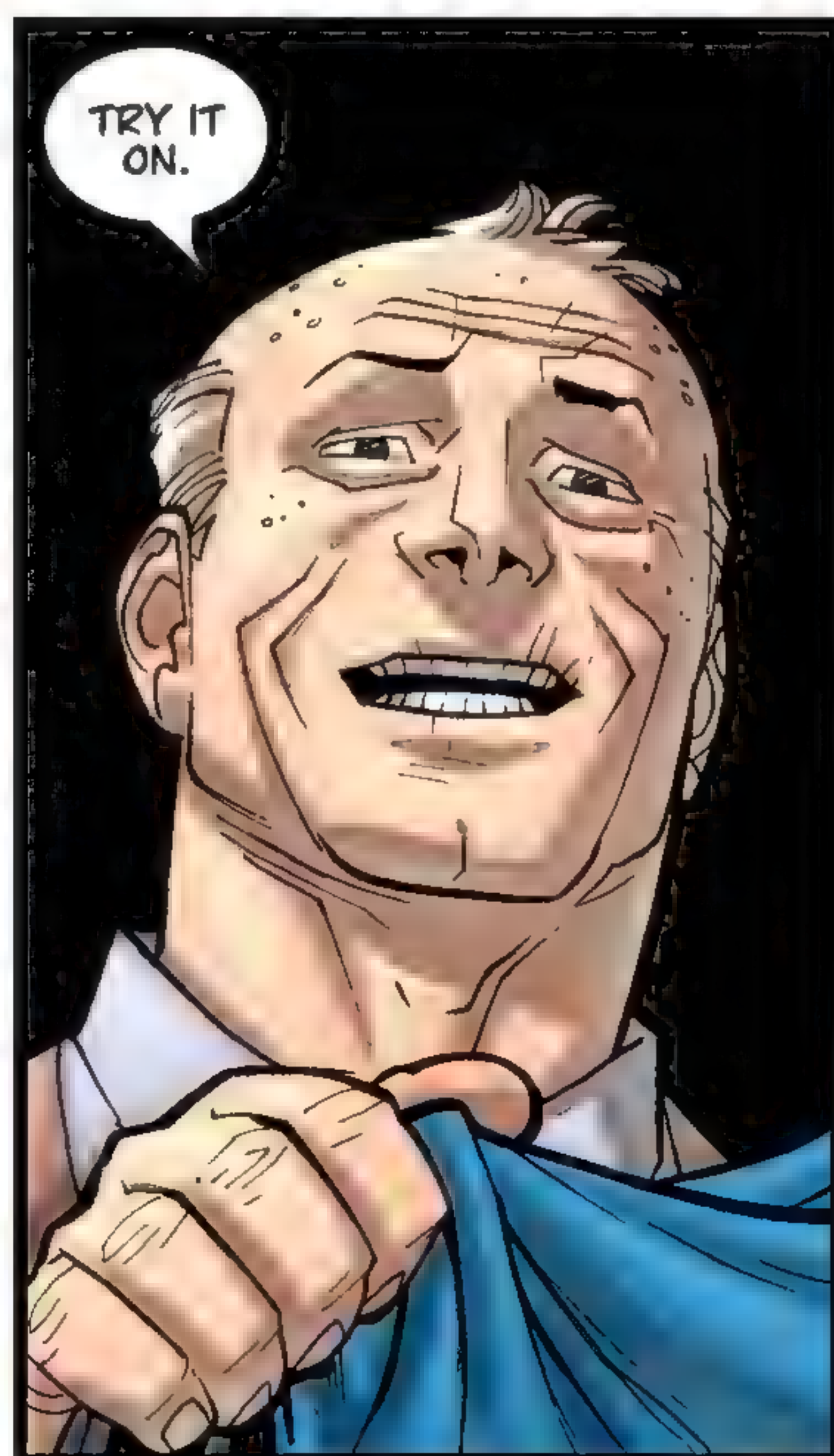


OKAY, I CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER AND YOU GAVE ME ENOUGH TIME TO PUT ON A COUPLE FINISHING TOUCHES.

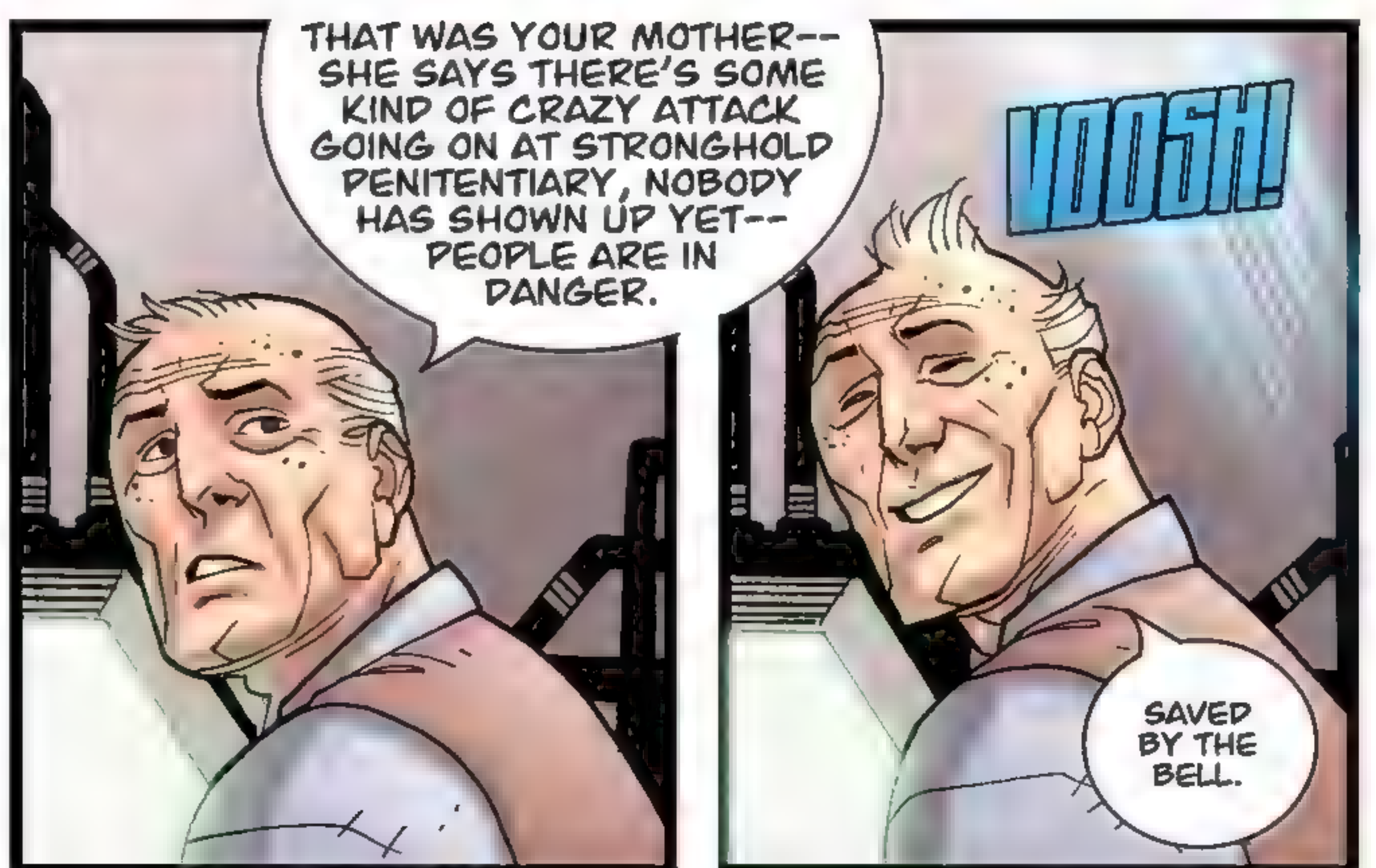
MARK, TRY THIS ON.

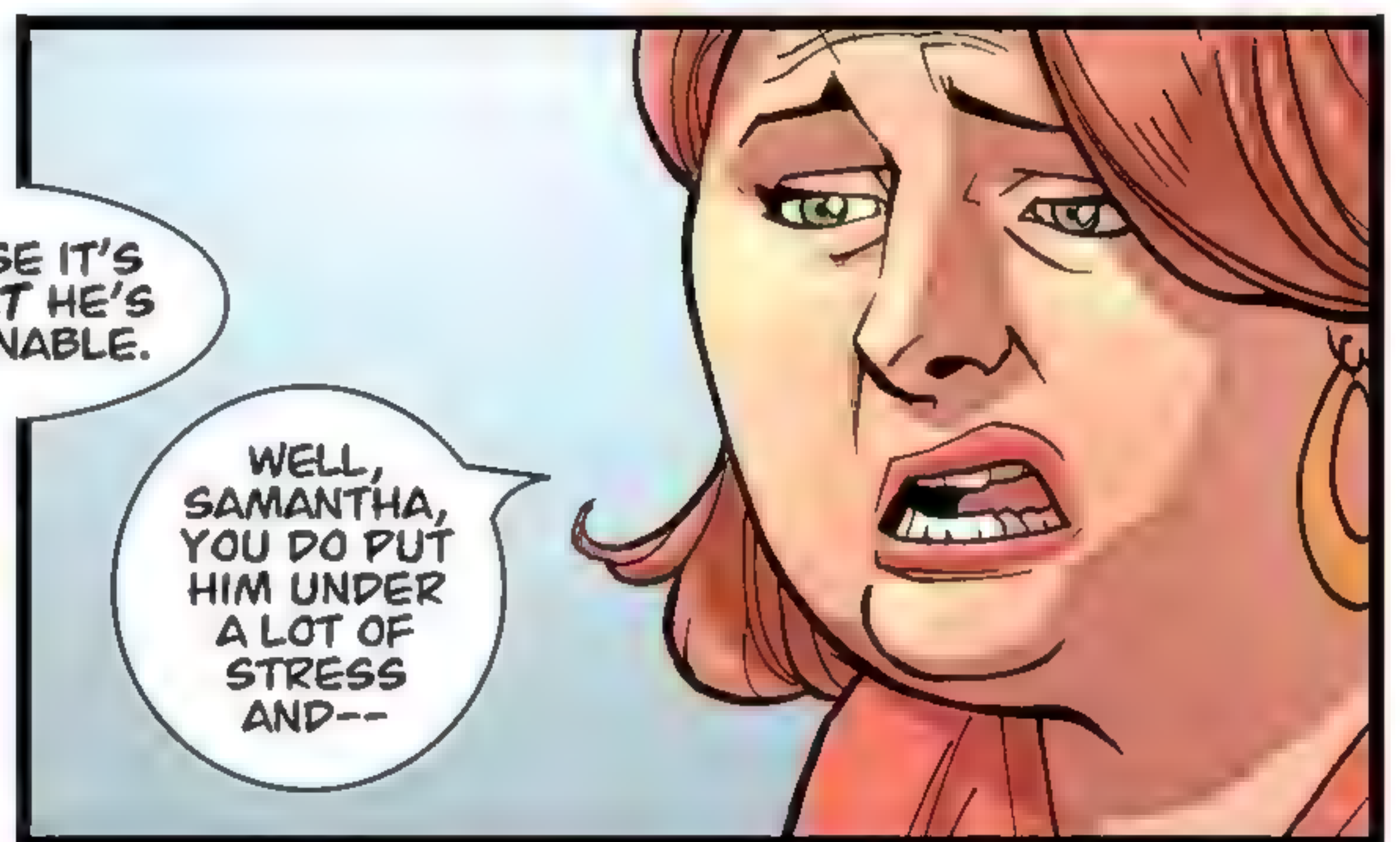
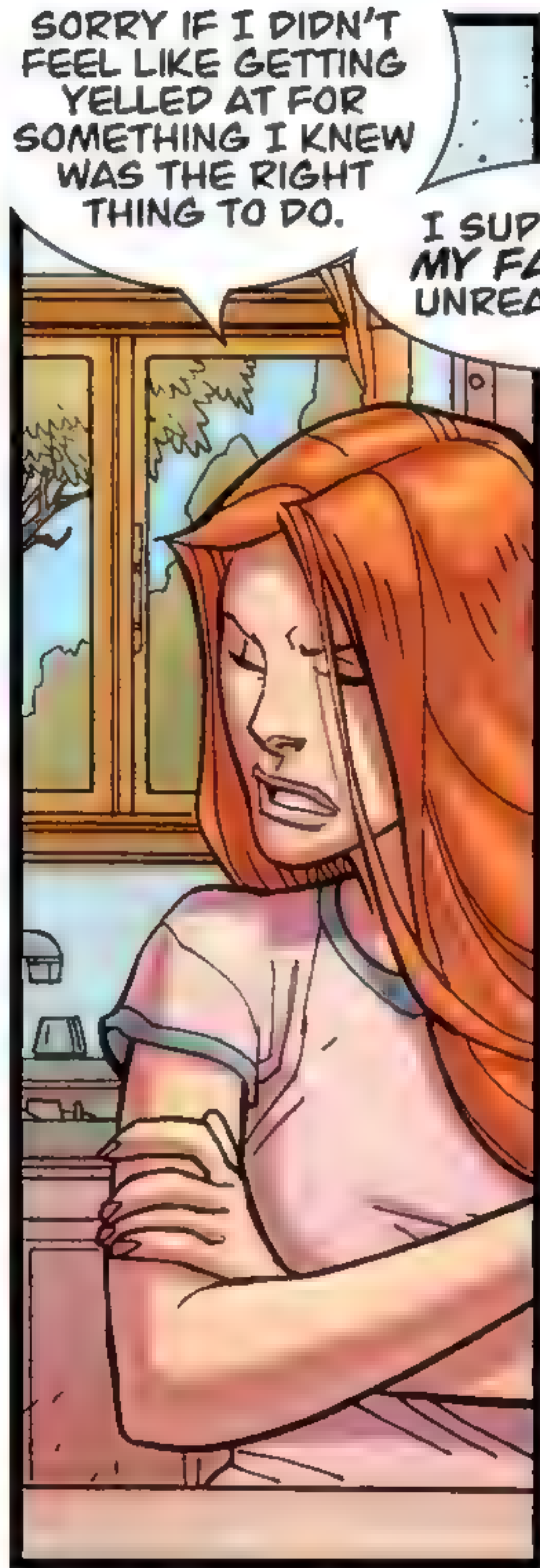
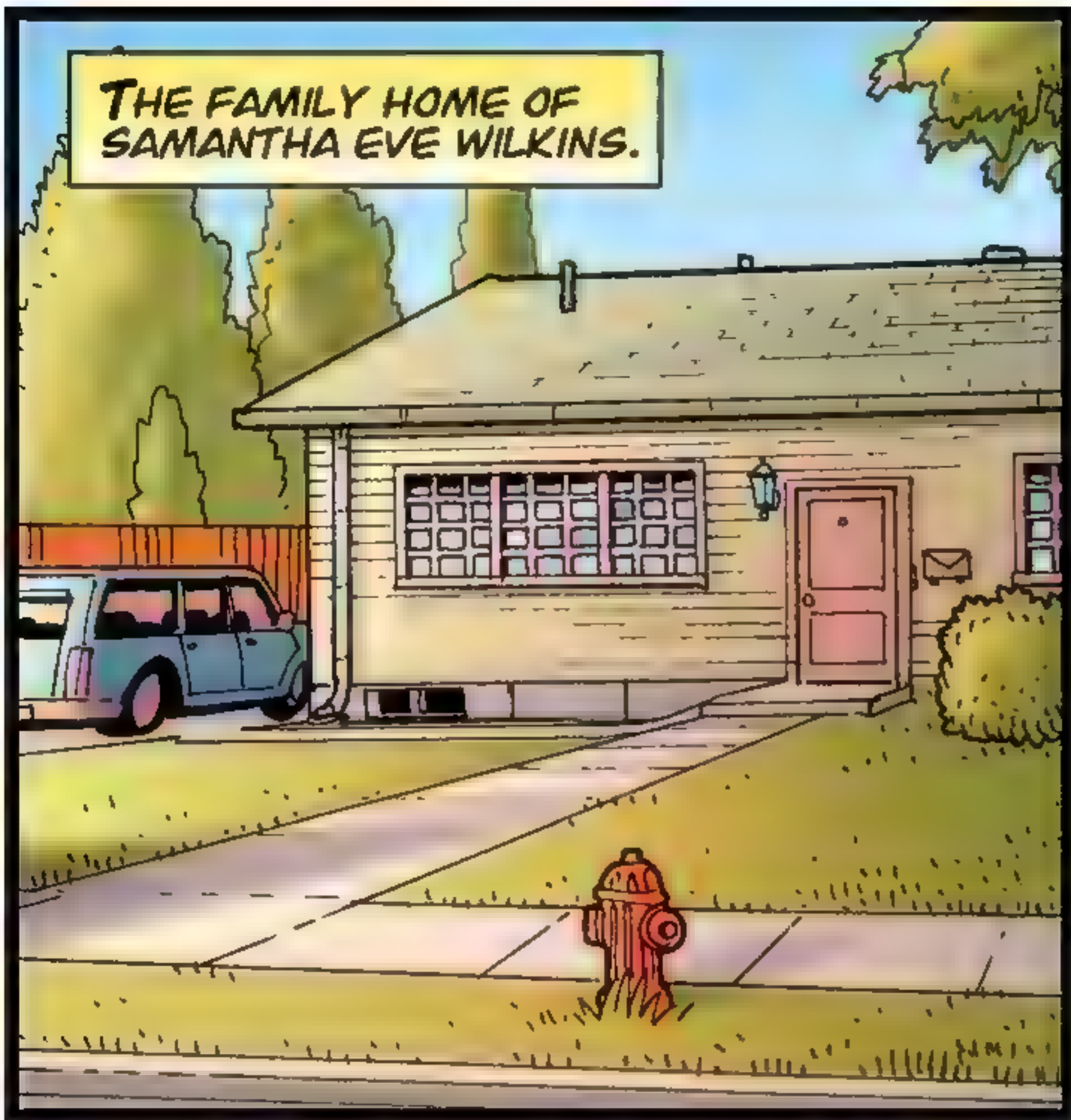


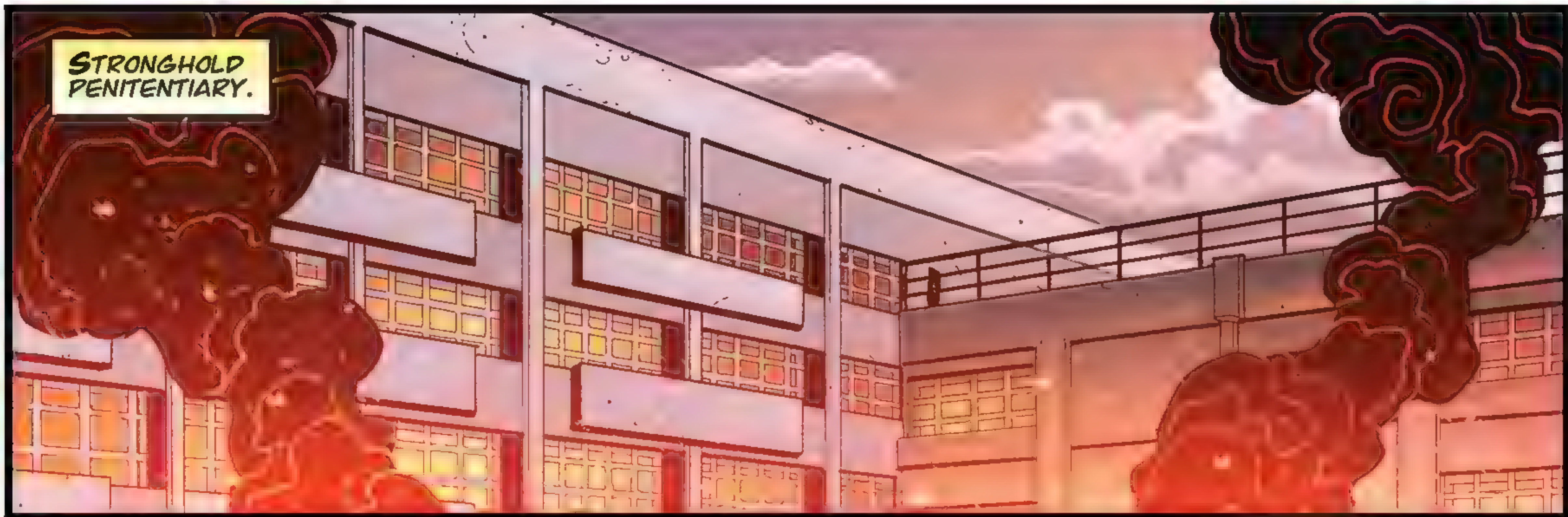
HUH? WHAT IS THAT? THAT'S NOT MY--

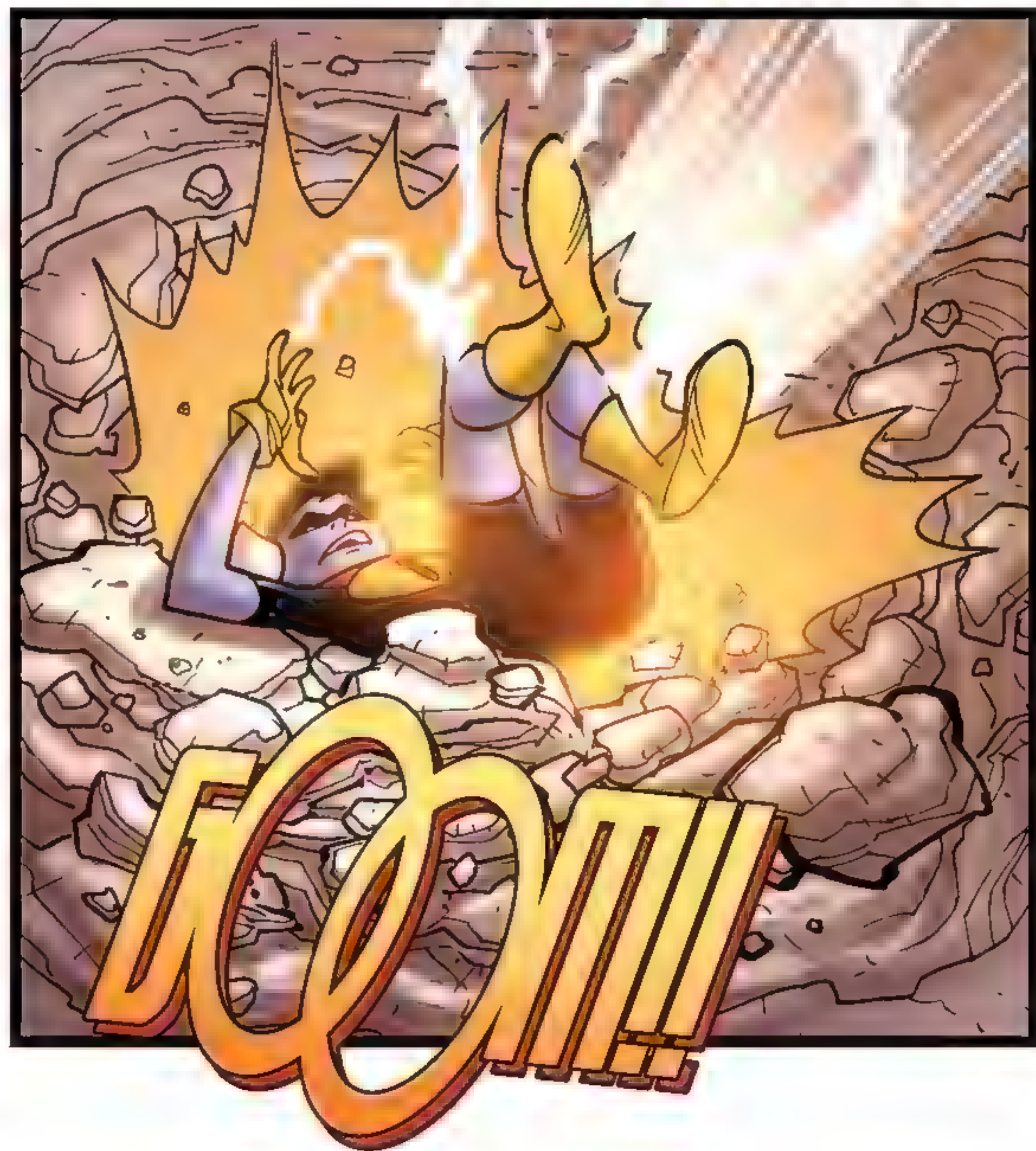
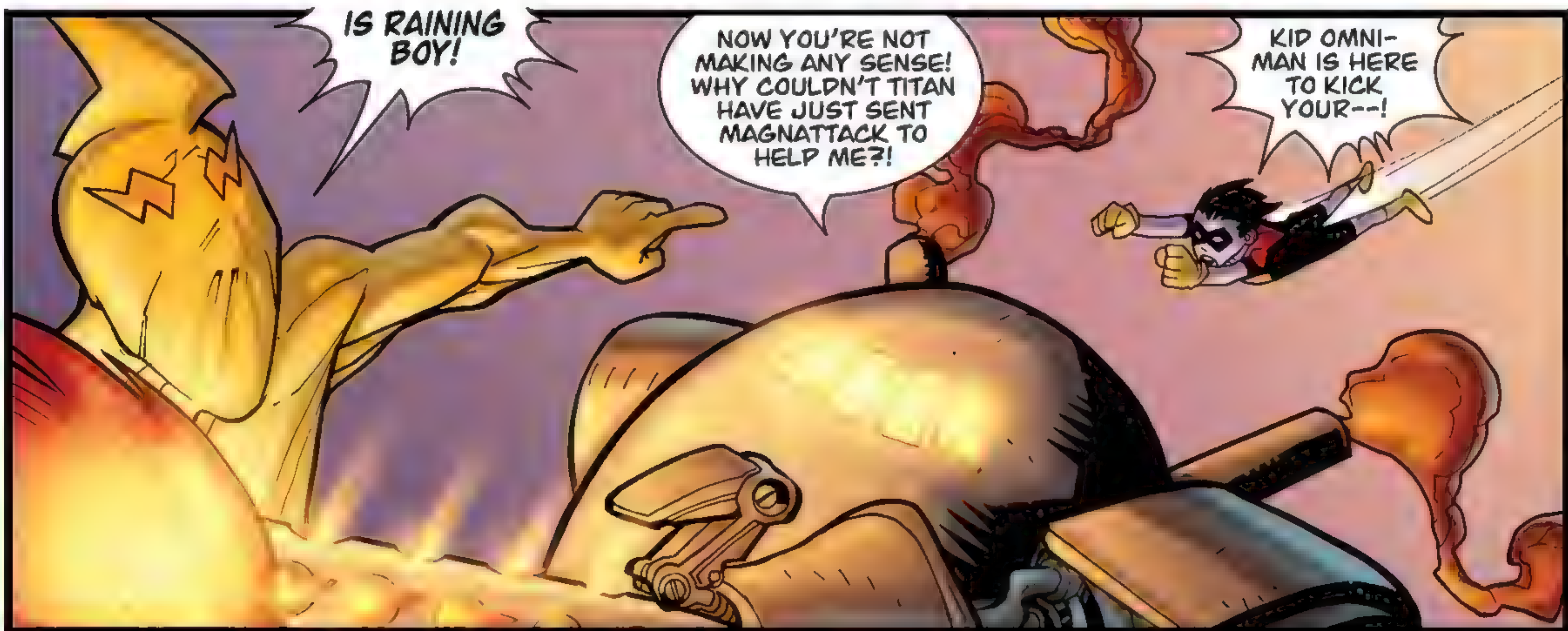


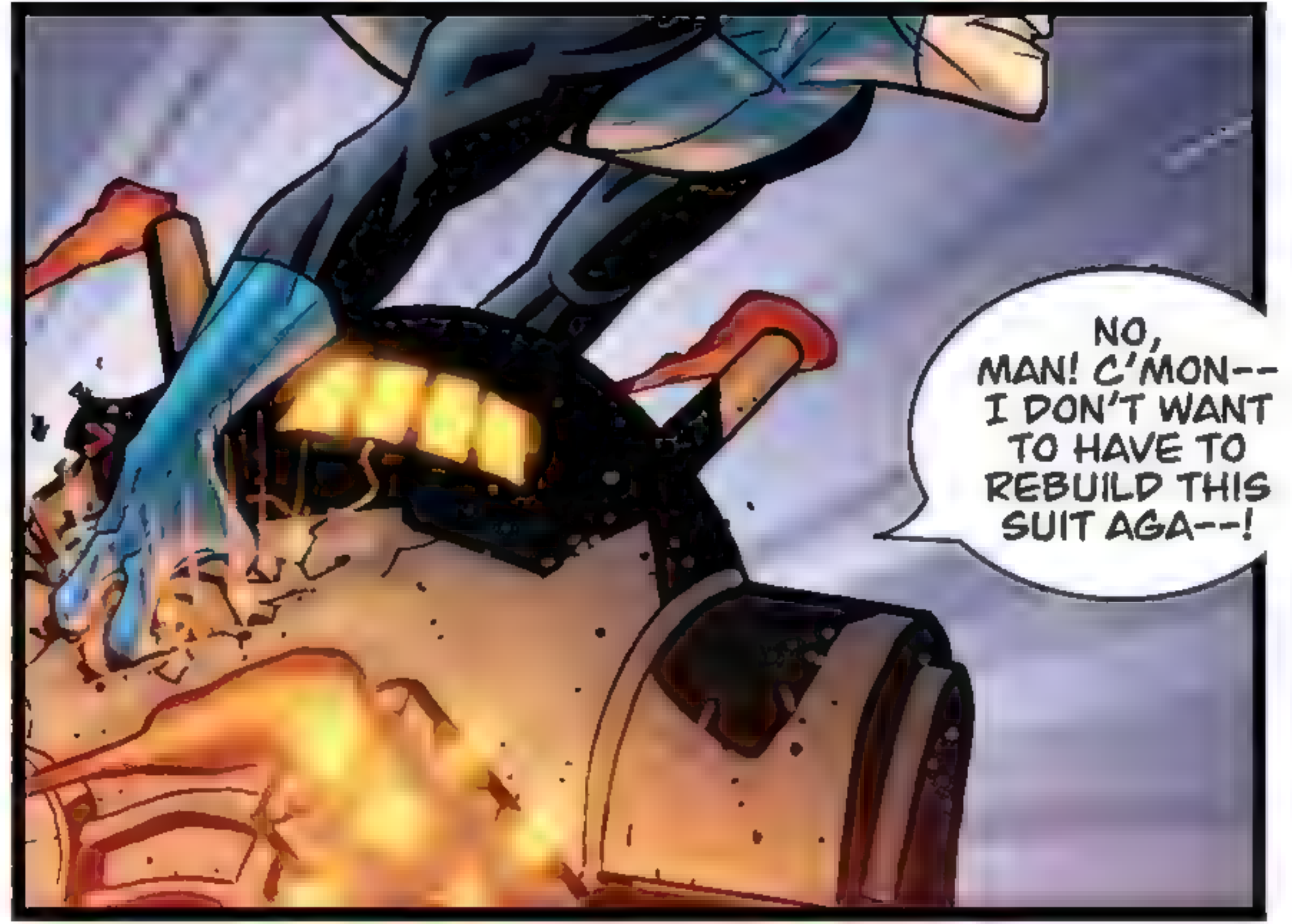
TRY IT ON.

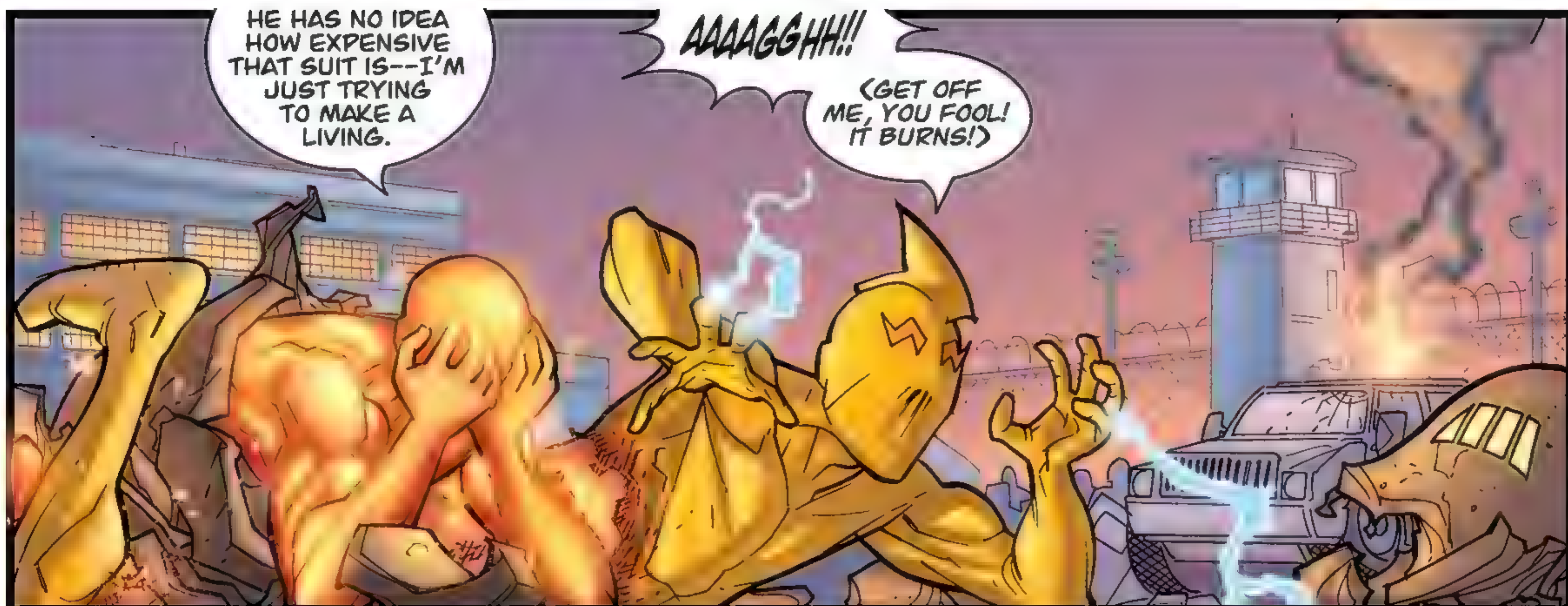


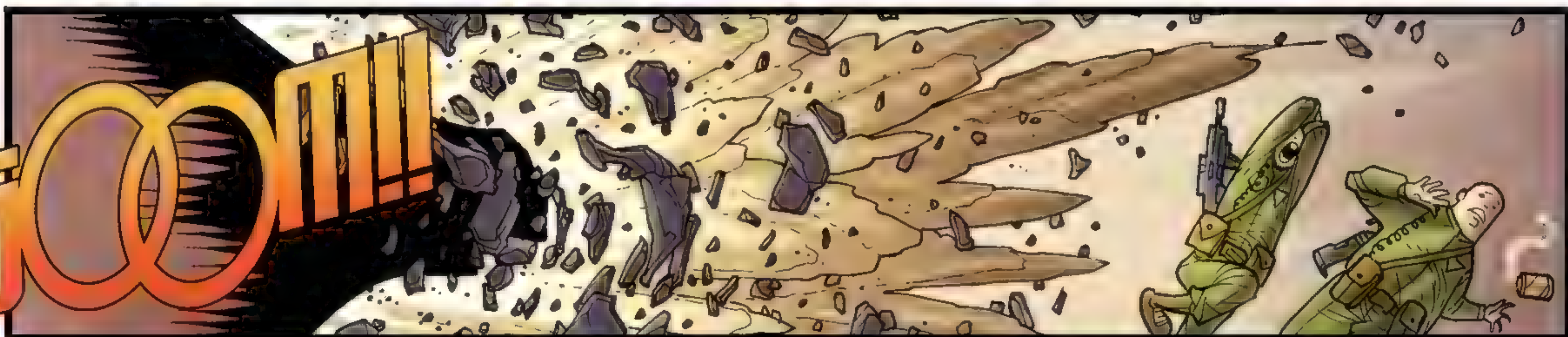
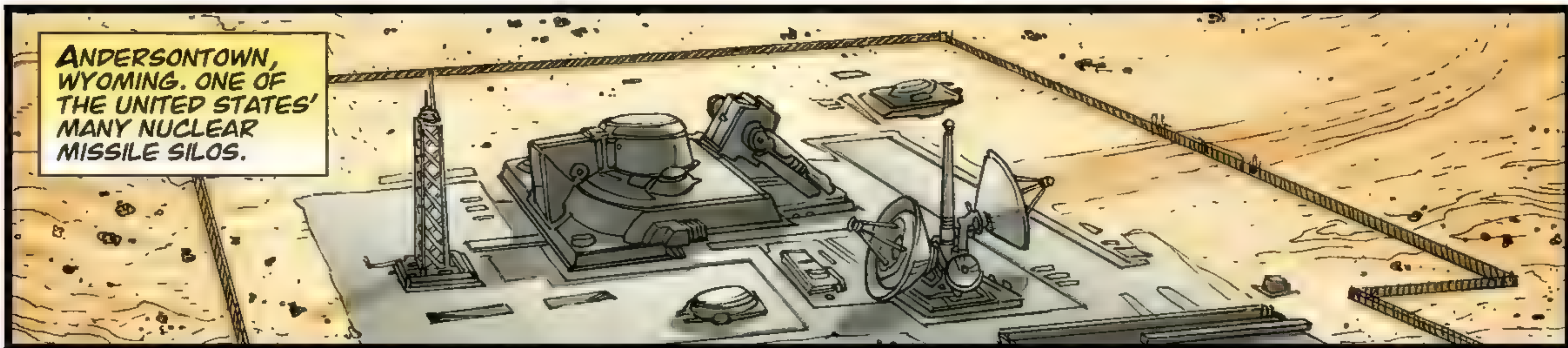














WOW.

WHAT?

YOU'RE
ALREADY
GETTING
FASTER.

REALLY?



YEAH. I'M NOT
FLYING SLOW
ENOUGH TO ANNOY
ME AND YOU'RE
STILL KEEPING
UP.

YOU HAVEN'T
GOTTEN MUCH
FASTER--BUT ENOUGH
TO NOTICE, WHICH IS
CRAZY. I CAN'T BELIEVE
I CAN TELL A DIFFERENCE
FROM EARLIER TODAY.



COOL.

IT MUST
BE YOUR REAL
MOM'S GENES.
HER ALIEN RACE
LEARNED AND
ADAPTED AT A
RIDICULOUS RATE
TO ACCOMMODATE
THEIR EXTREMELY
SHORT LIFE-
SPAN.



THAT MUST
BE MAKING YOUR
VILTRUMITE
ABILITIES KICK IN
AND ADVANCE
FASTER.



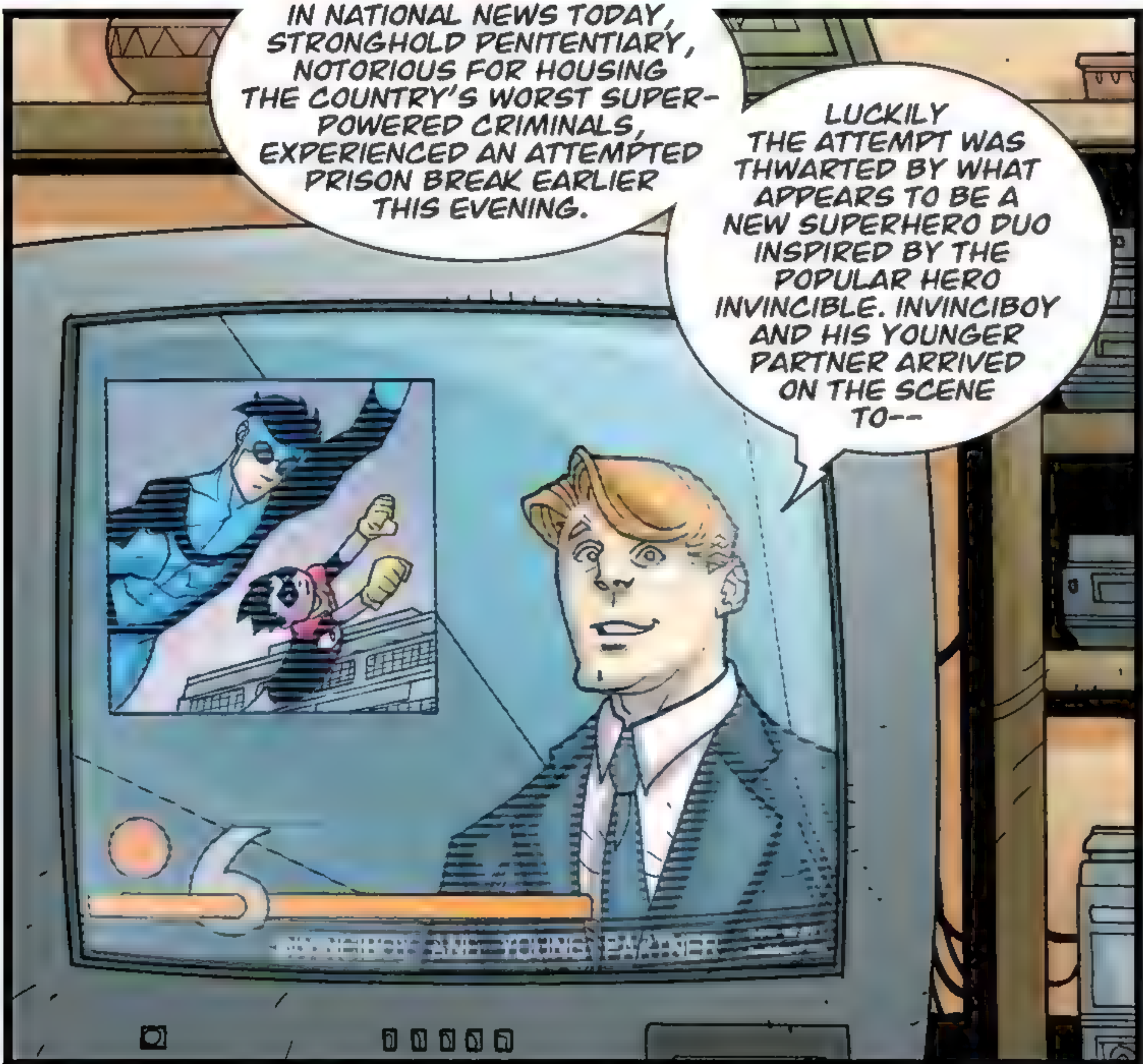
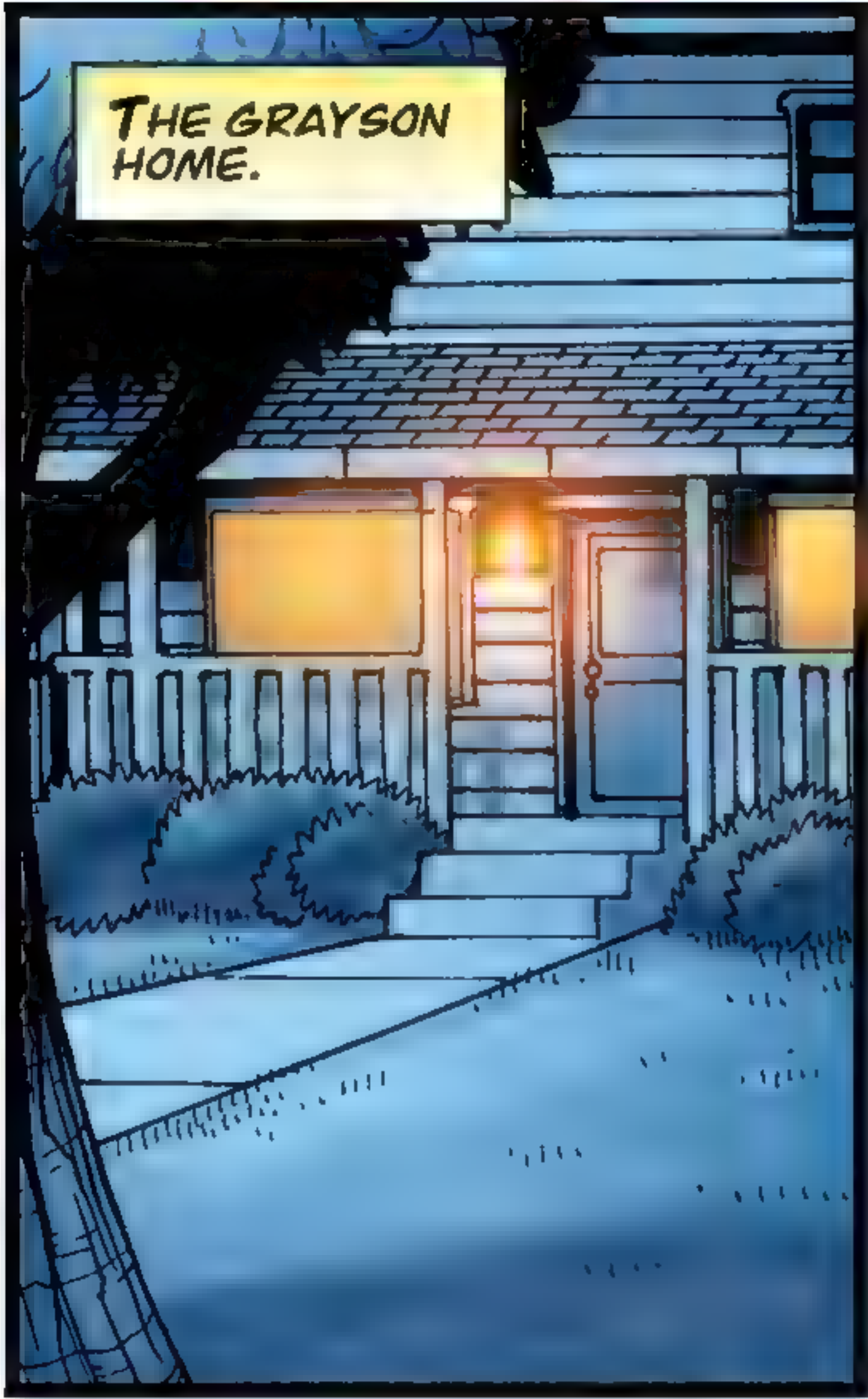
AWESOME.

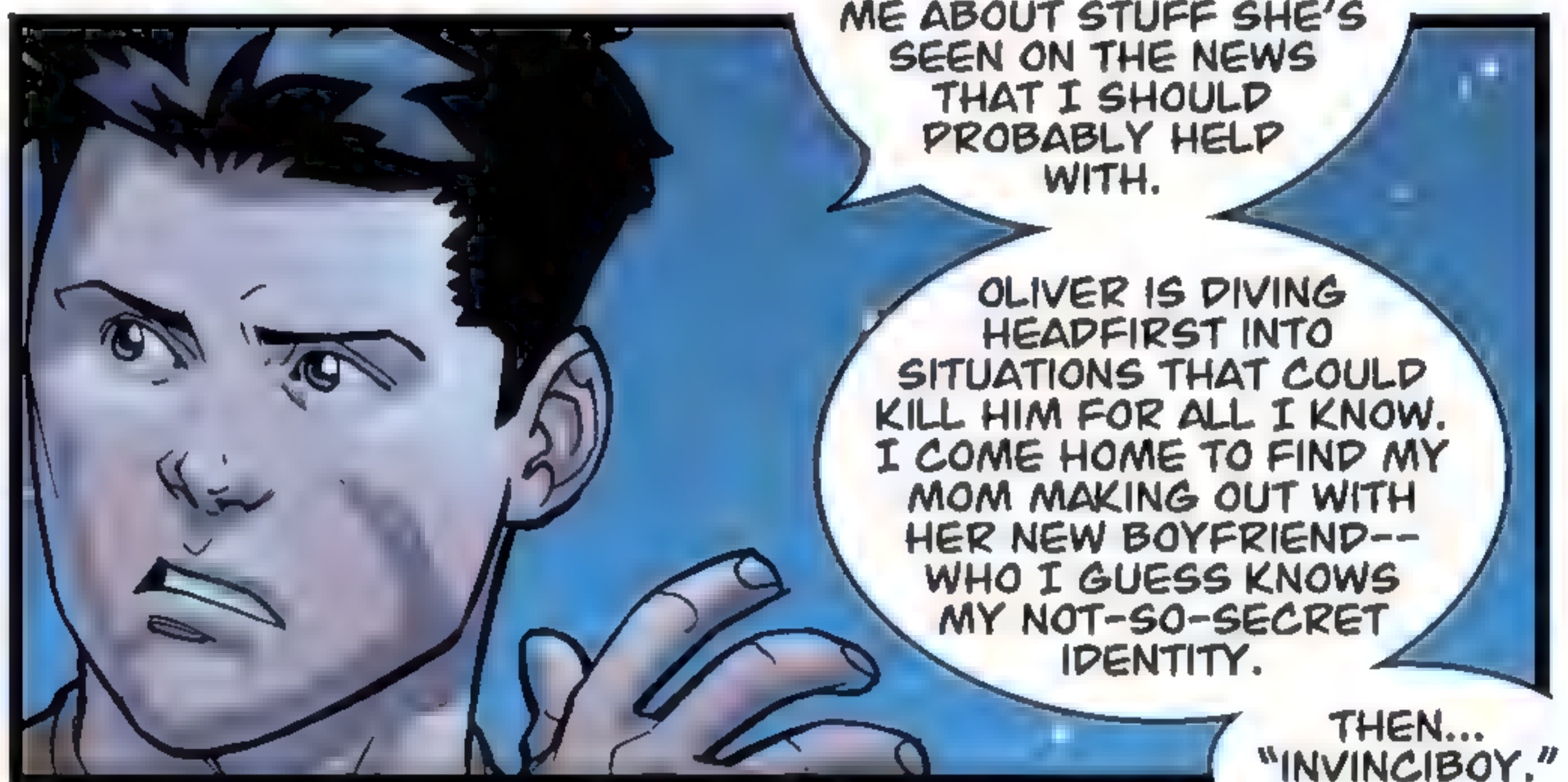
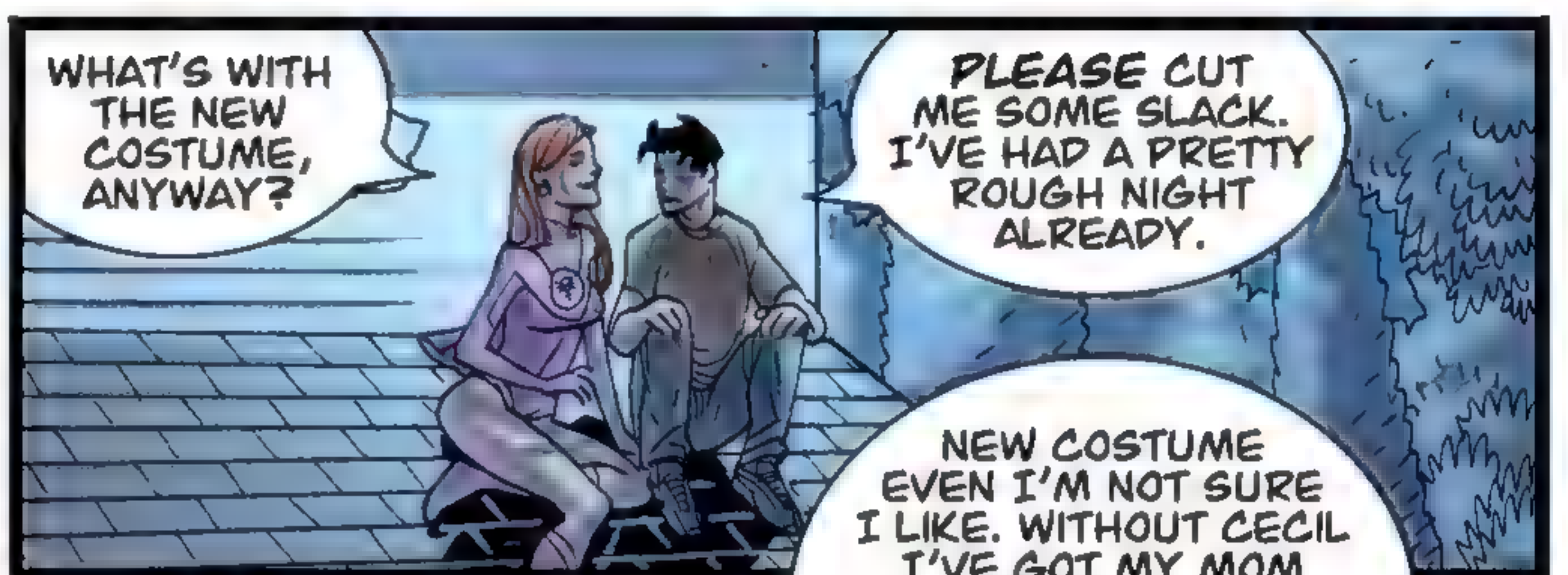
I THINK
WE SHOULD GO
TO THIS HOT DOG
PLACE IN HAWAII
TOMORROW. DAD
TOOK ME THERE
ONCE... IT'S
GREAT.



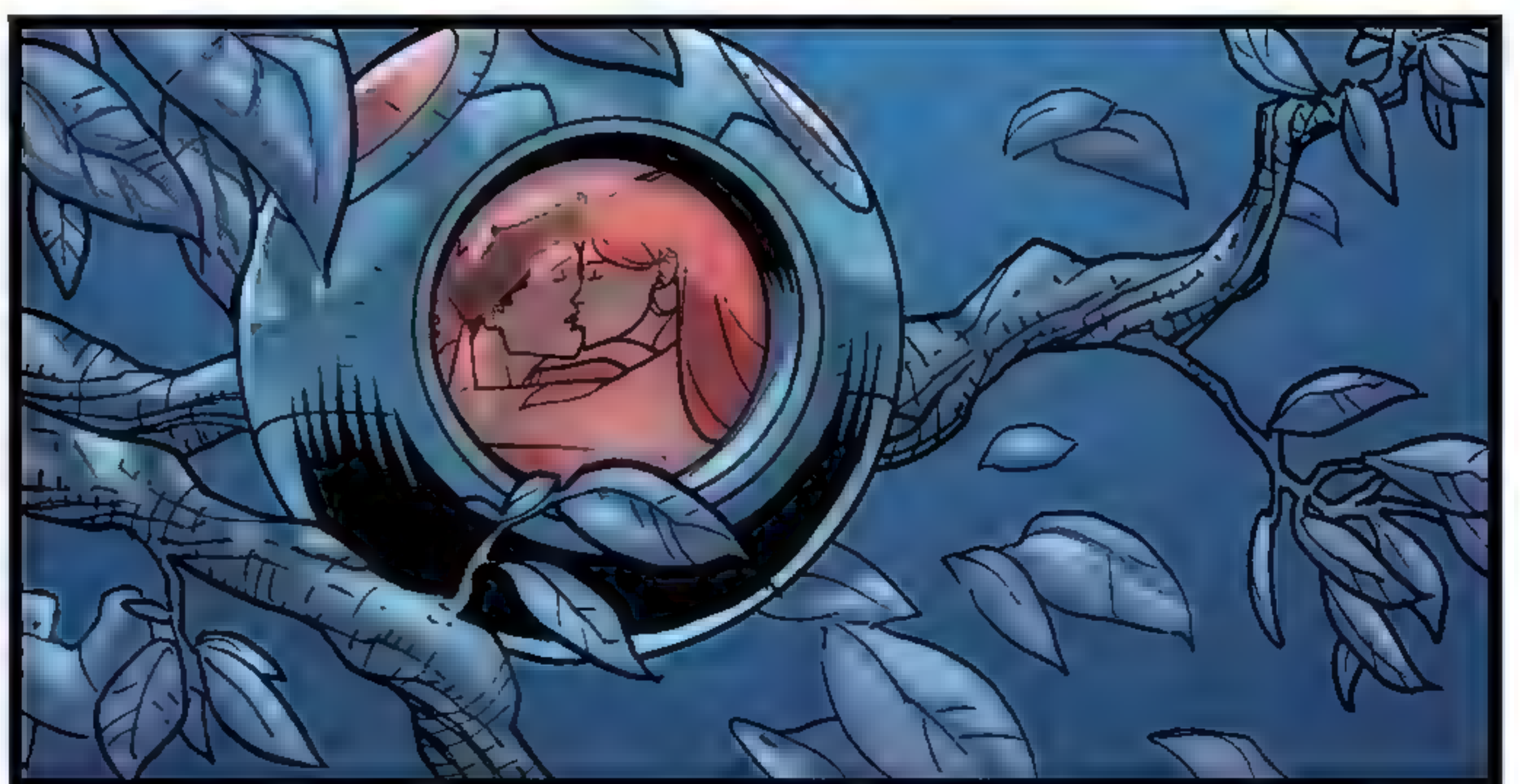
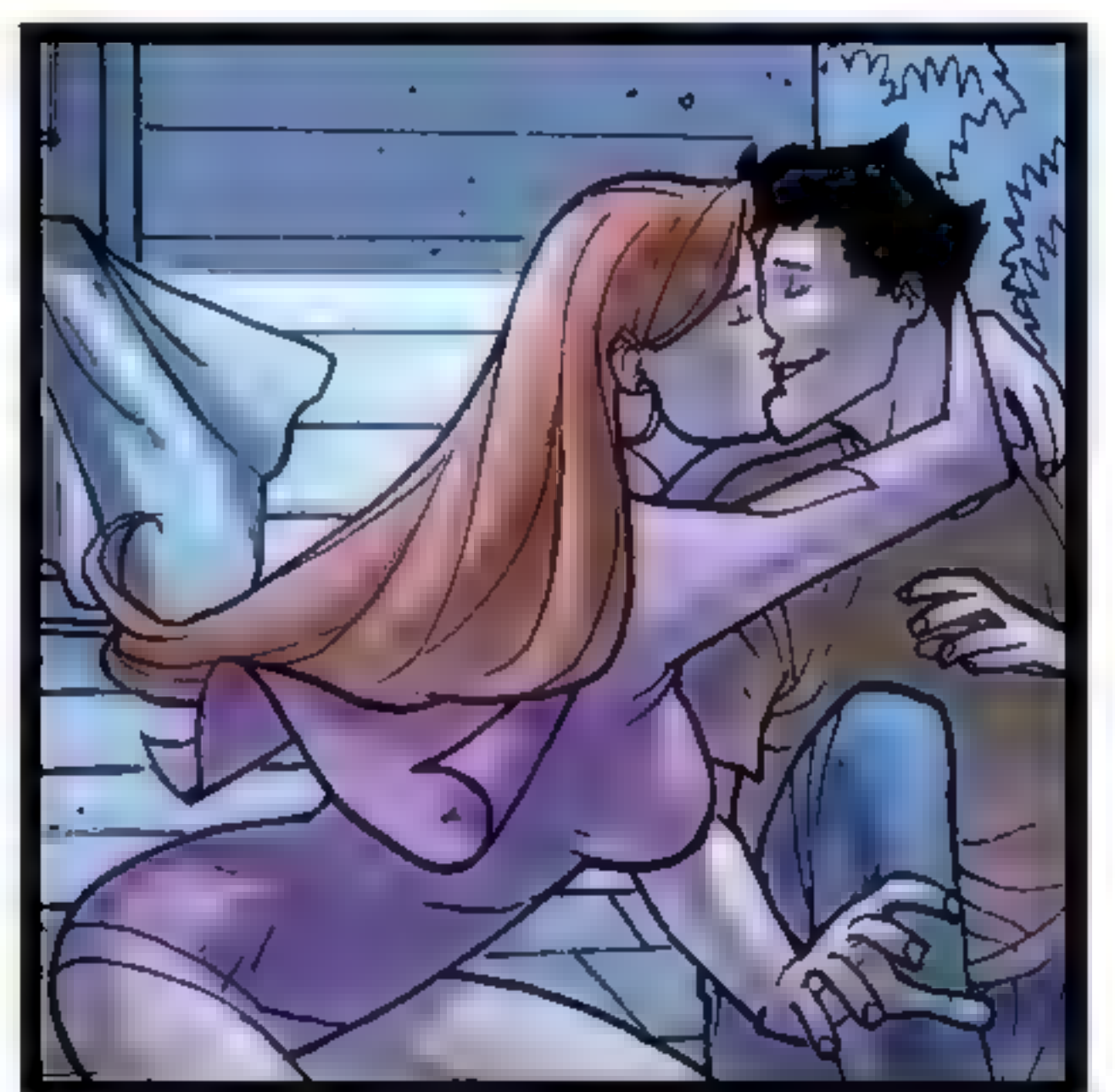
SO...
YOU'RE
NOT STILL
MAD AT
ME?

NO.





THEN...
INVINCIBOY.





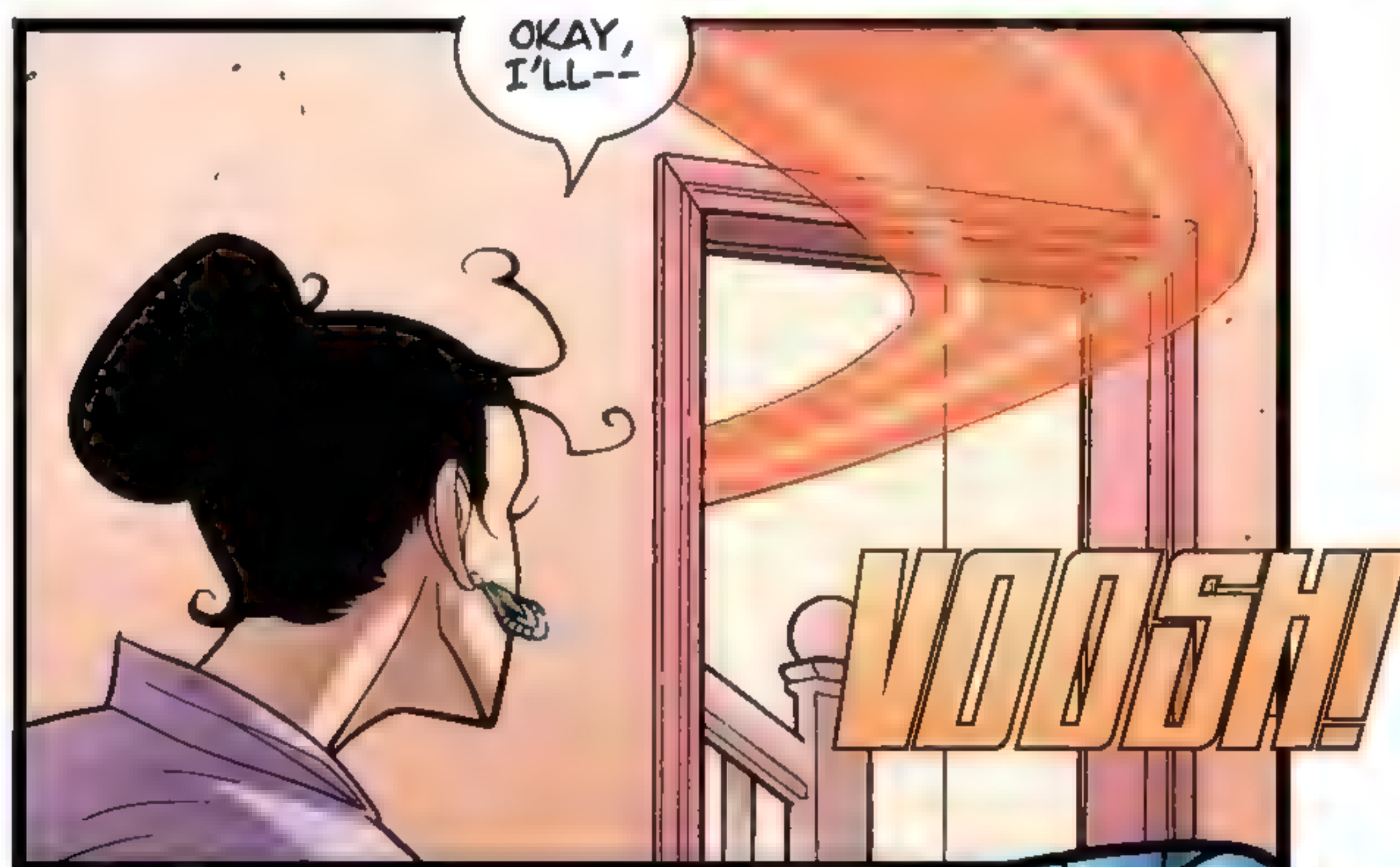
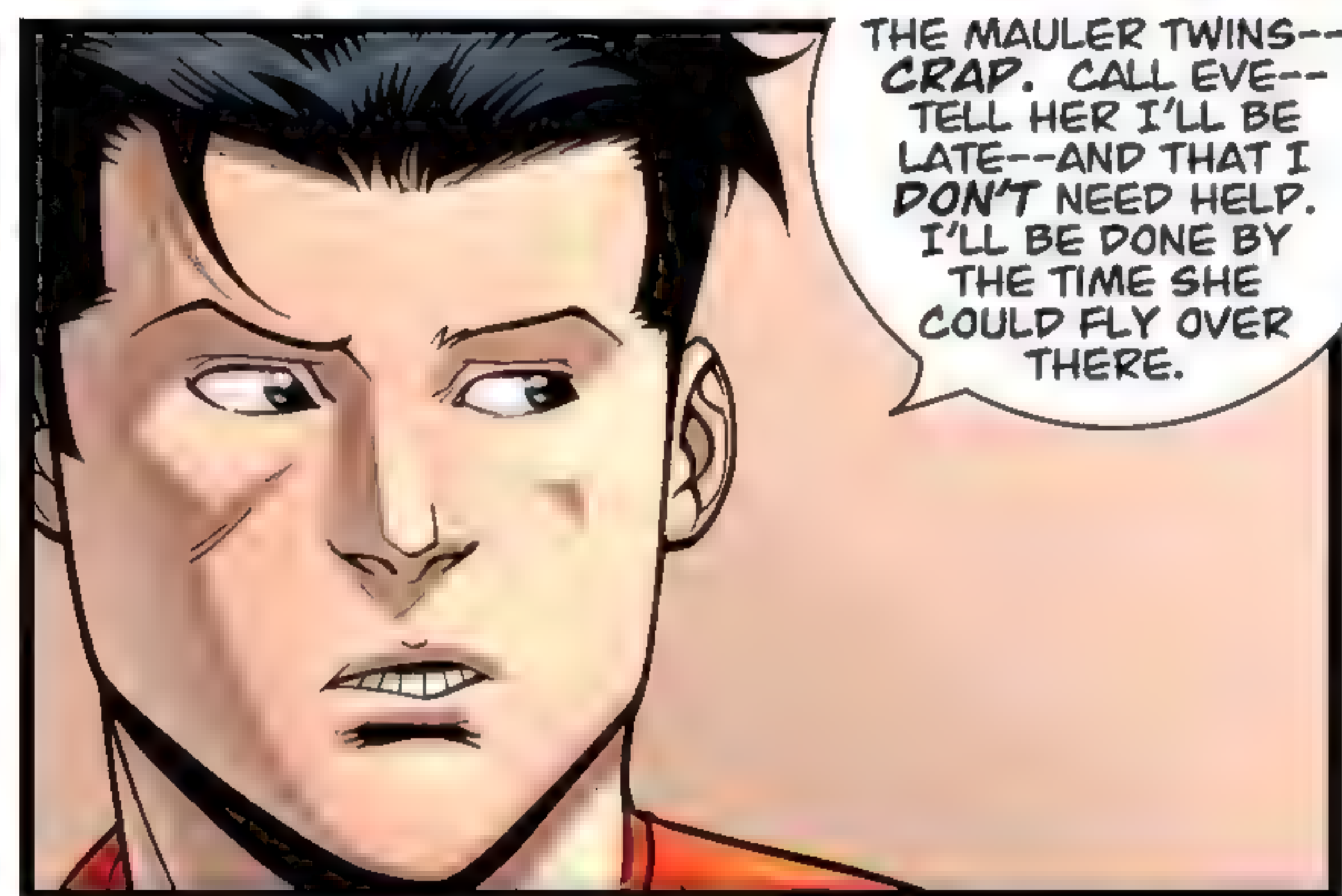
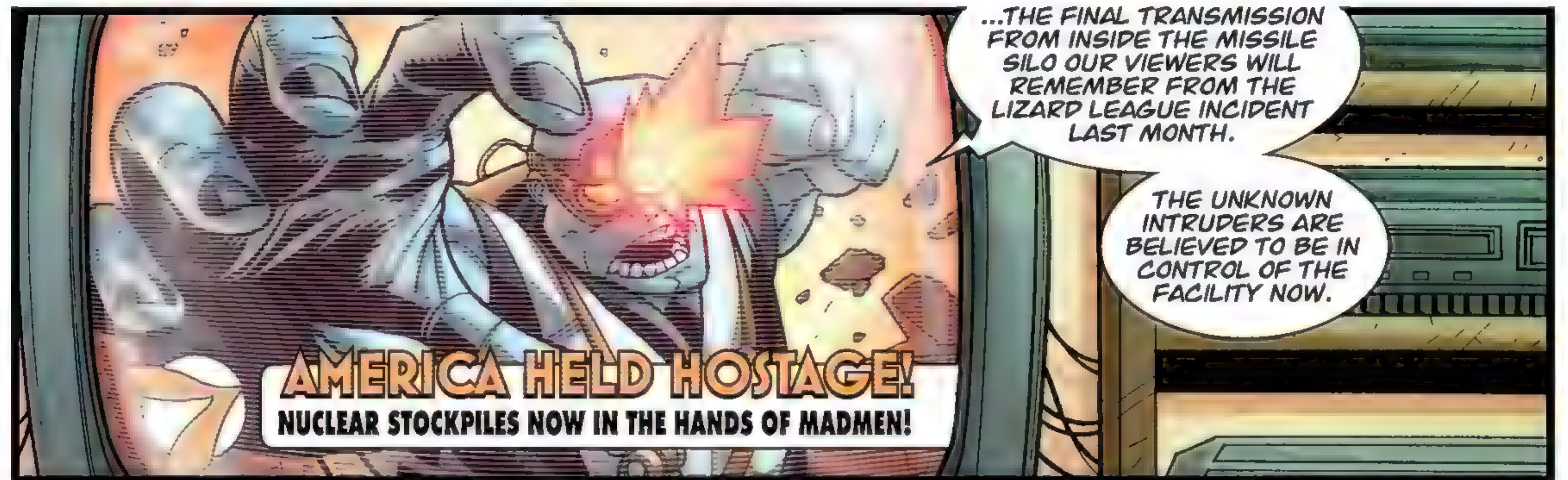
YOUNG
LOVE...

...HOW
INTERESTING.



CHAPTER 52







I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED---

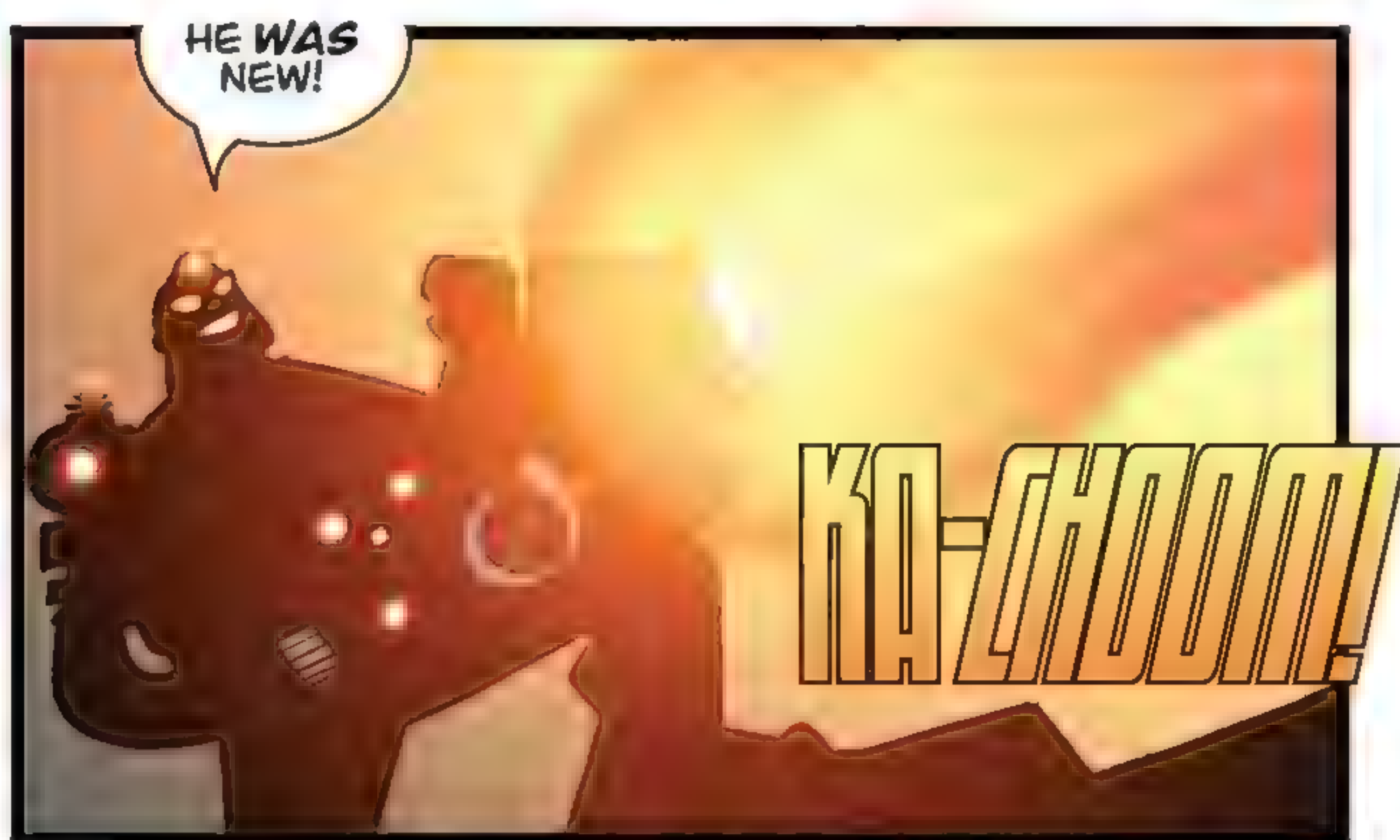
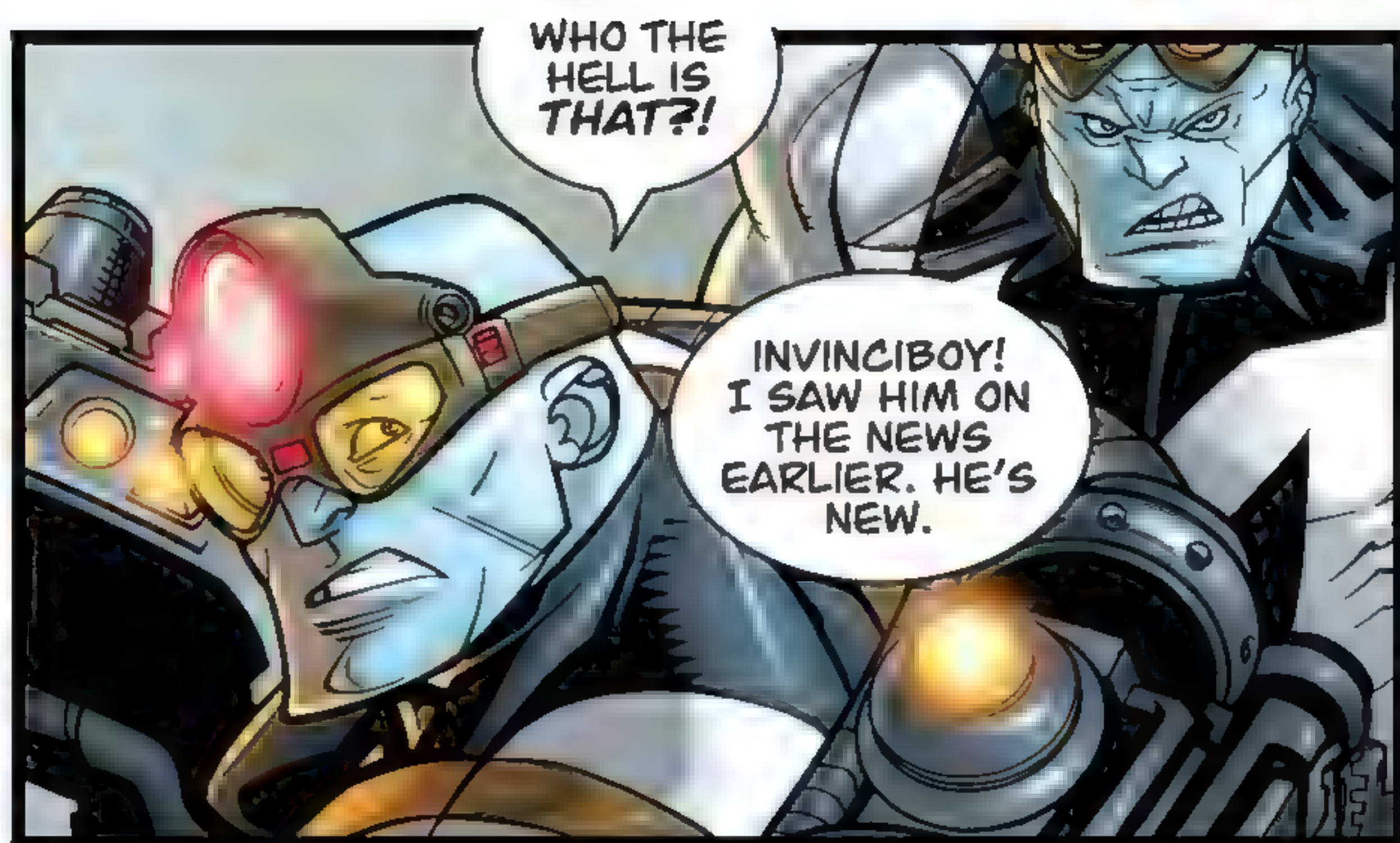
OF COURSE IT WORKED. WE BUILT THAT GUN. I TOLD YOU IT WOULD WORK.

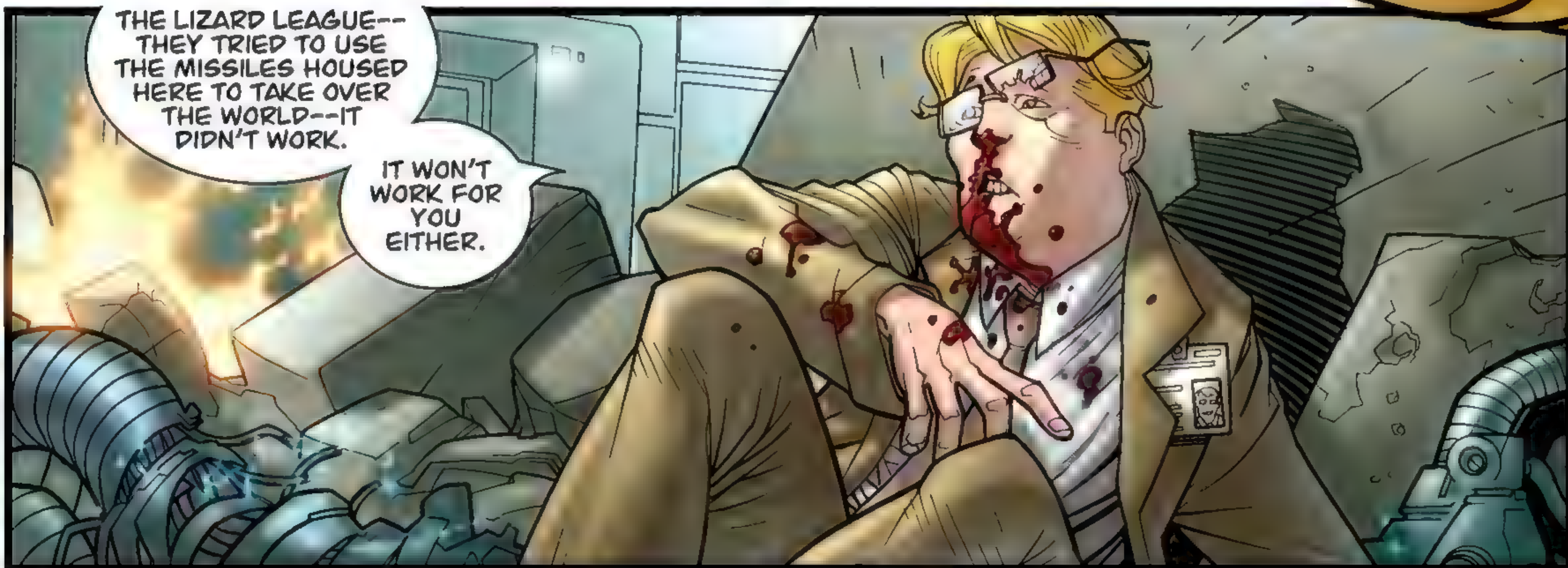
SO WELL. YOU CUT ME OFF. I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED SO WELL.

I TOLD YOU IT WOULD WORK THAT WELL.

I THINK I'M THE ORIGINAL CLONE. YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY SUFFERING FROM EXTENSIVE DEGRADATION.

WON'T WORK. WHATEVER YOU'RE TRYING... SOMEONE WILL STOP YOU. SOMEONE--







WE DON'T NEED THE WHOLE WORLD-- THE ENTIRE COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE OF THIS PLANET WILL BE ENOUGH.

WE'RE GOING TO LAUNCH ONE OF YOUR MISSILES INTO SPACE-- TO DETONATE IN THE SUN. THE RESULTING SOLAR FLARE WILL BE THE LARGEST IN RECORDED HISTORY.

ALL SATELLITE BASED FORMS OF COMMUNICATION WILL BE OFFLINE-- INDEFINITELY.



OR RATHER--THEY WILL BE UNTIL WE BRING THEM BACK ONLINE--UNDER OUR CONTROL.

ENTIRE NATIONS WILL HAVE TO PAY US FOR THE RIGHT TO CONVERSE. THOSE WHO OPPOSE US CAN BE MANIPULATED INTO WAR.

WE WON'T "RULE" THE WORLD... BUT WE WILL CONTROL IT.



SORRY-- I WOULD HAVE BEEN HERE SOONER BUT HAD TROUBLE FINDING THE PLACE!

WHY ARE YOU HERE?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!



I'M HELPING YOU-- SEE?!

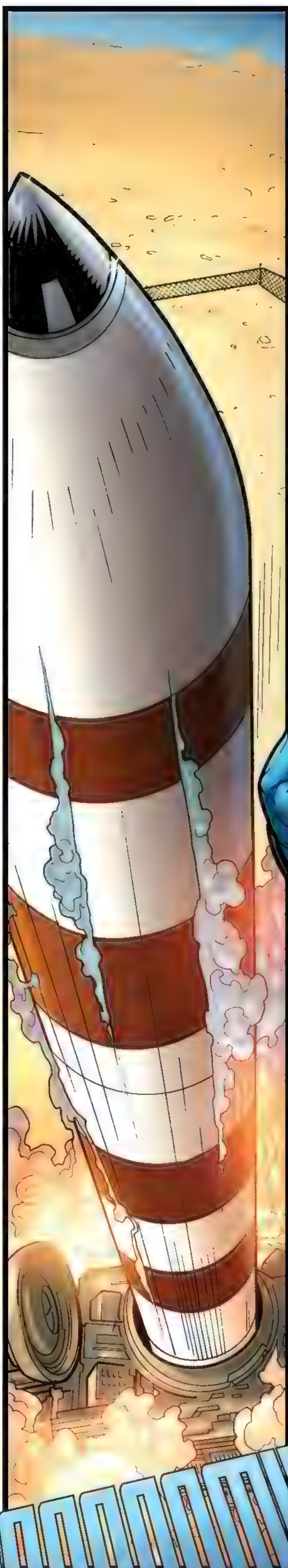
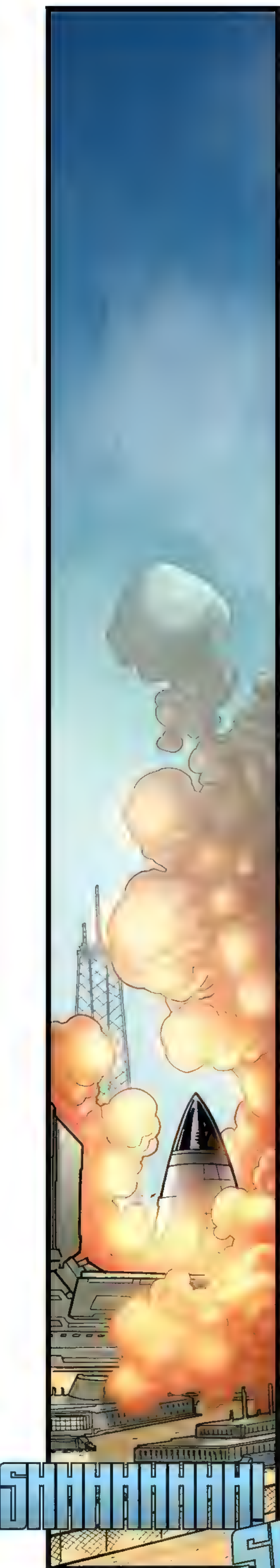


NO!

YOU'RE NOT READY FOR THIS! GET OUT OF HERE!

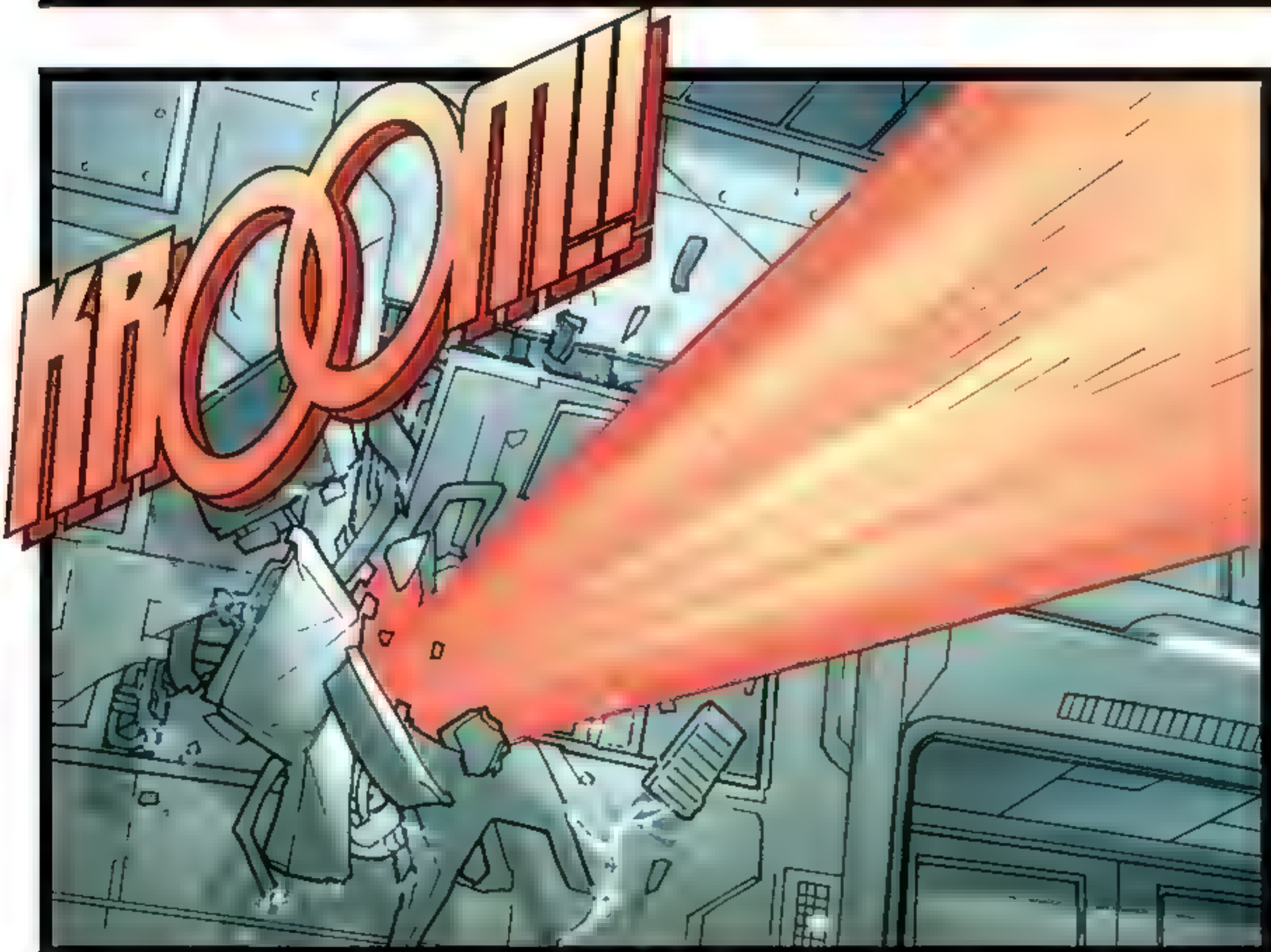
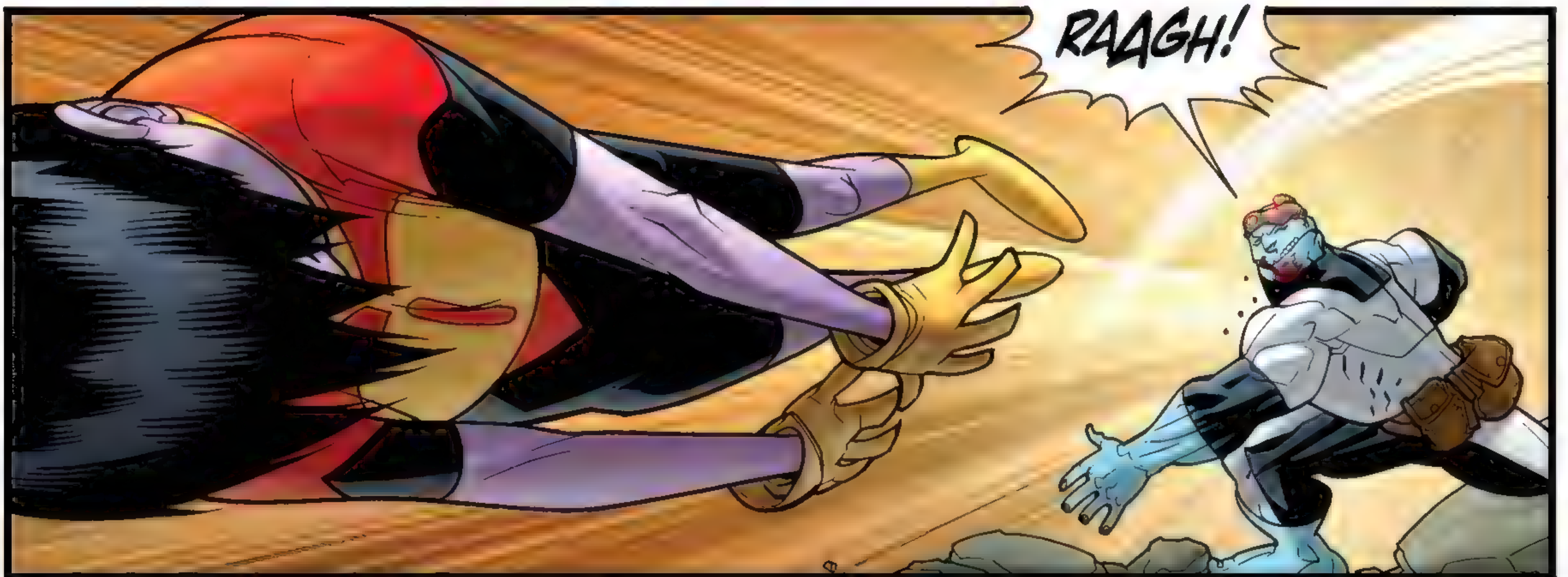
NOW!



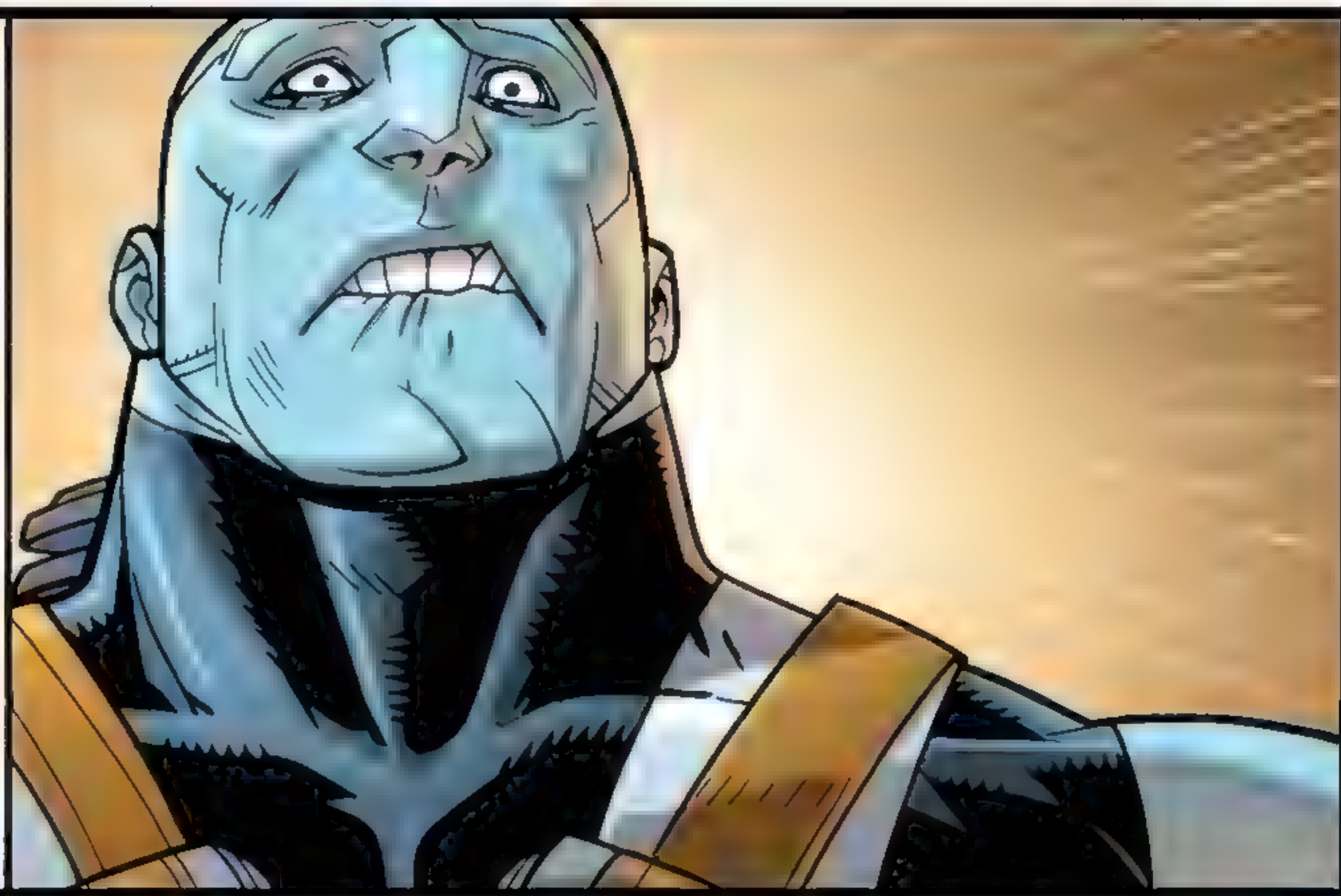


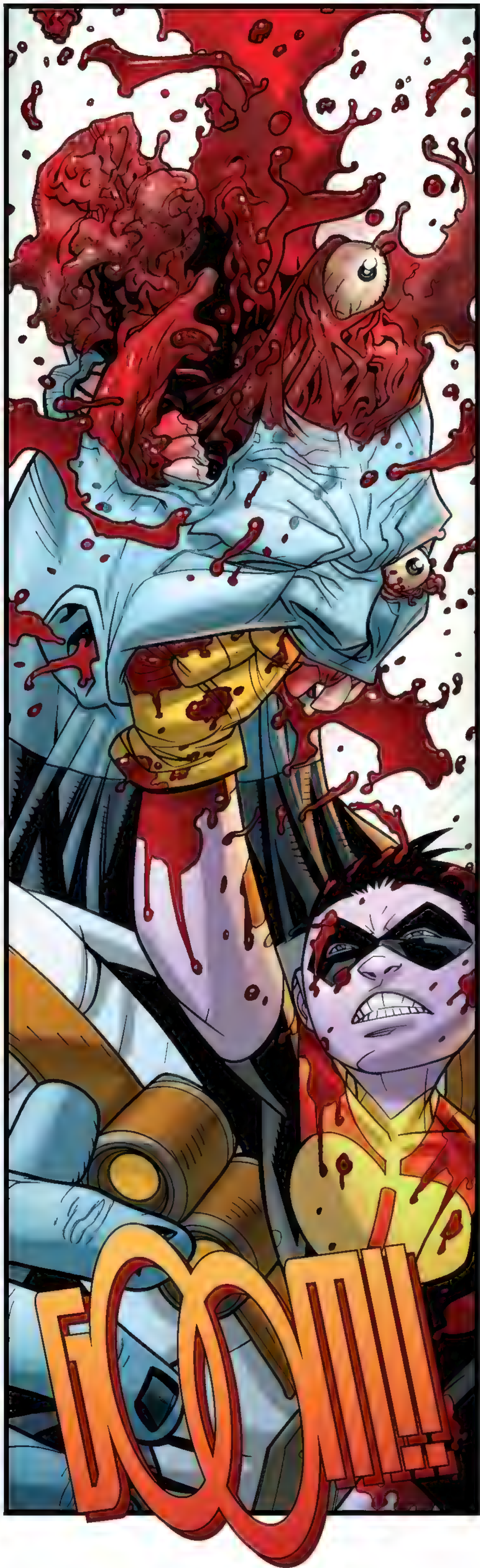
SHHHHHHHH!

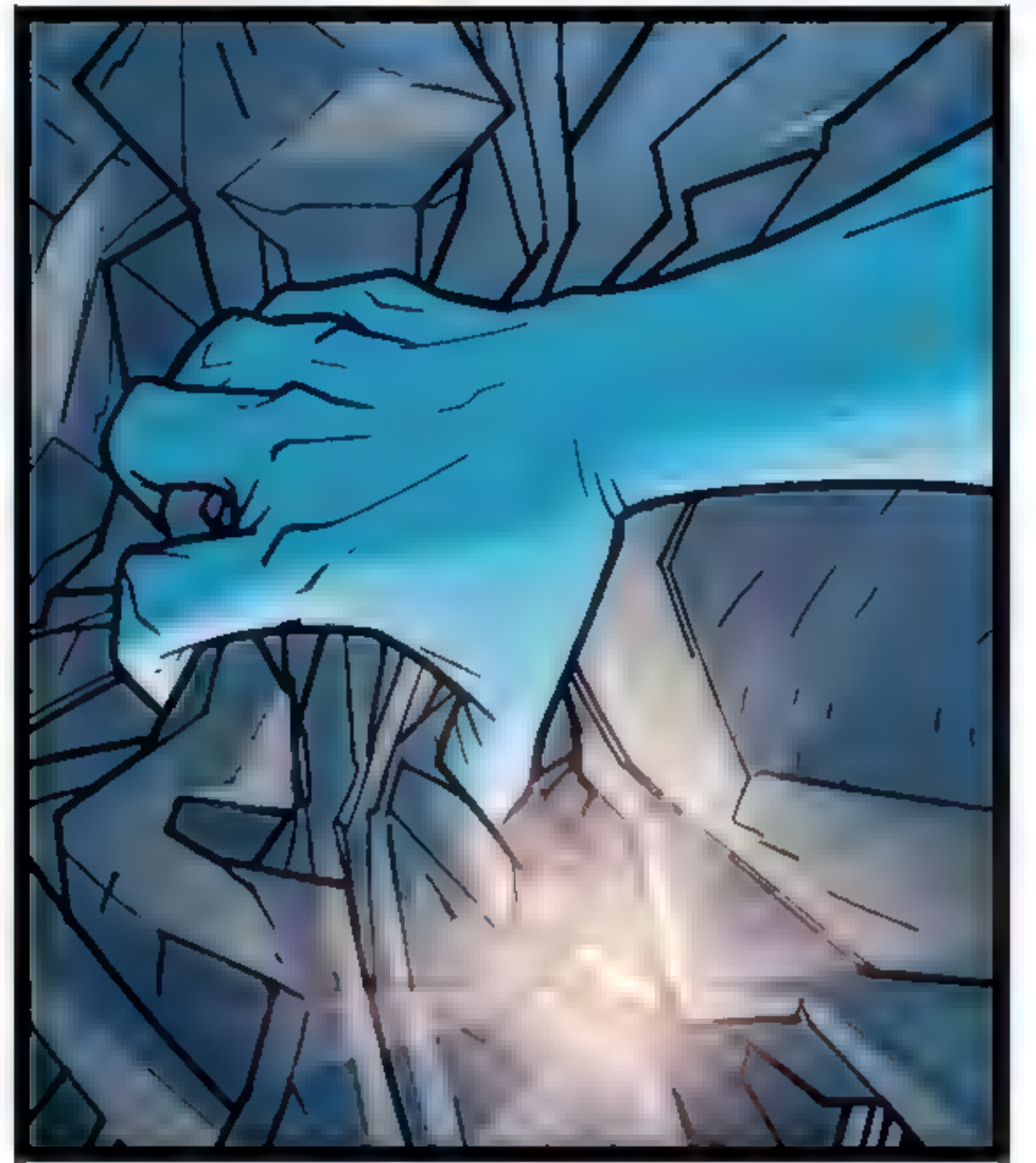
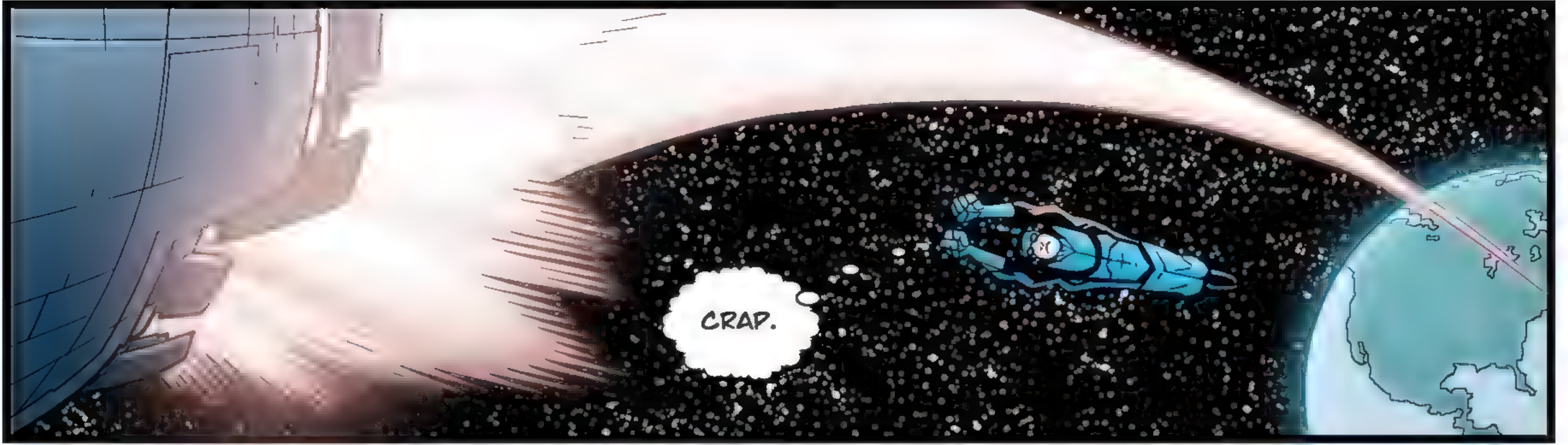
SHOOOOOOO!!!





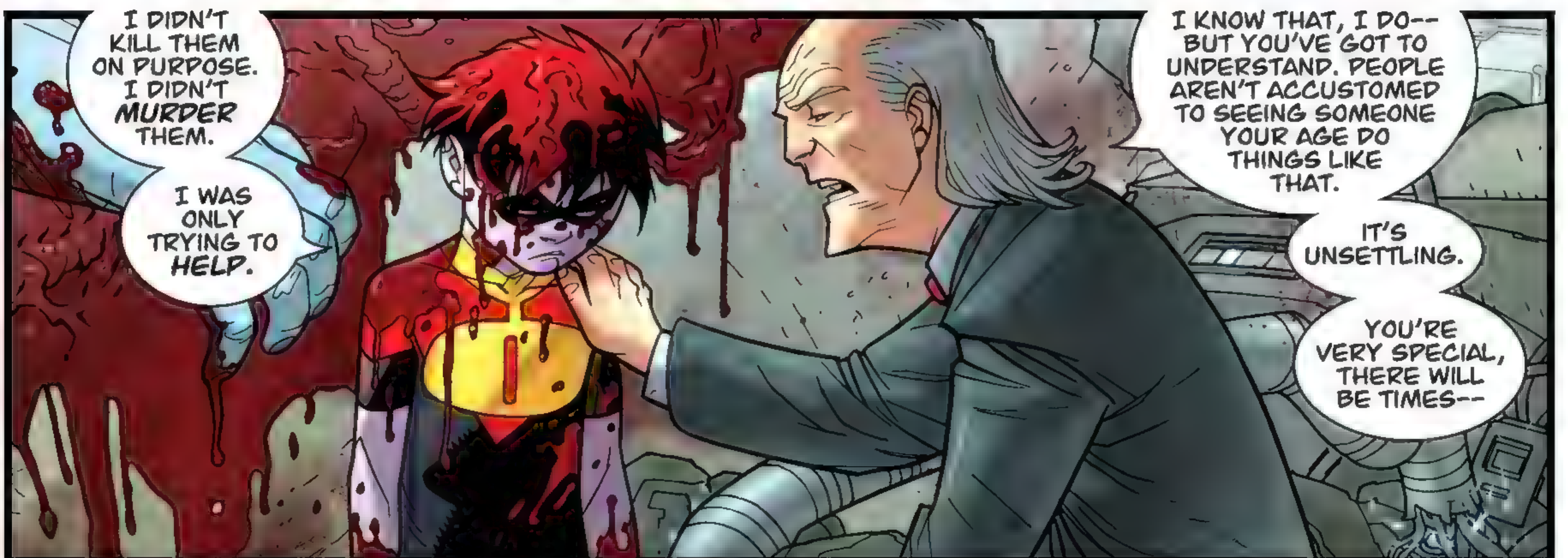


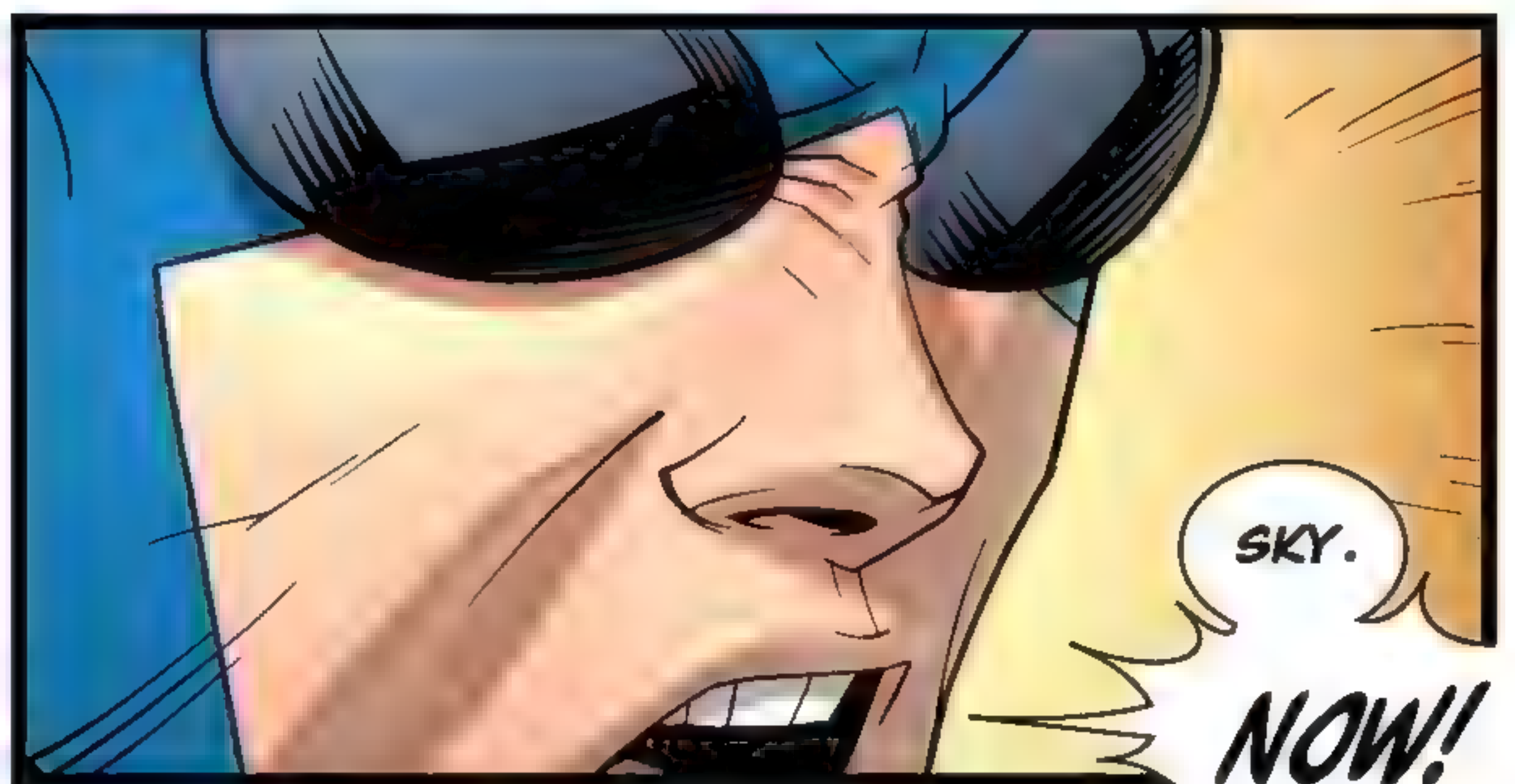
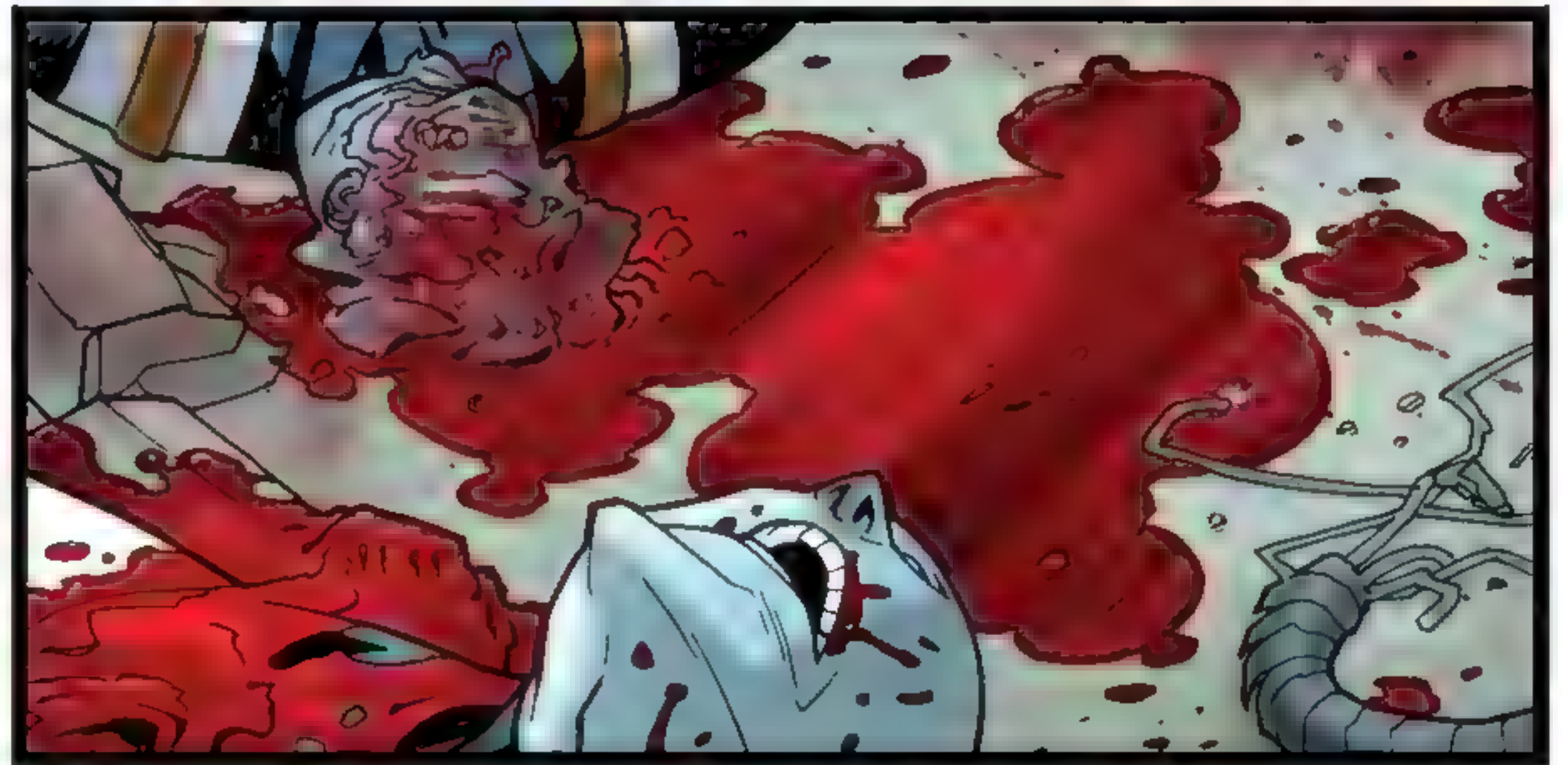


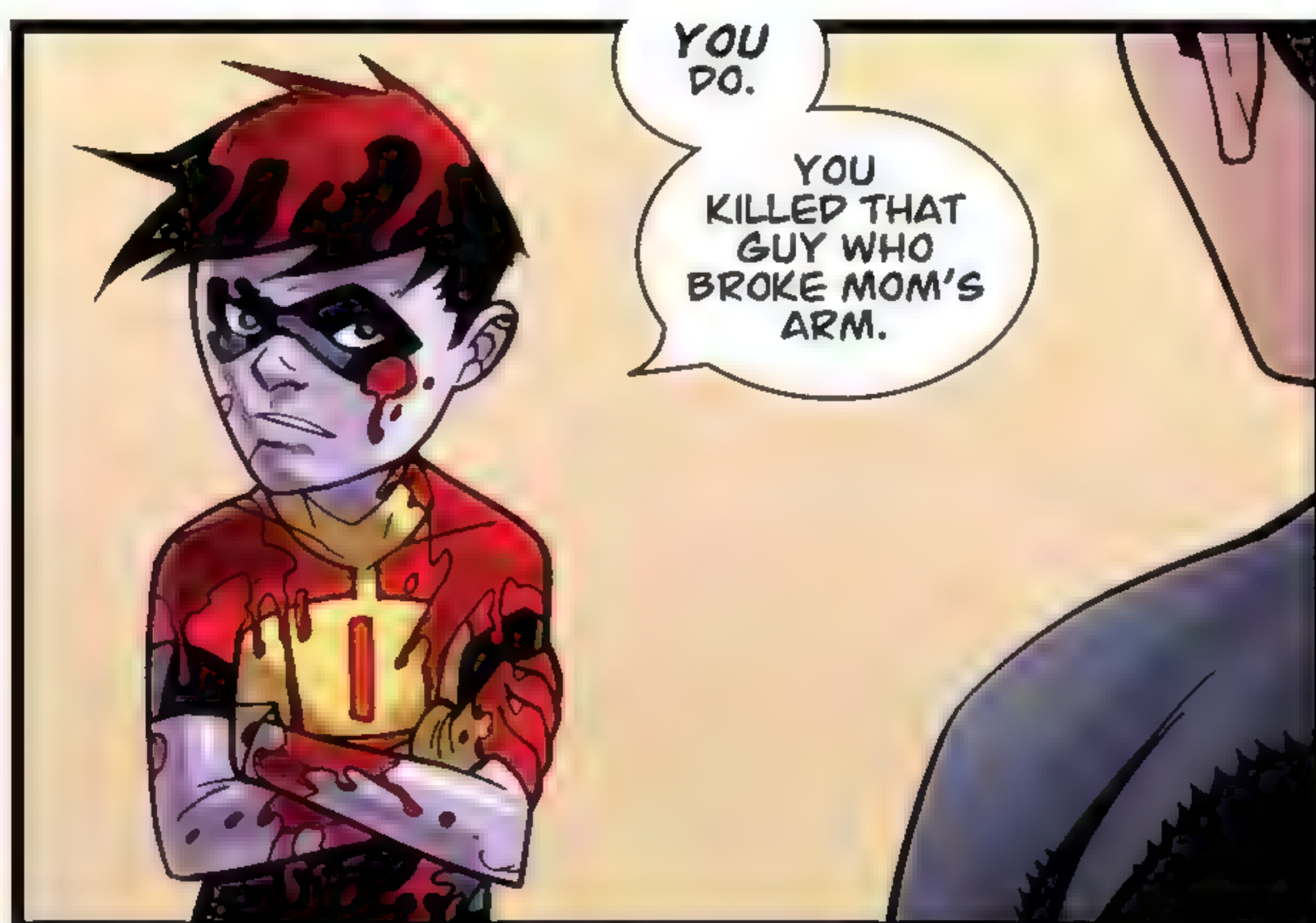
















PRECIOUS. HUMAN LIFE ISN'T PRECIOUS. NOT IN GENERAL--- NOT EVERYONE.

PEOPLE RISK THEIR LIVES EVERY DAY. THEY KILL EACH OTHER. IF THEY DON'T THINK THEIR LIVES ARE IMPORTANT, WHY SHOULD I?

MOST OF THEM ARE UTTERLY INSIGNIFICANT.

YOU SOUND LIKE DAD.

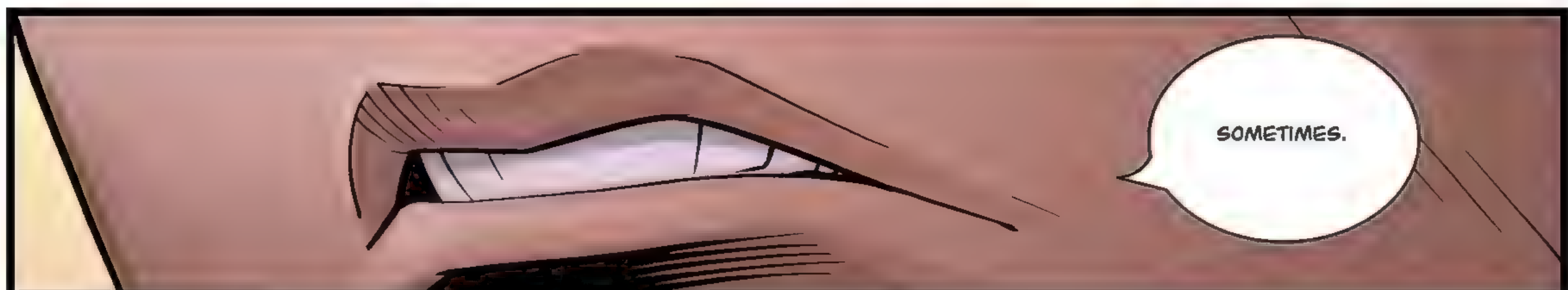


SO? WHY IS THAT BAD? WAS HE SO WRONG? DID NOTHING HE SAID MAKE SENSE TO YOU--EVEN ON A SMALL LEVEL?

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT THAT MAYBE OUR FATHER WAS RIGHT?



...

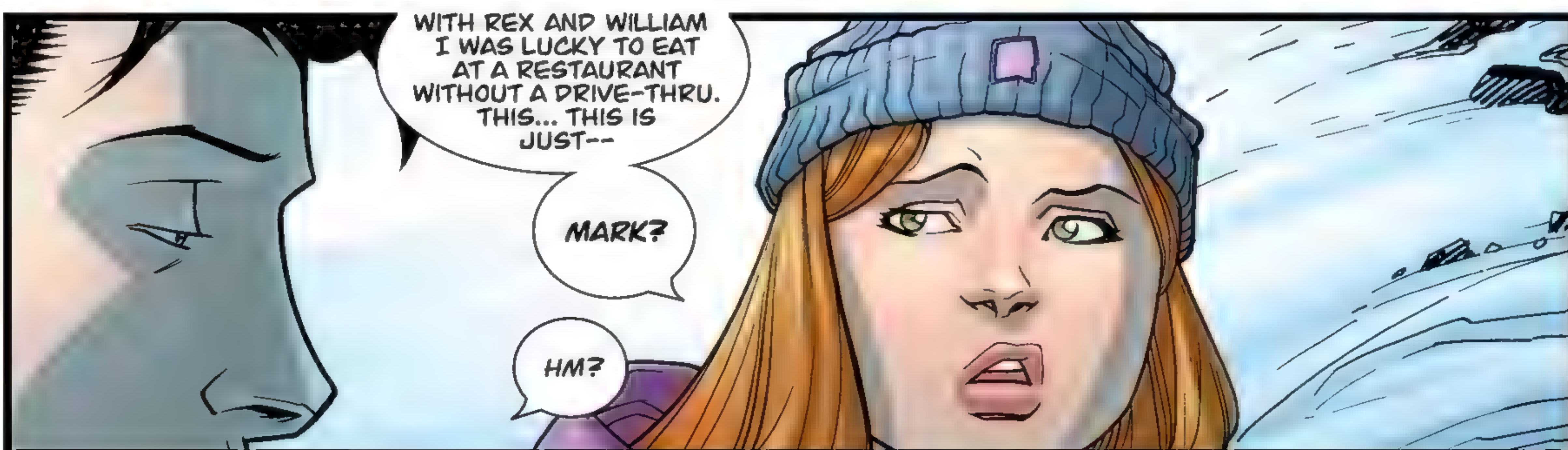
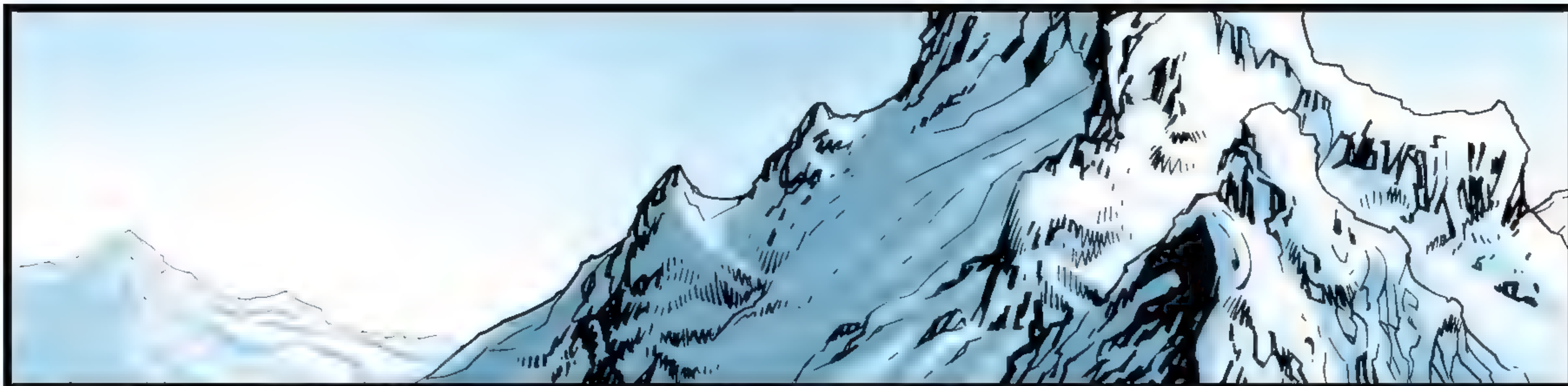


SOMETIMES.



CHAPTER 53



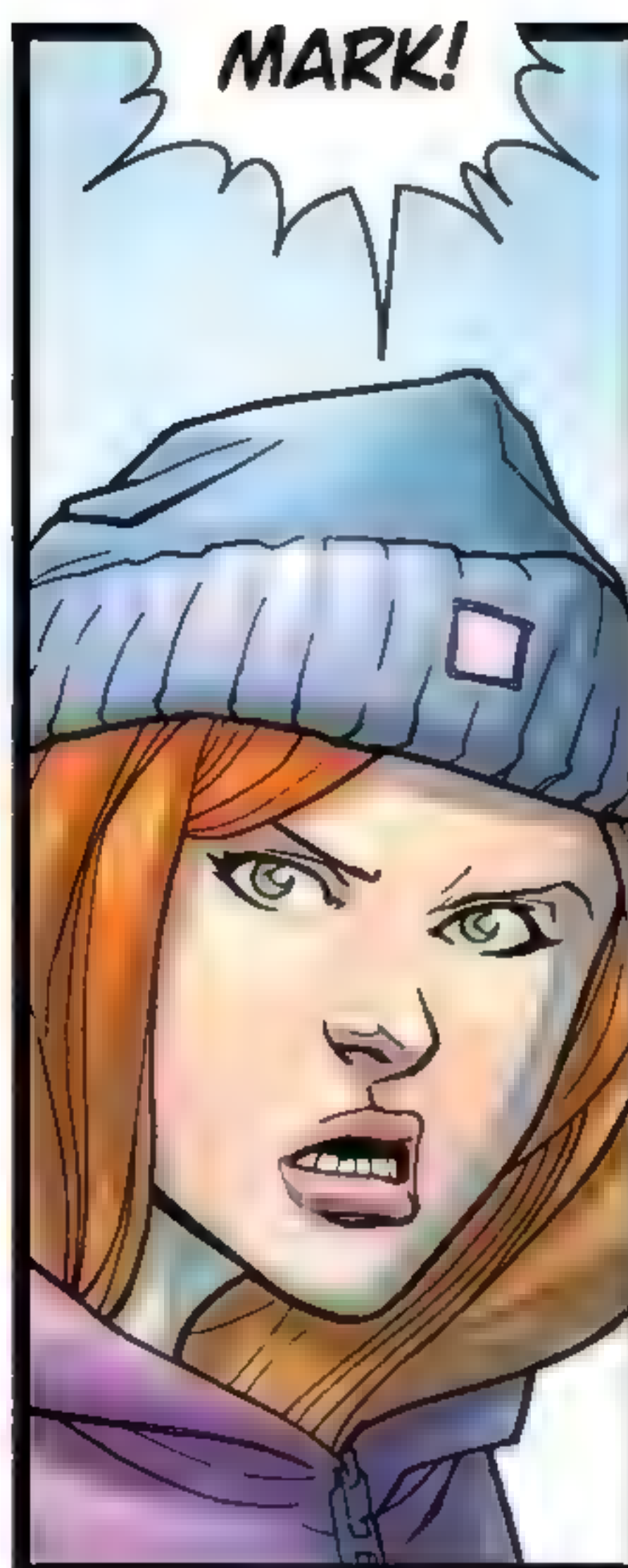




ARE YOU
EVEN
LISTENING
TO ME?



WHAT?



MARK!



HUH?



OH MY GOD--
YOU AREN'T,
ARE YOU?!

I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT!



OH, EVE--I'M
SORRY... REALLY.
I WANTED THIS TO
BE SPECIAL... THIS
IS OUR FIRST REAL
DATE--I JUST, I
DON'T MEAN TO
DRIFT OFF.

I'VE
JUST GOT
A LOT ON
MY MIND.

ARE
YOU STILL
THINKING
ABOUT
OLIVER?



YEAH, I
DON'T KNOW
HOW HE'S DEALING
WITH WHAT HE DID
YESTERDAY--OR IF
HE'S EVEN GIVEN
IT A SECOND
THOUGHT.

I WANT
TO TALK TO
HIM SOME
MORE.

HE KILLED TWO
PEOPLE YESTERDAY...
HE'S STILL JUST A KID.
I CAN'T TAKE MY MIND
OFF THE WHOLE ORDEAL.



I UNDERSTAND...
THAT'S A BIG
DEAL.

DO
YOU WANT
TO LEAVE?
I MEAN, WE CAN
DO THIS AGAIN
SOME OTHER
TIME.

WHAT? NO. I CAN'T DO THAT. THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE SPECIAL. I HATE THAT I'VE RUINED THE MOMENT AS MUCH AS I HAVE ALREADY.

NO WAY.



WHOA--I'M NOT SOME STUPID GIRL YOU HAVE TO BEND OVER BACKWARDS FOR TO KEEP HAPPY. I'M ATOM FRICKIN' EVE-- I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH.

LET'S GO.

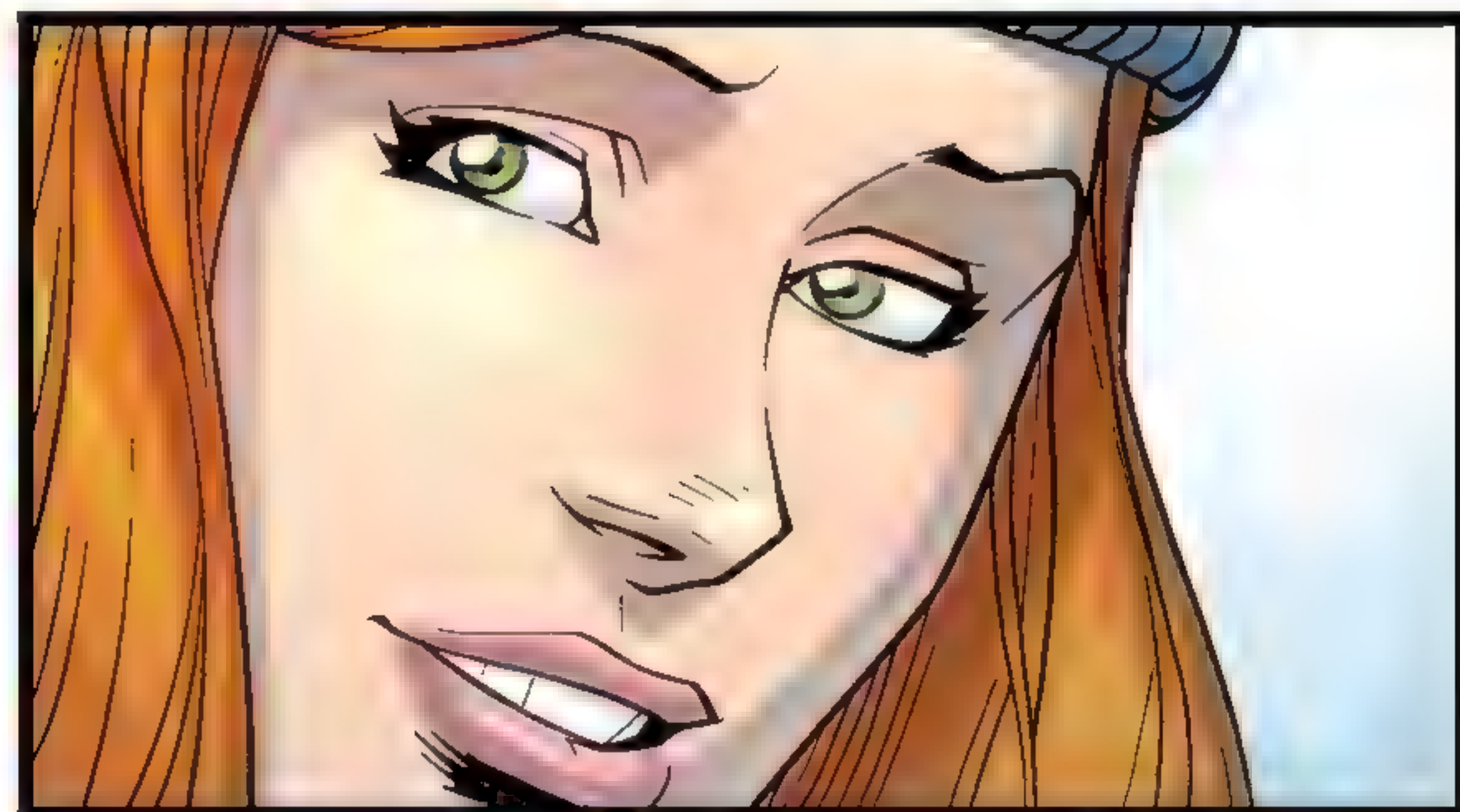
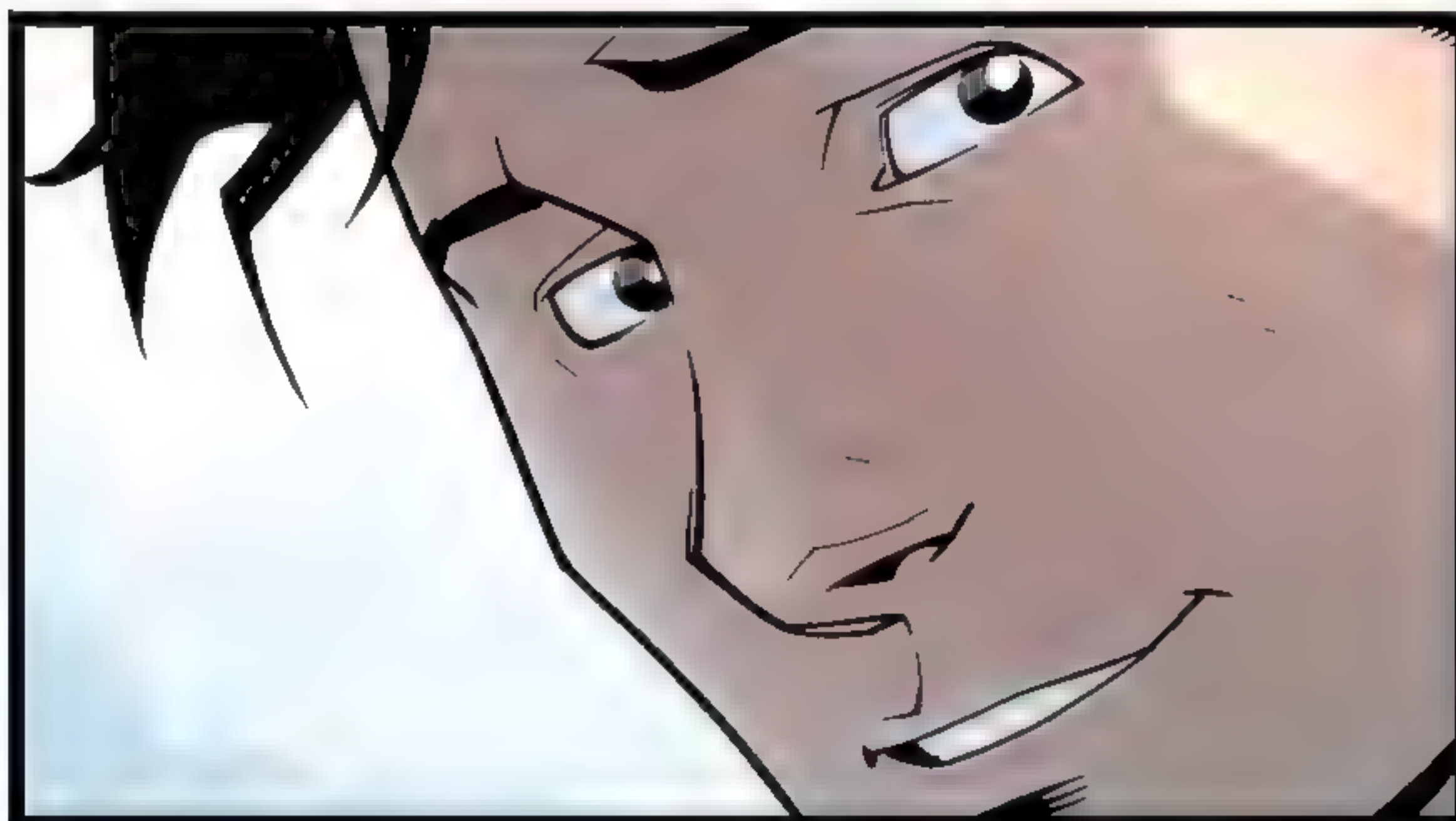
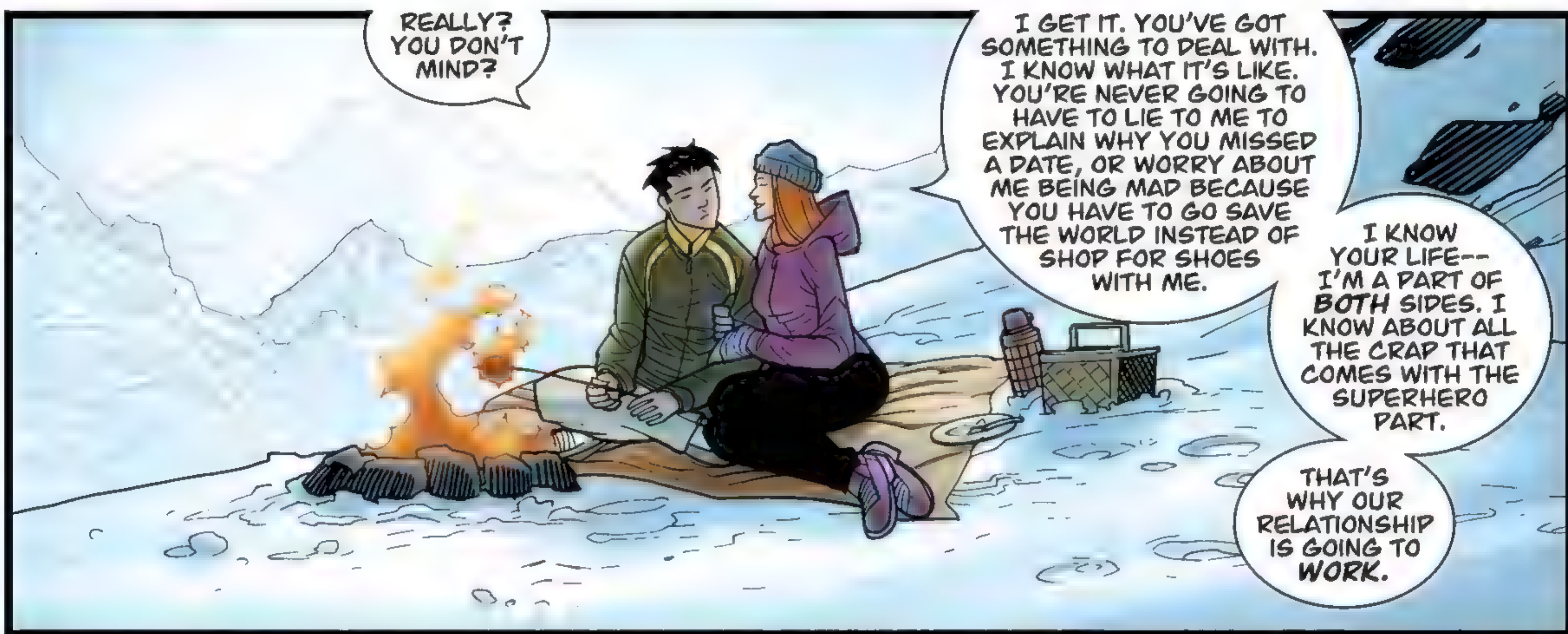


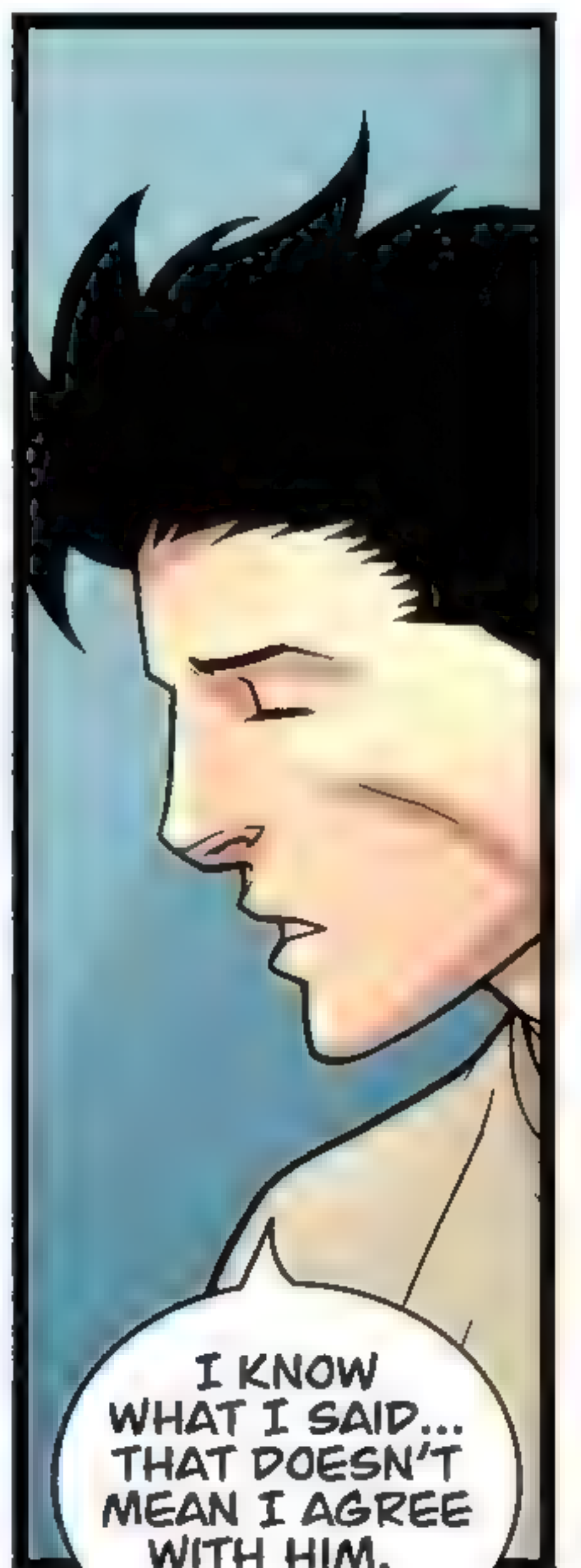
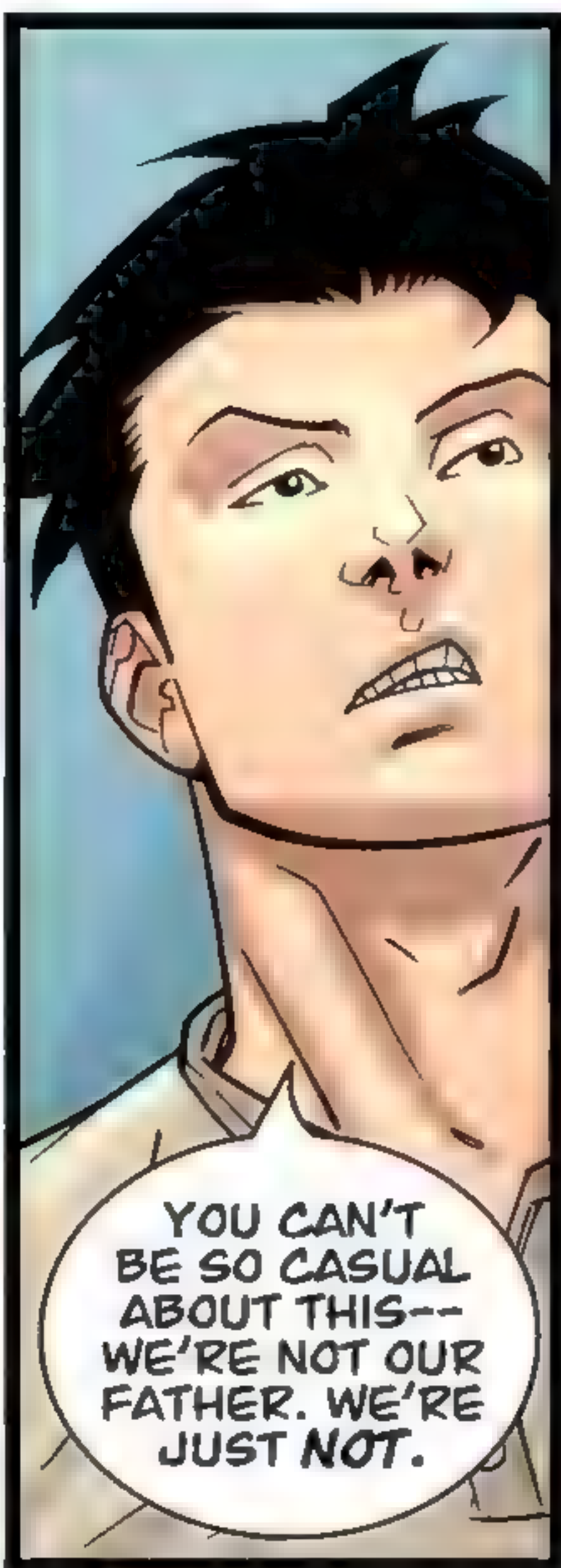
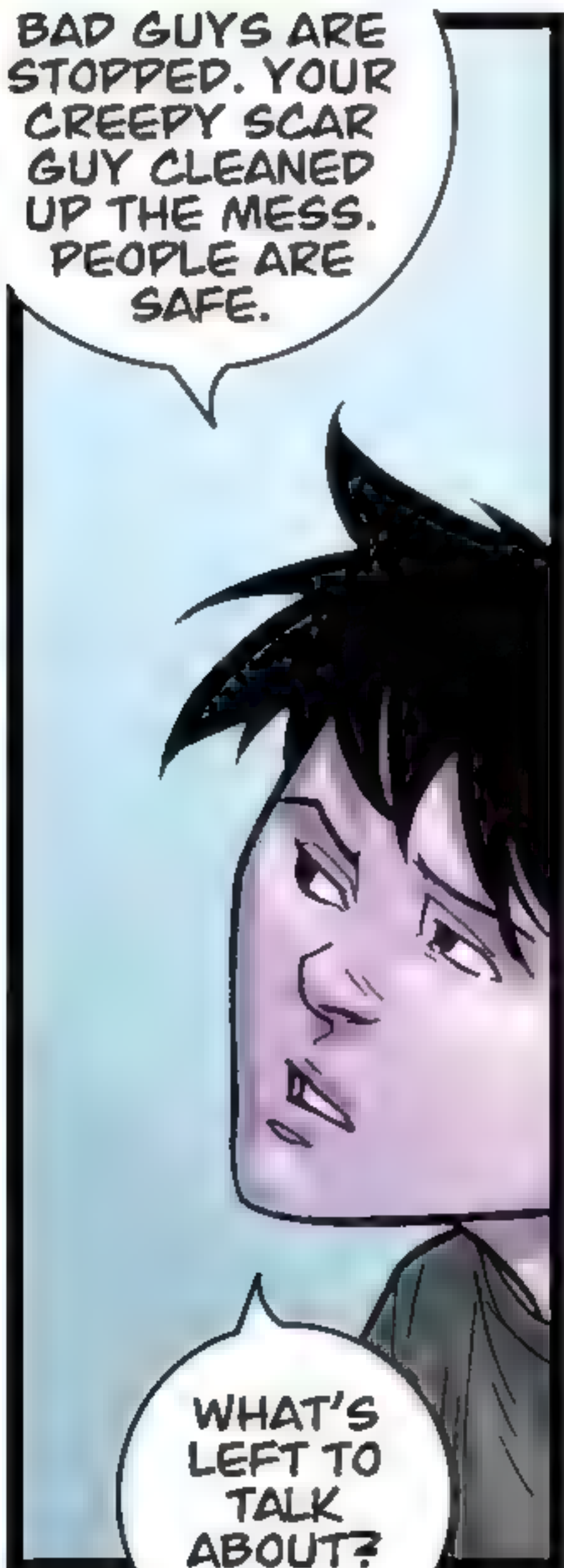
REALLY? YOU DON'T MIND?

I GET IT. YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO DEAL WITH. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE. YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO HAVE TO LIE TO ME TO EXPLAIN WHY YOU MISSED A DATE, OR WORRY ABOUT ME BEING MAD BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO GO SAVE THE WORLD INSTEAD OF SHOP FOR SHOES WITH ME.

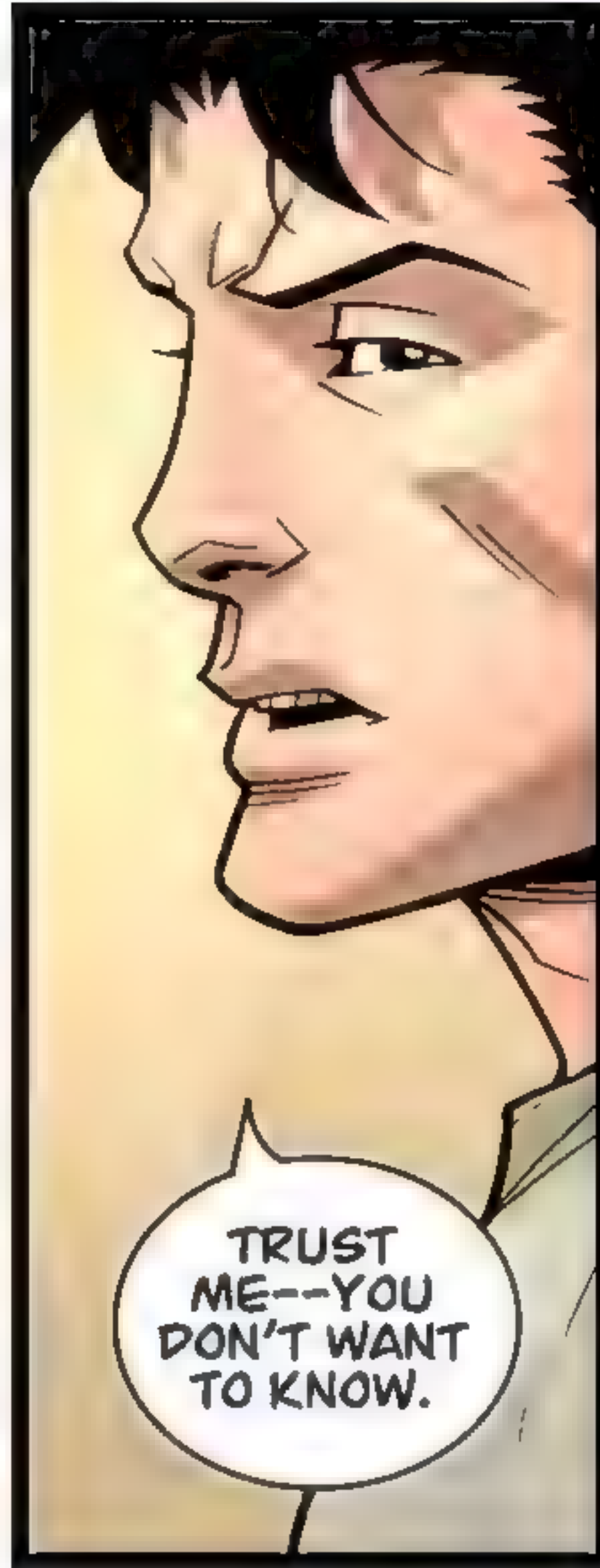
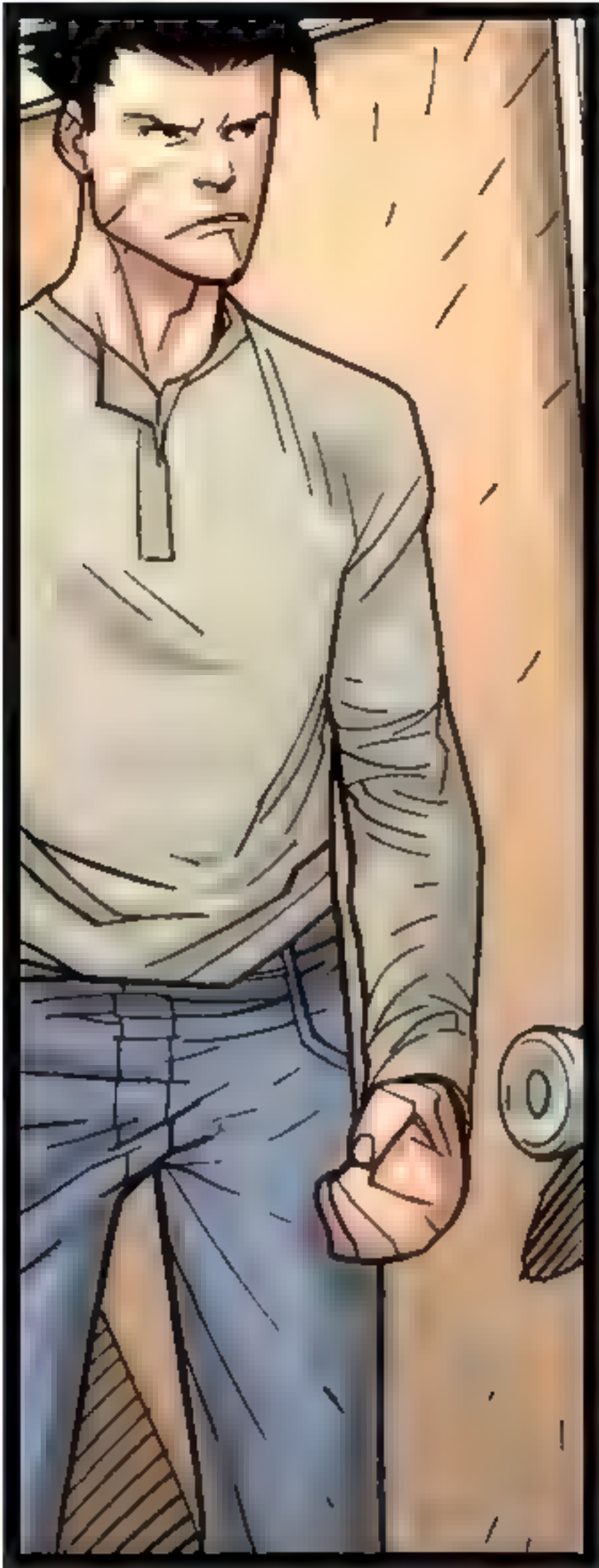
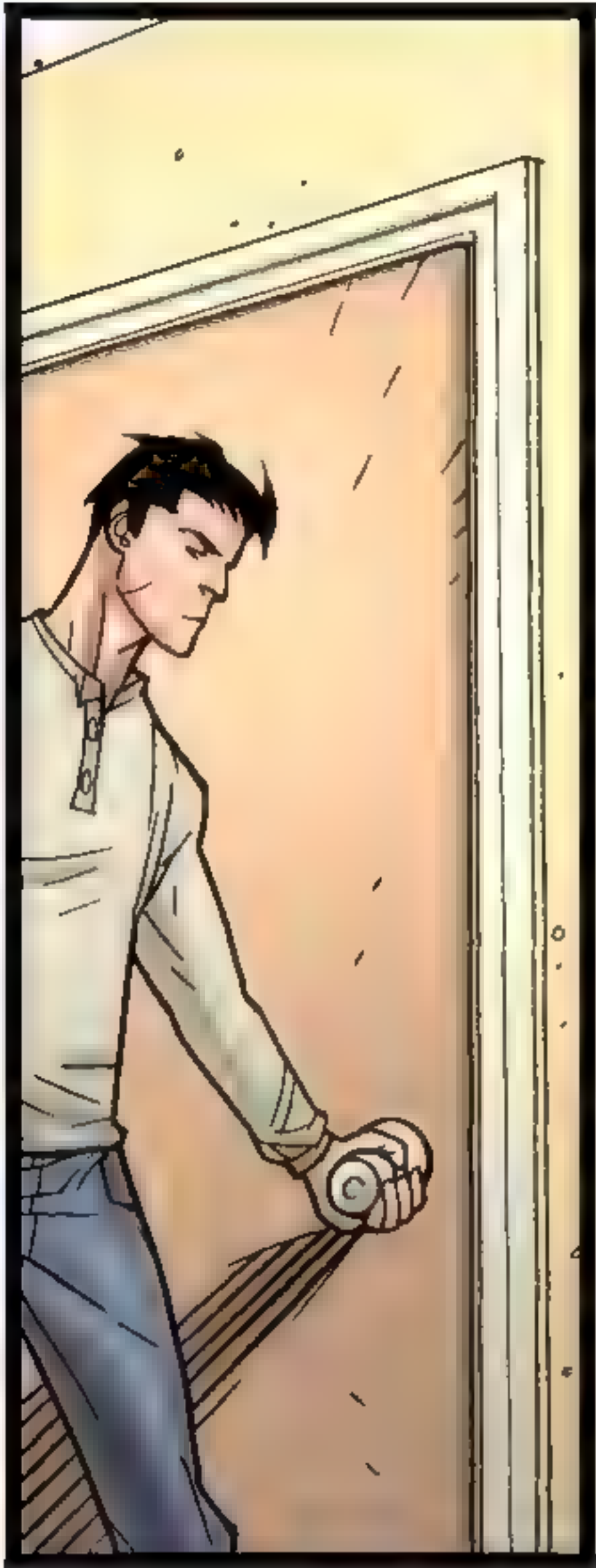
I KNOW YOUR LIFE-- I'M A PART OF BOTH SIDES. I KNOW ABOUT ALL THE CRAP THAT COMES WITH THE SUPERHERO PART.

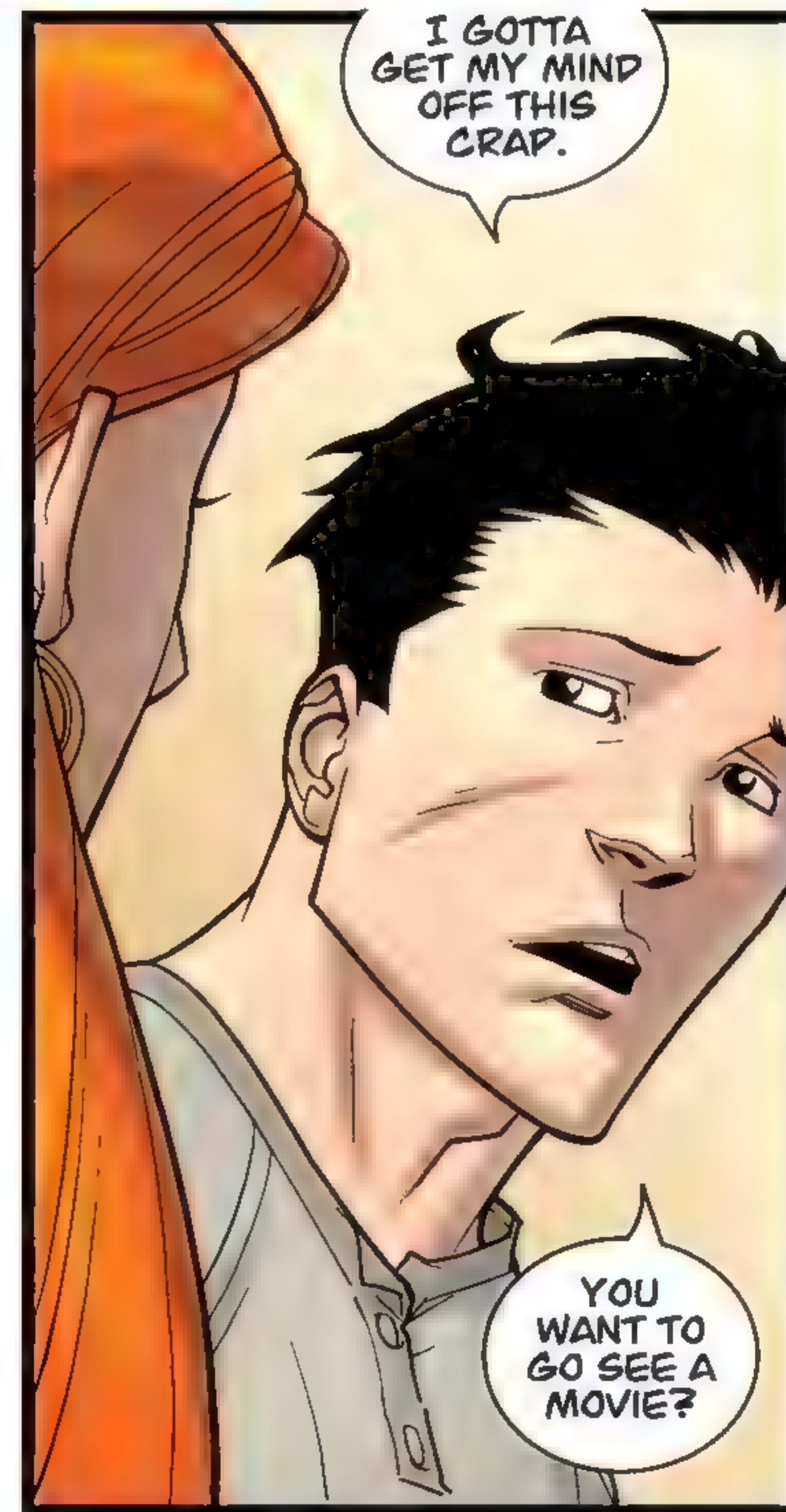
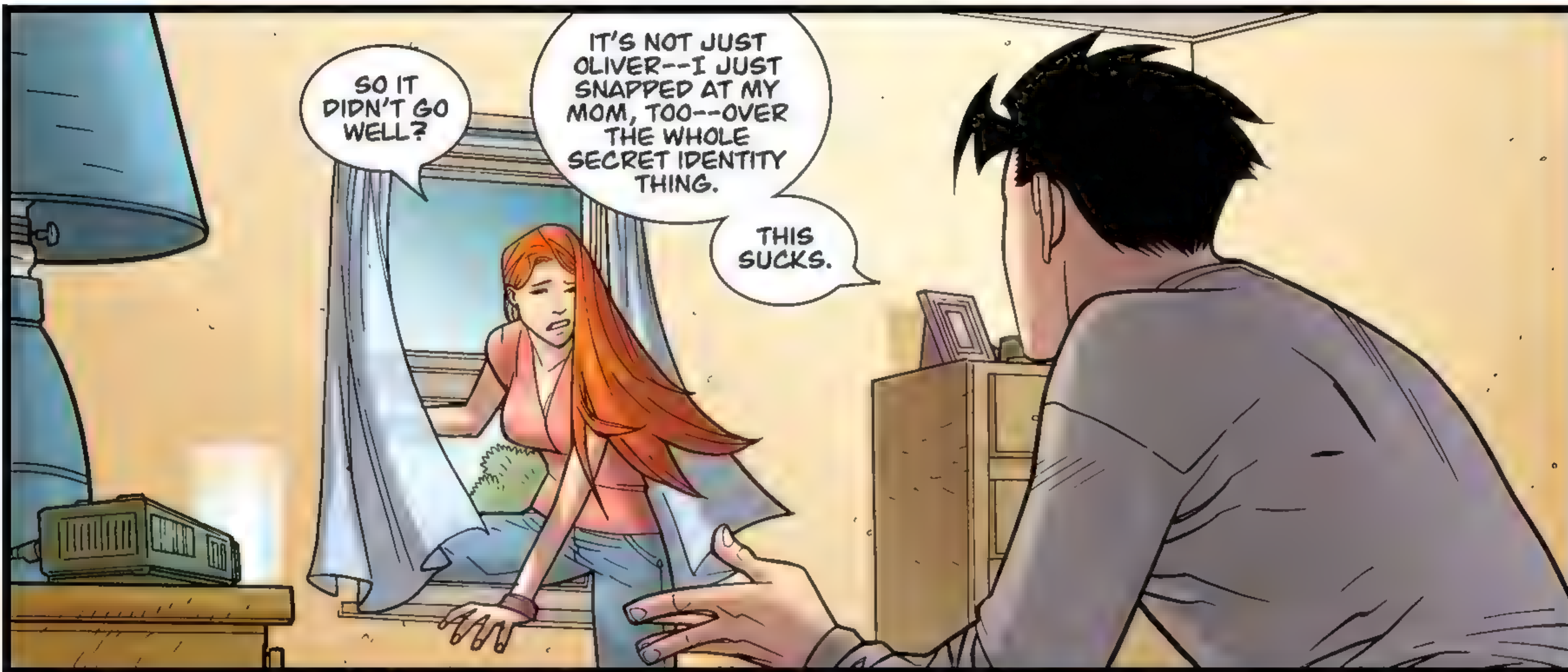
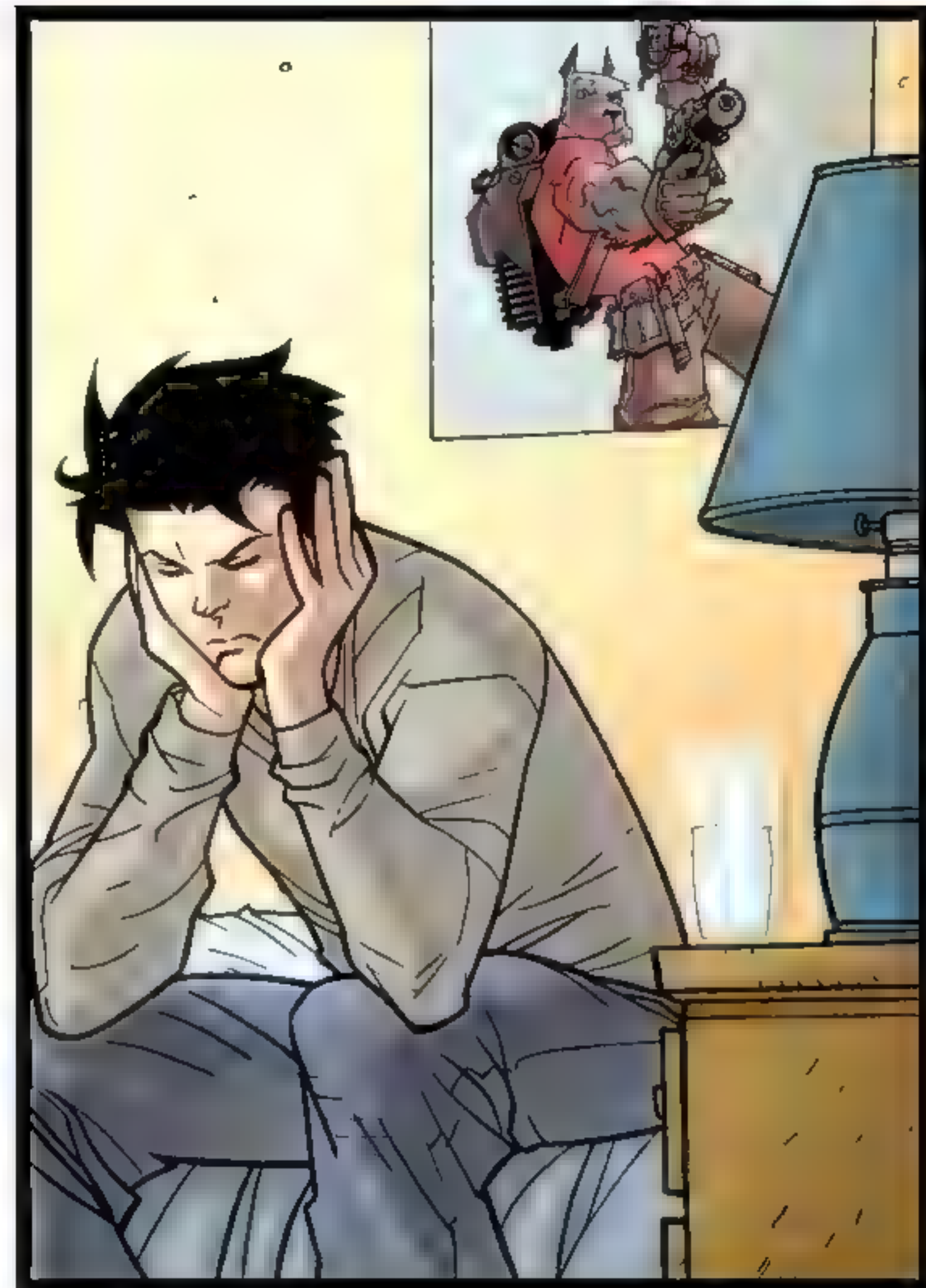
THAT'S WHY OUR RELATIONSHIP IS GOING TO WORK.

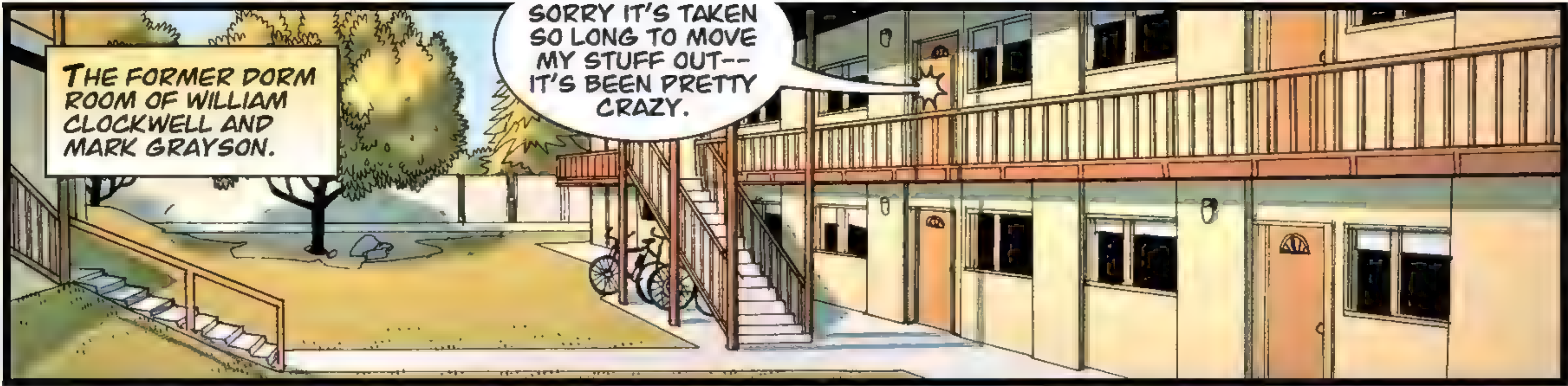












THE FORMER DORM ROOM OF WILLIAM CLOCKWELL AND MARK GRAYSON.

SORRY IT'S TAKEN SO LONG TO MOVE MY STUFF OUT-- IT'S BEEN PRETTY CRAZY.

I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE HERE TODAY--I THINK THIS STUFF WAS GOING TO BE ON THE CURB TOMORROW. I'M MOVING OUT, TOO.

I CAN SEE THAT. ONE SECOND.



OKAY-- THAT'S THE LAST OF IT.

WHERE ARE YOU MOVING?

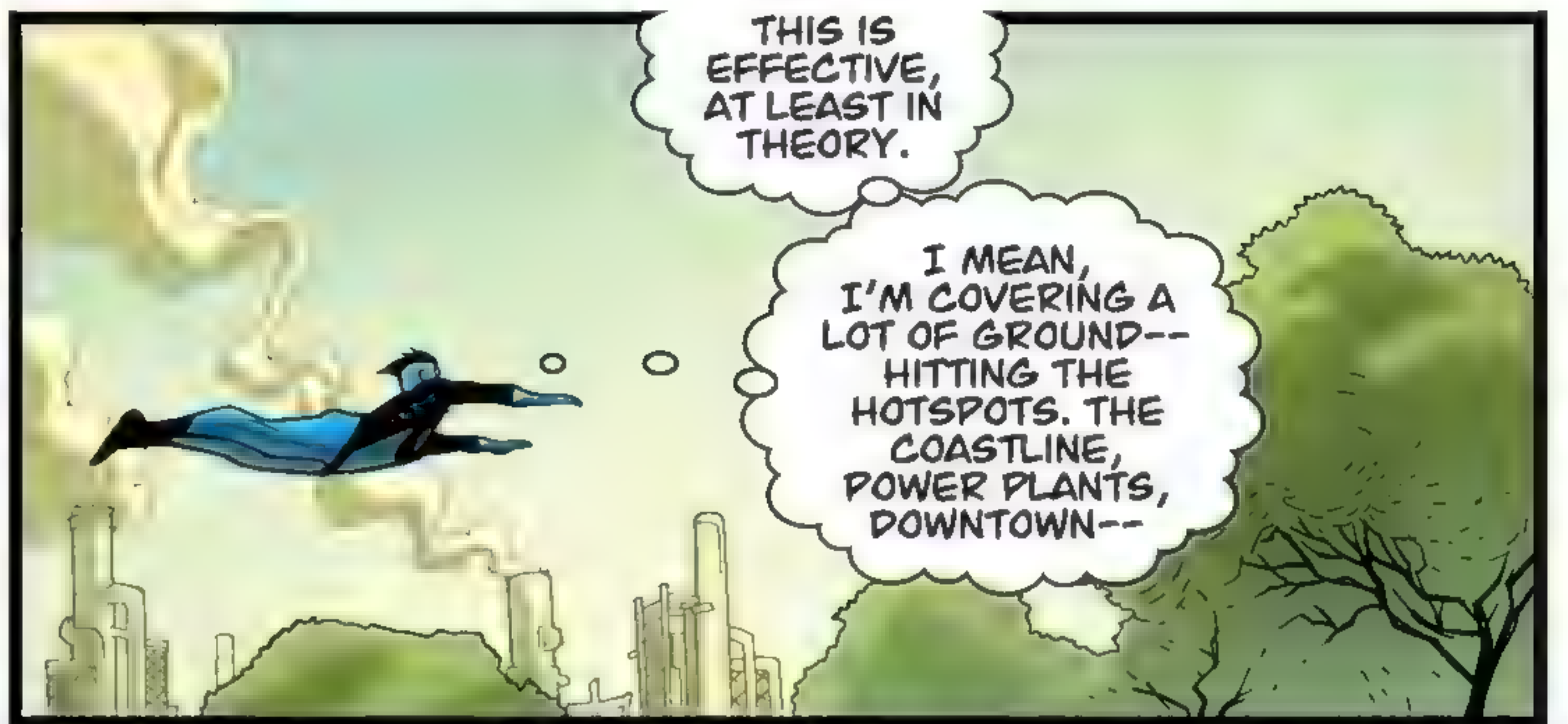
I'M MOVING IN WITH RICK SHERIDAN. HE'S HAVING TROUBLE BEING ALONE--AFTER BEING TURNED INTO HALF A KILLER ROBOT. HIS ROOMMATE MOVED OUT AND, WELL, HE'S GOT AN AWESOME PLACE SO...

YOU THINK YOU COULD HELP ME? IT SURE WOULD MAKE THE MOVE GO FASTER.

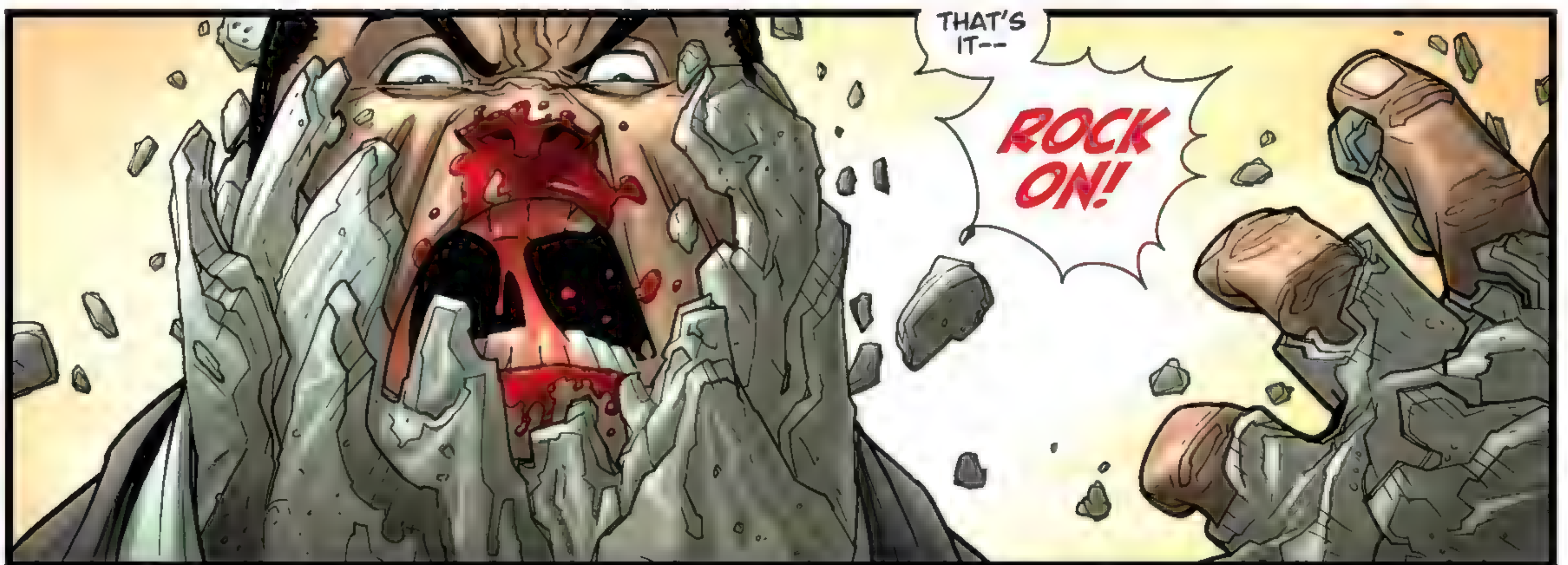
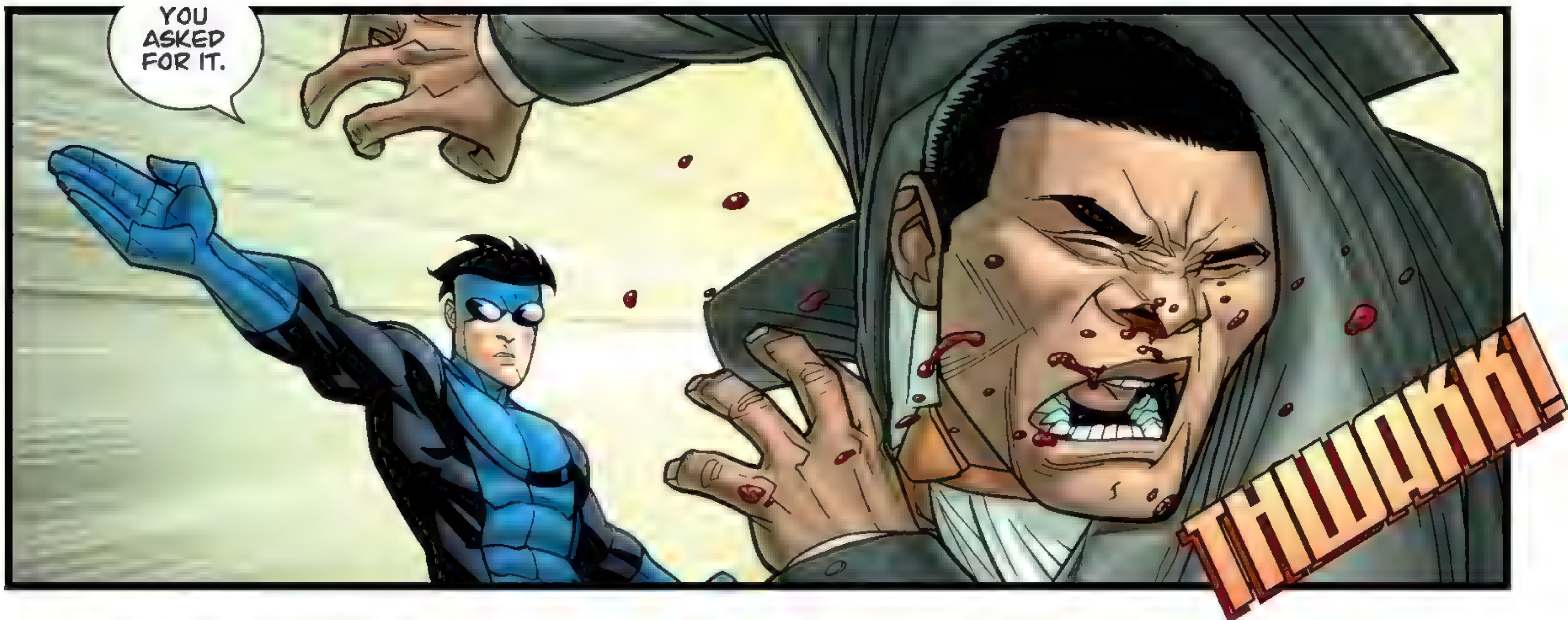


SURE, NO PROBLEM. I GOTTA HURRY THOUGH--I WAS GOING TO DO A LITTLE PATROLLING TODAY.



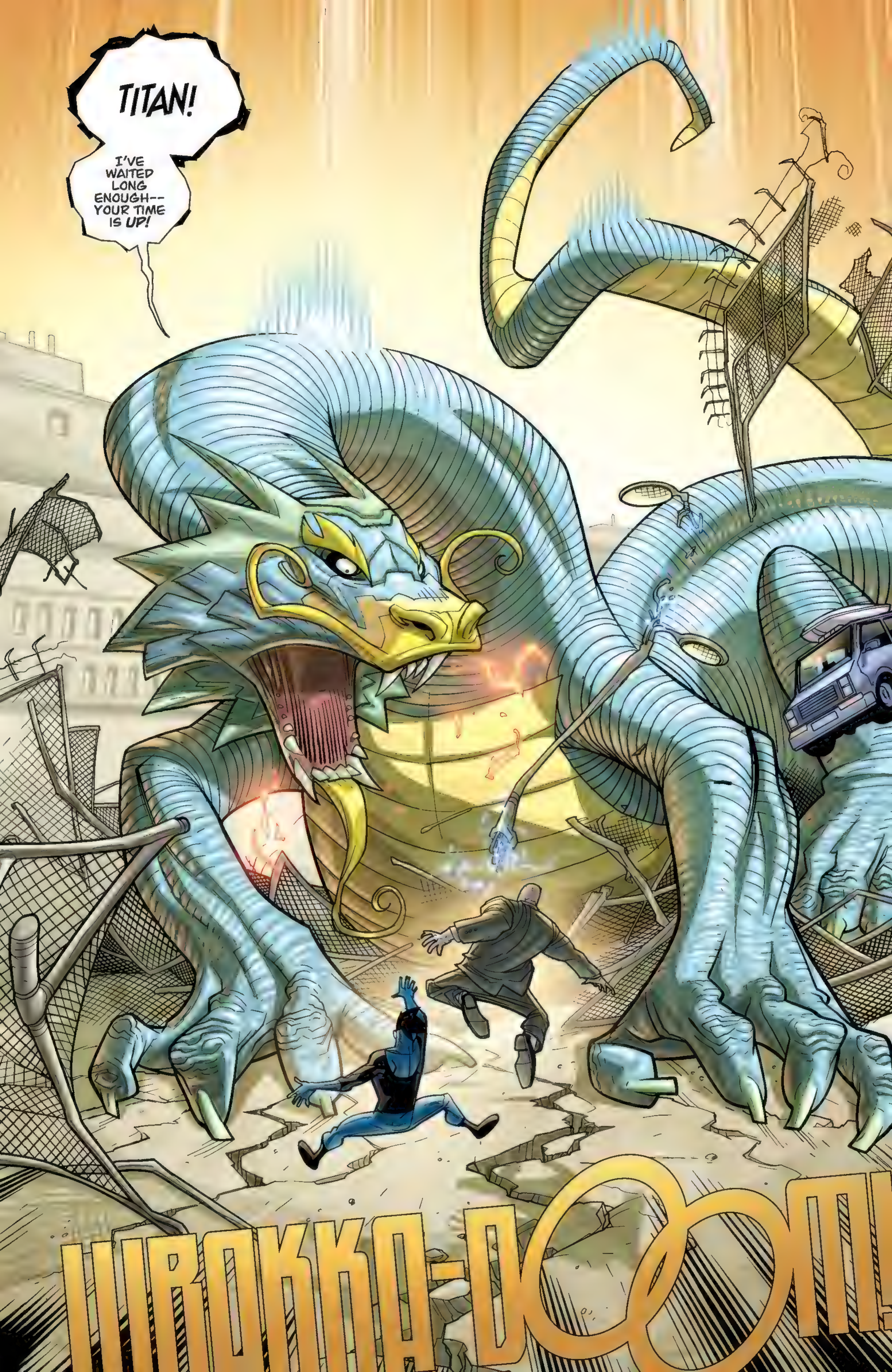




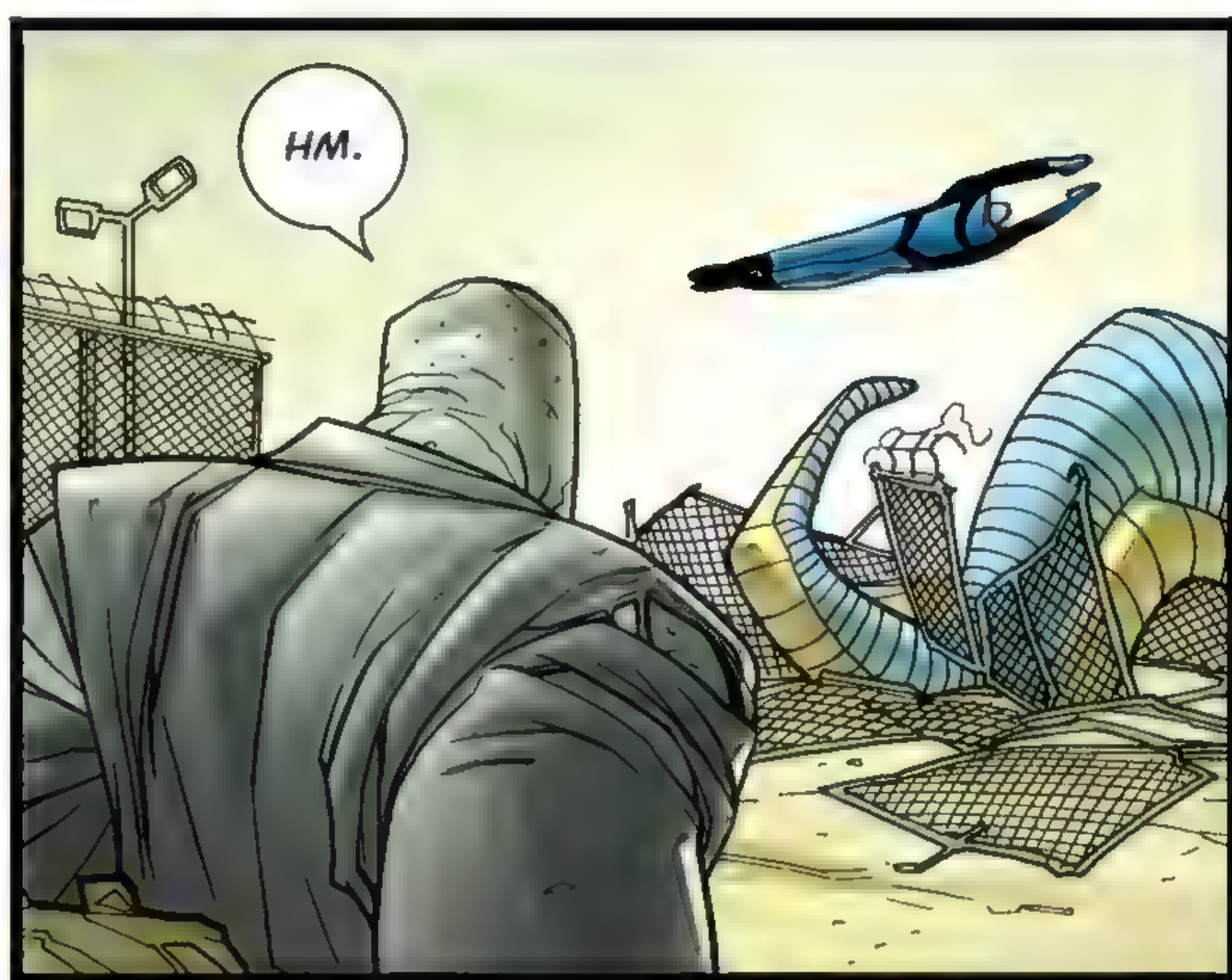
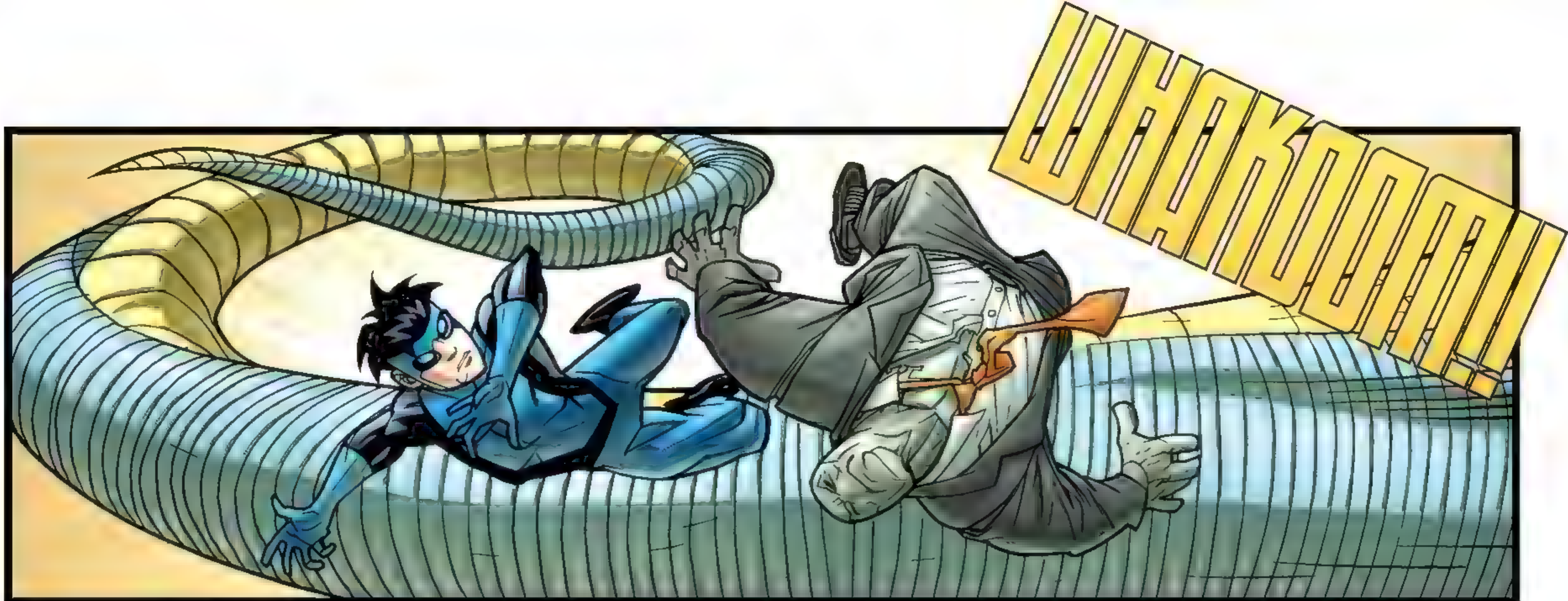


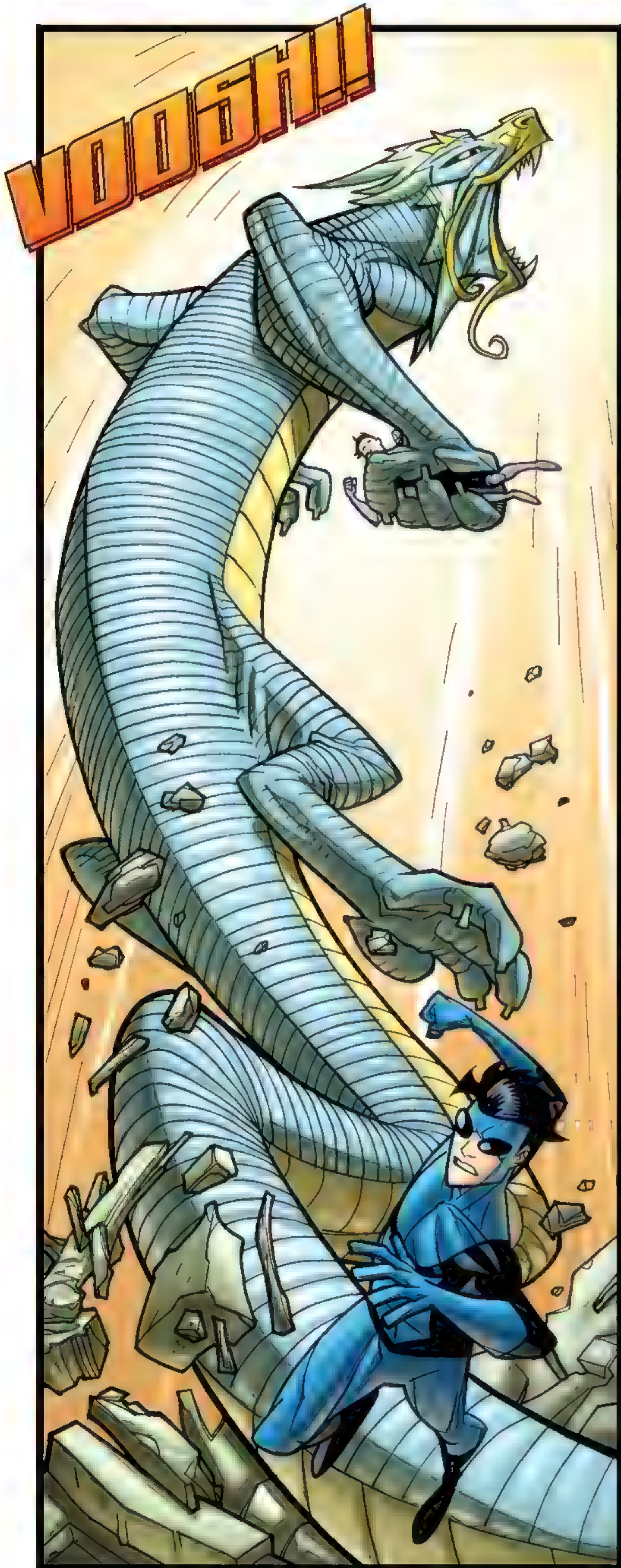
TITAN!

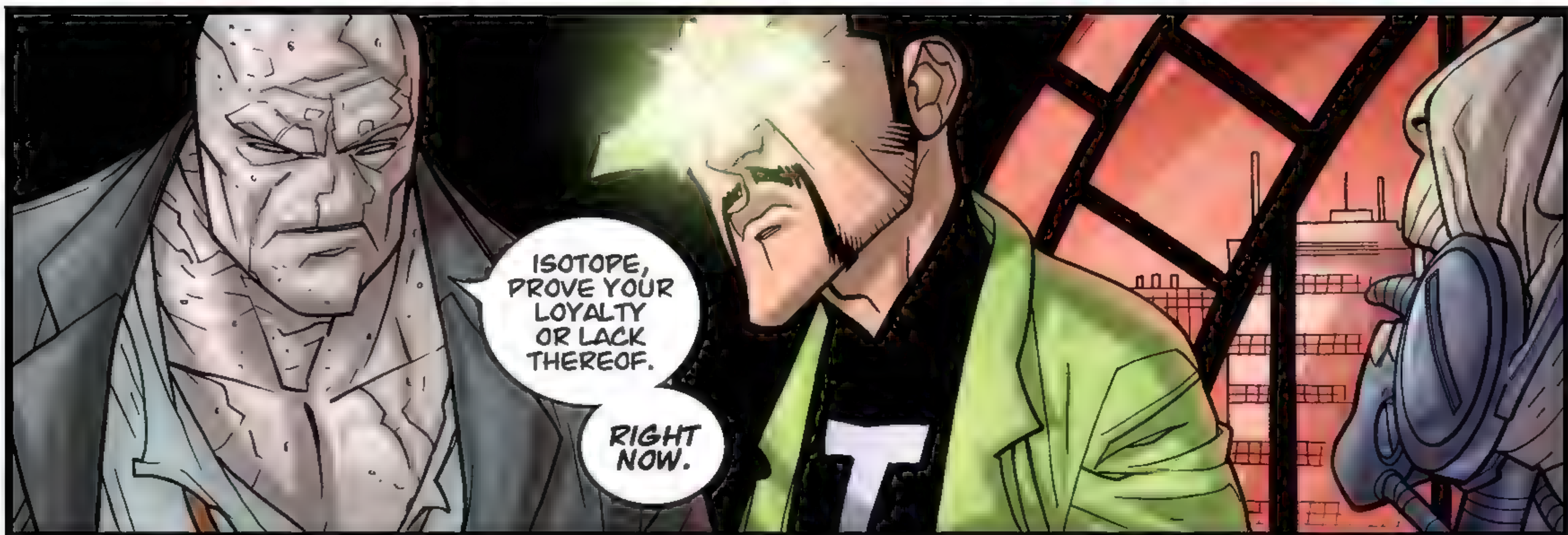
I'VE
WAITED
LONG
ENOUGH--
YOUR TIME
IS UP!



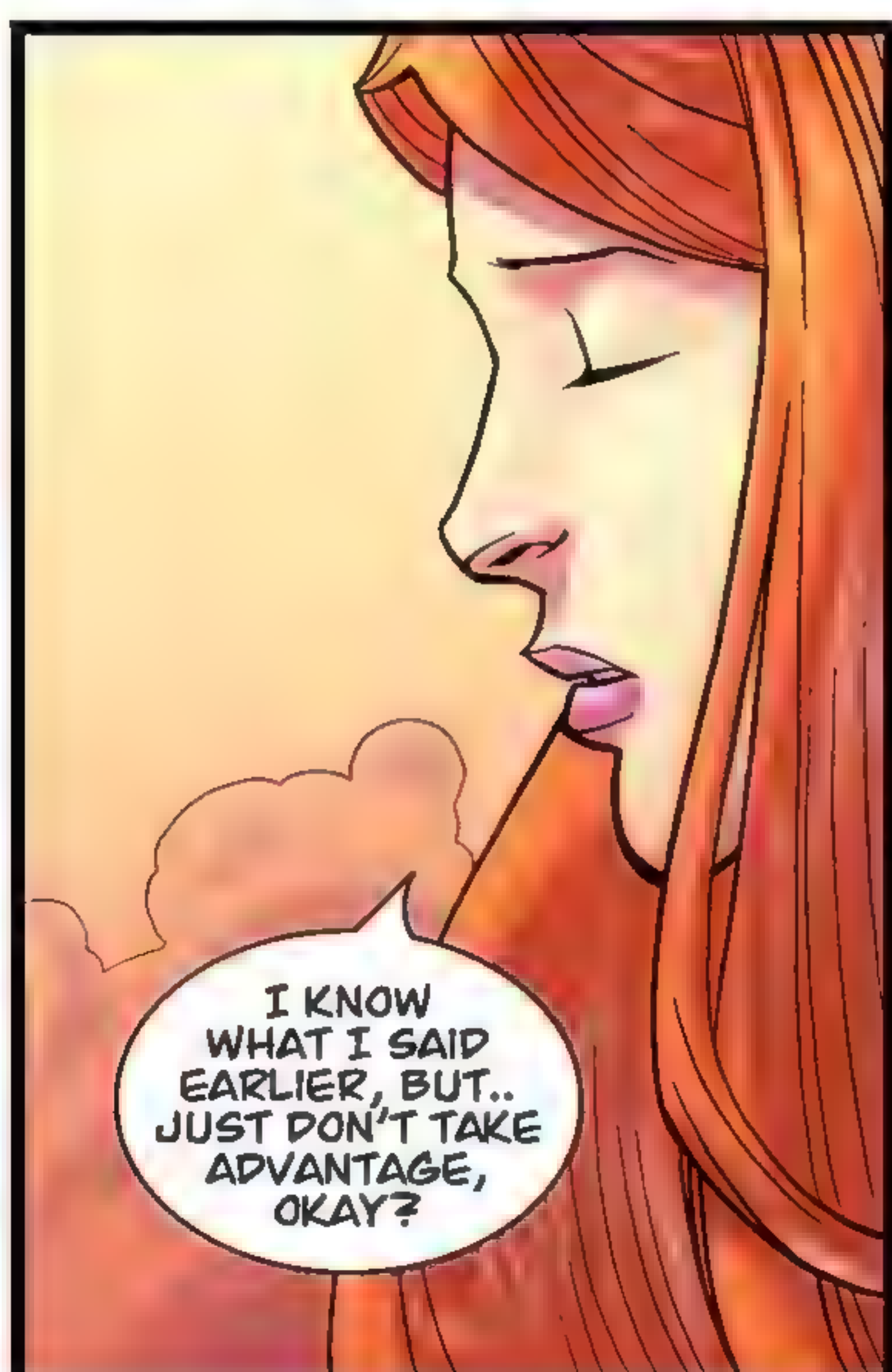
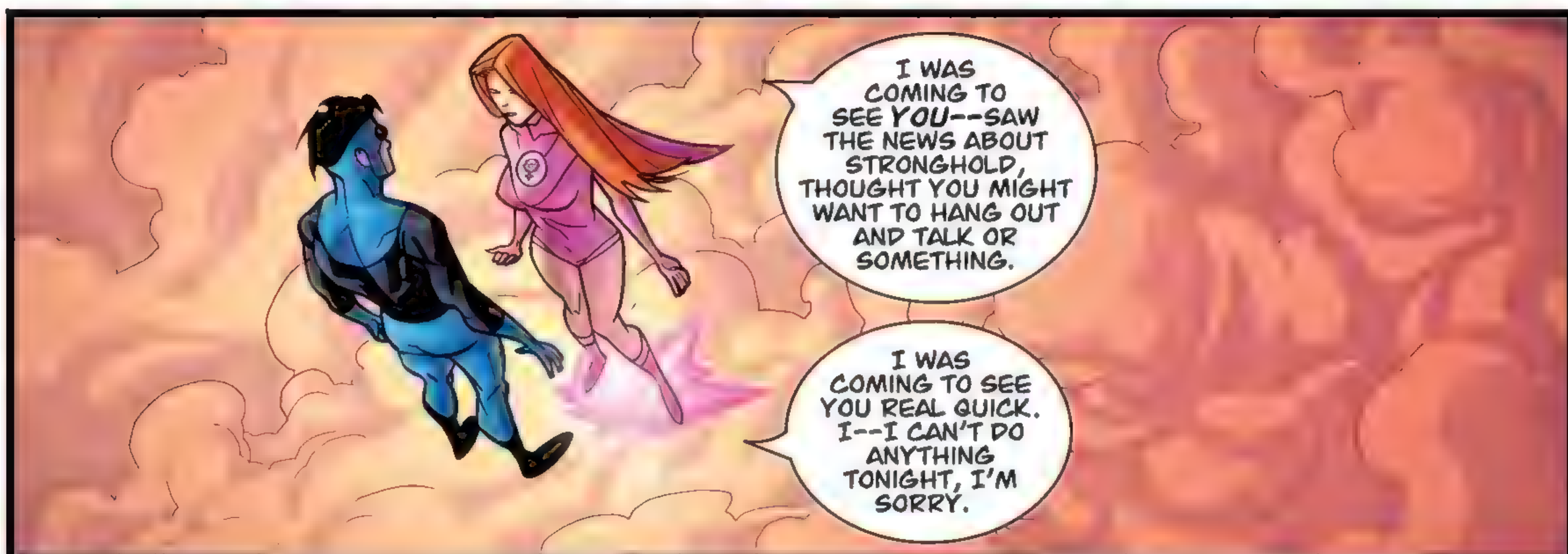
WROCKA-DOOM!











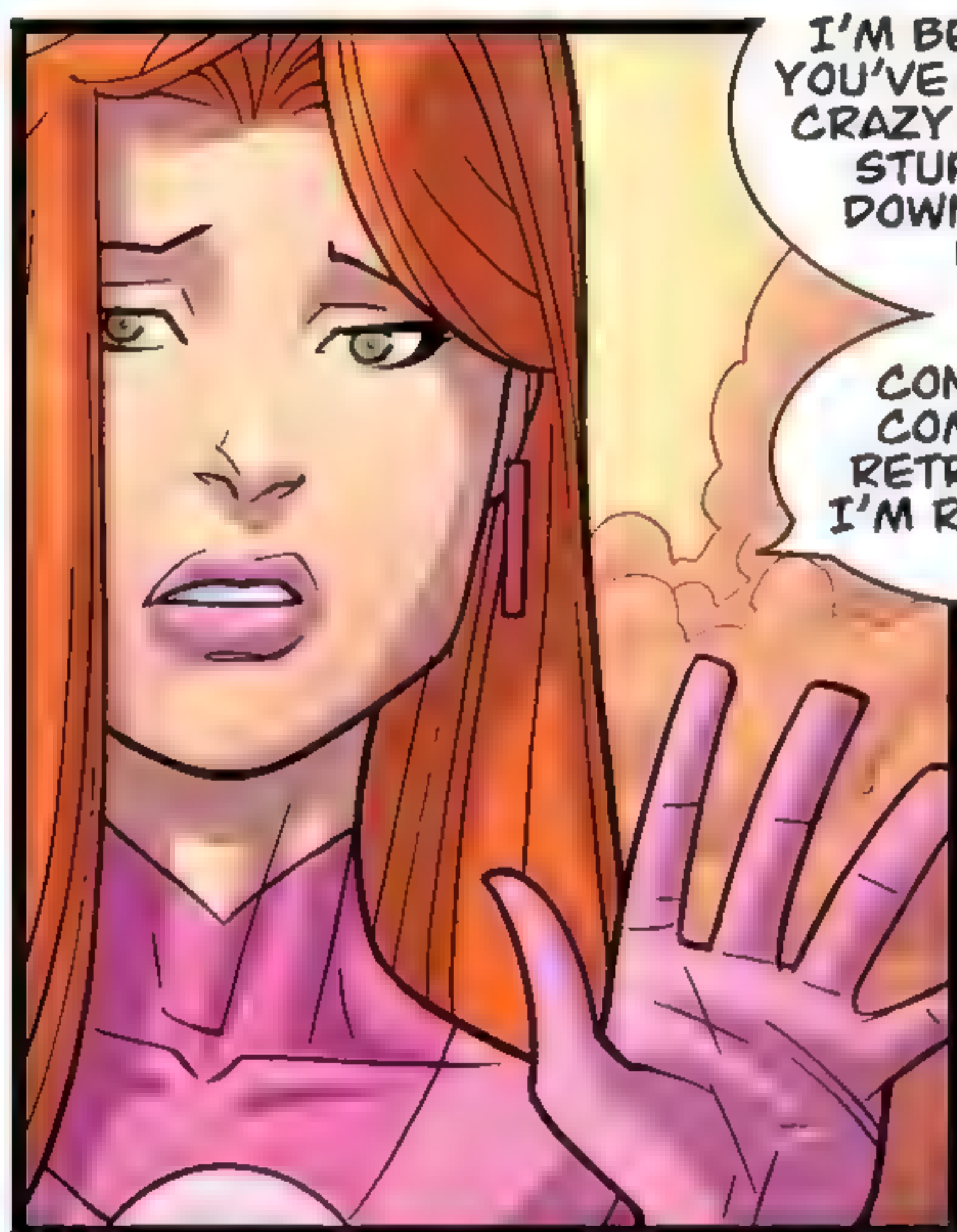


ARE YOU KIDDING?
OF COURSE I'M
HAPPY WITH YOU.
JEEZ---C'MON! I---
I'M TOTALLY
HAPPY WITH
YOU.

YOU CAN'T
TELL? REALLY?
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO
SAY.

STOP---
STOP RIGHT
THERE.

I'VE BEEN
DISTRACTED, YES---
MY BROTHER KILLED
A COUPLE GUYS, IT'S
SOMETHING I'VE
GOT TO DEAL
WITH, I---

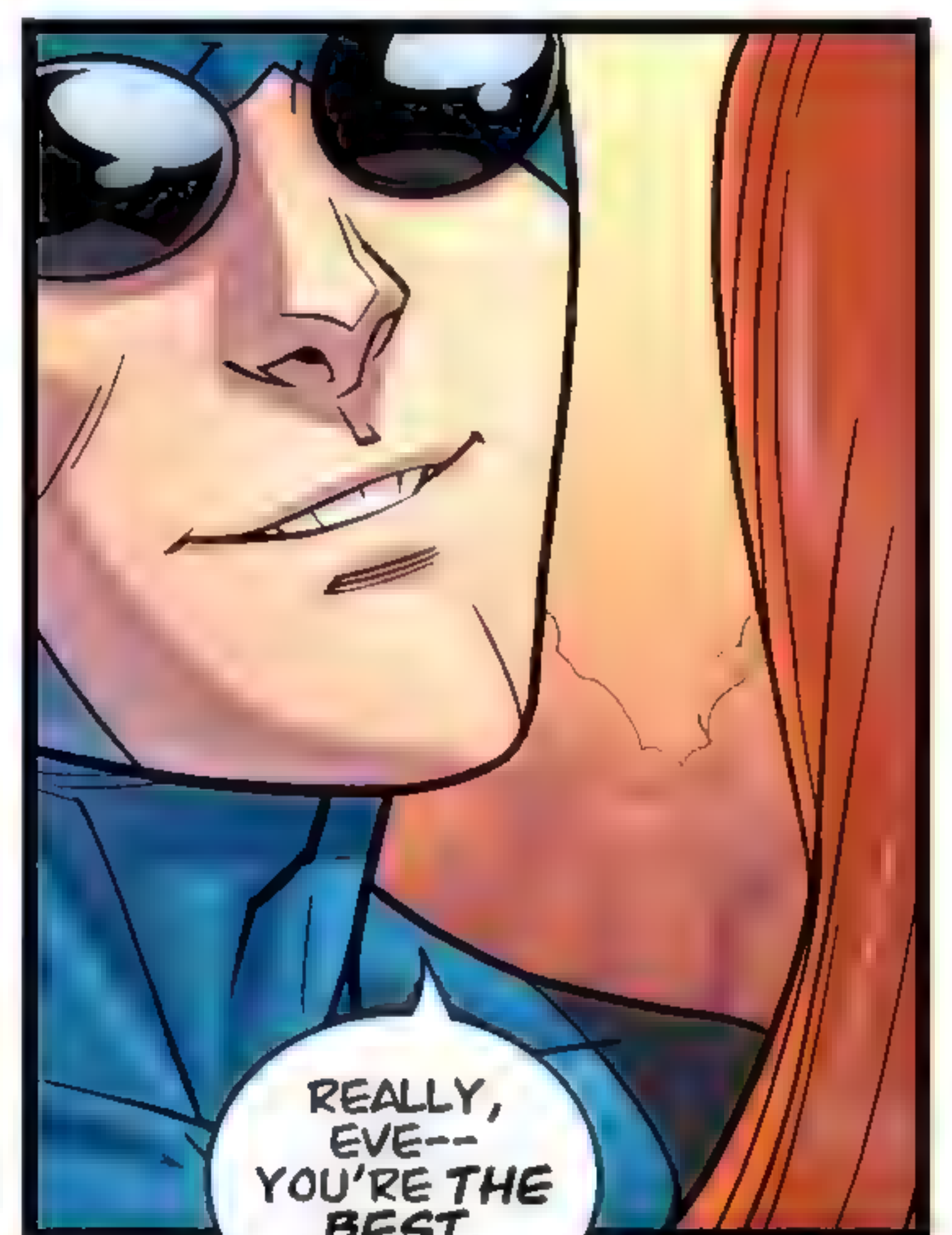


I'M BEING SILLY.
YOU'VE GOT REALLY
CRAZY IMPORTANT
STUFF GOING
DOWN IN YOUR
LIFE.

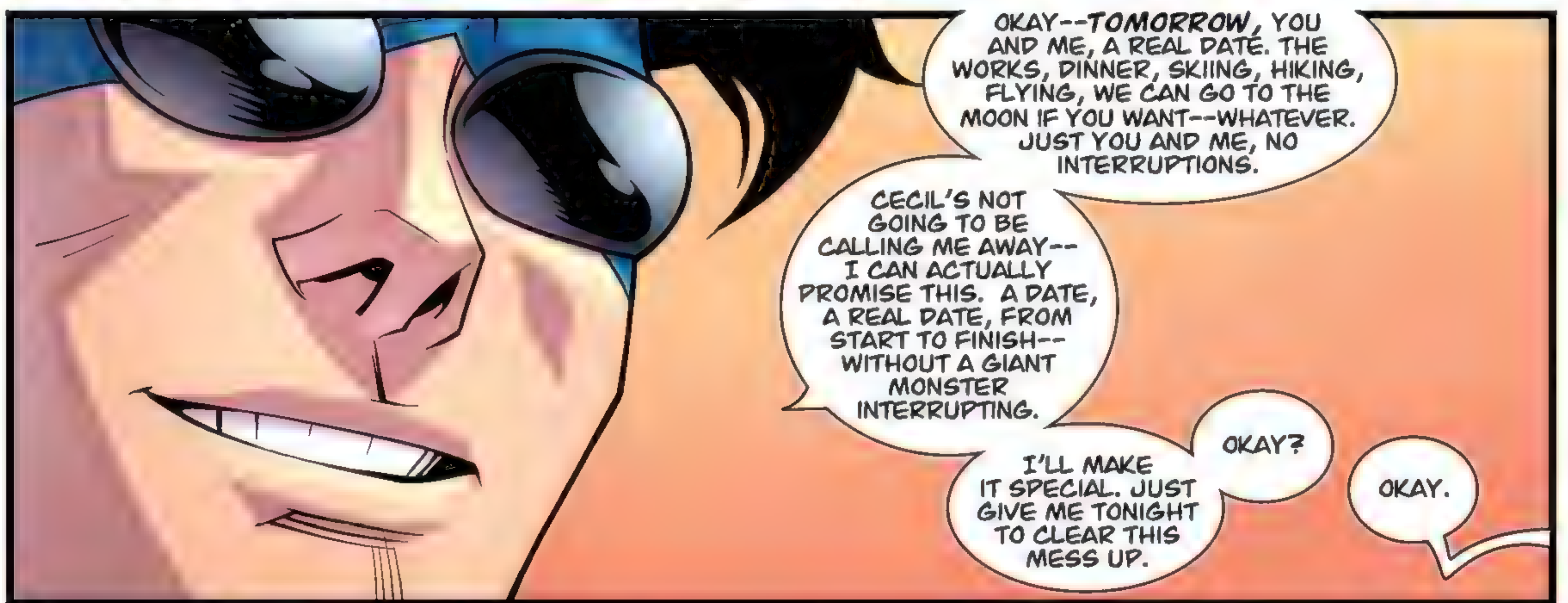
CONSIDER
COMMENT
RETRACTED.
I'M REALLY---



ULP!



REALLY,
EVE---
YOU'RE THE
BEST.



OKAY--TOMORROW, YOU
AND ME, A REAL DATE. THE
WORKS, DINNER, SKIING, HIKING,
FLYING, WE CAN GO TO THE
MOON IF YOU WANT--WHATEVER.
JUST YOU AND ME, NO
INTERRUPTIONS.

CECIL'S NOT
GOING TO BE
CALLING ME AWAY--
I CAN ACTUALLY
PROMISE THIS. A DATE,
A REAL DATE, FROM
START TO FINISH--
WITHOUT A GIANT
MONSTER
INTERRUPTING.

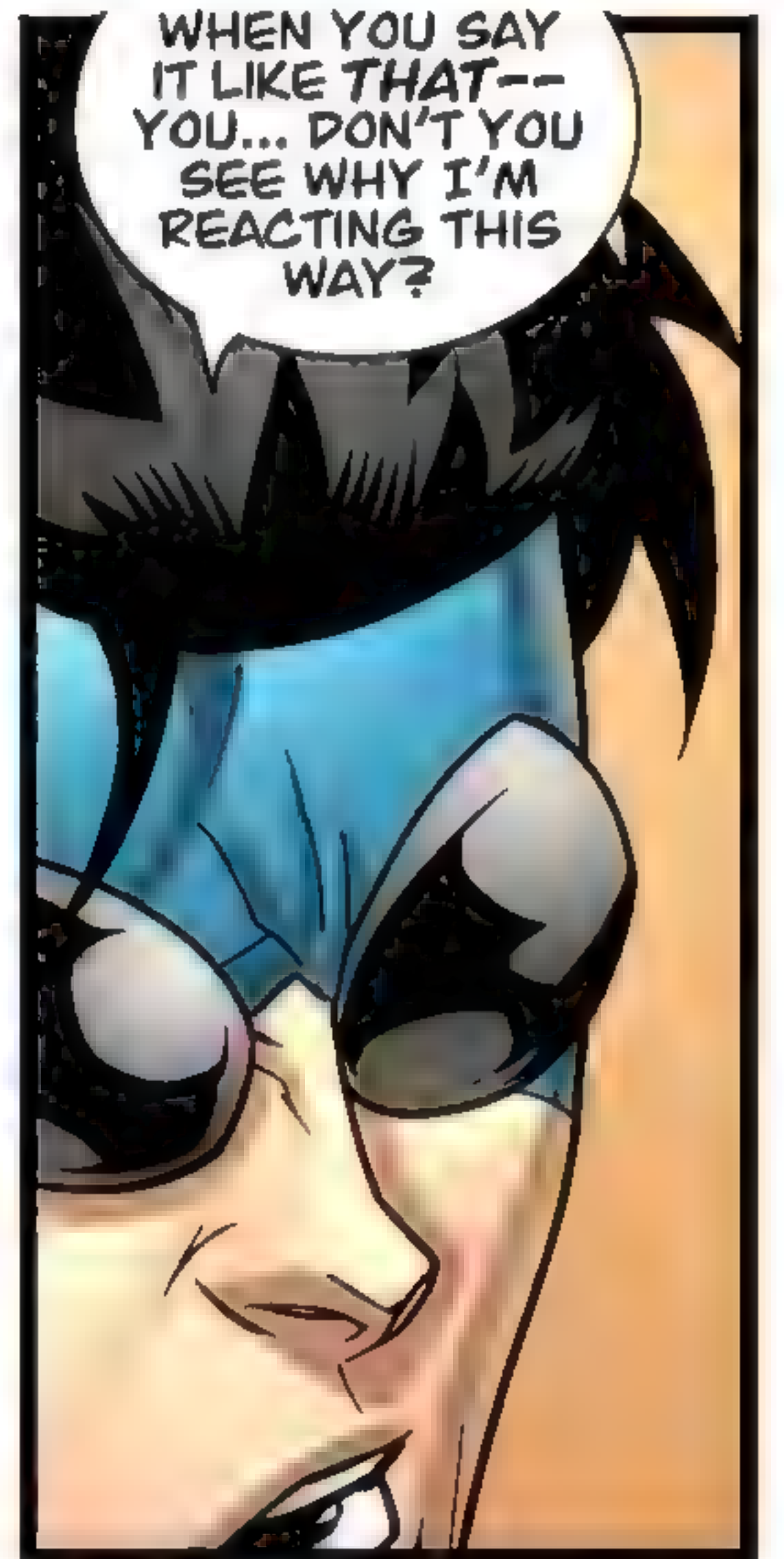
I'LL MAKE
IT SPECIAL. JUST
GIVE ME TONIGHT
TO CLEAR THIS
MESS UP.

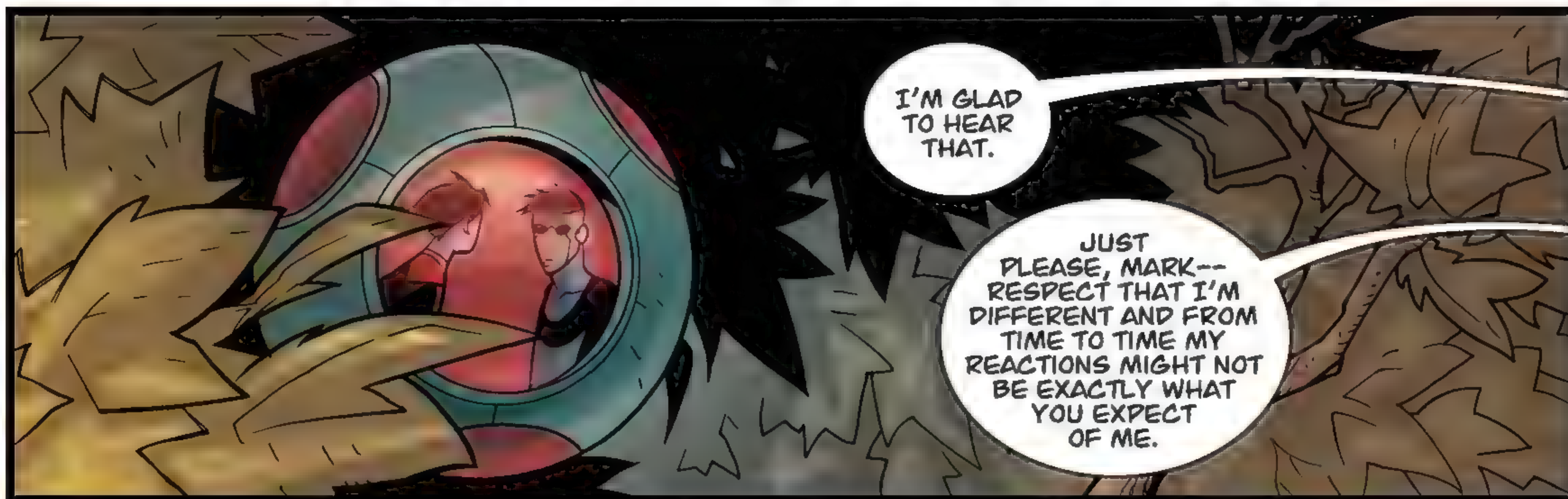
OKAY?

OKAY.



GREAT!
I'LL BE AT
YOUR PLACE
AT FIVE.
SEE YOU
THEN!

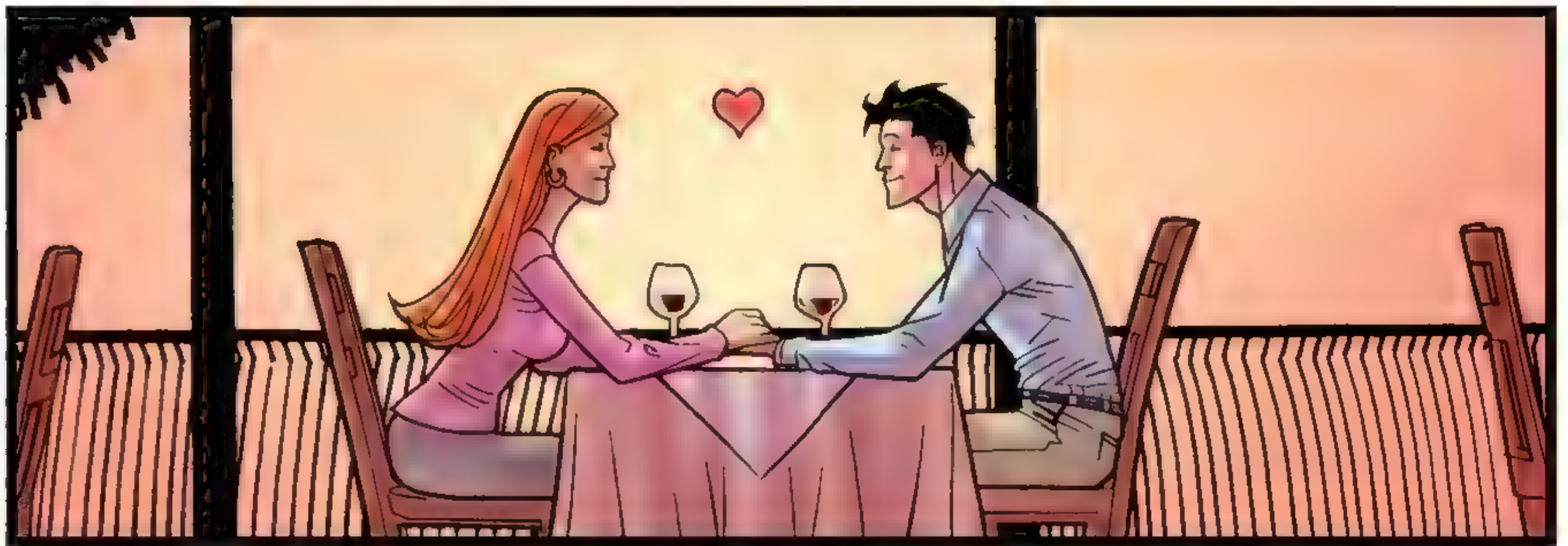
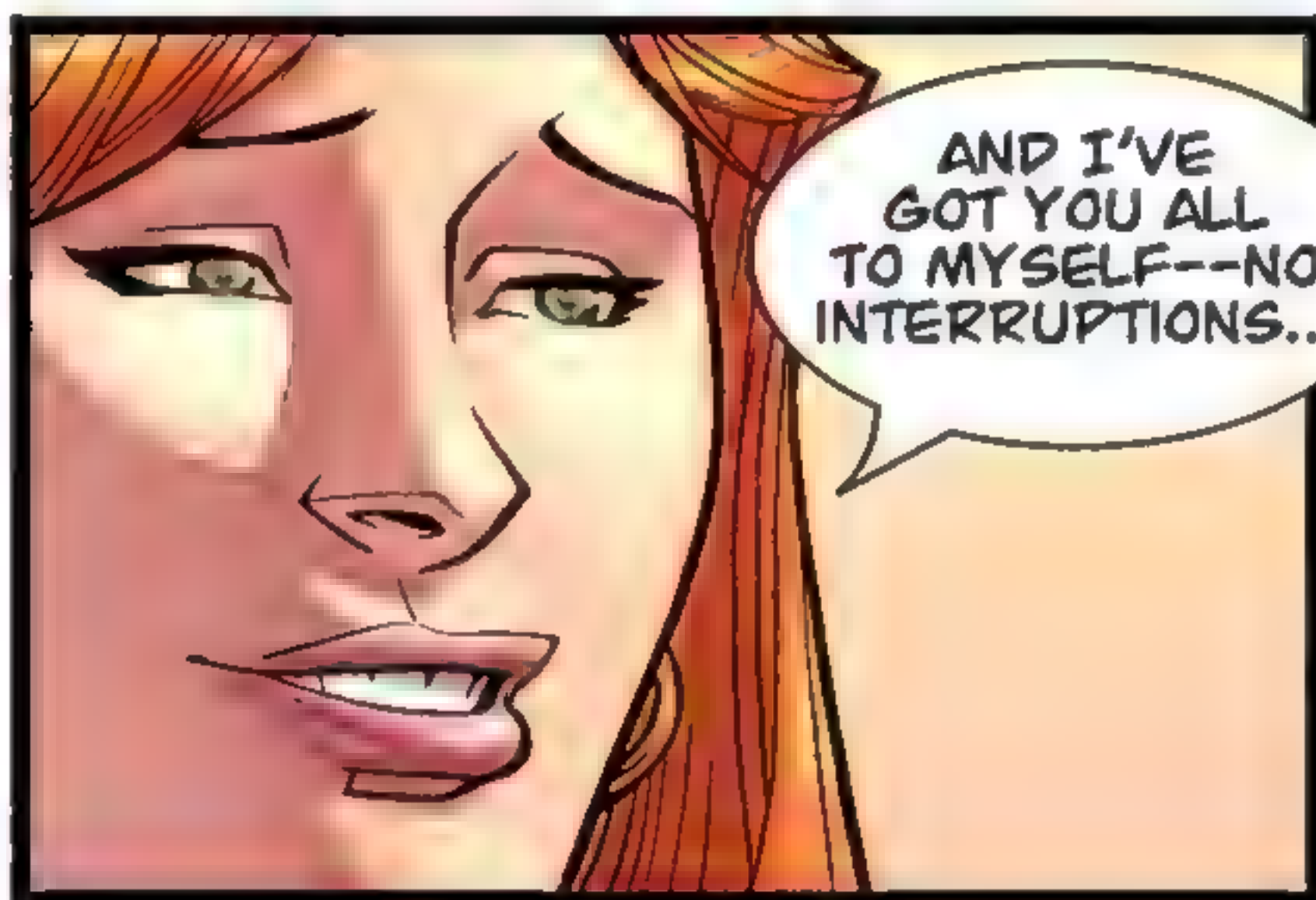
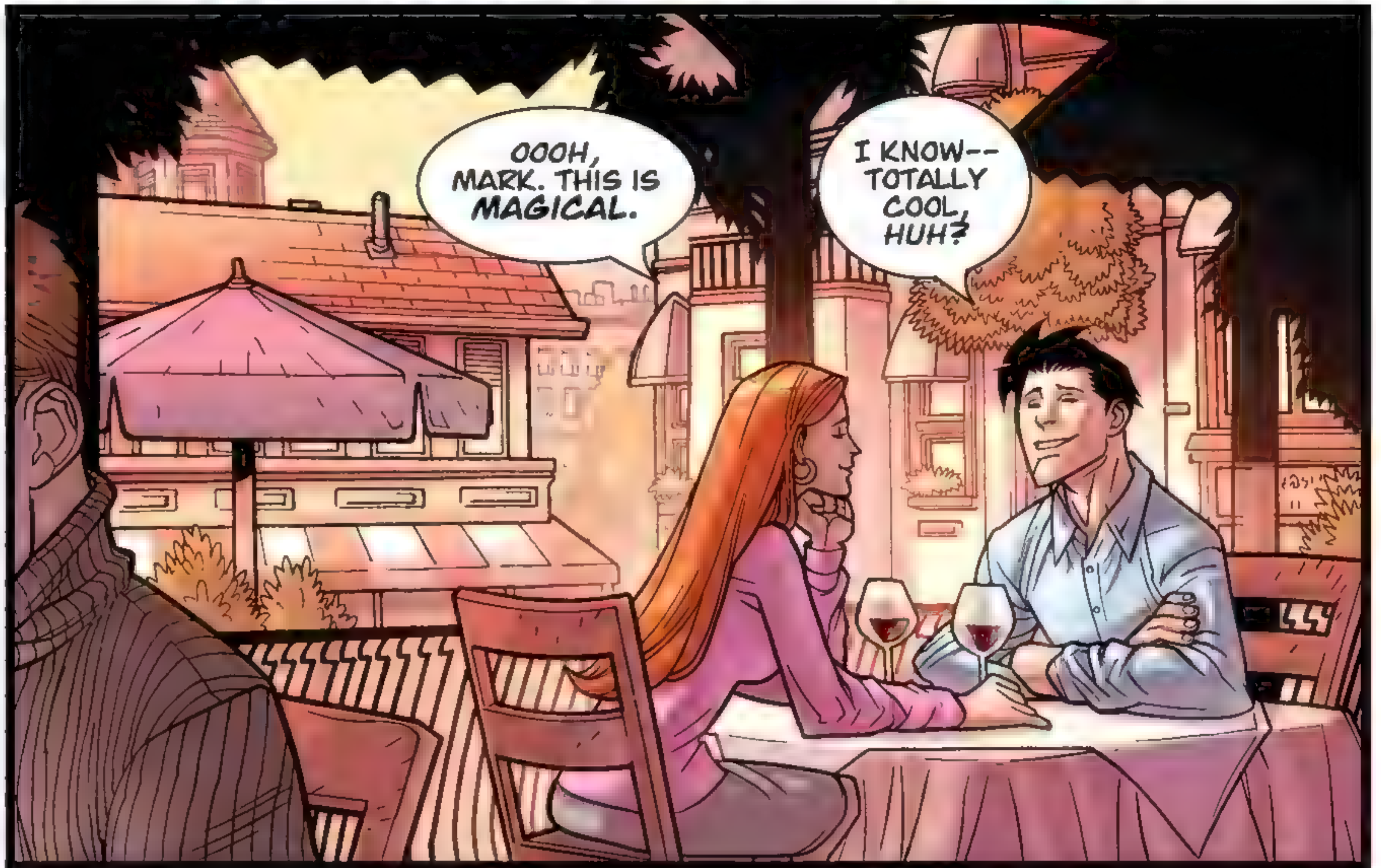
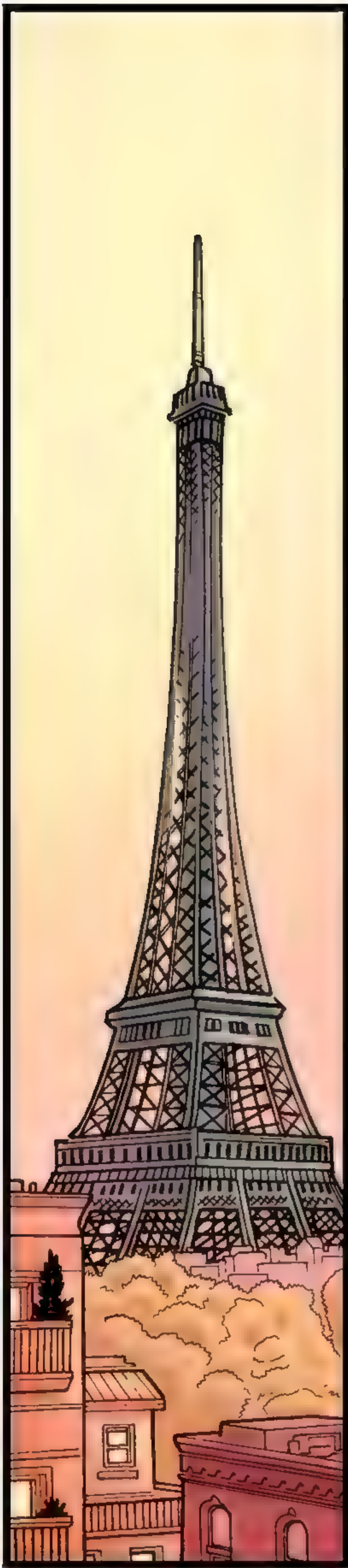






CHAPTER 54







IS THIS HIM?!

YEAH--
THAT'S THE
DUDE WHO
KICKED OUR
ASSES! GRAB
HIM!



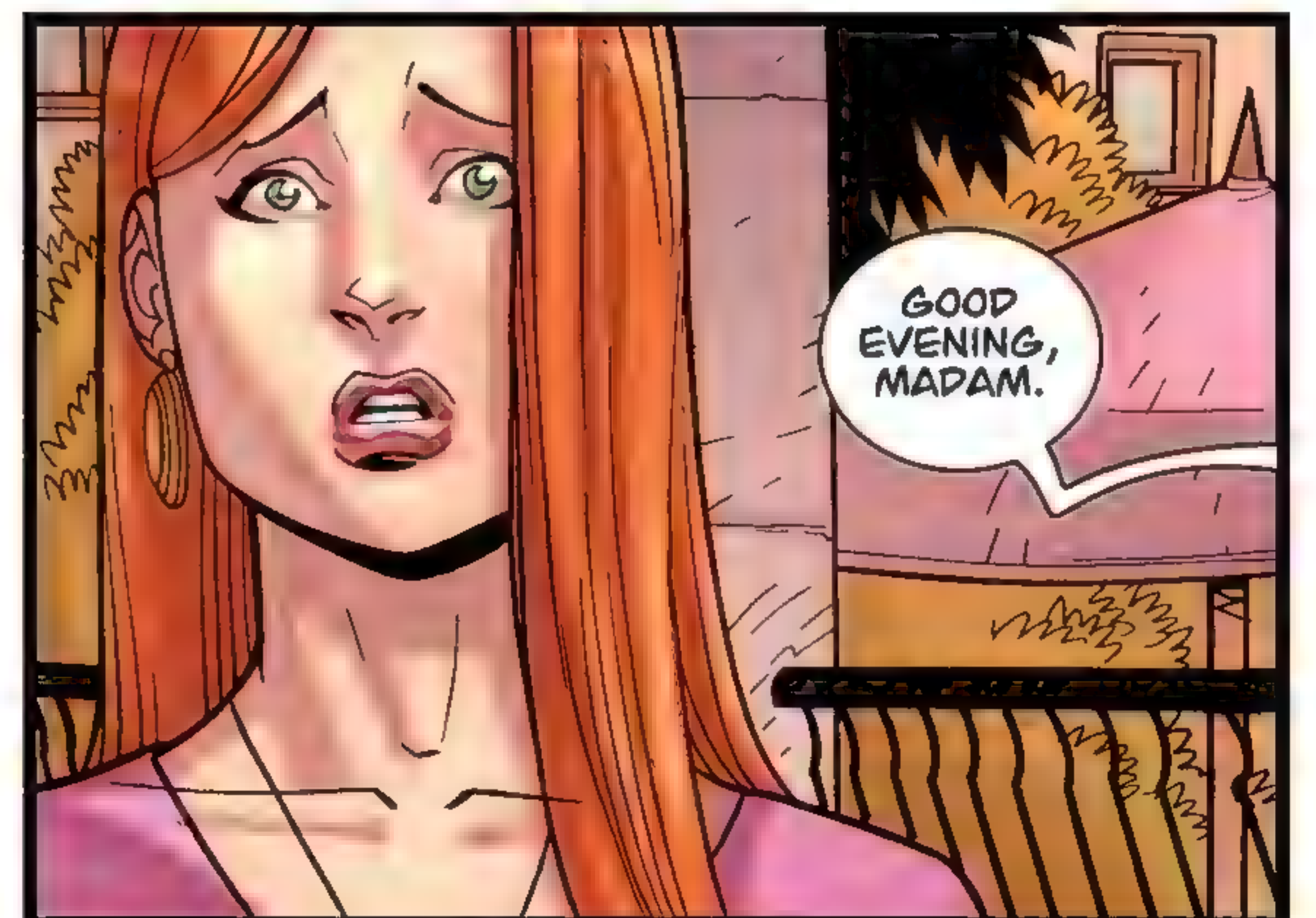
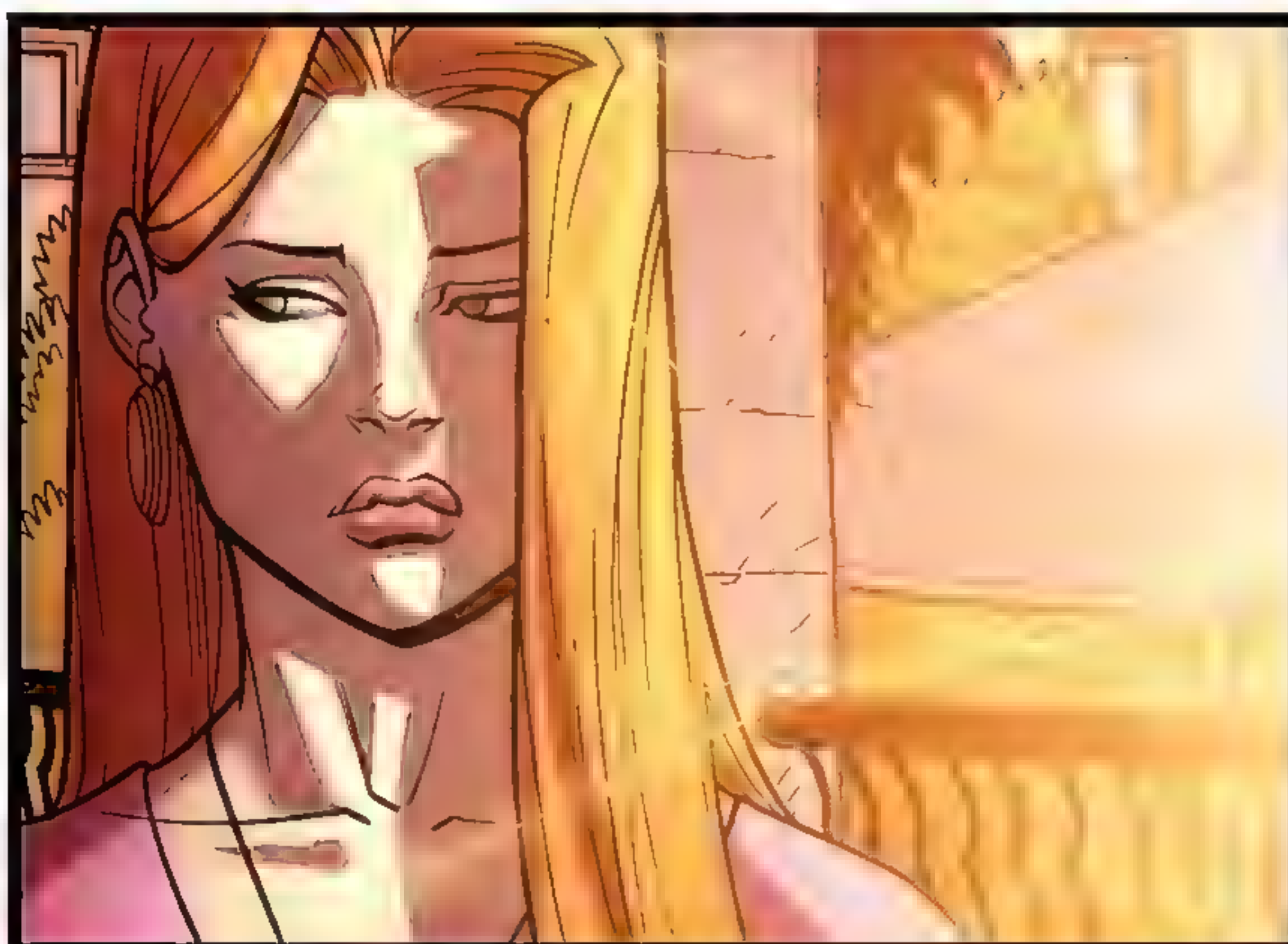
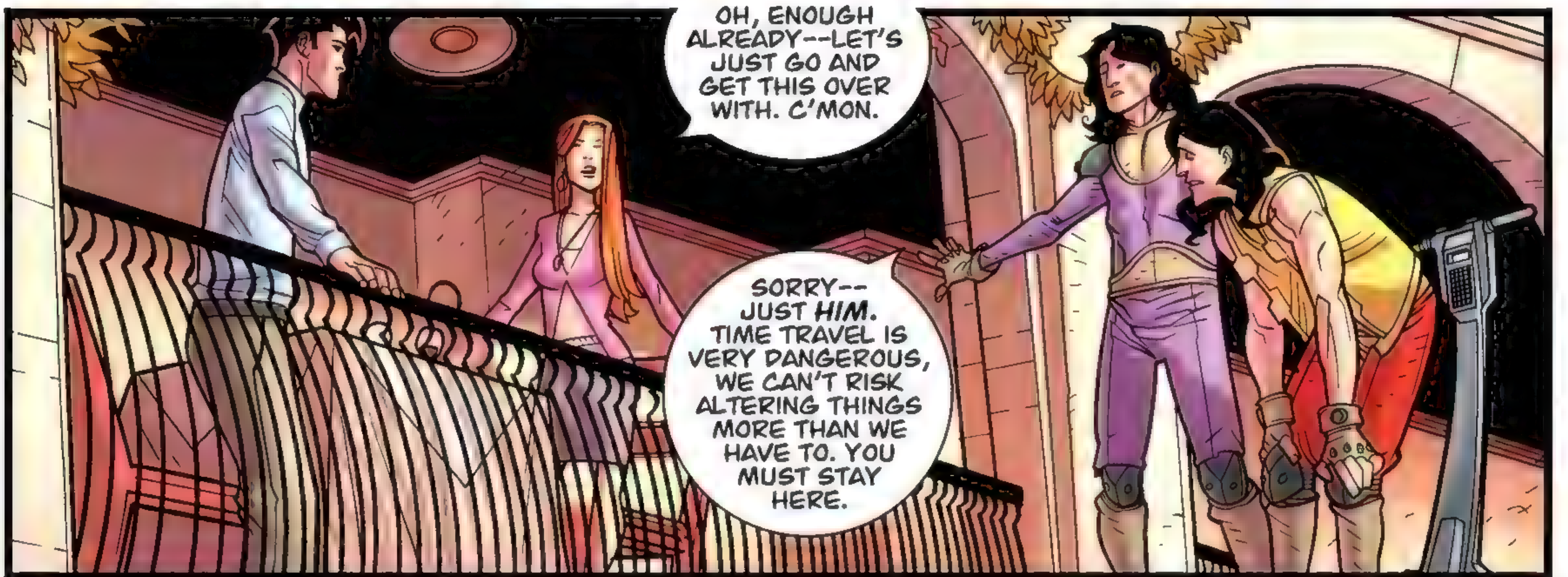
WHOA--NOT SO
FAST, JERKS! I'M
KIND OF IN THE
MIDDLE OF
SOMETHING.

WRAM!



NO--YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND.
YOU'VE GOT TO
COME WITH
US!

YOU'VE
GOT TO
SAVE THE
FUTURE!





WELCOME
TO...

...THE
FUTURE!



OR AS WE
CALL IT--THE
PRESENT!

OUR FUTURE
IS WAY WORSE
THAN THIS ONE,
TRUST ME. WHICH
IS WHY WE REALLY
NEED YOUR
HELP!



SO--TELL ME WHAT
IT IS YOU NEED ME TO
DO. I REALLY NEED
TO GET BACK TO MY
DATE--AND PLEASE
DON'T TELL MY
GIRLFRIEND I WORE
MY COSTUME UNDER
MY CLOTHES.

DO YOU HAVE
A COMPARTMENT
ON THIS SLED I
COULD PUT
THESE IN?



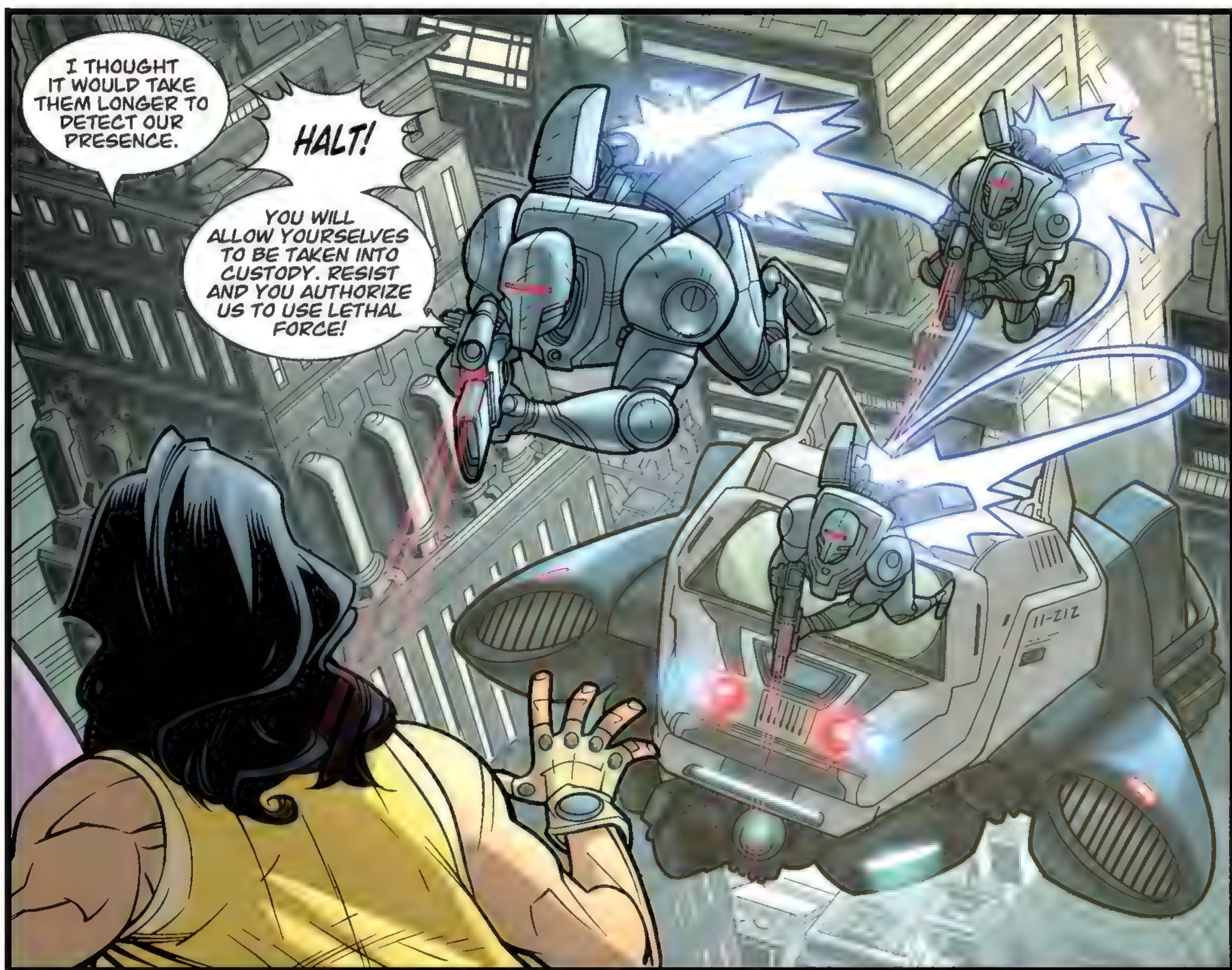
I'LL TAKE
THOSE
OFF YOUR
HANDS.

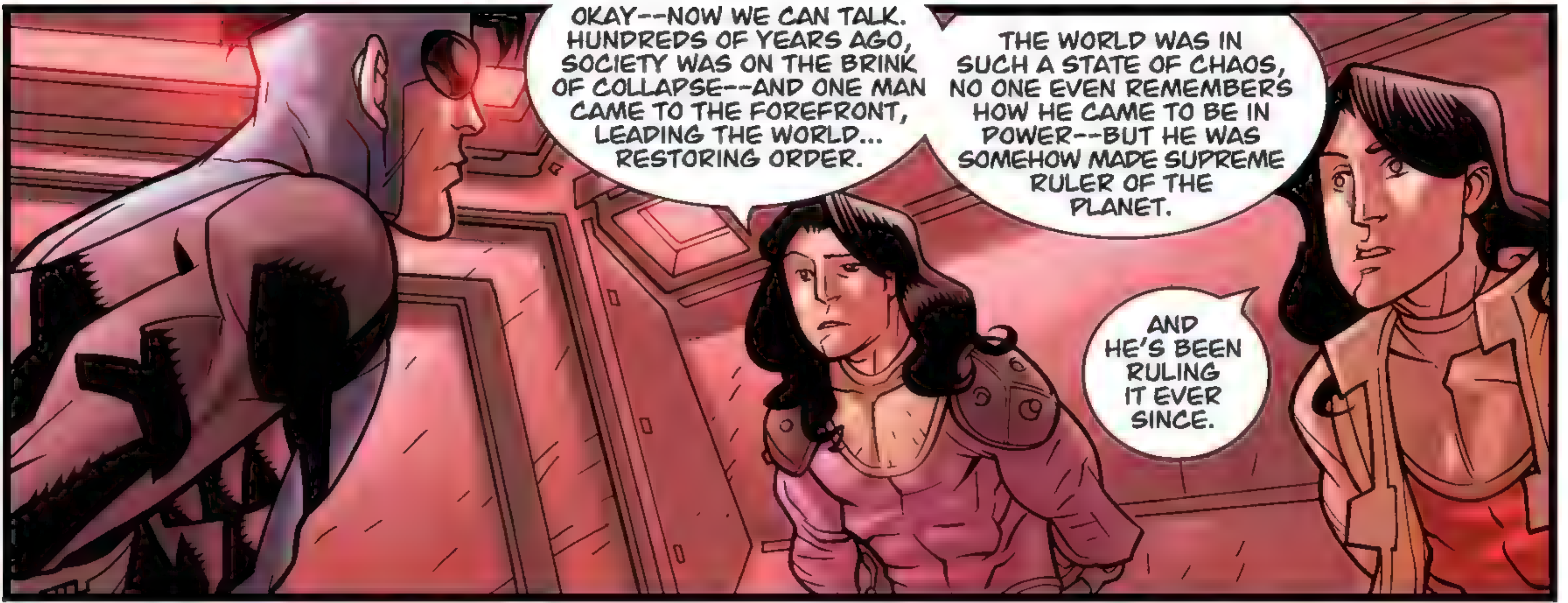
HUH?



WHAT
WAS--?

PROBABLY
BEST IF WE
IGNORE THAT.





OKAY--NOW WE CAN TALK. HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO, SOCIETY WAS ON THE BRINK OF COLLAPSE--AND ONE MAN CAME TO THE FOREFRONT, LEADING THE WORLD... RESTORING ORDER.

THE WORLD WAS IN SUCH A STATE OF CHAOS, NO ONE EVEN REMEMBERS HOW HE CAME TO BE IN POWER--BUT HE WAS SOMEHOW MADE SUPREME RULER OF THE PLANET.

AND HE'S BEEN RULING IT EVER SINCE.



FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS?

IS HE A... VILTRUMITE?



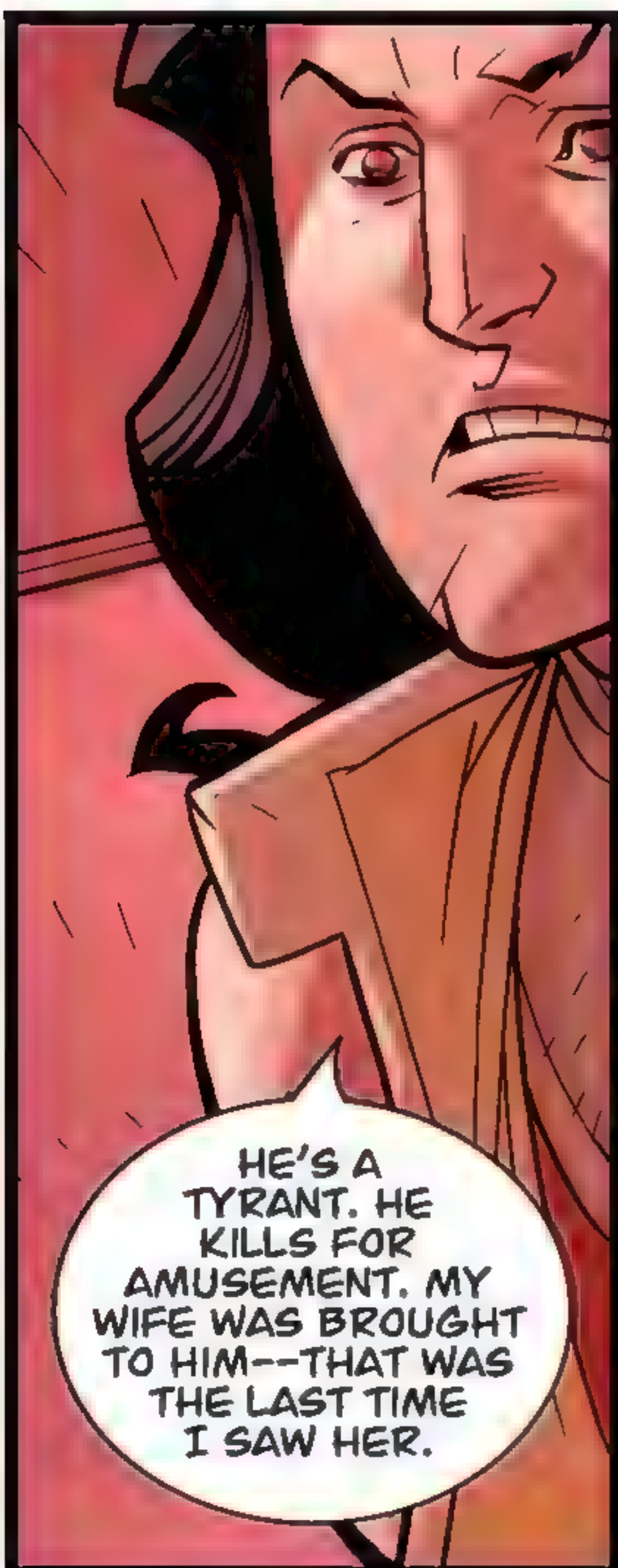
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS.

ANYWAY, HE'S LOST HIS MIND, HE'S DESTROYING THE PLANET, PEOPLE ARE DYING--AND THINGS ARE ONLY GETTING WORSE.



RIGHT--AND WE WERE ASSEMBLING PIECES OF A WEAPON THAT COULD SUPPOSEDLY DEFEAT HIM. THE INK FROM YOUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WAS USED TO MAKE A POISON HE WOULDN'T BE IMMUNE TO.

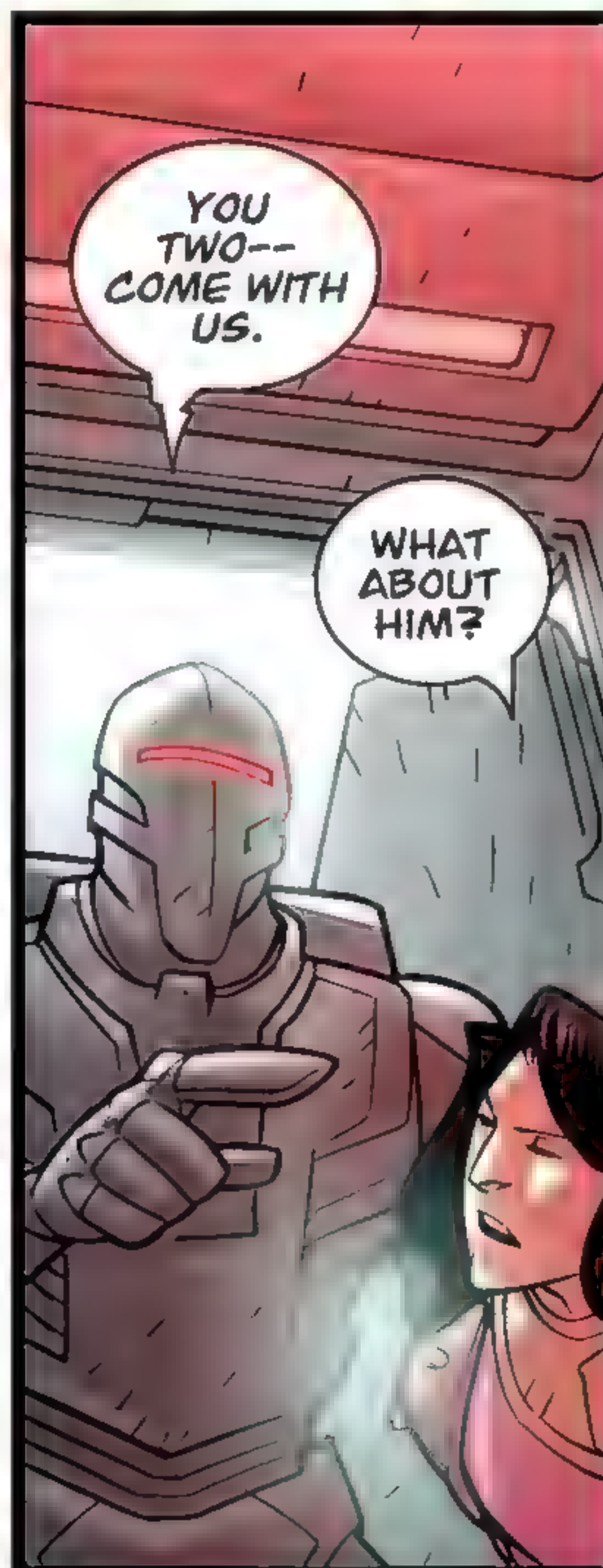
IT DIDN'T WORK.



HE'S A TYRANT. HE KILLS FOR AMUSEMENT. MY WIFE WAS BROUGHT TO HIM--THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW HER.

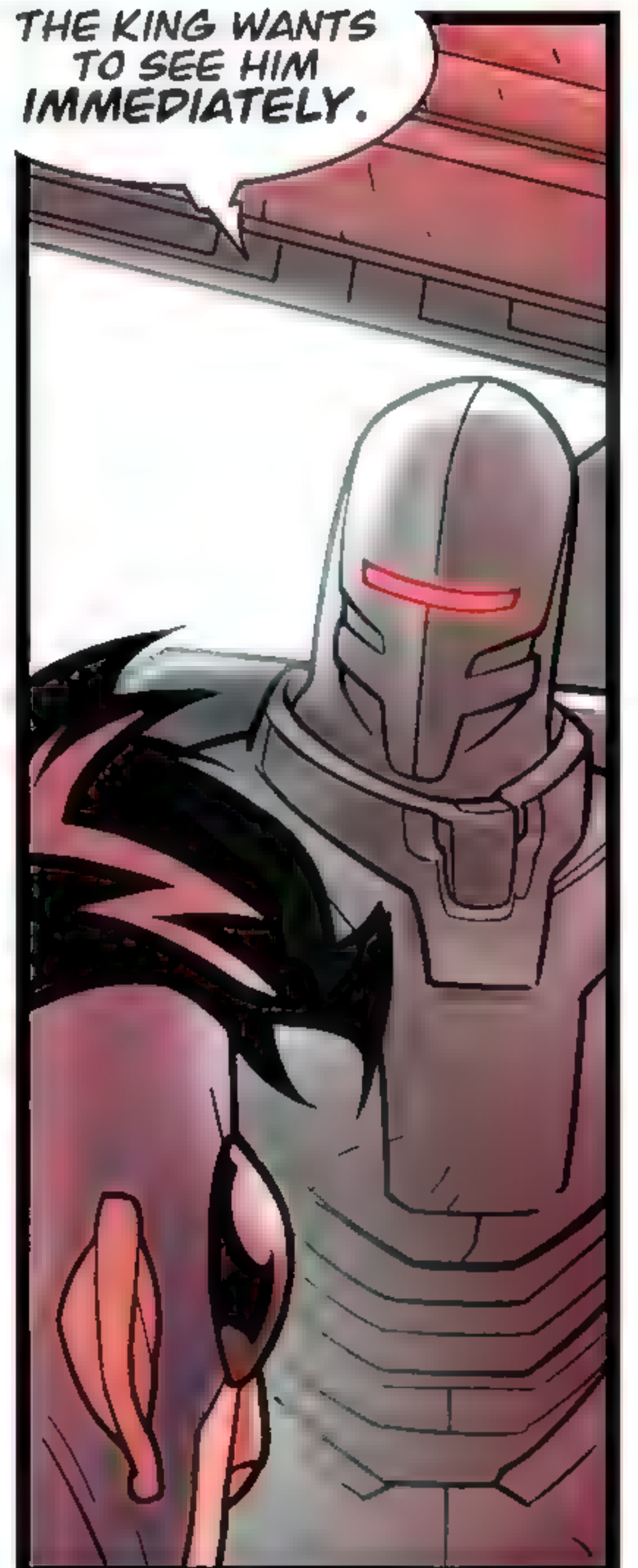


WE'RE BEING BROUGHT TO THE CITADEL, BUT WE'LL BE HELD IN THE DETENTION LEVEL-- YOU'LL NEED TO WORK YOUR WAY UP TO THE ROYAL CHAMBERS. WE'VE GOT REBELS WORKING WITH US EVERYWHERE. ONCE WE FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET YOU TO THE KING WE CAN--



YOU TWO-- COME WITH US.

WHAT ABOUT HIM?



THE KING WANTS TO SEE HIM IMMEDIATELY.



NO, I'M FINE--
I'M JUST YOUNGER.
THESE GUYS
BROUGHT ME HERE
FROM THE--

I HAVEN'T
SEEN YOU SINCE
YOU TOOK YOUR
FAMILY AND LEFT
THIS PLANET. WHAT
WAS THAT--TWO
HUNDRED--THREE
HUNDRED YEARS
AGO?

I JUST...
I CAN'T
REMEMBER.

I CARRY WITHIN ME
A GREAT SORROW,
MARK. SOMETHING
I CAN'T OVERCOME...
NOT ANYMORE...

IS IT ABOUT
KATE? DID
KATE DIE?

KATE?
I DON'T
REMEMBER
A KATE...

IS THAT
THE REDHEAD
THAT YOU--

NO!

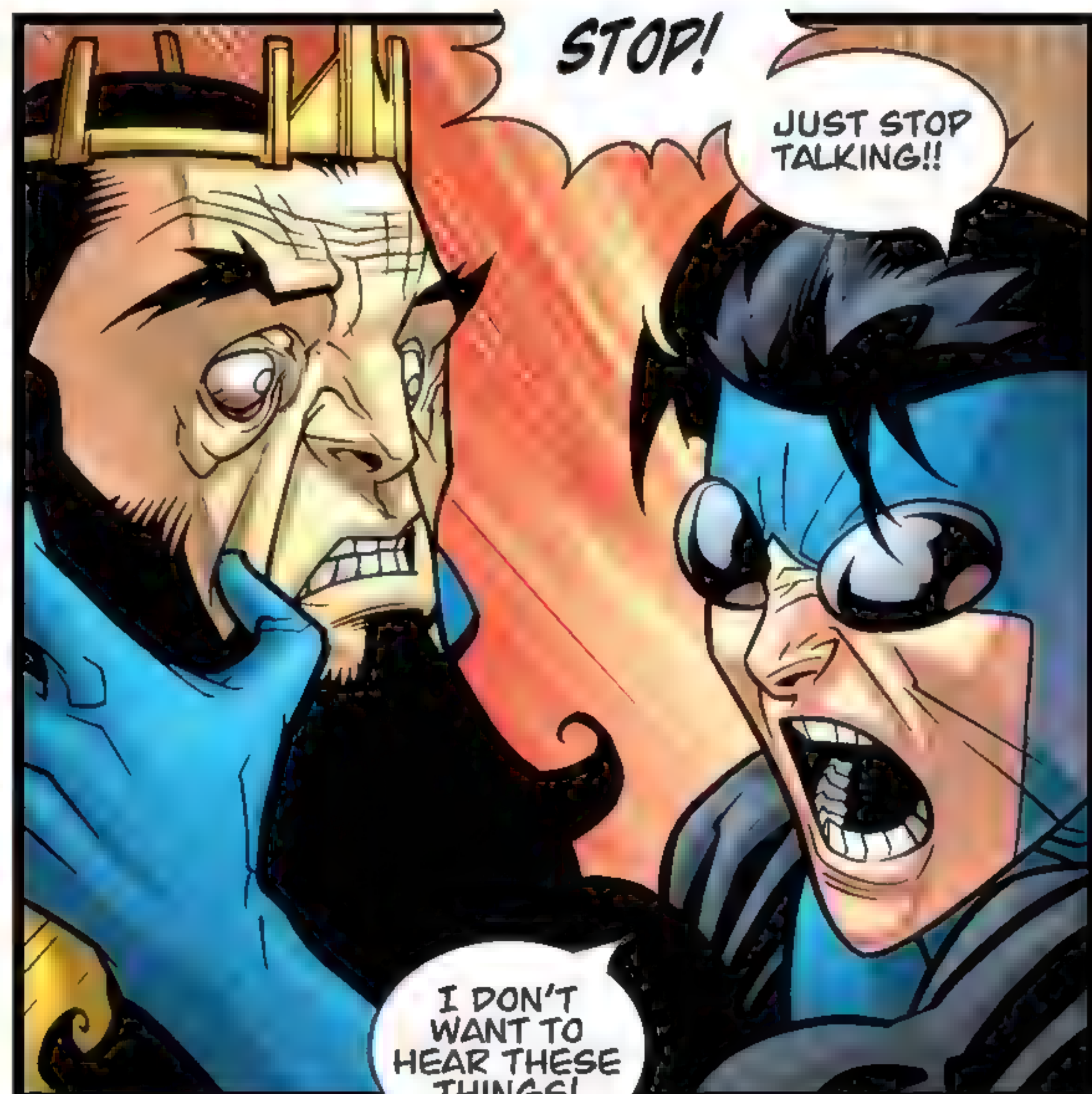
I DON'T
REMEMBER! I
DON'T REMEMBER
ANYTHING!

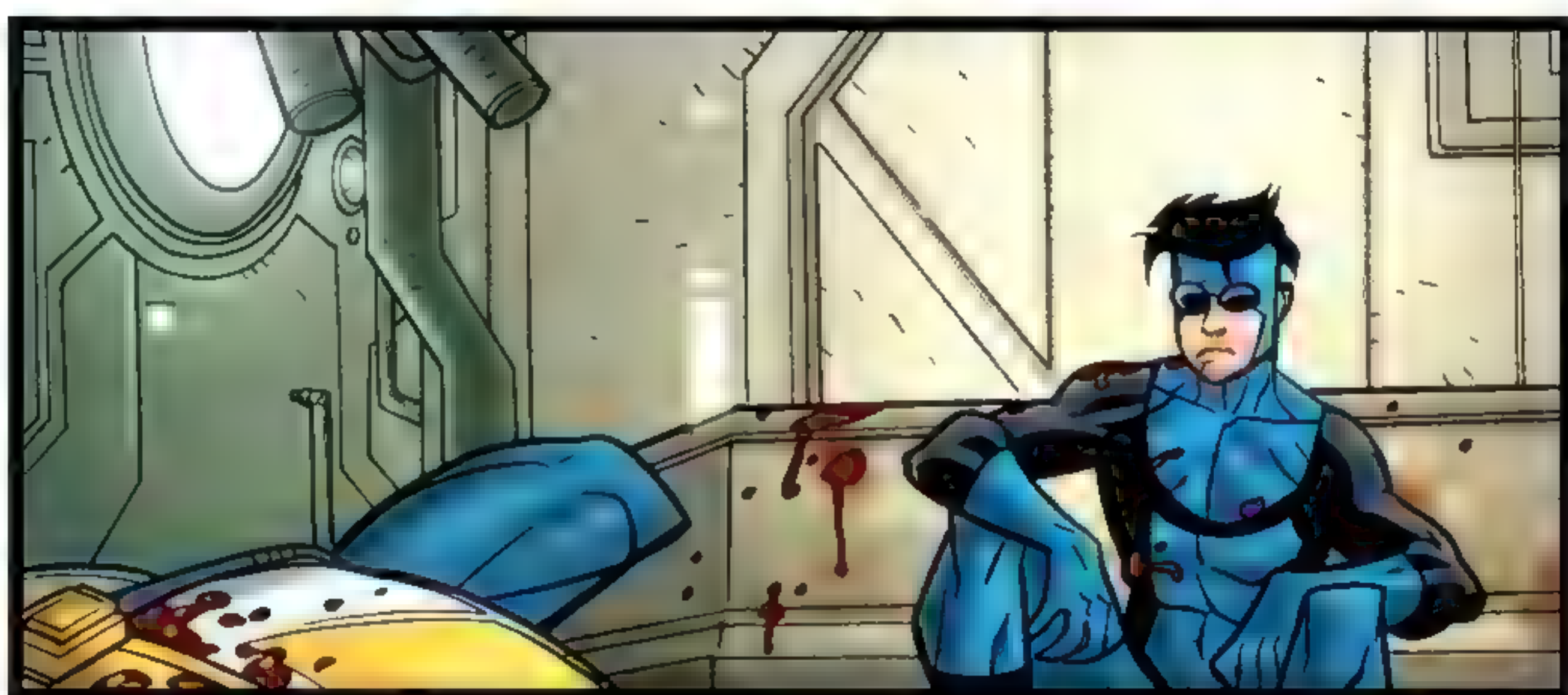
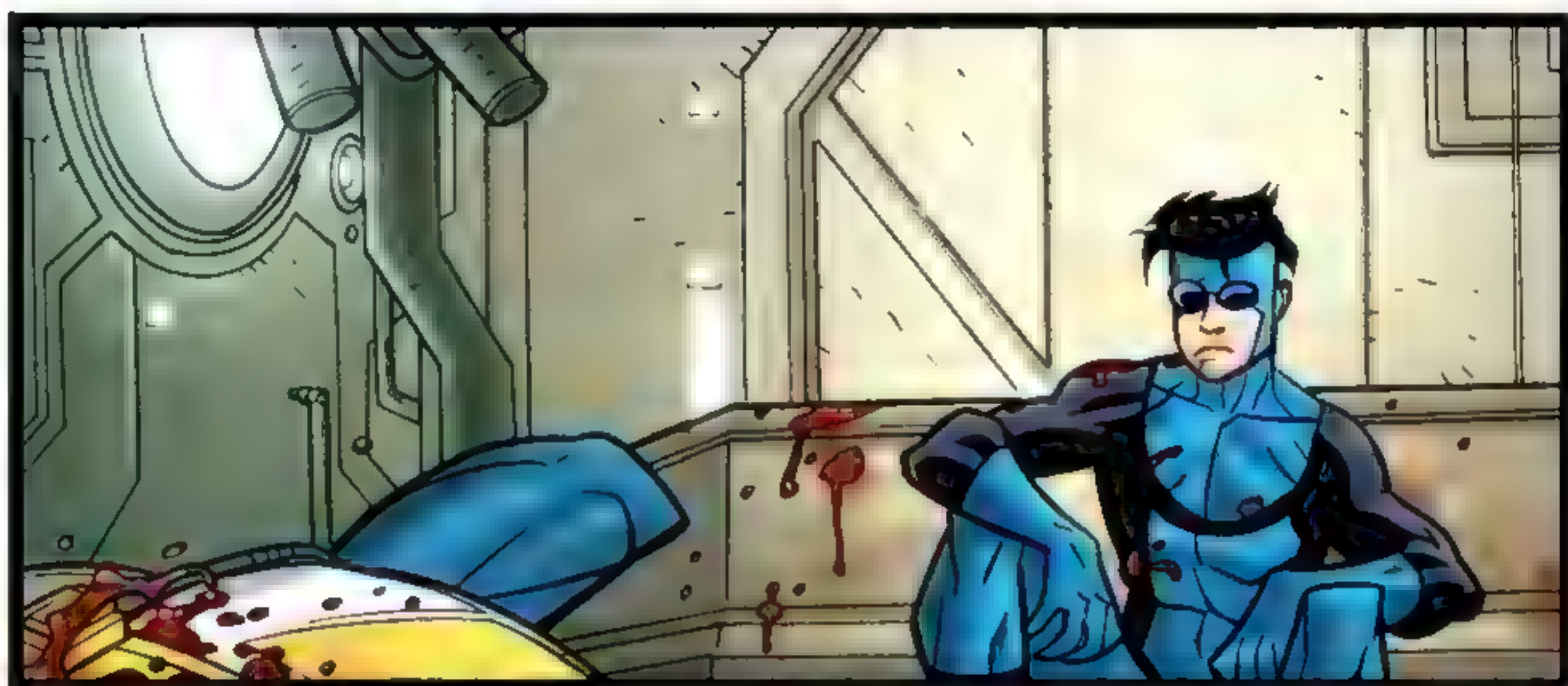
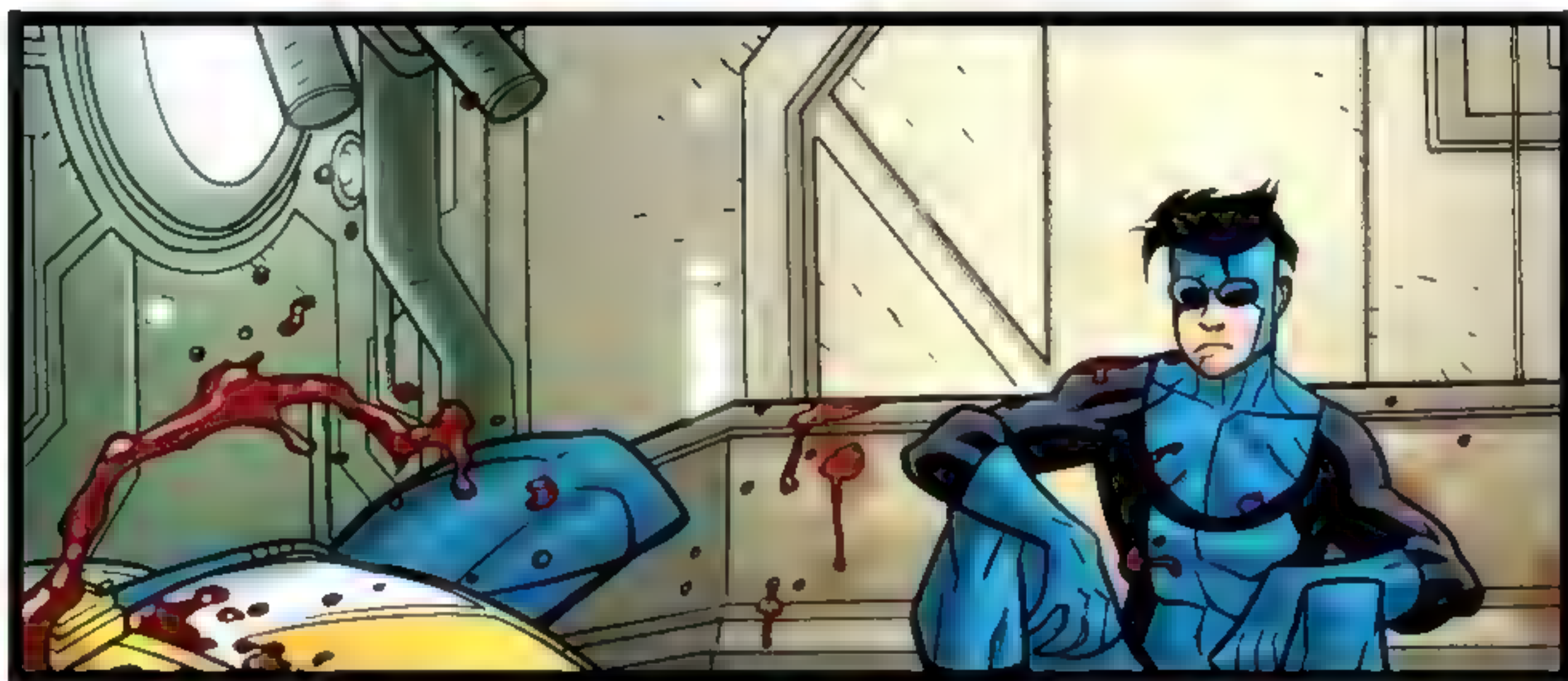
I WANT
IT ALL TO END...
FINALLY, AT
LONG LAST... I
JUST WANT IT
TO BE OVER.

I WANT
TO DIE,
MARK.

UH...
I'M SORRY,
I REALLY
DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO
SAY.







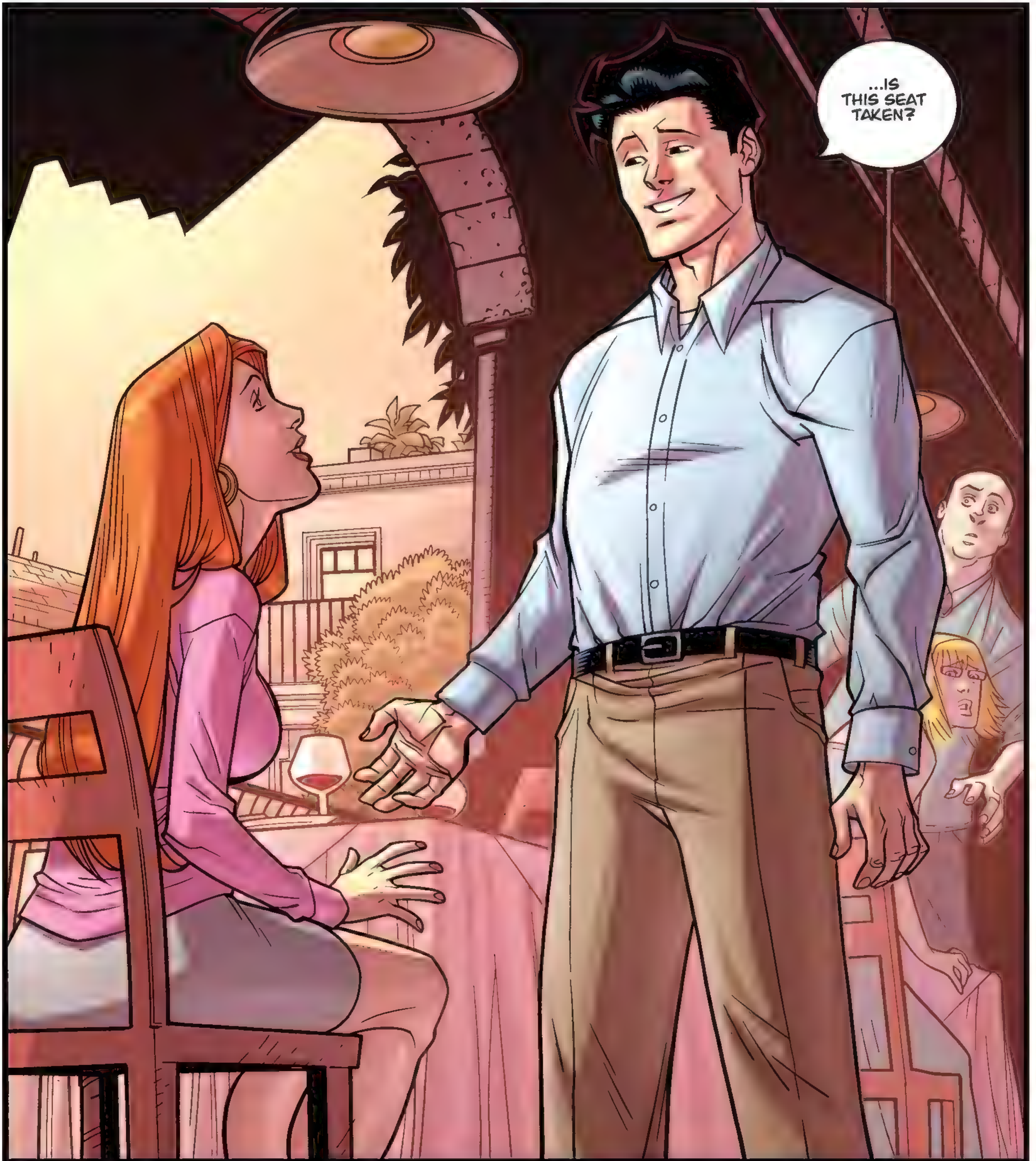
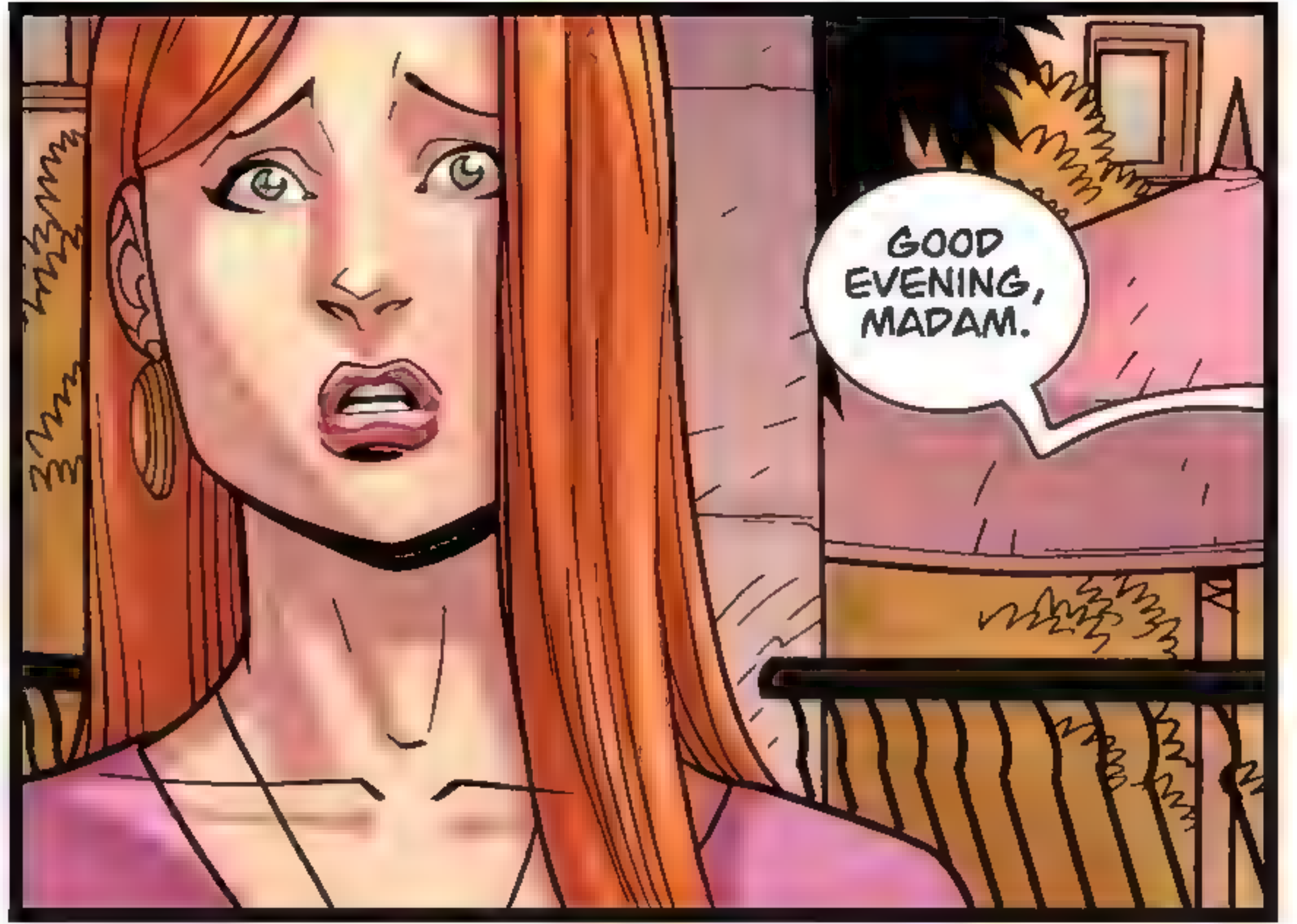
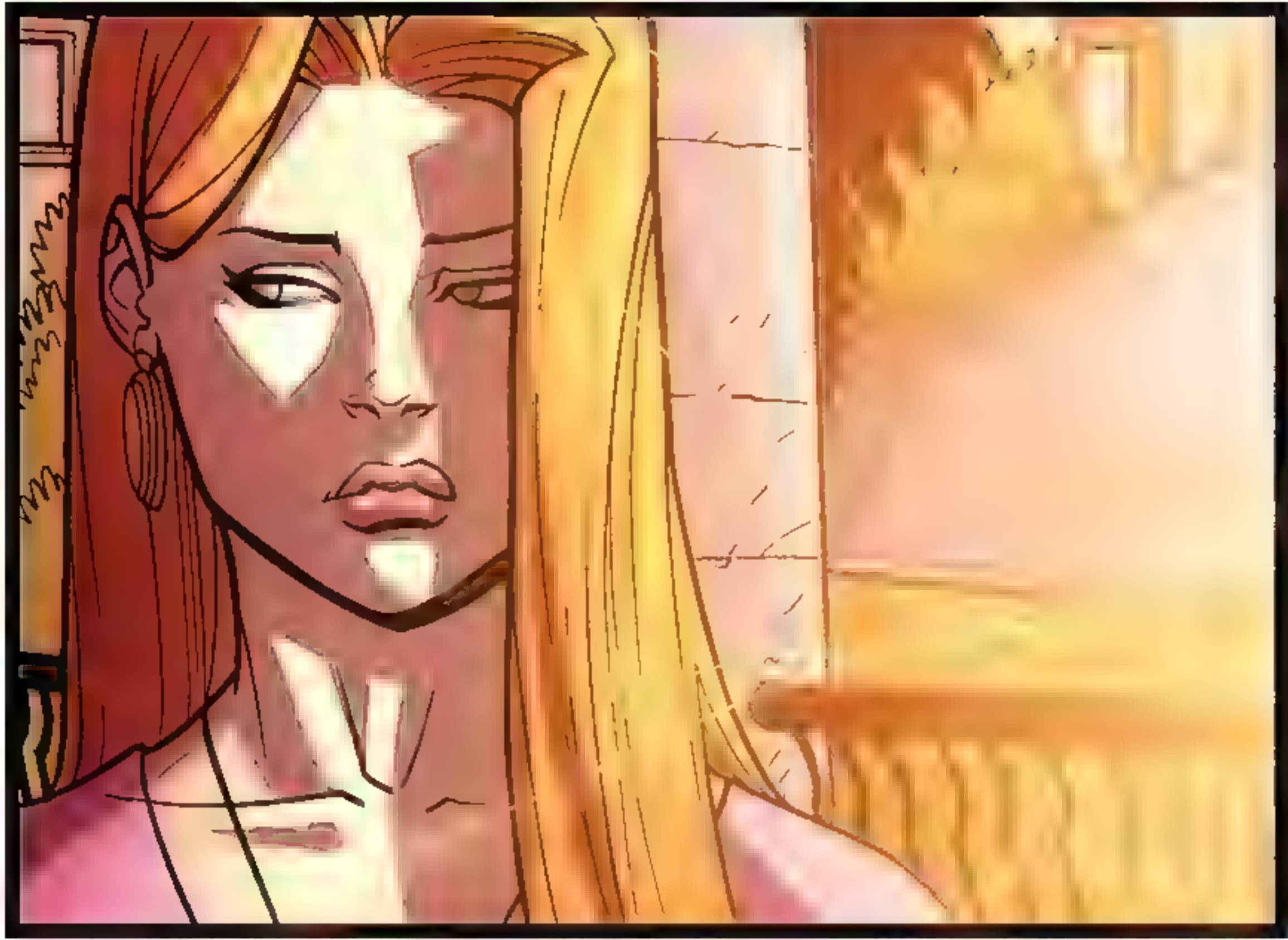
WE WERE ABLE TO CONTACT THE RESISTANCE FROM OUR HOLDING CELL. THE ROYAL GUARD HAS FALLEN--WE'VE TAKEN OVER THE CITADEL, IT'S ALL OVER!

WE CAN TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR TIME WHENEVER YOU'RE READY.

HE'S NOT REALLY DEAD. YOU NEED TO KEEP WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM SEPARATED OR HE'LL COME BACK-- THAT'S HOW HE WORKS.







BUT YOU
JUST... HOW
DID--?

I DON'T
GET IT.

TIME TRAVEL--
I'VE BEEN AWAY
FOR A WHILE, BUT
THEY LET ME
RETURN EXACTLY
WHEN I LEFT.
COOL, HUH?

YEAH,
ACTUALLY.
VERY MUCH
SO. DATE:
UNINTERRUPTED.
GIRLFRIEND:
HAPPY.

WHAT I JUST DID IN THE
FUTURE, WELL--I DON'T
REALLY WANT TO TALK
ABOUT IT NOW... BUT
THERE WERE SOME
THINGS THAT WERE
SAID--ABOUT ME IN THE
FUTURE AND, WELL...
DO YOU THINK
I'M A GOOD
PERSON?

WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?
I'M HERE, AREN'T
I? OF COURSE I
DO. WHAT
HAPPENED
THERE?

NOT NOW, LET ME
JUST... I REALLY
LIKE YOU AND I WANT
TO SPEND MORE TIME
WITH YOU BUT THE
SUPERHERO STUFF
HAS KEPT GETTING IN
THE WAY. I THINK
I CAN STOP THAT
NOW.

I'M JUST
GOING TO BE
MORE DEVOTED
TO MAKING THIS
WORK--WE
NEED TO BE
TOGETHER, I
CAN SEE THAT
NOW...

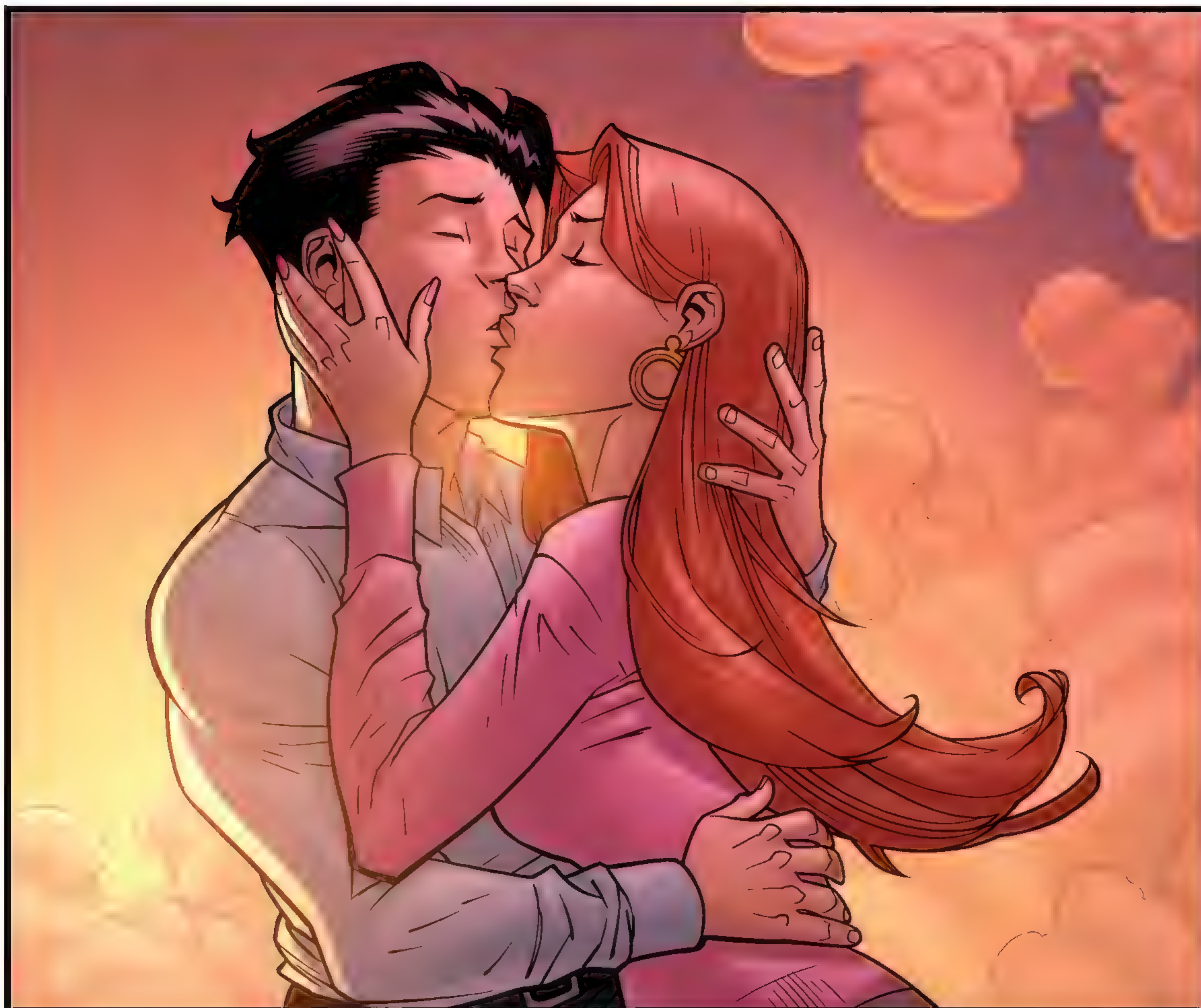
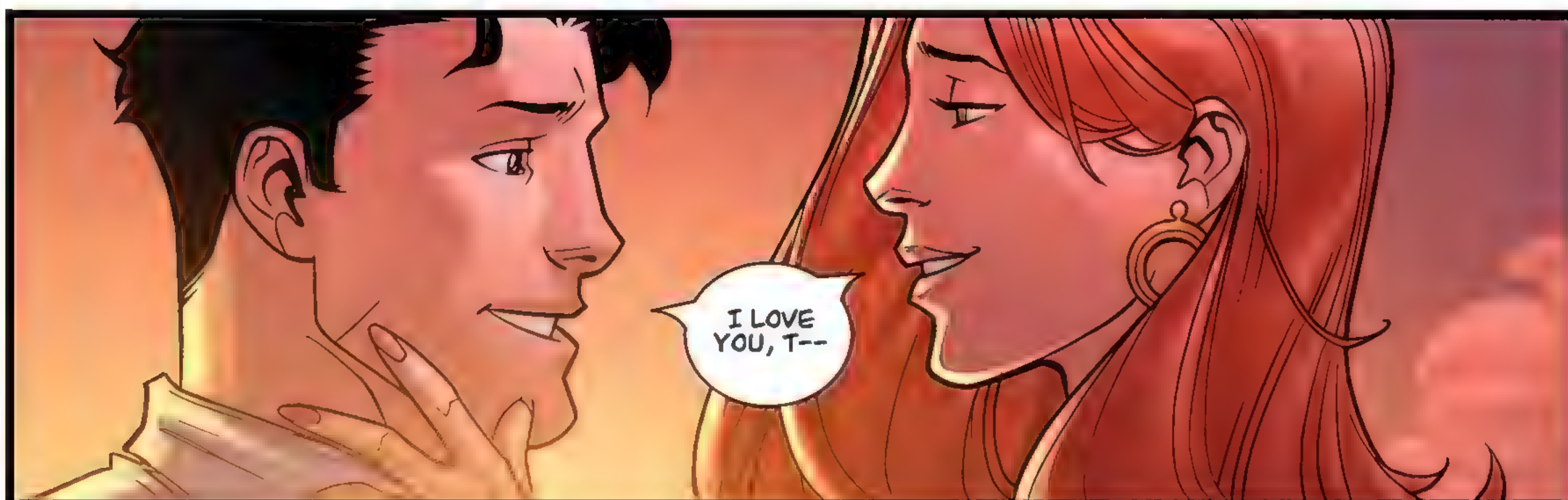
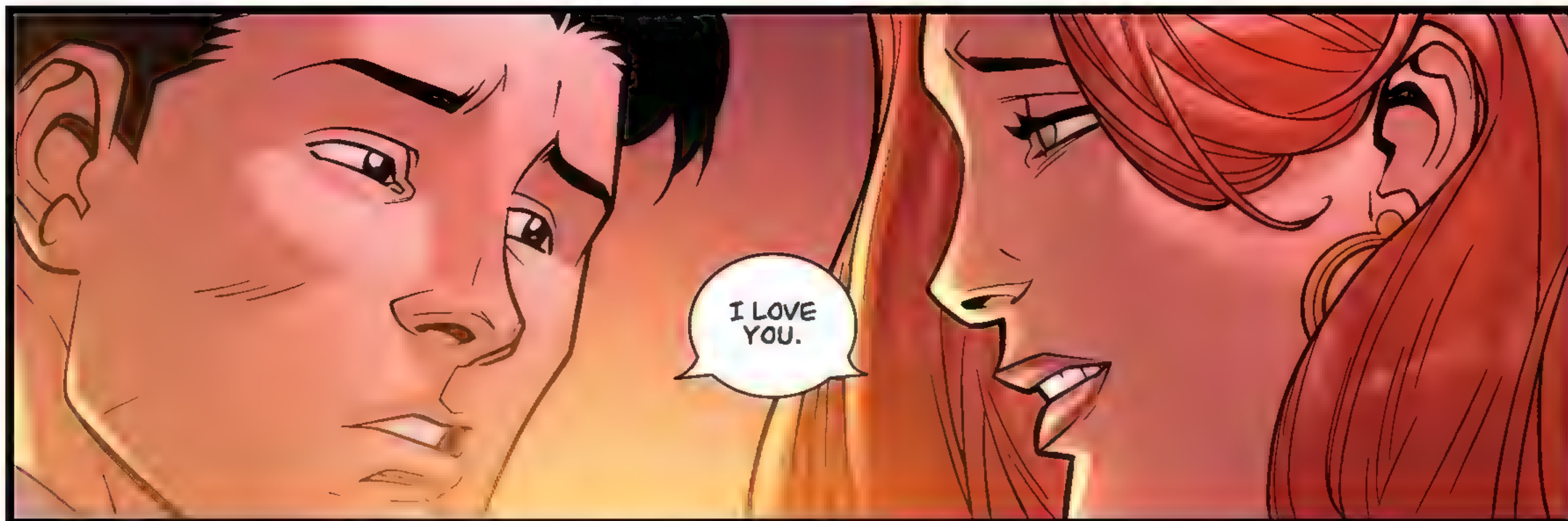
UH...

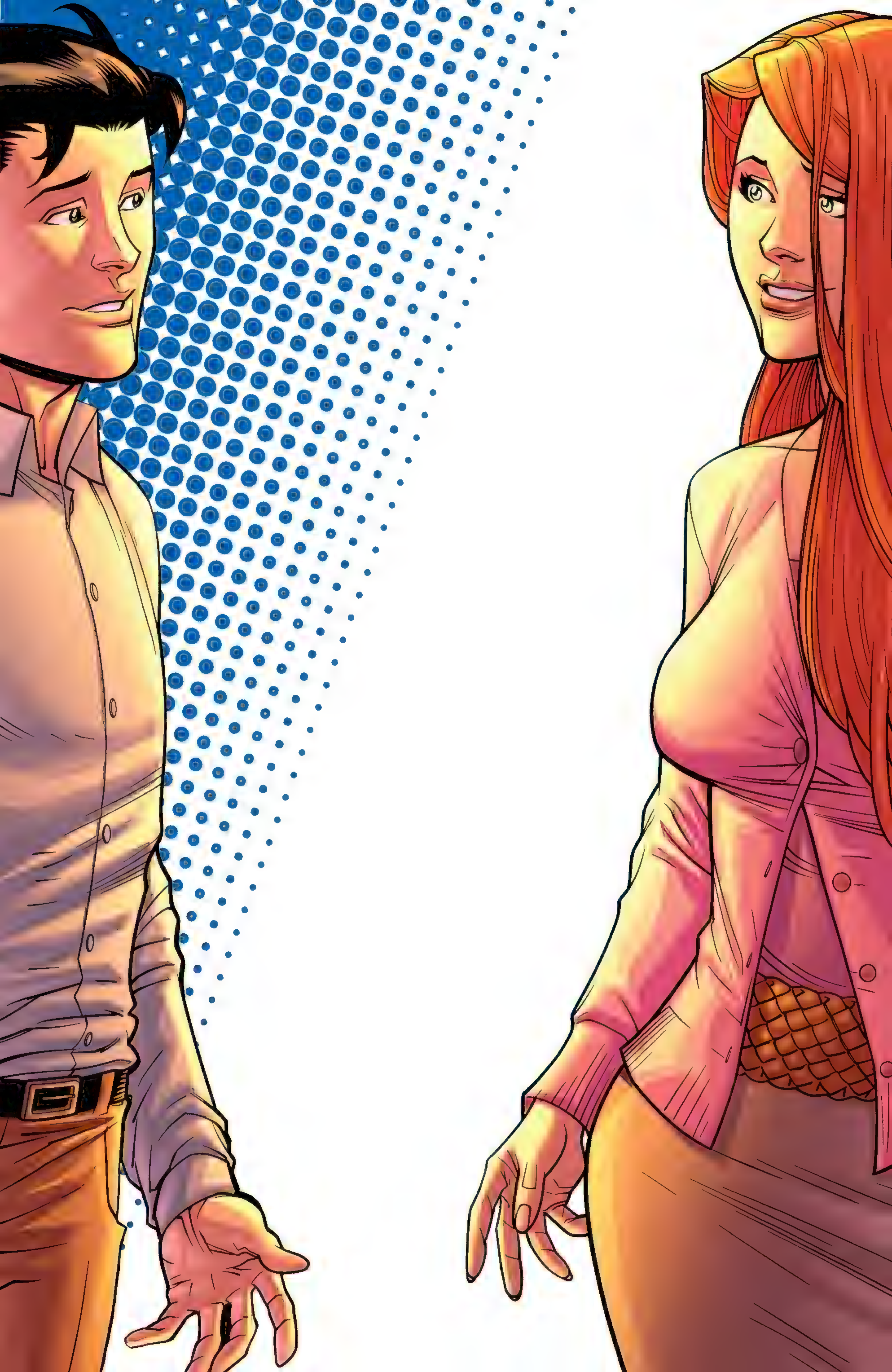
MAYBE
WE SHOULD
GET OUT OF
HERE.

LET'S.







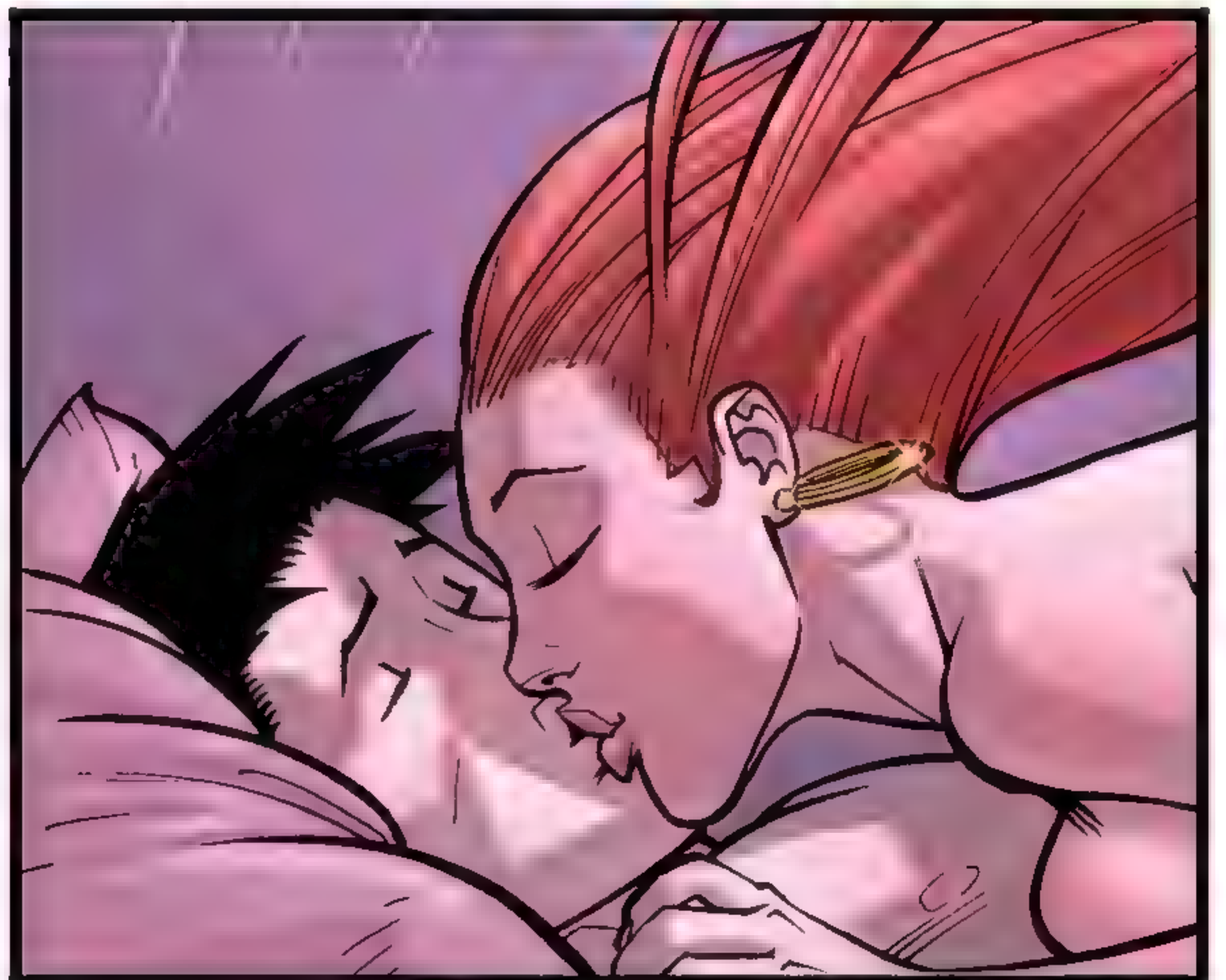
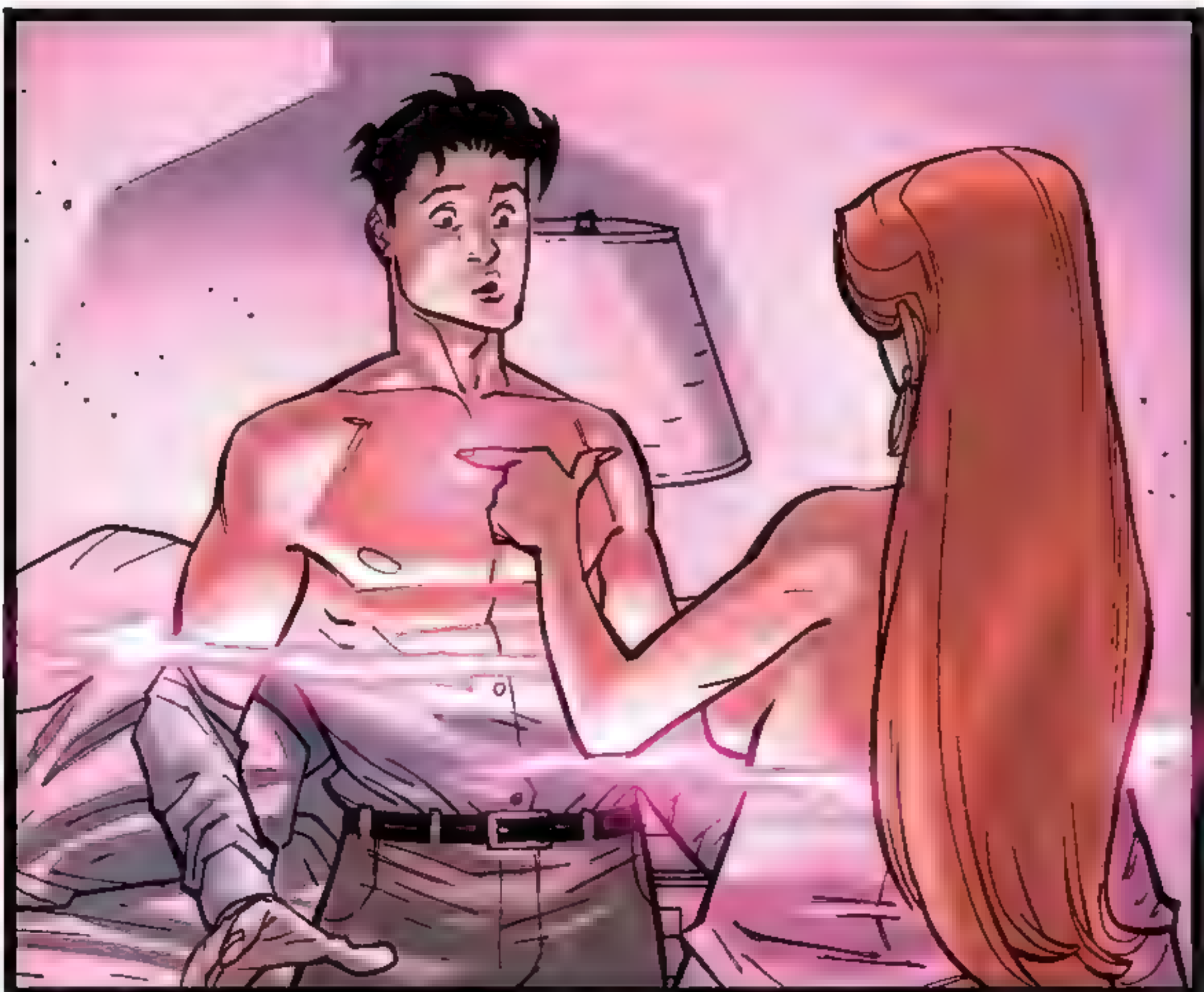
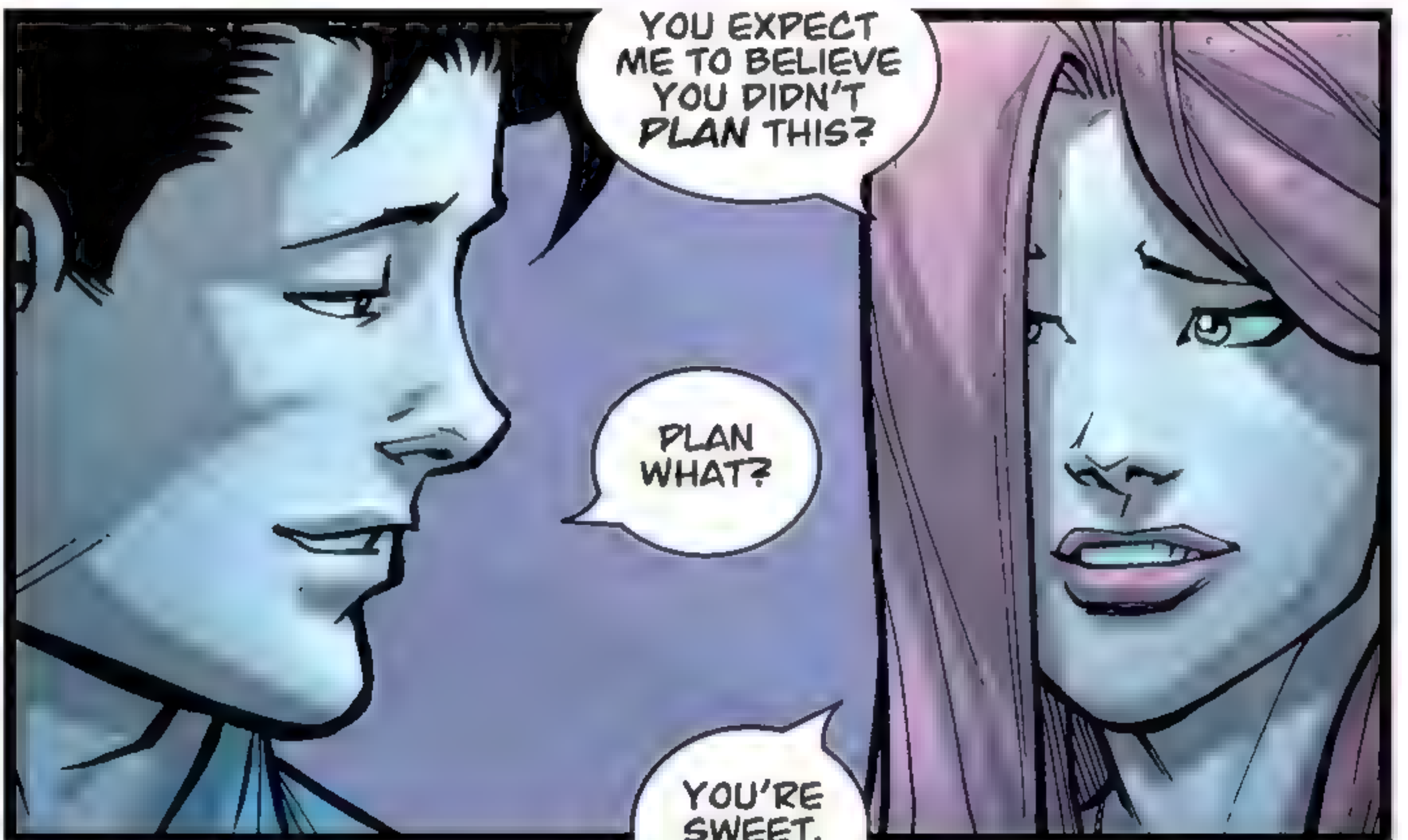
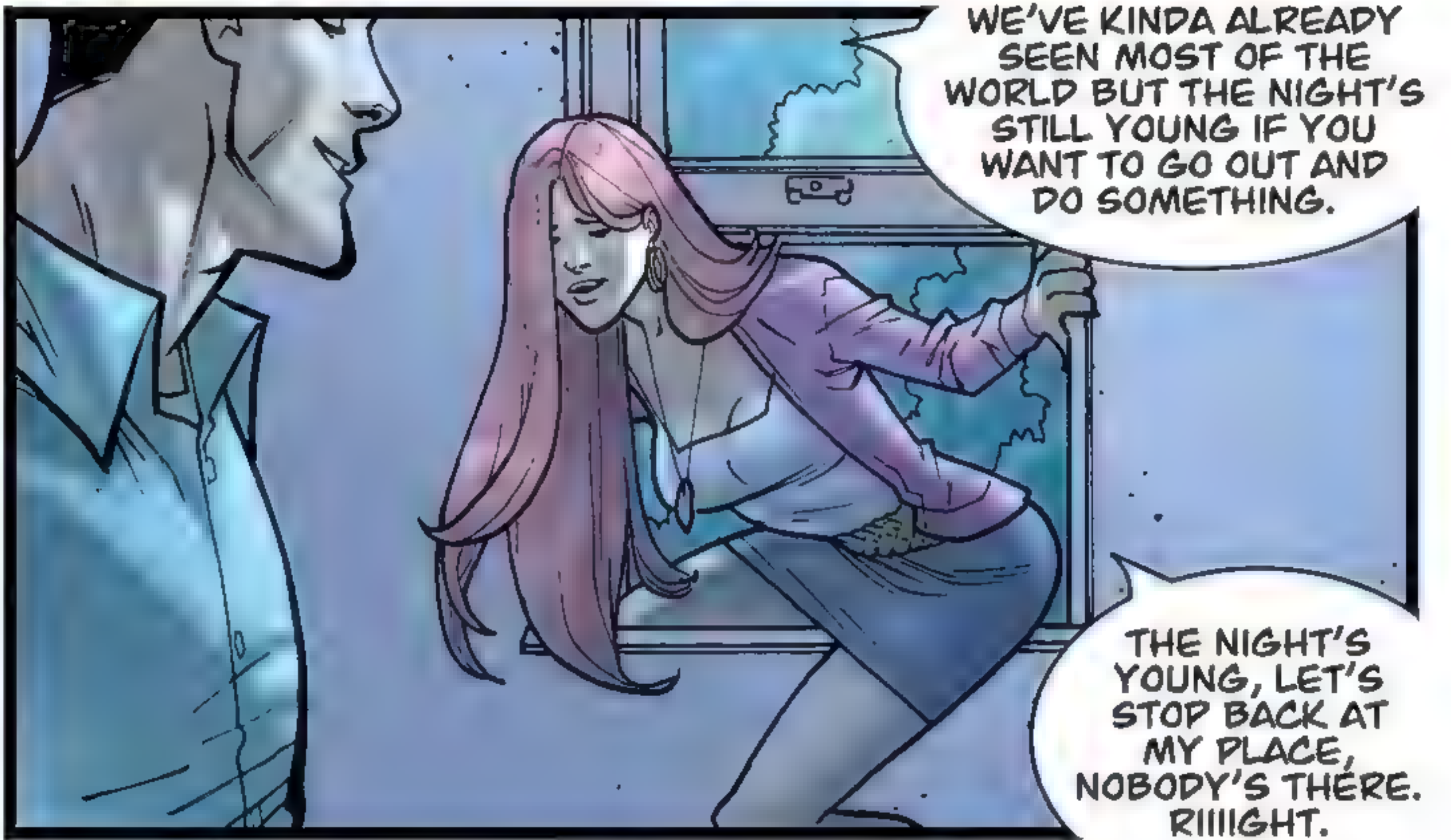
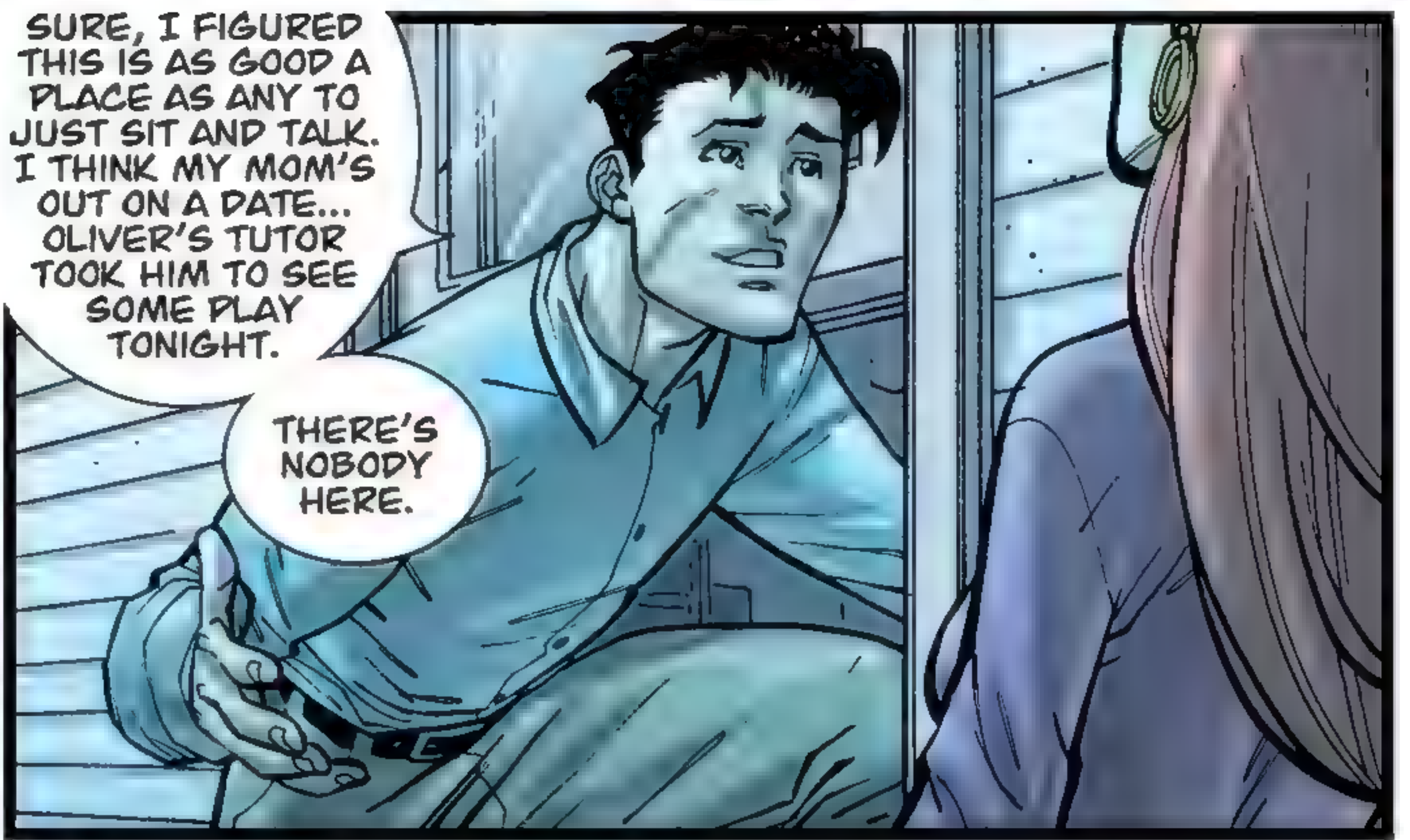
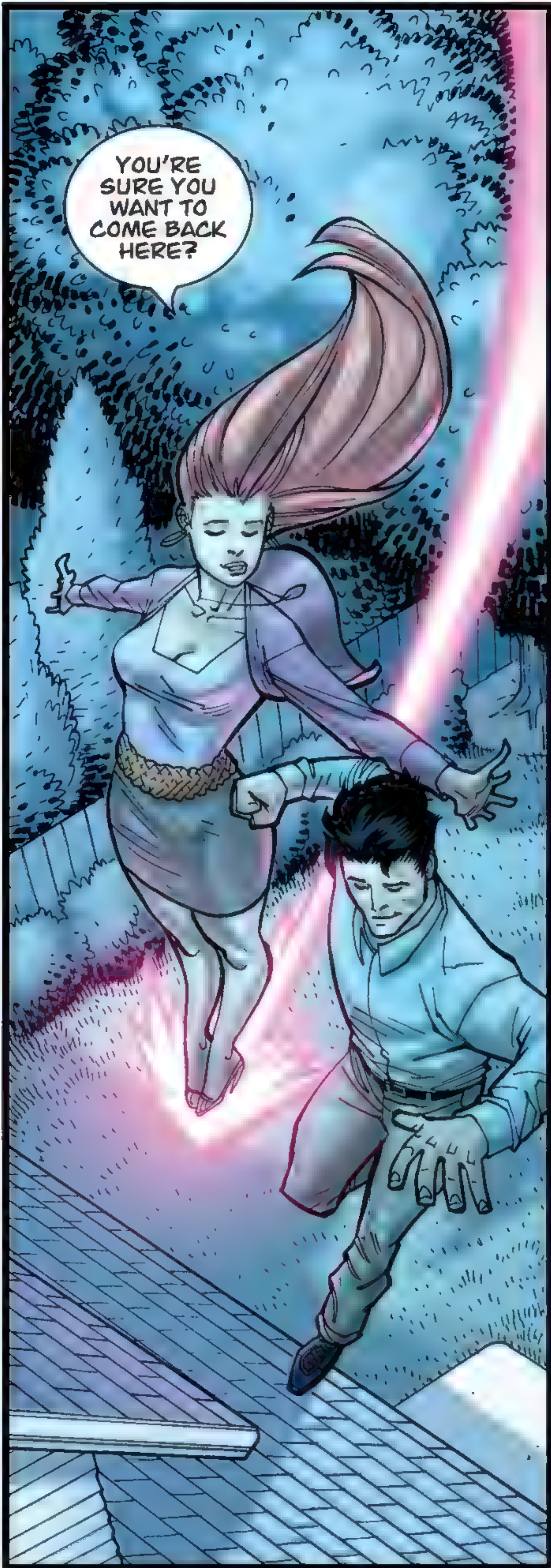


CHAPTER 55



Ryan

ico



BORN OF A DWINDLING NOMADIC RACE, ROBBED OF THEIR HOMEWORLD BY THE FEARSOME VILTRUMITES! EXPERIMENTED ON TO INCREASE HIS STRENGTH AND SPEED UNTIL HE EMERGED A GUARDIAN OF THE SPACEWAYS! IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS: ALLEN THE ALIEN IN:

LOCK DOWN, BUT NOT OUT!

AND SO, DEAR READER, WE TURN OUR ATTENTION ELSEWHERE TO GIVE YOUNG MARK GRAYSON AND SAMANTHA EVE WILKINS SOME PRIVACY.

THIS IS A FAMILY TITLE AFTER ALL.

YES, WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO FAN FAVORITE, ALLEN THE ALIEN... WHO CURRENTLY RESIDES IN A VILTRUMITE PRISON CELL... FOR NOW.

YOU SEE, THESE SHACKLES CANNOT HOLD HIM. THESE WALLS CANNOT HOLD HIM. THIS PRISON CANNOT HOLD HIM, FOR ALLEN THE ALIEN HAS GROWN STRONG, VERY STRONG.*

BUT STILL, HE REMAINS, STILL HE WAITS...

...BECAUSE ALLEN THE ALIEN HAS A PLAN.

*SEE ISSUE 38 FOR DETAILS, INVINCIBLEHEADS.

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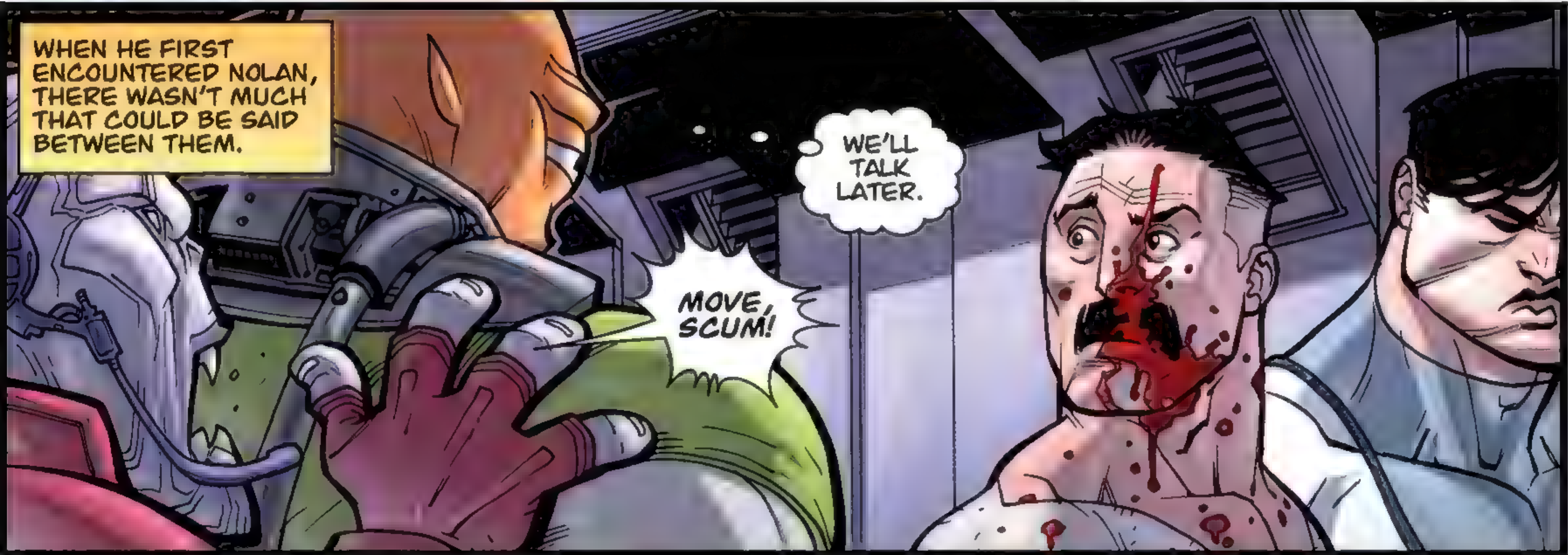
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ALLEN IS HERE FOR A REASON AND THAT REASON IS NOLAN GRAYSON, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS OMNI-MAN, THE FATHER OF INVINCIBLE.

HE ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE TAKEN PRISONER WHEN HE LEARNED NOLAN WAS BEING HELD HERE.*

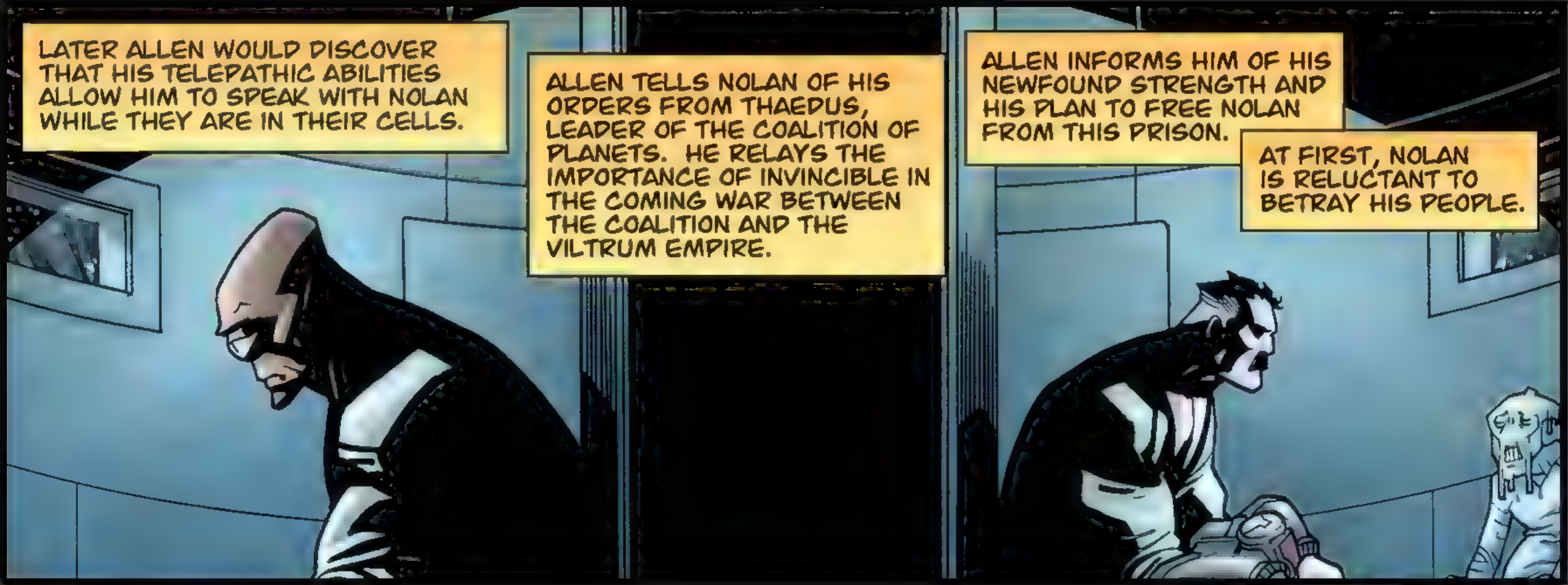
*SEE ISSUE 45.



WHEN HE FIRST ENCOUNTERED NOLAN, THERE WASN'T MUCH THAT COULD BE SAID BETWEEN THEM.

WE'LL TALK LATER.

MOVE, SCUM!



LATER ALLEN WOULD DISCOVER THAT HIS TELEPATHIC ABILITIES ALLOW HIM TO SPEAK WITH NOLAN WHILE THEY ARE IN THEIR CELLS.

ALLEN TELLS NOLAN OF HIS ORDERS FROM THAEDUS, LEADER OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS. HE RELAYS THE IMPORTANCE OF INVINCIBLE IN THE COMING WAR BETWEEN THE COALITION AND THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

ALLEN INFORMS HIM OF HIS NEWFOUND STRENGTH AND HIS PLAN TO FREE NOLAN FROM THIS PRISON.

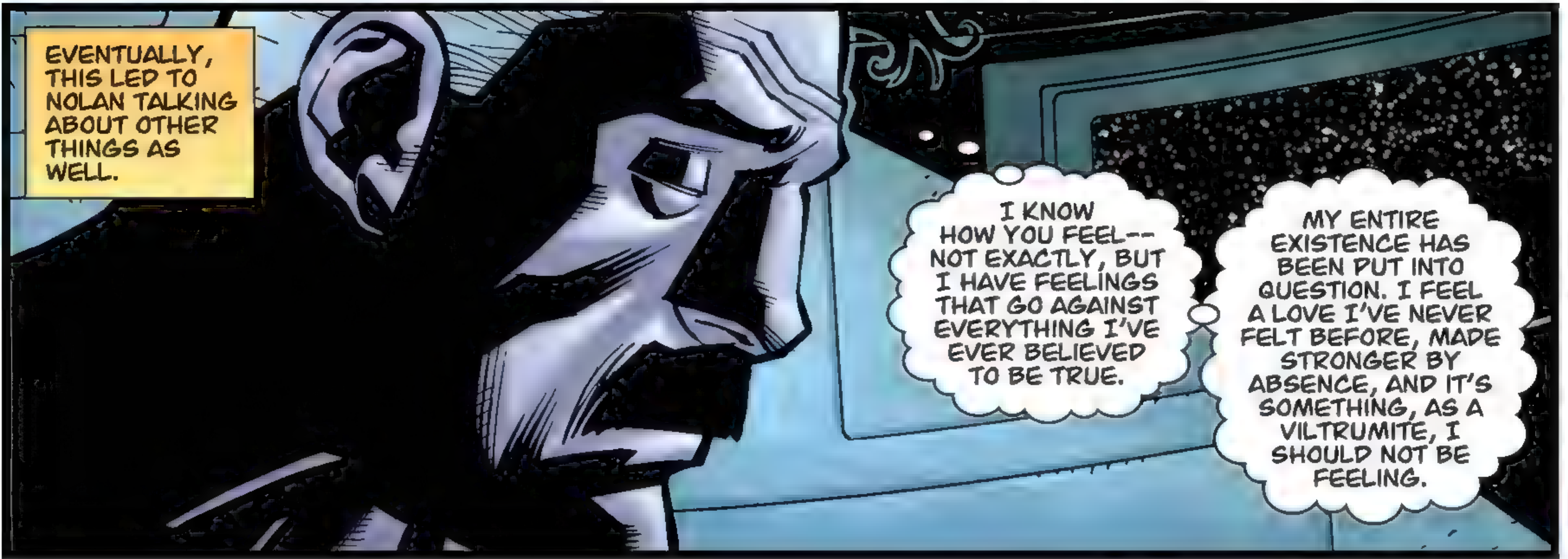
AT FIRST, NOLAN IS RELUCTANT TO BETRAY HIS PEOPLE.



ALLEN CONTINUES TO TELL NOLAN ALL HE KNOWS ABOUT NOLAN'S BOOKS, INVINCIBLE AND HIS NEW YOUNGER BROTHER, AND EVENTUALLY, HE BEGINS TO TELL HIM OF OTHER THINGS.

HER NAME IS TELIA AND SHE IS VERY SPECIAL TO ME. I LOVE HER. I DO. BUT MY PEOPLE WON'T ALLOW ME TO BE WITH HER.

MY PEOPLE, THE UNOPANS, WERE NEARLY EXTINCT--WE HAVE STRICT MATING RULES TO ENSURE OUR SURVIVAL. WE HAVE TO LIVE IN SECRET...



EVENTUALLY, THIS LED TO NOLAN TALKING ABOUT OTHER THINGS AS WELL.

I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL-- NOT EXACTLY, BUT I HAVE FEELINGS THAT GO AGAINST EVERYTHING I'VE EVER BELIEVED TO BE TRUE.

MY ENTIRE EXISTENCE HAS BEEN PUT INTO QUESTION. I FEEL A LOVE I'VE NEVER FELT BEFORE, MADE STRONGER BY ABSENCE, AND IT'S SOMETHING, AS A VILTRUMITE, I SHOULD NOT BE FEELING.



MANY THINGS WERE DISCUSSED IN THE TIME NOLAN AWAITED EXECUTION FOR HIS CRIMES AGAINST THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

EVENTUALLY THEY EVEN DISCUSSED THEIR MANY ENCOUNTERS IN EARTH'S ORBIT, YEARS AGO AT THIS POINT, WHEN NEITHER ONE KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT THE OTHER.*

A BOND STARTED TO FORM.

*SEEN BRIEFLY IN ISSUE 2 AND AGAIN IN ISSUE 11.



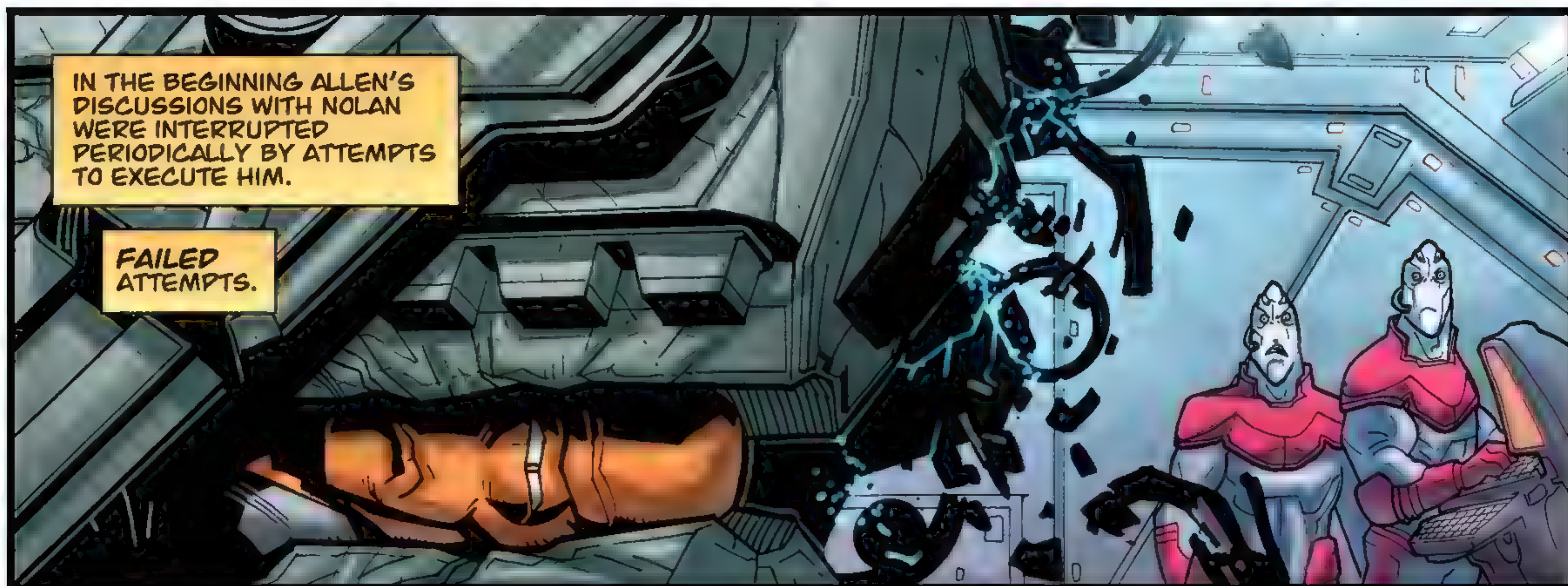
UNTIL THEY WERE FRIENDS.



THAT BOND GREW, UNTIL THE MISSION BECAME THAT MUCH MORE IMPORTANT.

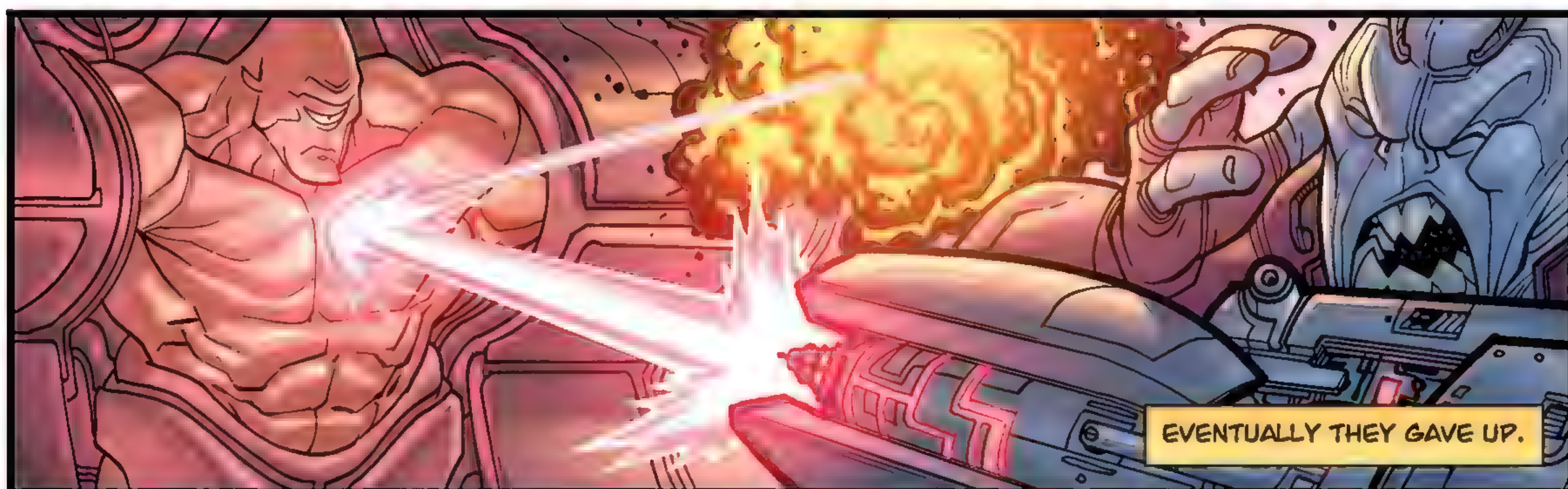
ALLEN WAS NO LONGER THERE TO RESCUE A POSSIBLE ALLY.

HE NEEDED TO SAVE HIS FRIEND AND HE WAS NOT SURE HE WOULD SUCCEED--AND THIS WORRIED HIM.



IN THE BEGINNING ALLEN'S DISCUSSIONS WITH NOLAN WERE INTERRUPTED PERIODICALLY BY ATTEMPTS TO EXECUTE HIM.

FAILED ATTEMPTS.



EVENTUALLY THEY GAVE UP.



THEY STOPPED TRYING TO EXECUTE HIM. FROM THAT POINT ON, ALLEN WAITED--LIKE NOLAN, HE WAITED FOR THE TIME WHEN THE VILTRUMITES THEMSELVES WOULD FINALLY COME TO EXECUTE HIM.

HE WAITED.

AND WAITED.

AND WAITED.



ALLEN WOULD OFTEN WONDER TO HIMSELF WHY IT WAS TAKING SO LONG. WHAT IS IT THEY WERE WAITING ON?

WHY WERE THEY WAITING?



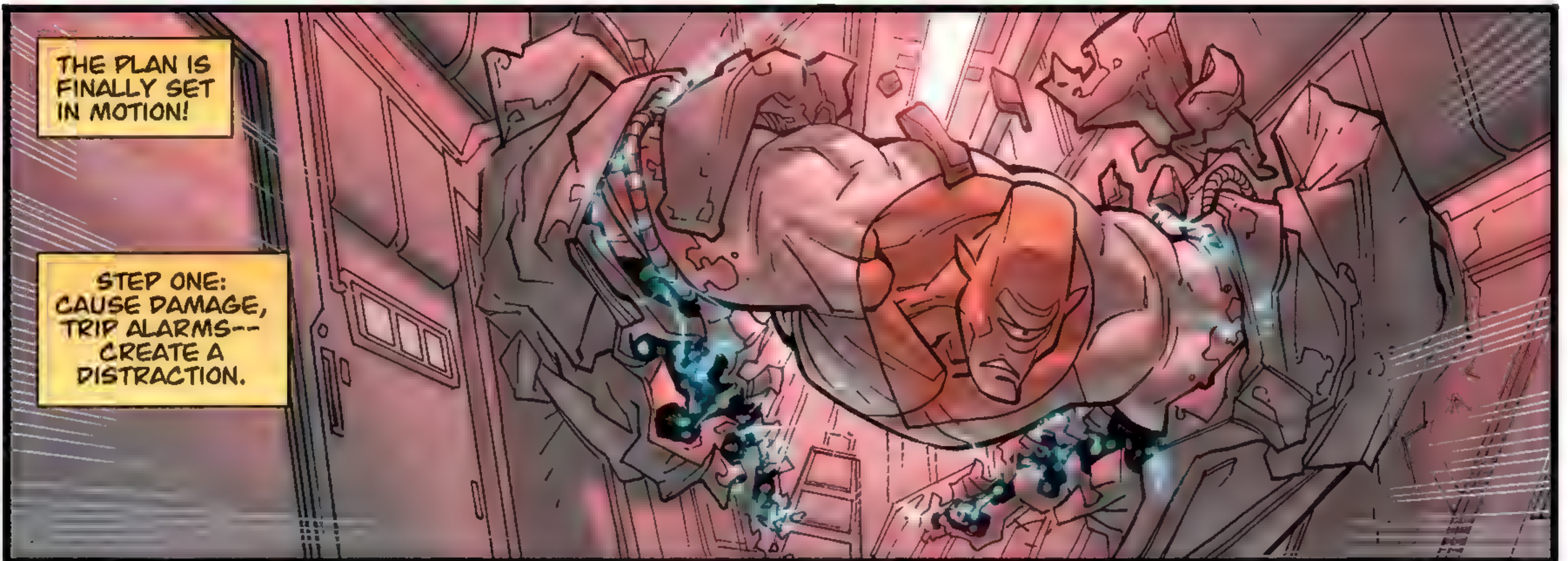
WHY?

IT'S TIME.



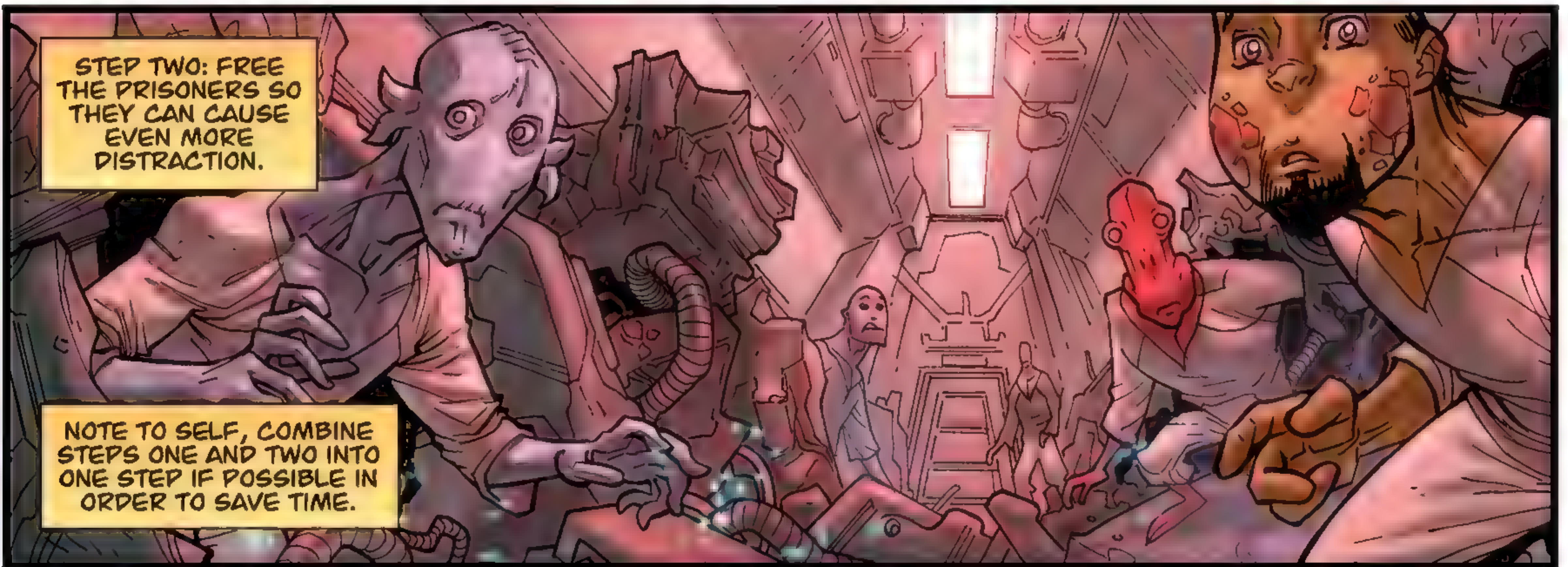


IT WAS THEN THAT THE ABSURDITY OF ALLEN ACTUALLY BEING CONTAINED IN THIS PRISON BECAME ALL TOO CLEAR.



THE PLAN IS FINALLY SET IN MOTION!

STEP ONE: CAUSE DAMAGE, TRIP ALARMS--- CREATE A DISTRACTION.



STEP TWO: FREE THE PRISONERS SO THEY CAN CAUSE EVEN MORE DISTRACTION.

NOTE TO SELF, COMBINE STEPS ONE AND TWO INTO ONE STEP IF POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO SAVE TIME.



STEP THREE: SCAN THE PRISONERS AS THEY ESCAPE, SEE IF ANY OF THEM ARE FORMIDABLE ENOUGH TO AID US IN OUR ESCAPE EFFORTS.

STEP ONE: CHECK.

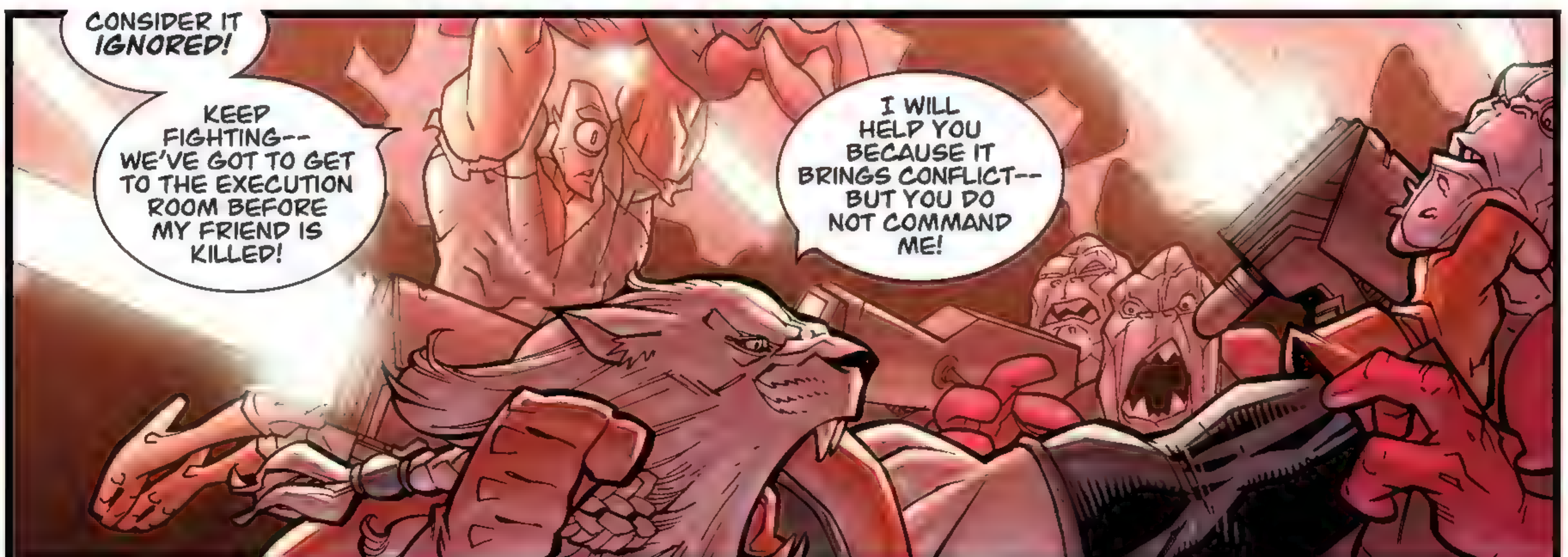
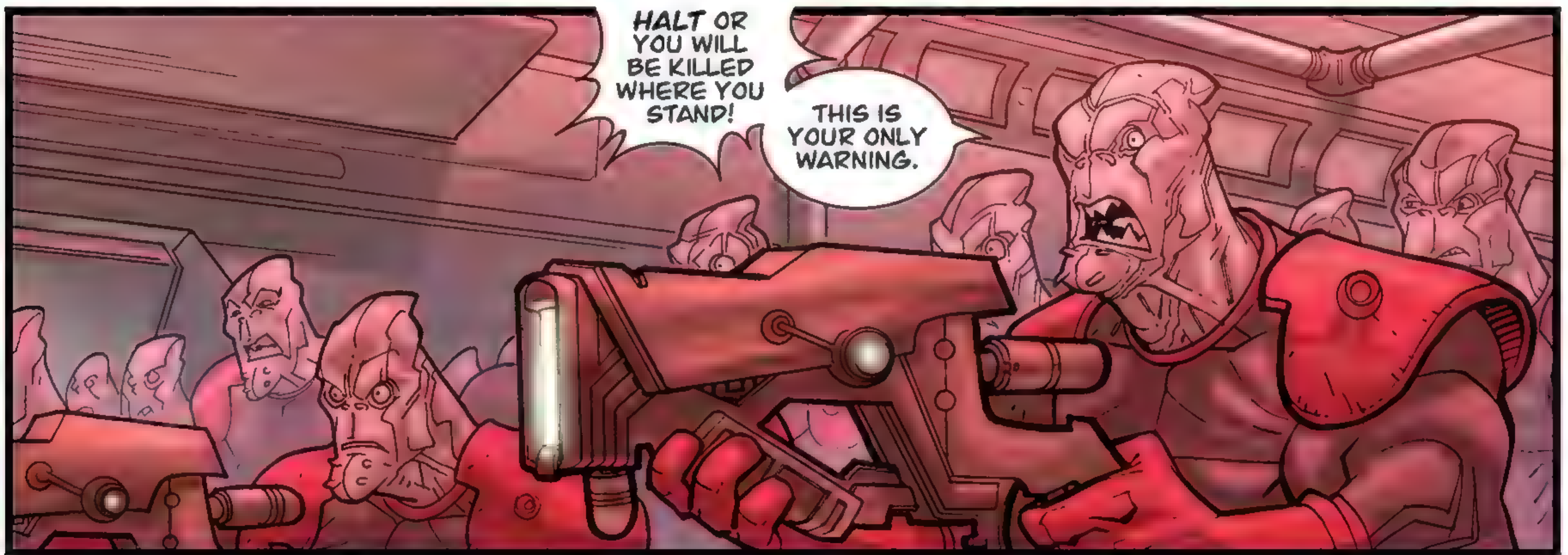
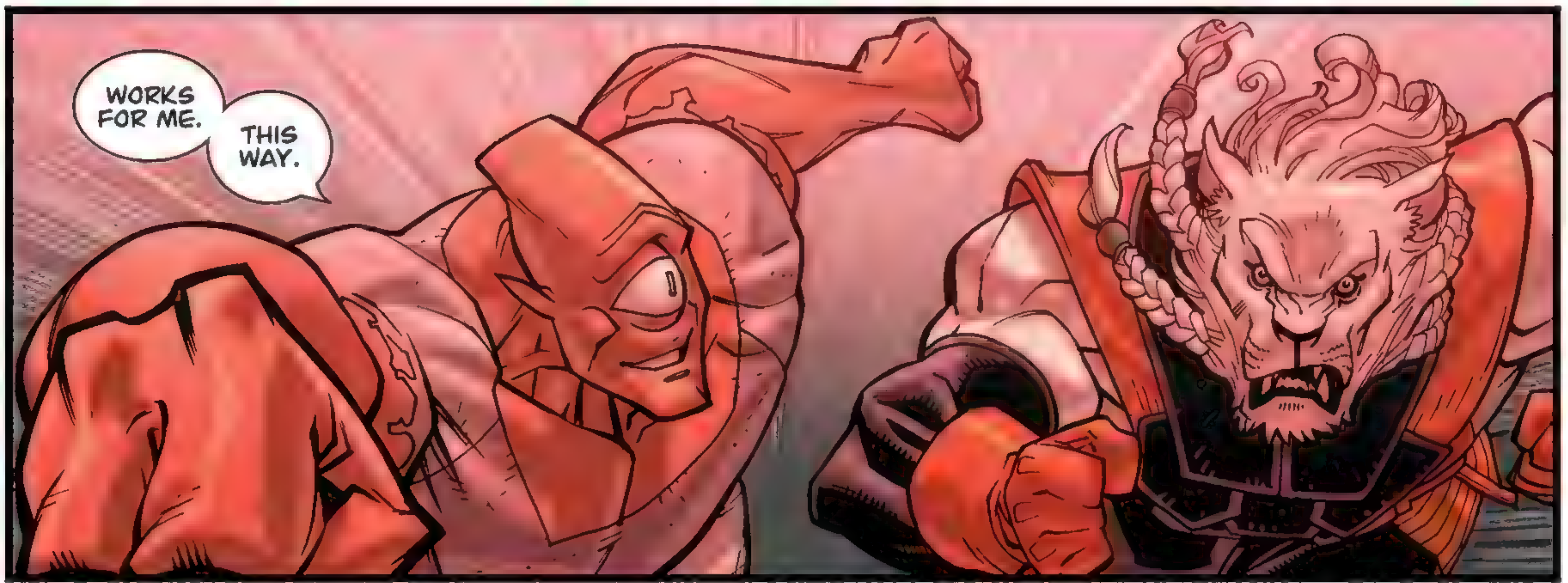
STEP TWO: CHECK.

STEP THREE: ...?

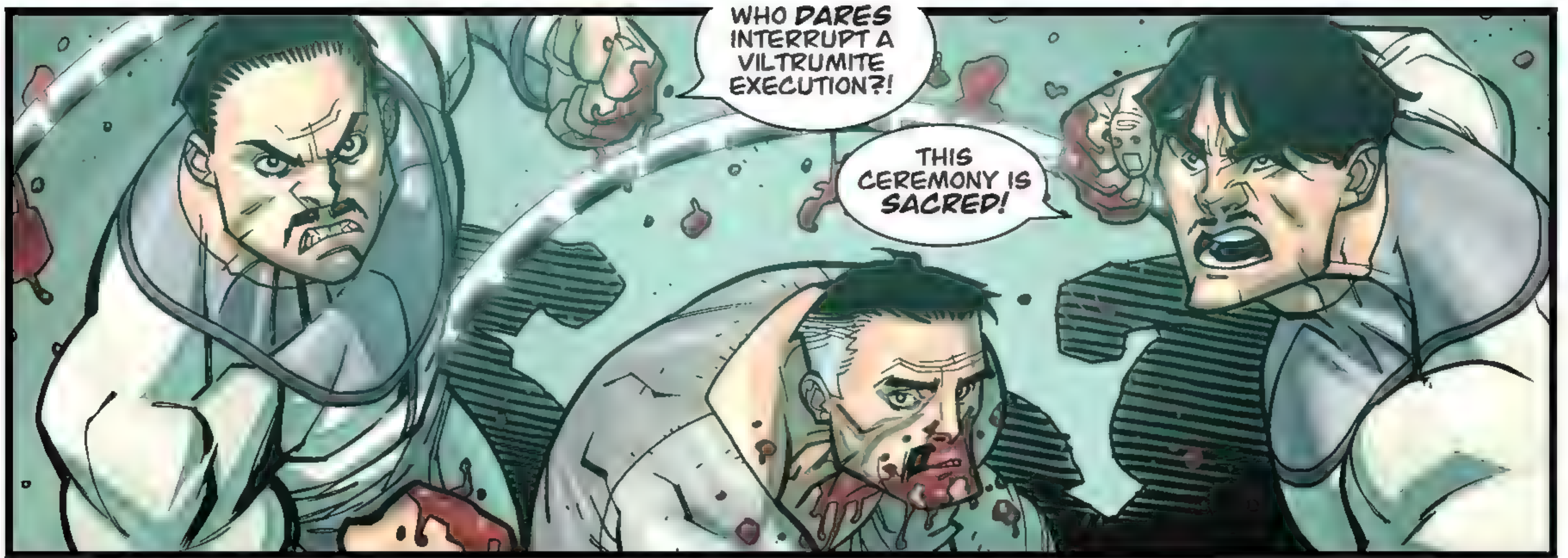
WHO IS
BRAVE ENOUGH
TO FREE
**BATTLE
BEAST?!**

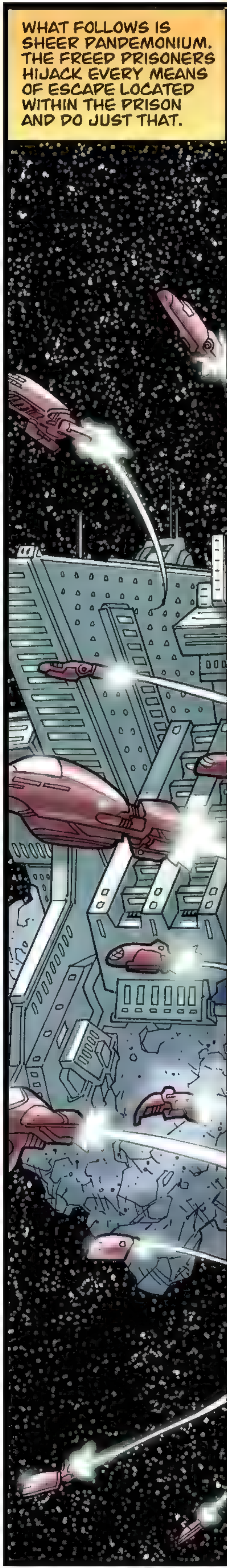
CHECK.











WHAT FOLLOWS IS SHEER PANDEMONIUM. THE FREED PRISONERS HIJACK EVERY MEANS OF ESCAPE LOCATED WITHIN THE PRISON AND DO JUST THAT.



ALLEN'S NEW FRIEND, BATTLE BEAST, FOCUSES ONLY ON ONE VILTRUMITE, HELPING ONLY BY KEEPING HIM OCCUPIED.

HE HAS FOUND HIS WORTHY ADVERSARY AND IS CONTENT TO SIMPLY ENJOY THE BATTLE.



THIS LEAVES NOLAN AND ALLEN ALONE TO FACE THE REMAINING VILTRUMITE EXECUTIONER-- AND HIS ARMY OF SUPER-POWERED PRISON GUARDS.

IT ISN'T A FIGHT EASILY WON.



BUT IT'S NOT FOR LACK OF TRYING ON THEIR PART.

HOLD UP--

I'VE GOT AN IDEA! WE CAN SURVIVE OUT IN SPACE--

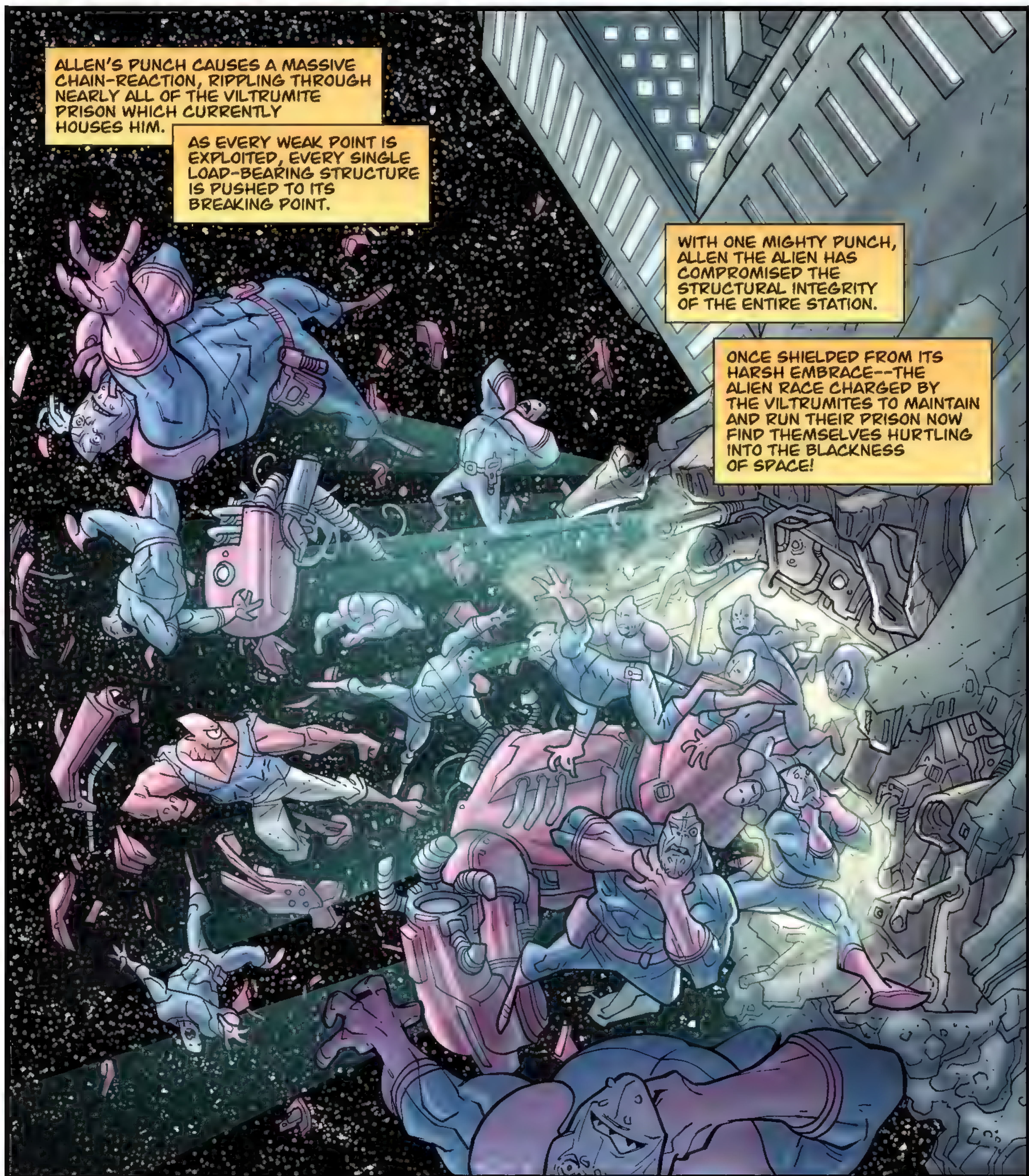


ALLEN'S PUNCH CAUSES A MASSIVE CHAIN-REACTION, RIPPLING THROUGH NEARLY ALL OF THE VILTRUMITE PRISON WHICH CURRENTLY HOUSES HIM.

AS EVERY WEAK POINT IS EXPLOITED, EVERY SINGLE LOAD-BEARING STRUCTURE IS PUSHED TO ITS BREAKING POINT.

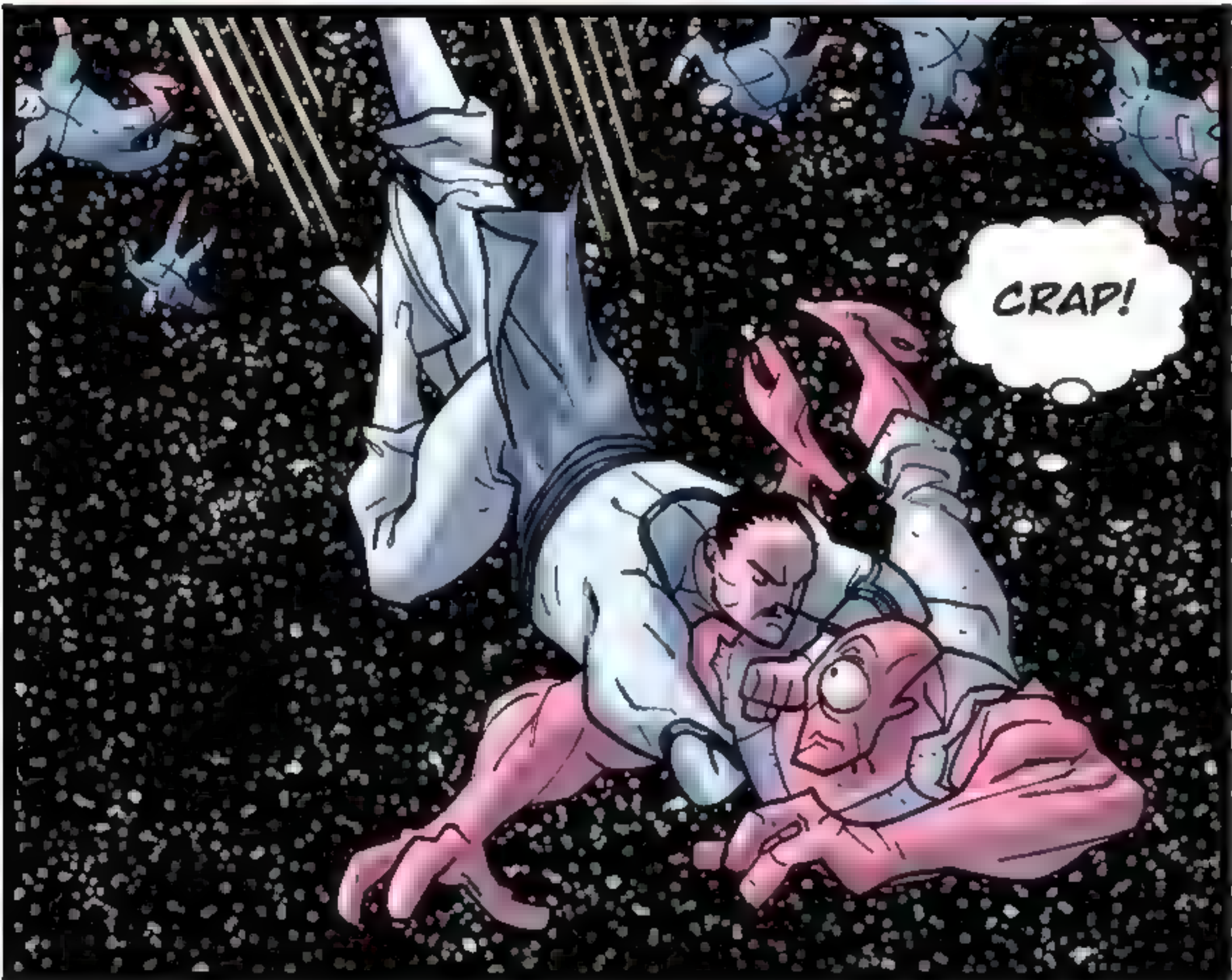
WITH ONE MIGHTY PUNCH, ALLEN THE ALIEN HAS COMPROMISED THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE ENTIRE STATION.

ONCE SHIELDED FROM ITS HARSH EMBRACE--THE ALIEN RACE CHARGED BY THE VILTRUMITES TO MAINTAIN AND RUN THEIR PRISON NOW FIND THEMSELVES HURTLING INTO THE BLACKNESS OF SPACE!





BEST
IDEA
EVER.



CRAP!



YOU'LL
DIE FOR
WHAT YOU'VE
DONE!



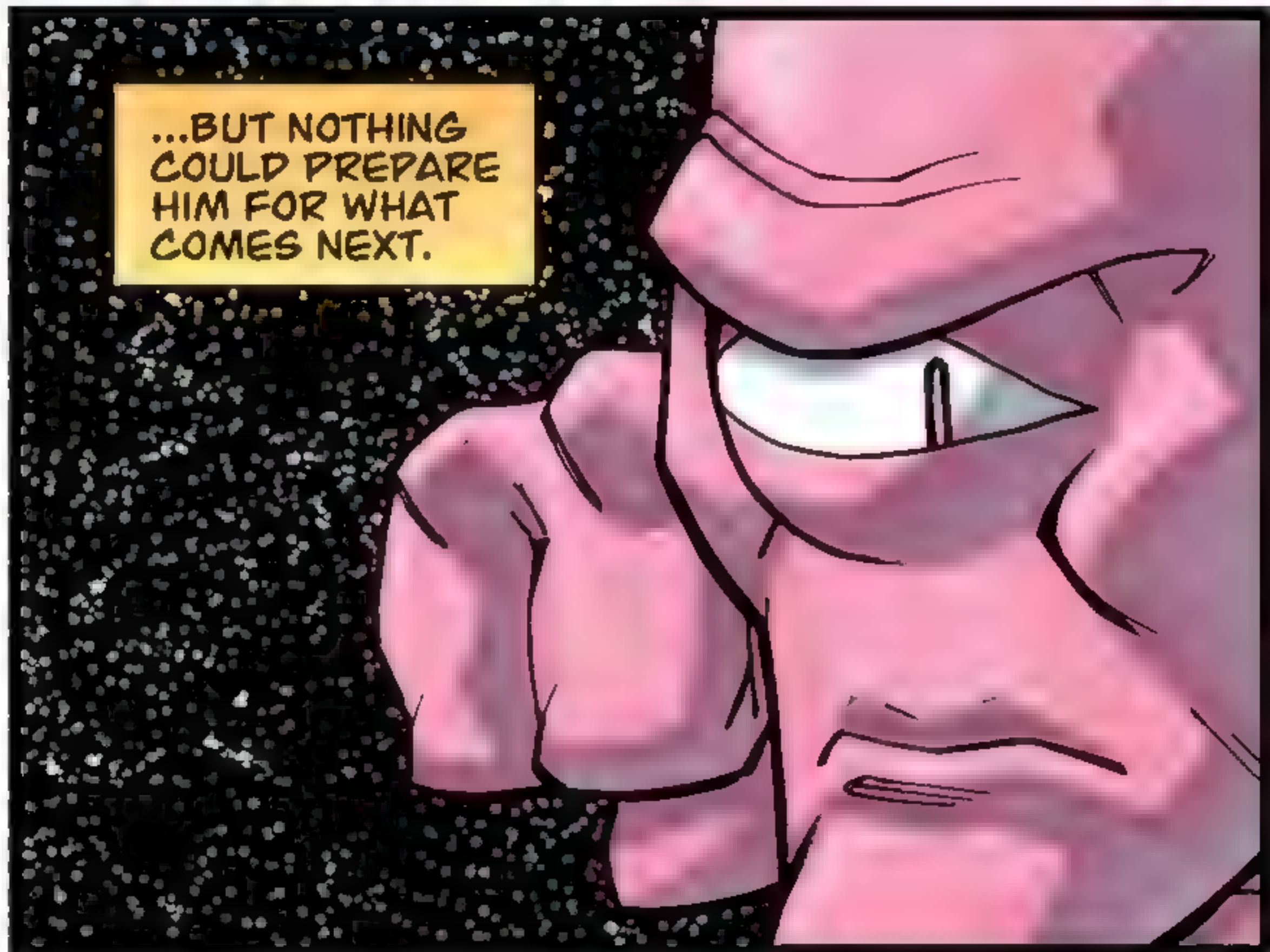
GET OFF
HIM!

THE VILTRUMITE AGENT TRAINED
WITH THE BEST OF THEM, HE
SHOULDN'T GO NAMELESS, HE
DESERVED A MUCH BETTER
FATE THAN THIS.

HE WAS
STRONG, HE
WAS LOYAL--
HE WAS A
VERY GOOD
SOLDIER.



HE COULD HAVE
BEEN THE PRIDE
OF THE EMPIRE...



...BUT NOTHING
COULD PREPARE
HIM FOR WHAT
COMES NEXT.

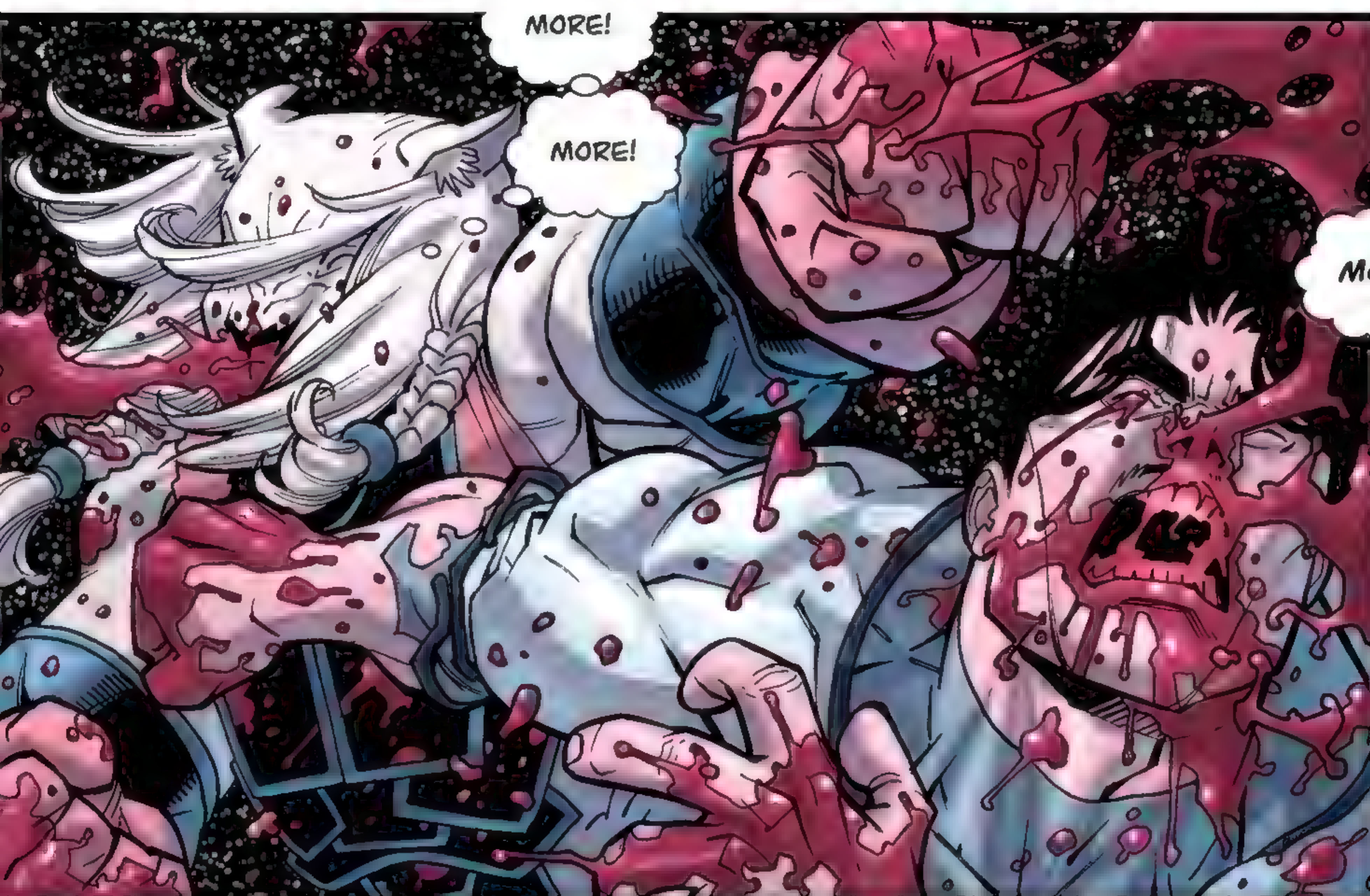




WHERE'S
THAT OTHER
VILTRUMITE--
AND MY FURRY
FRIEND?

I HAVEN'T
SEEN THEM SINCE
YOU DEMOLISHED
THAT WALL AND
SENT US OUT HERE--
YOU THINK HE
COULD SURVIVE
OUT HERE?

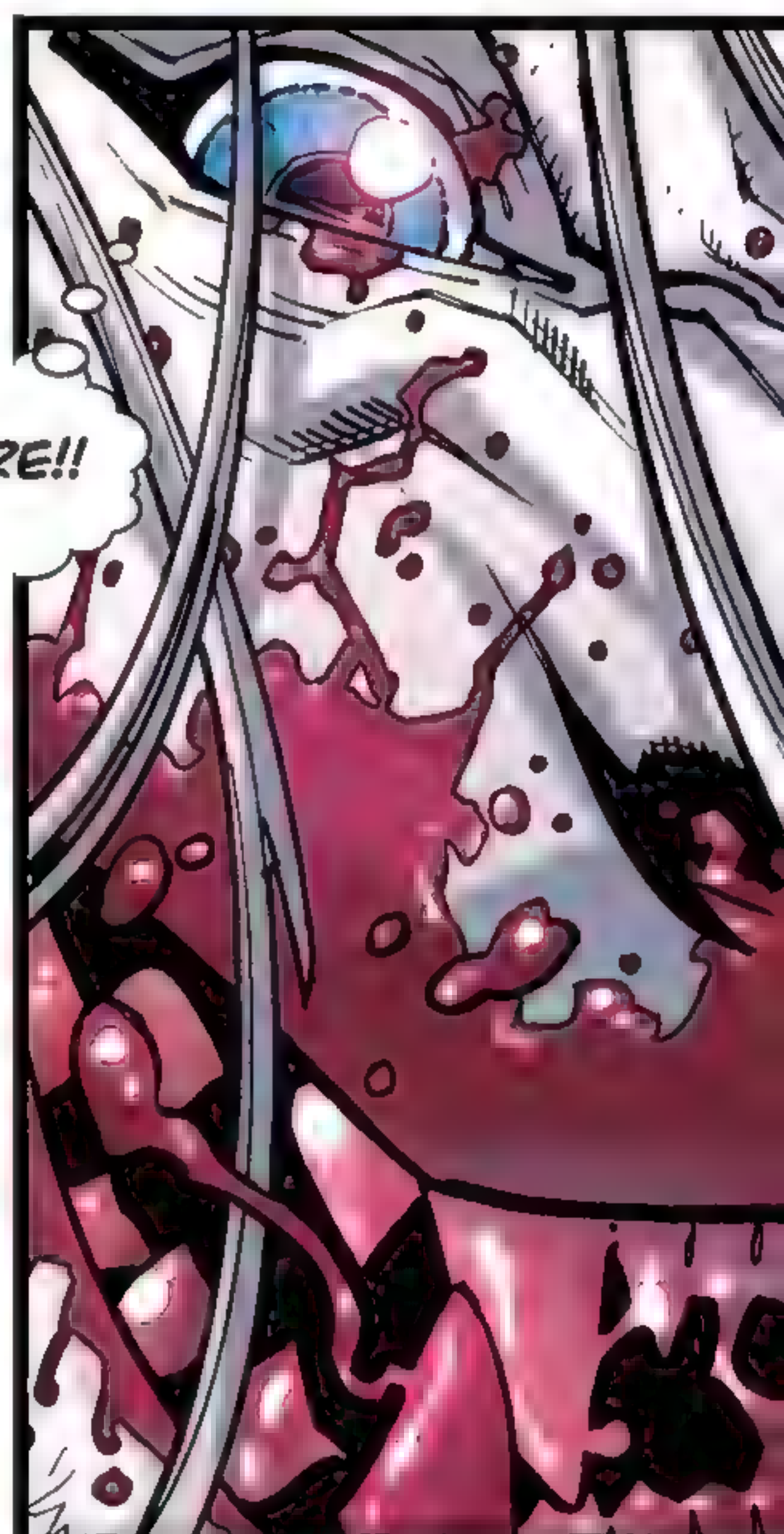
NO DOUBT.
MAYBE HE JUST
RAN--BUT THEN
WHERE'S THE
VILTRUMITE?



MORE!

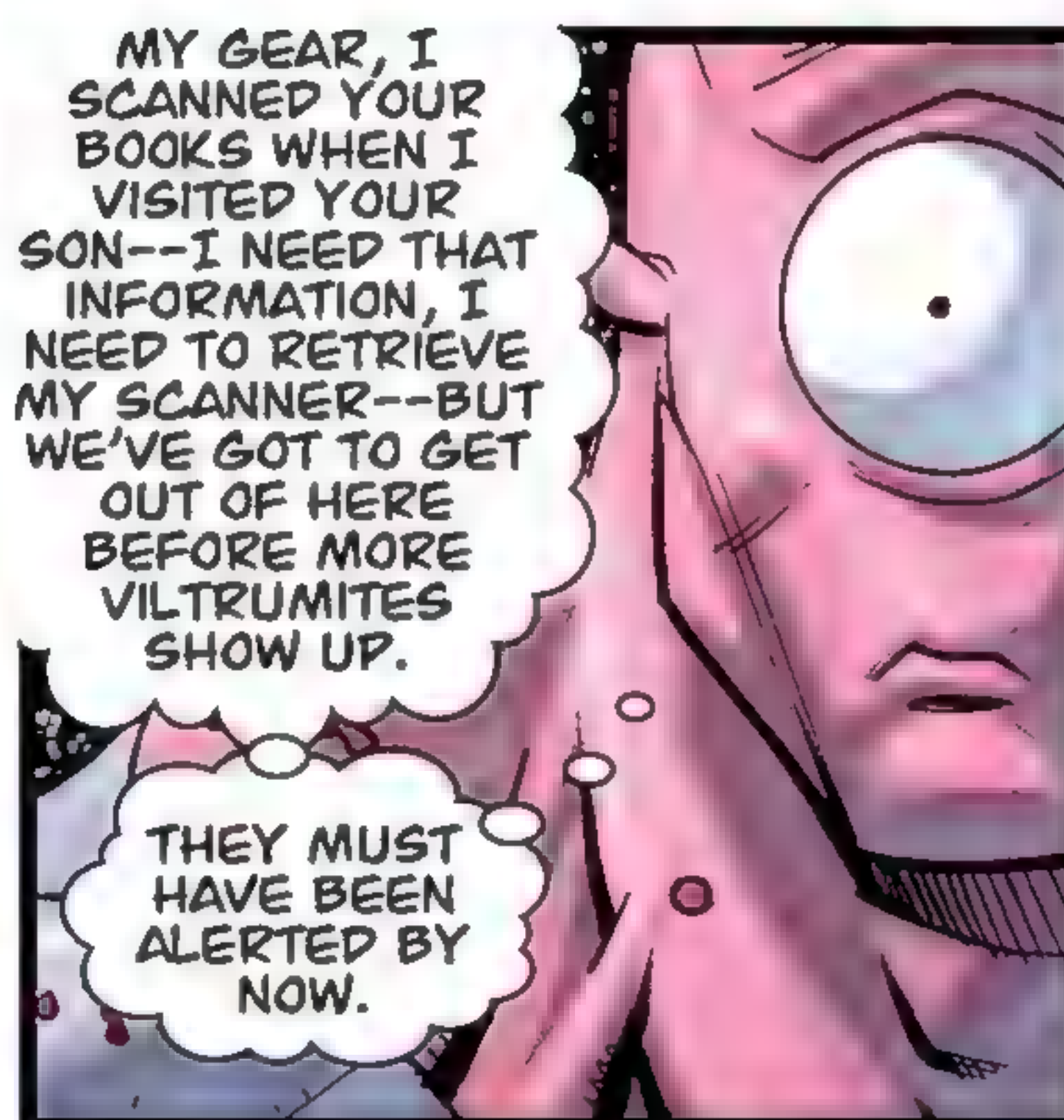
MORE!

MORE!!



CRAP!

WHAT
IS IT?



MY GEAR, I
SCANNED YOUR
BOOKS WHEN I
VISITED YOUR
SON--I NEED THAT
INFORMATION, I
NEED TO RETRIEVE
MY SCANNER--BUT
WE'VE GOT TO GET
OUT OF HERE
BEFORE MORE
VILTRUMITES
SHOW UP.

THEY MUST
HAVE BEEN
ALERTED BY
NOW.



YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO WORRY
ABOUT
THAT.

WHY?



YOU HAVE
TIME TO GET
YOUR GEAR.
TAKE YOUR TIME,
WE'LL LOOK
FOR MORE
SUPPLIES.

TRUST
ME... NO
ONE IS
COMING.

HOW DO
YOU KNOW
THAT? HOW
CAN YOU
BE SO
SURE?



THEY'RE NOT COMING
BECAUSE THERE IS NO
ONE TO *SEND*. I AM
CONFIDENT IN THIS
BECAUSE I KNOW HOW
FAR AWAY THE
VILTRUMITES
ARE.

MY EXECUTION
WAS POSTPONED
BECAUSE THEY WERE
CALLED AWAY--IT WAS
ONLY RECENTLY THEY
WERE ABLE TO SEND
BACK THE TWO AGENTS
REQUIRED BY LAW FOR
AN EXECUTION. THEY
HAD NO ONE TO
SPARE.

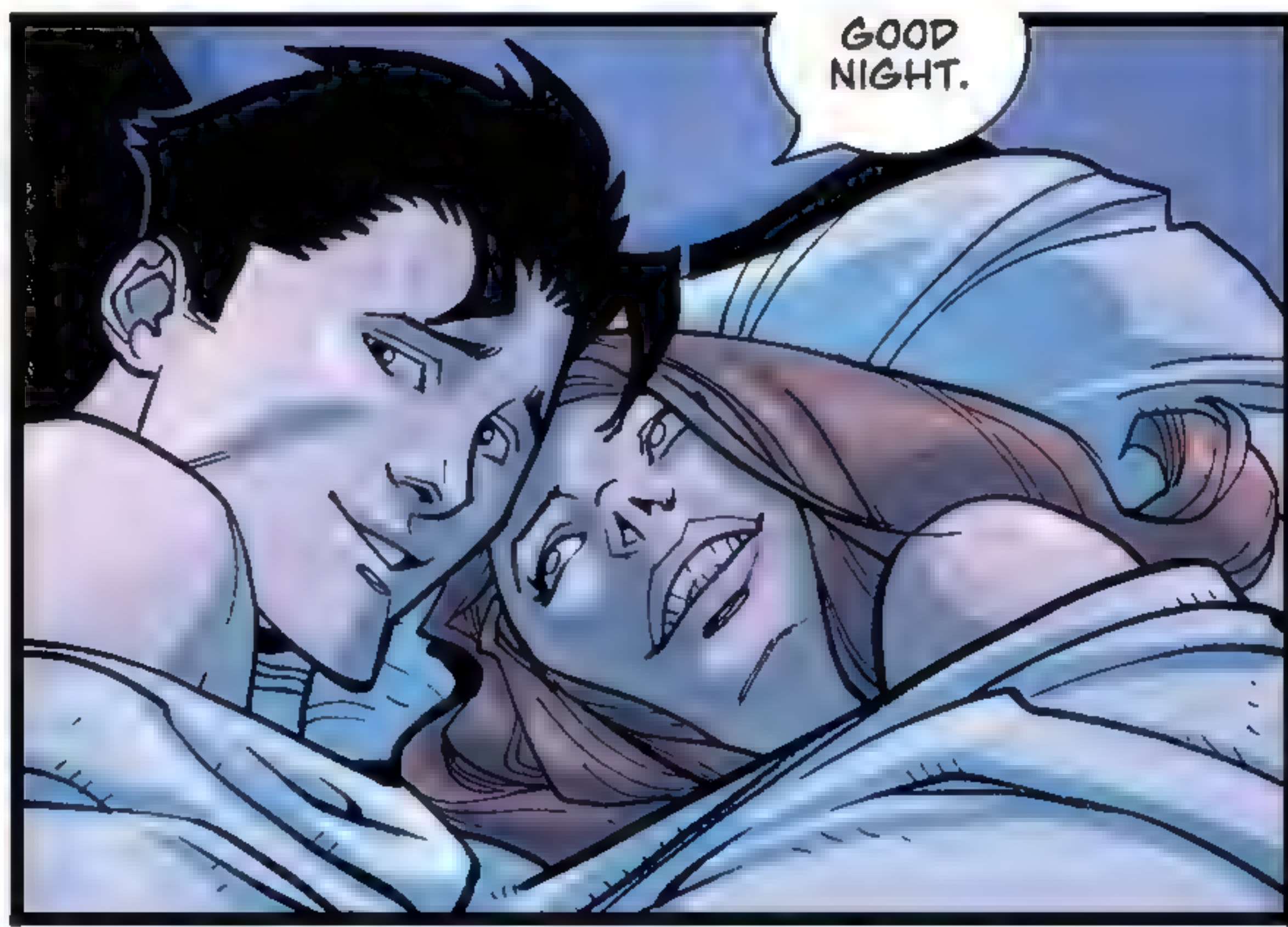
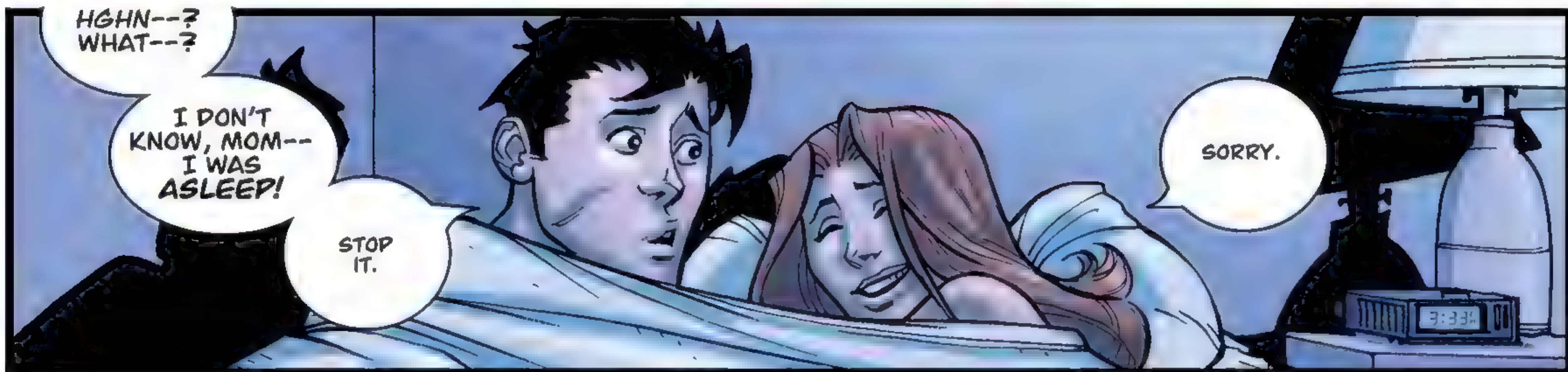
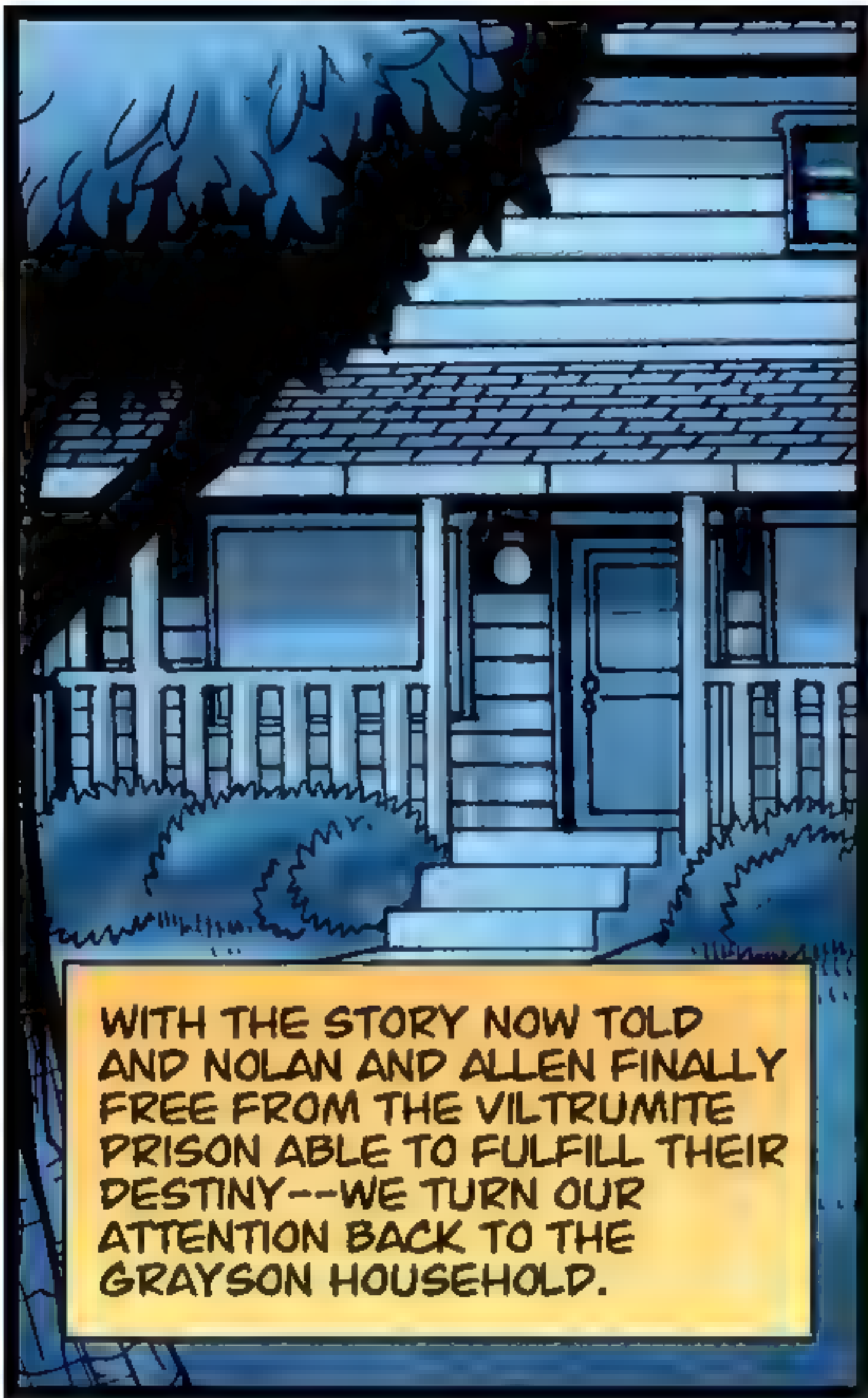
THE
REASON
FOR THIS IS
SIMPLE...

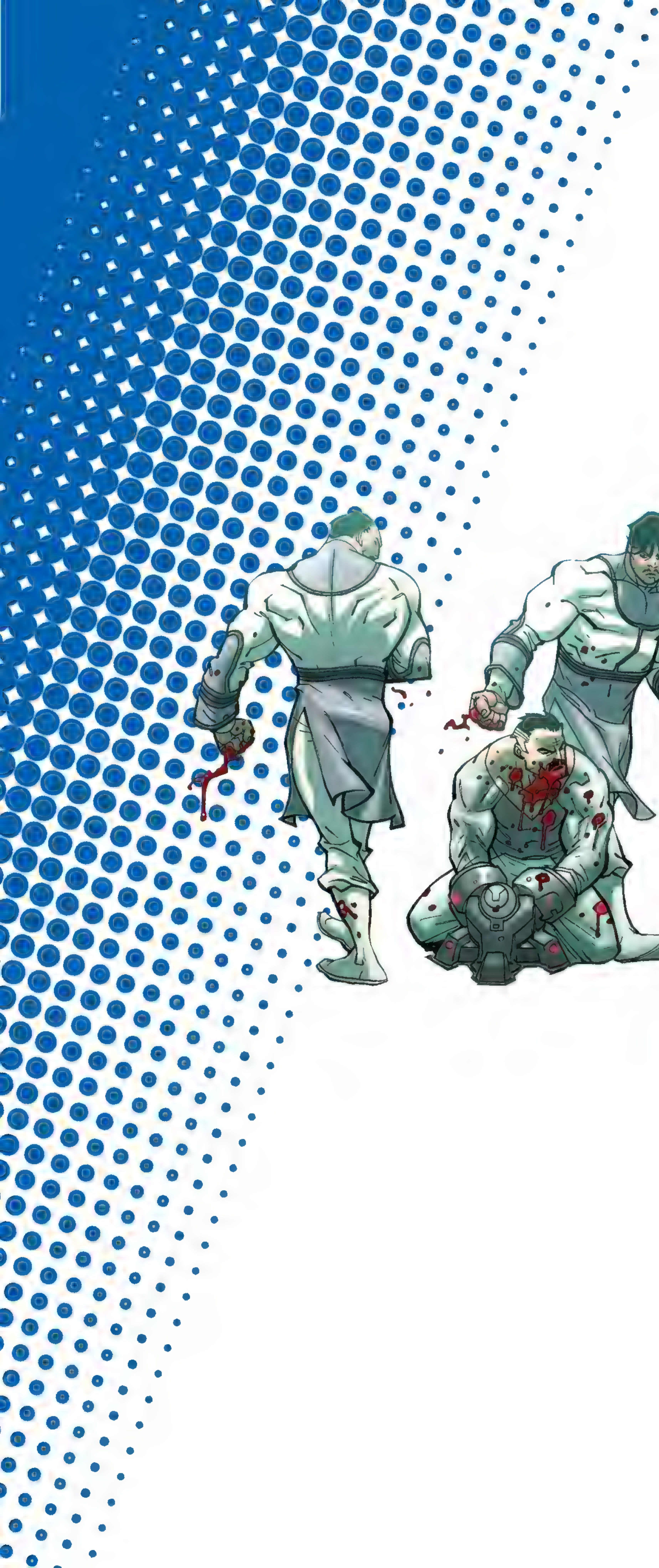
THERE ARE
LESS THAN FIFTY
PURE-BLOODED
VILTRUMITES LEFT
ALIVE IN THE WHOLE
UNIVERSE.

THAT'S
THE
SECRET...

THAT'S THE
THING THEY
DON'T WANT
ANYONE TO
KNOW...

THAT'S
WHY WE
CAN *BEAT*
THEM!

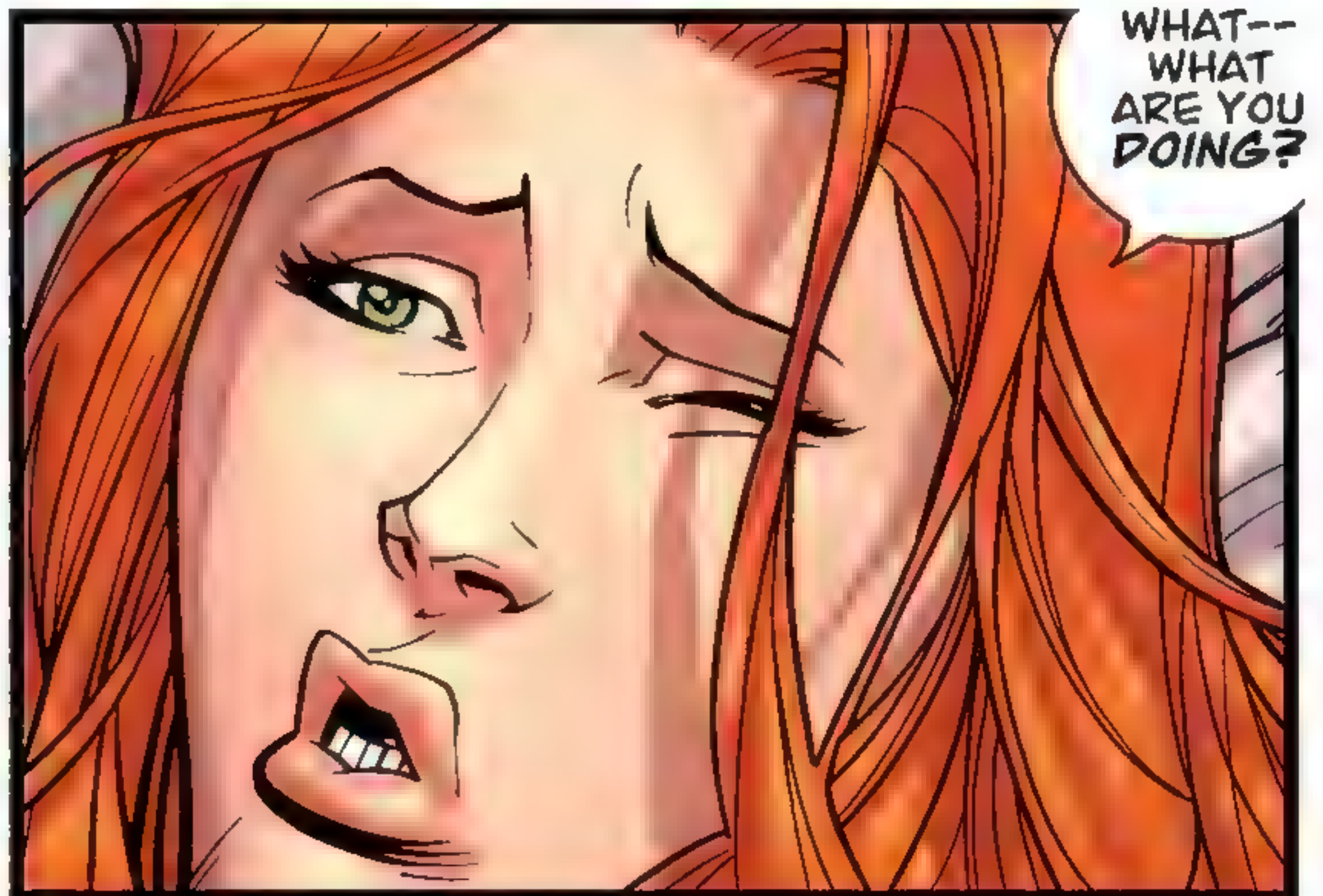
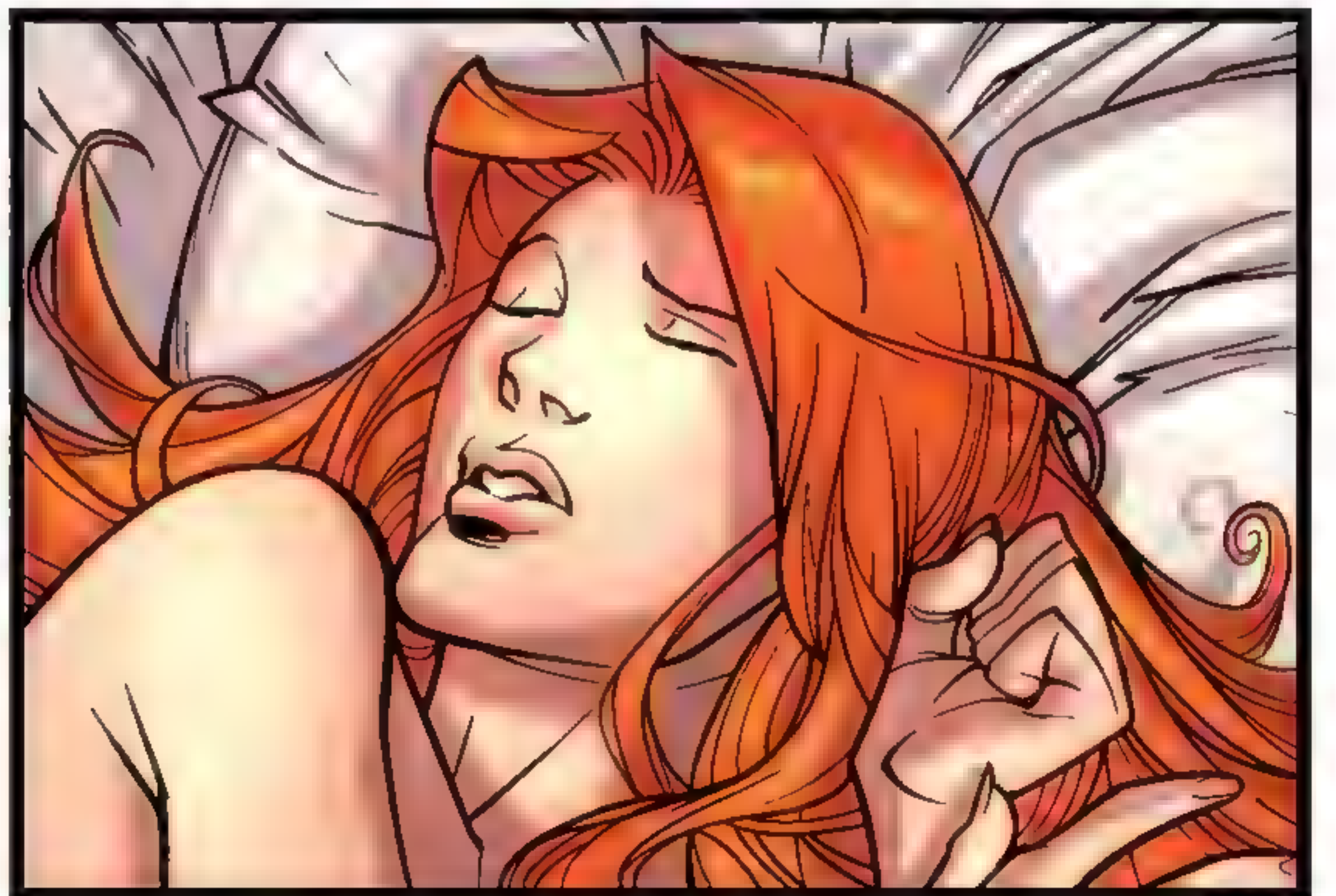
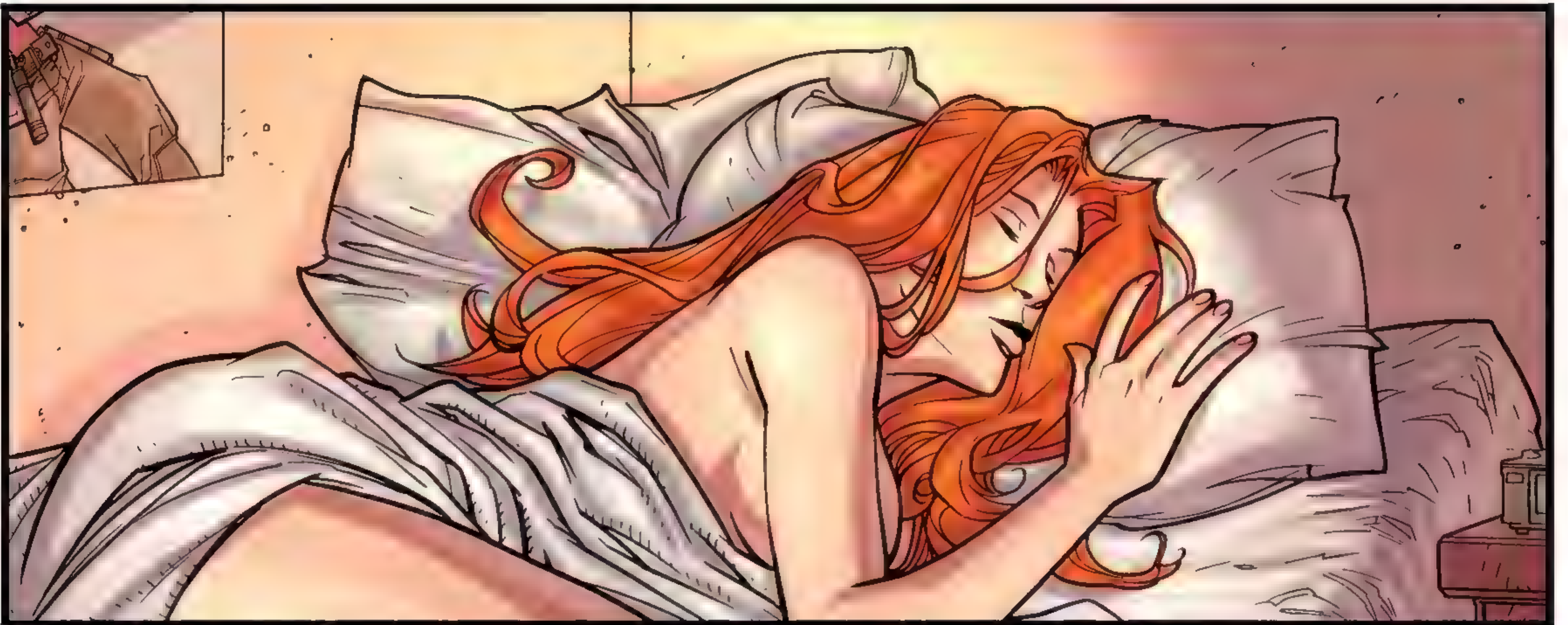
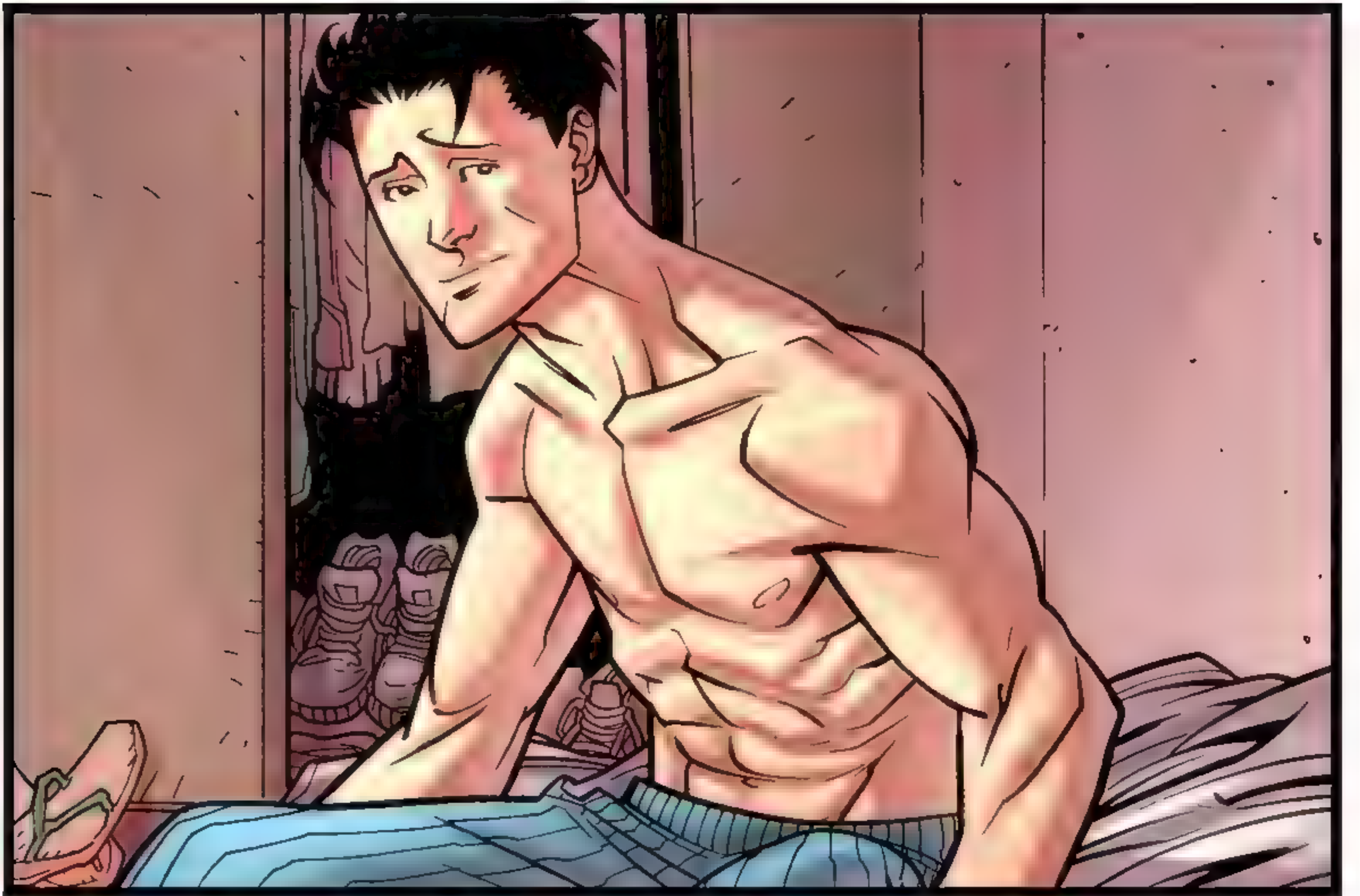
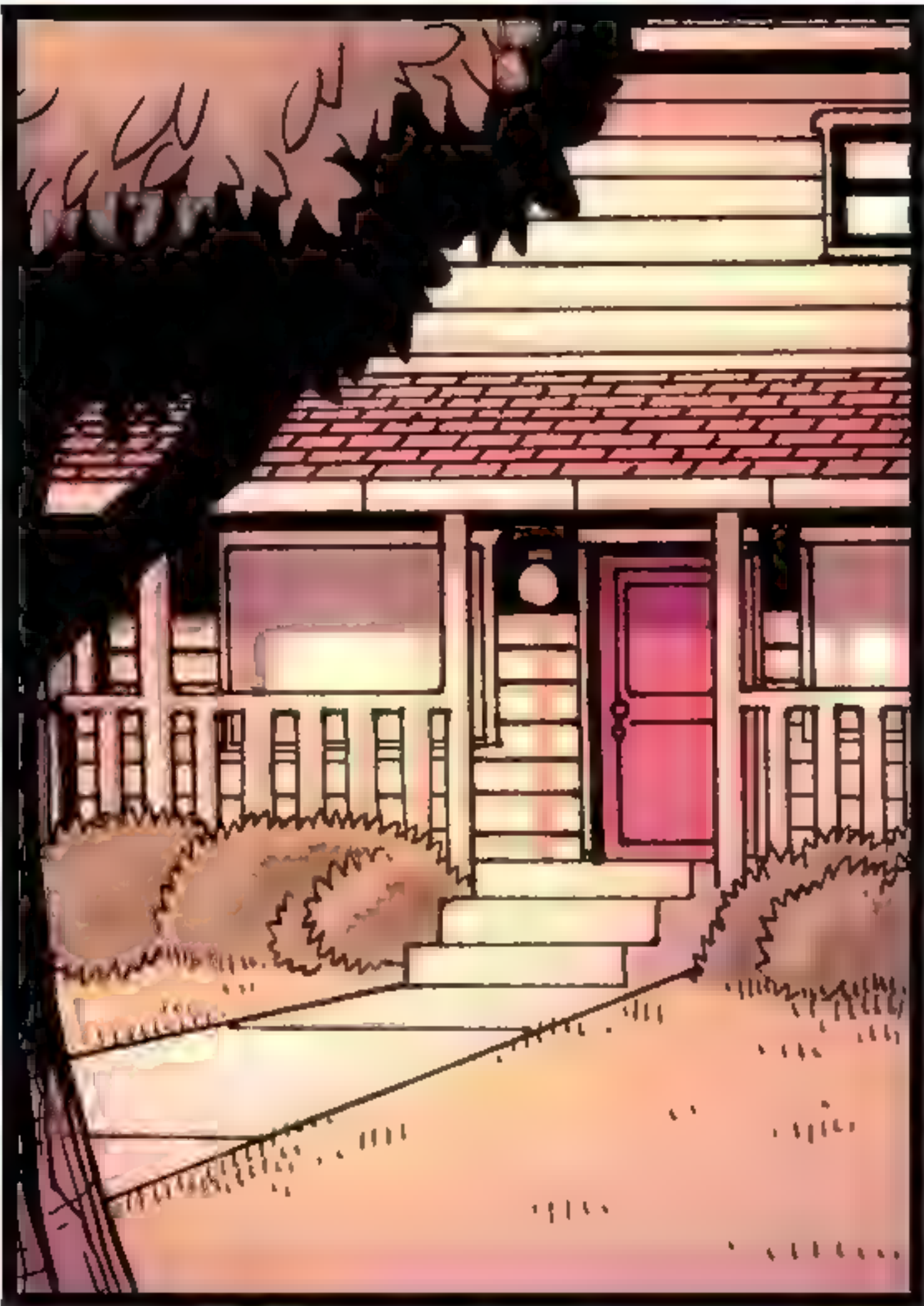


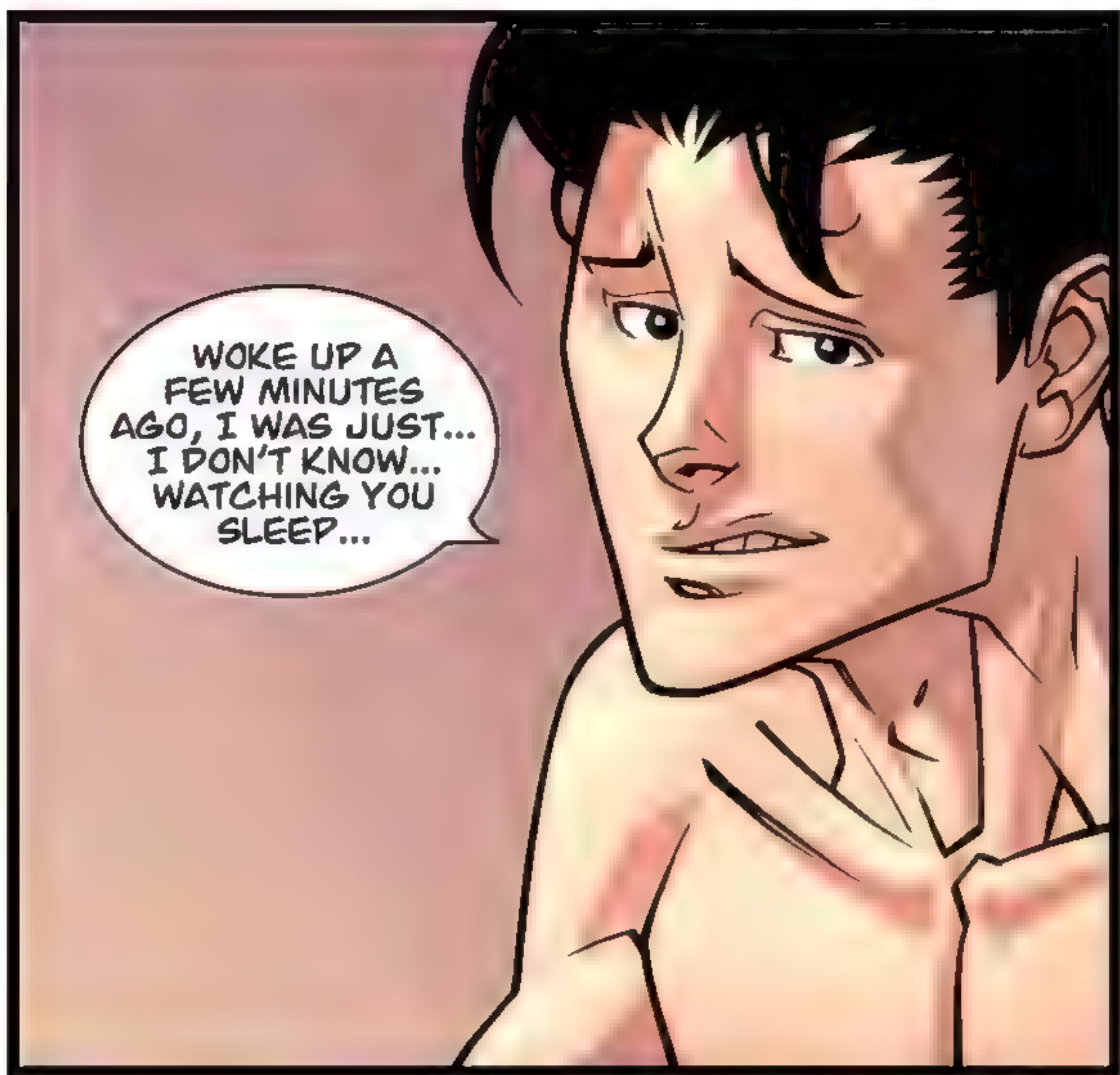


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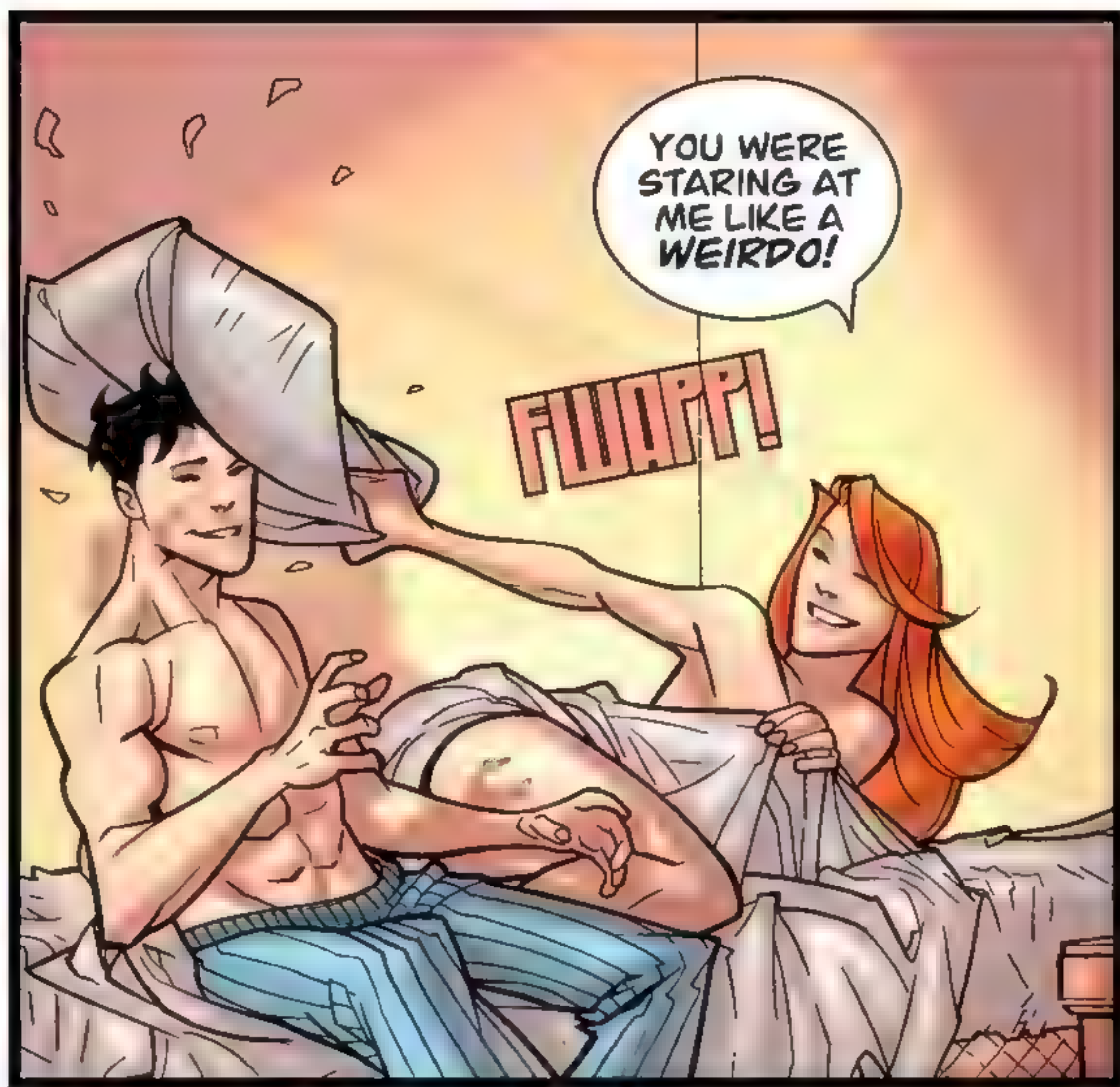


RYAN-fco pláscencia



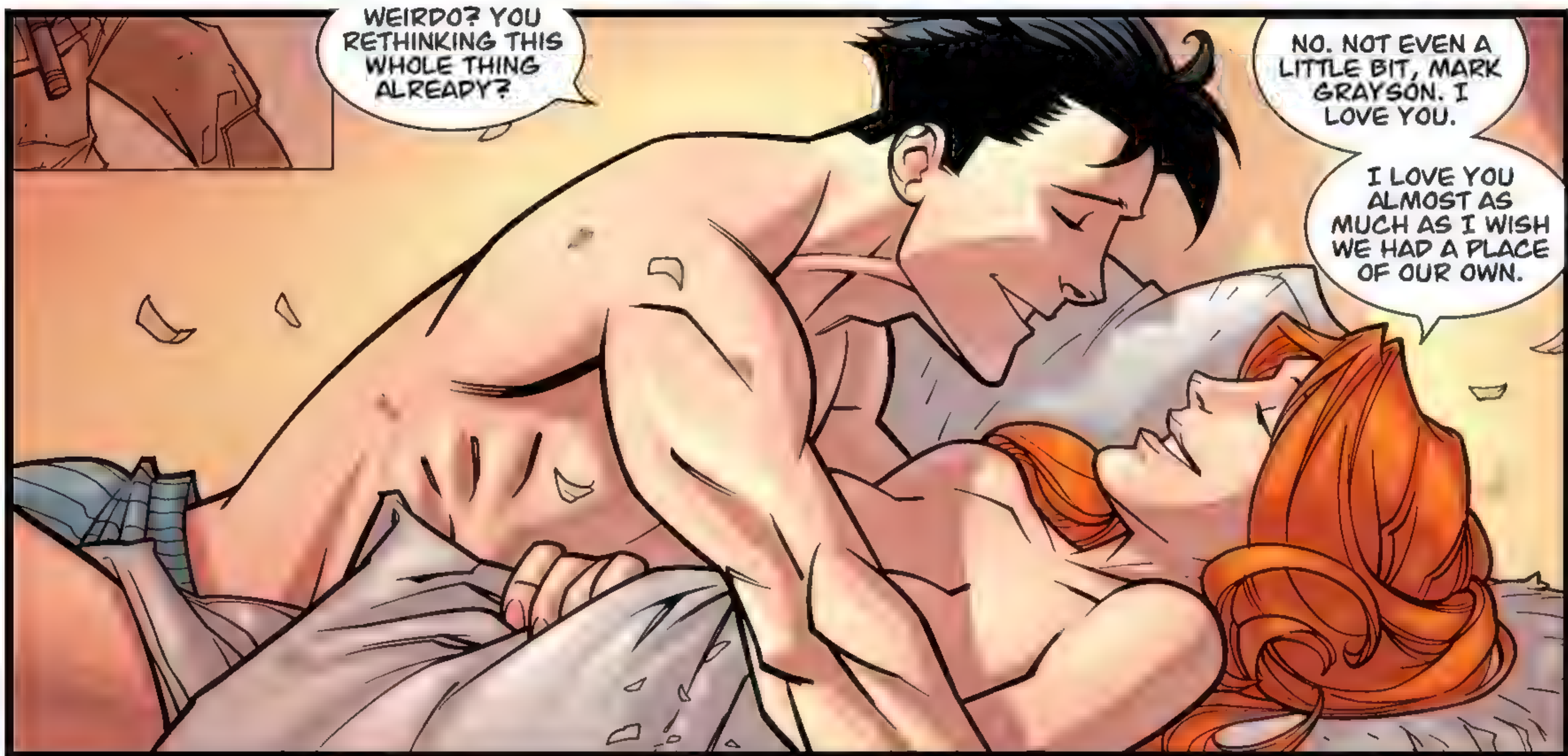


WOKE UP A FEW MINUTES AGO, I WAS JUST... I DON'T KNOW... WATCHING YOU SLEEP...



YOU WERE STARING AT ME LIKE A WEIRDO!

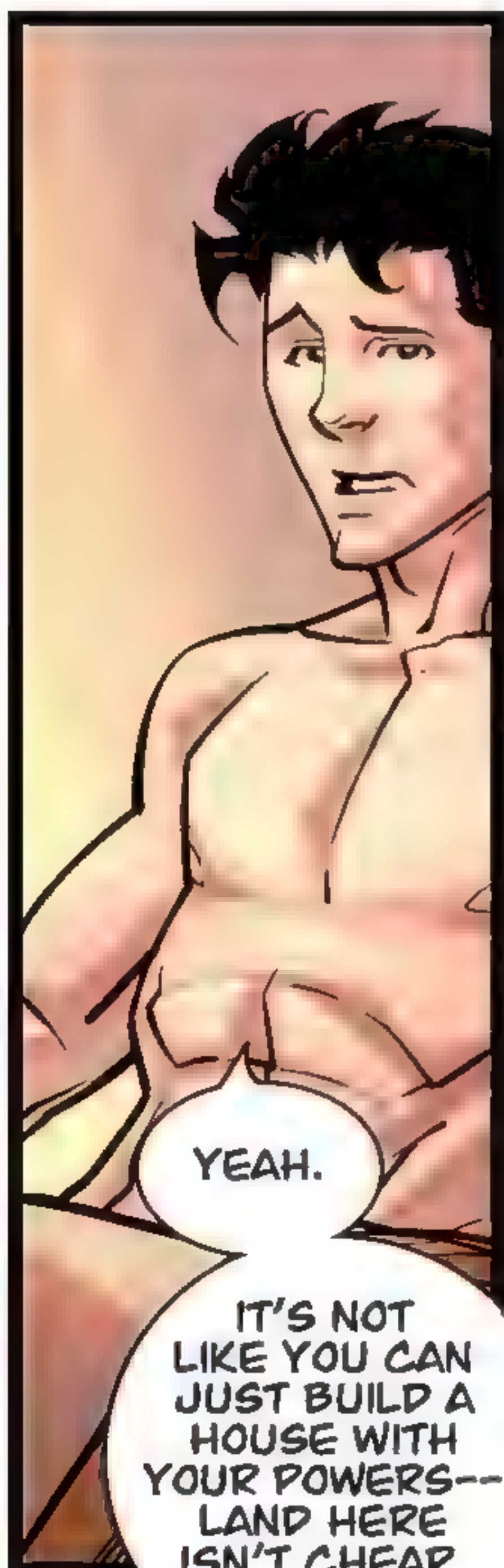
FWOOP!



WEIRDO? YOU RETHINKING THIS WHOLE THING ALREADY?

NO. NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT, MARK GRAYSON. I LOVE YOU.

I LOVE YOU ALMOST AS MUCH AS I WISH WE HAD A PLACE OF OUR OWN.

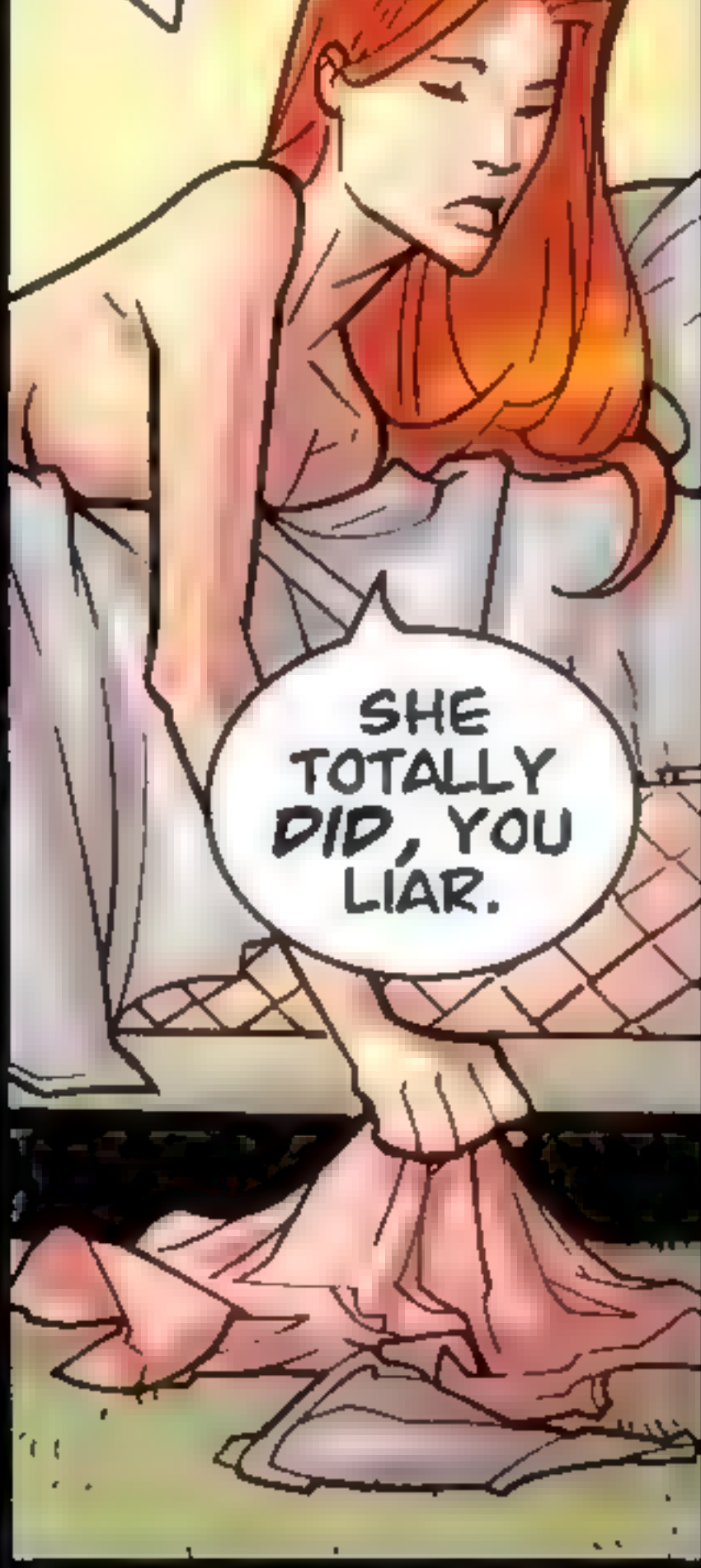


YEAH.

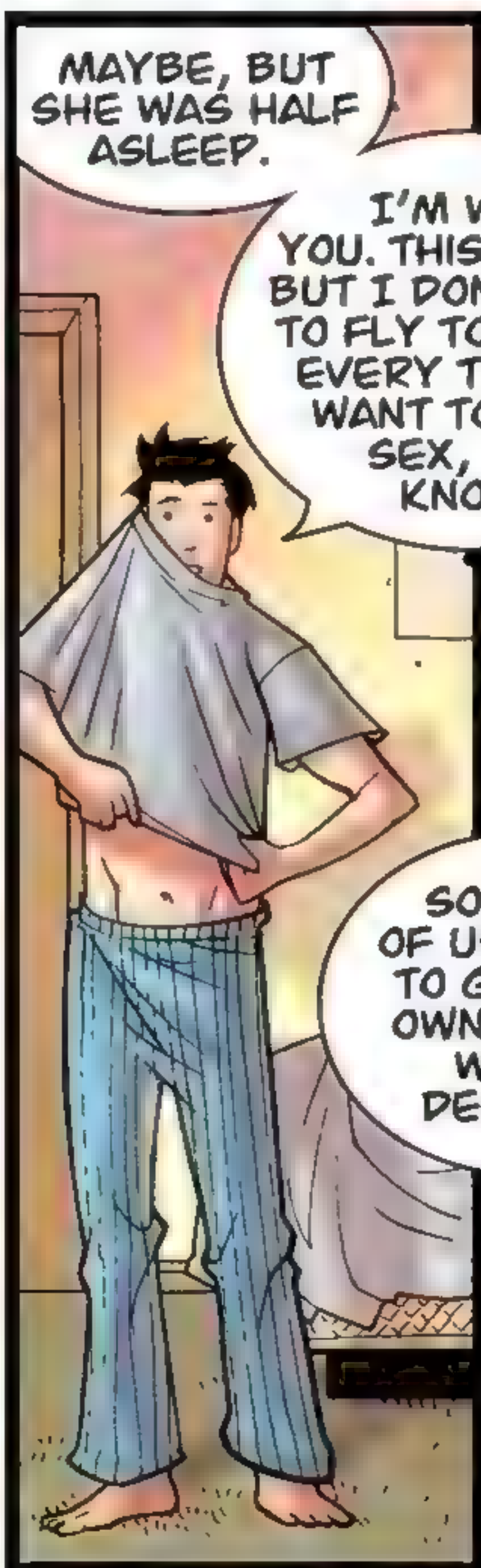
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN JUST BUILD A HOUSE WITH YOUR POWERS-- LAND HERE ISN'T CHEAP.

THIS ISN'T COOL. YOUR MOM'S WHAT--TEN FEET AWAY WHILE WE'RE DOING THIS? SHE HEARD US LAST NIGHT.

SHE DID NOT.



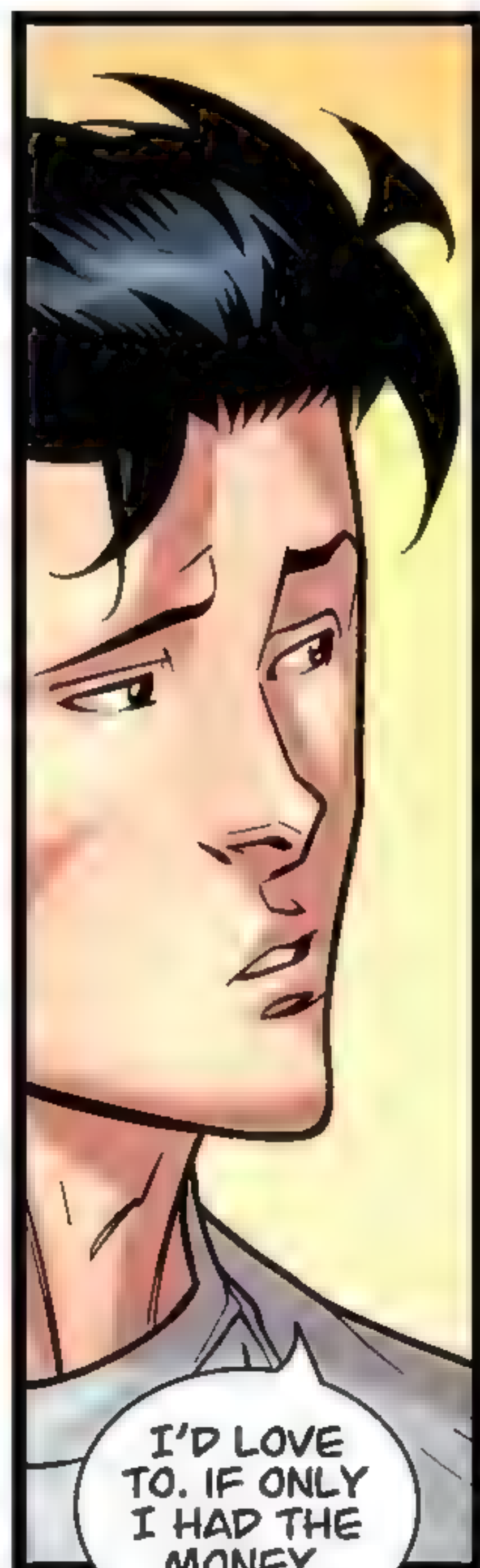
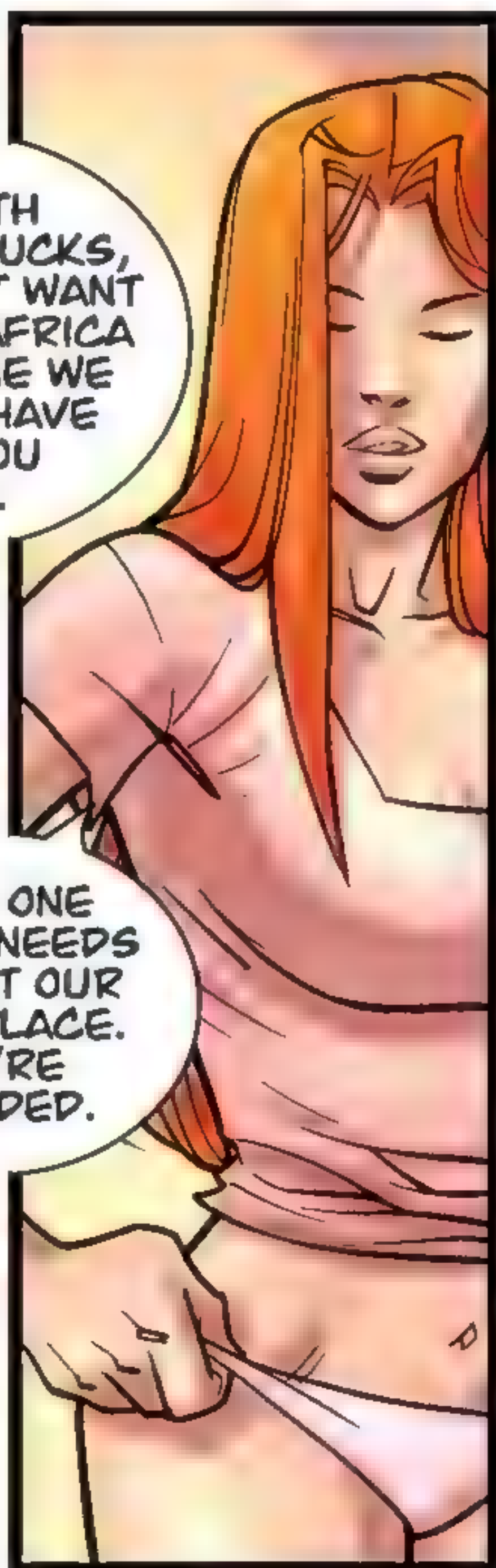
SHE TOTALLY DID, YOU LIAR.



MAYBE, BUT SHE WAS HALF ASLEEP.

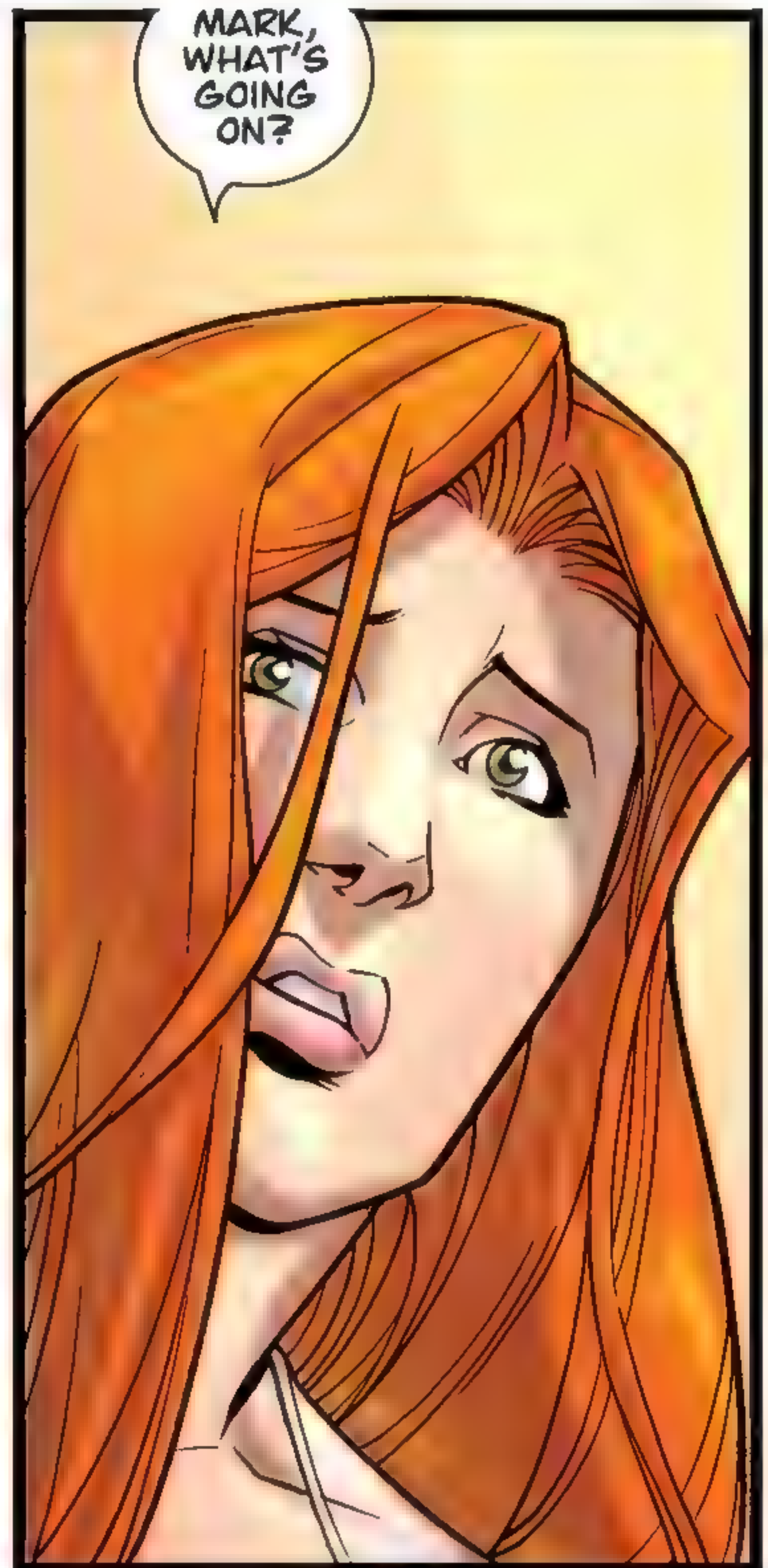
I'M WITH YOU. THIS SUCKS, BUT I DON'T WANT TO FLY TO AFRICA EVERY TIME WE WANT TO HAVE SEX, YOU KNOW.

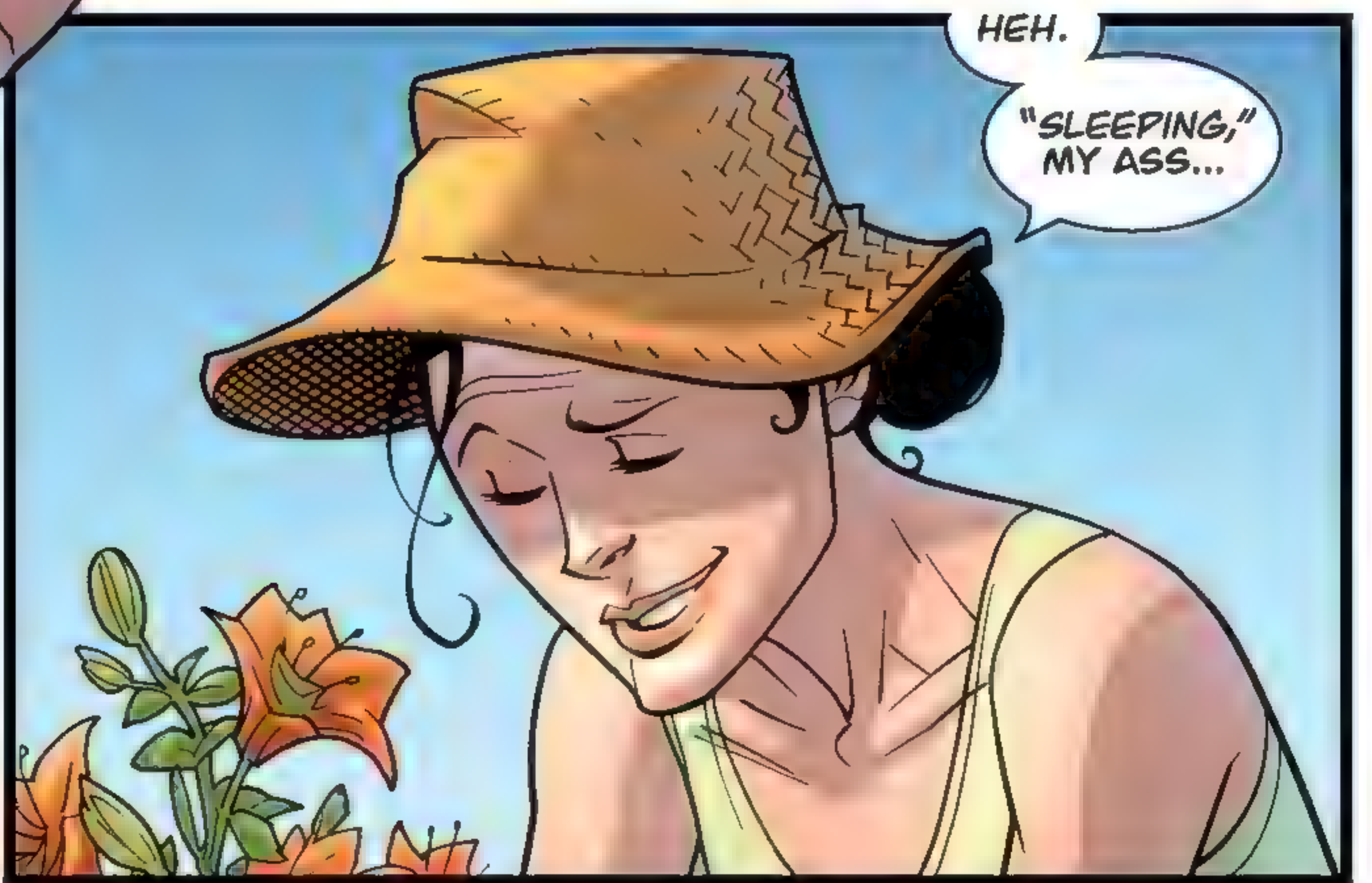
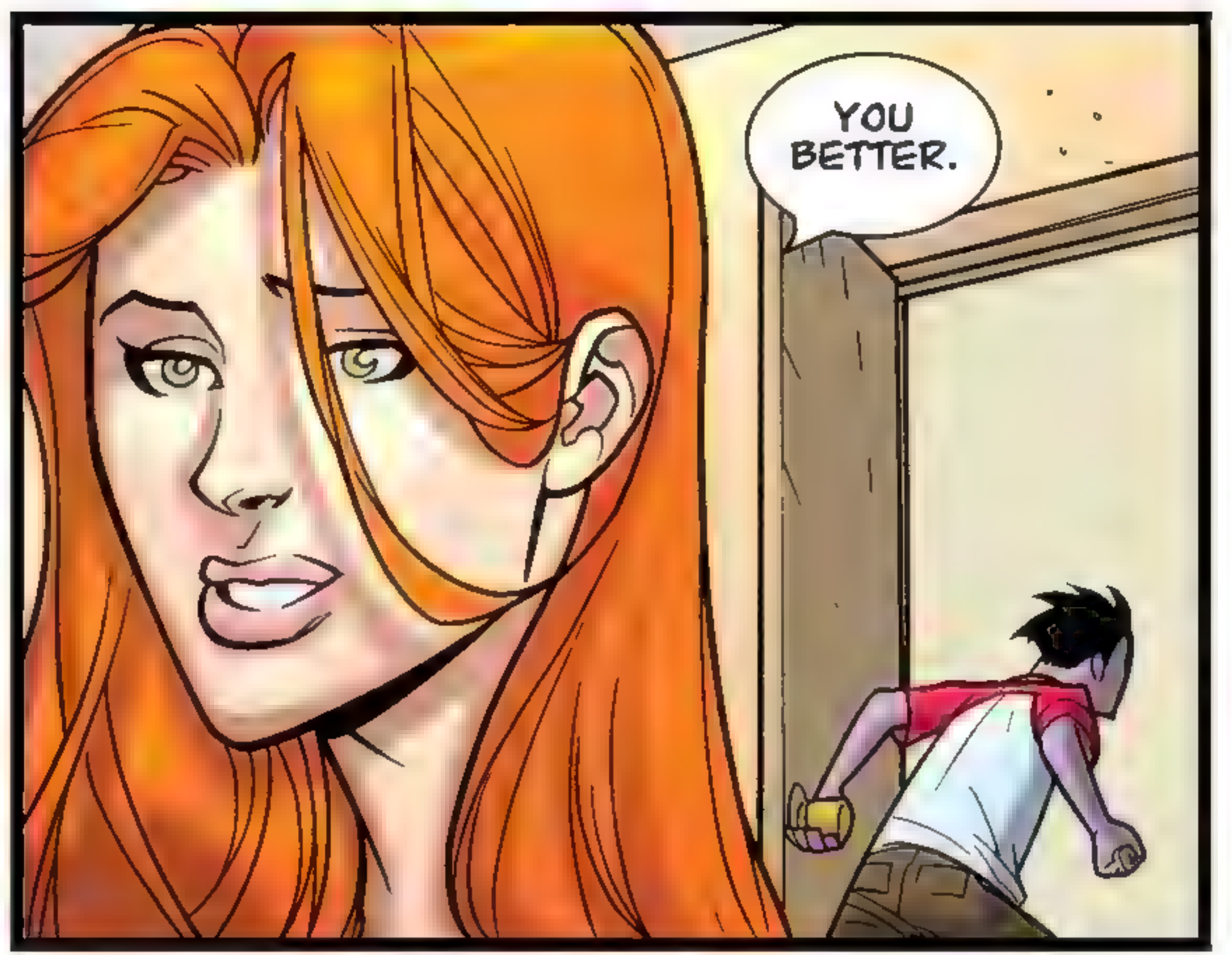
SO... ONE OF US NEEDS TO GET OUR OWN PLACE. WE'RE DECIDED.



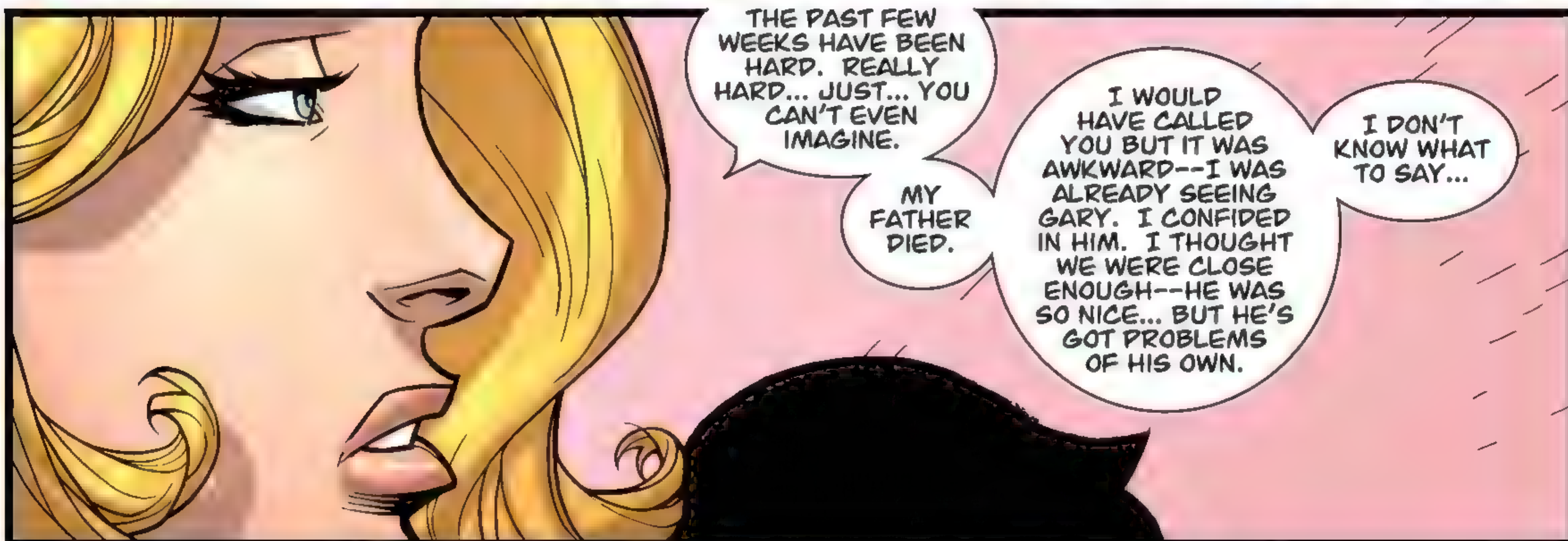
I'D LOVE TO. IF ONLY I HAD THE MONEY.

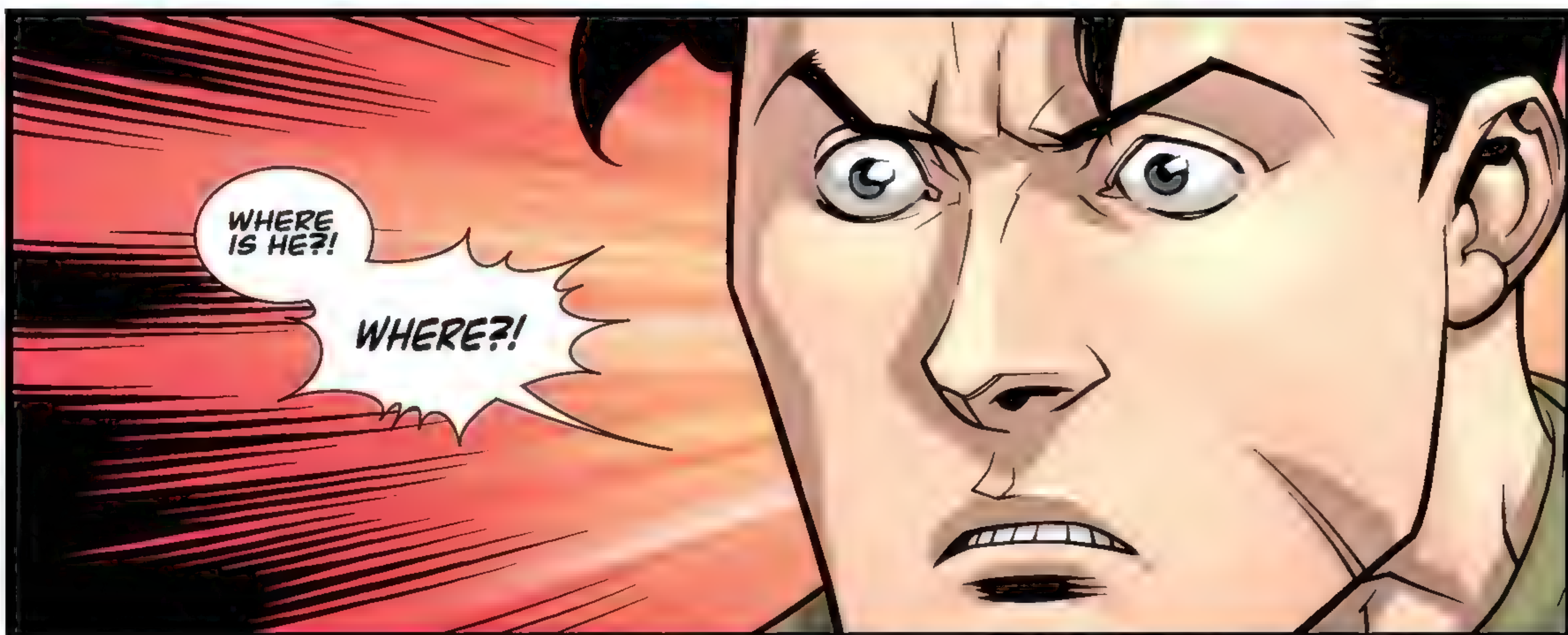
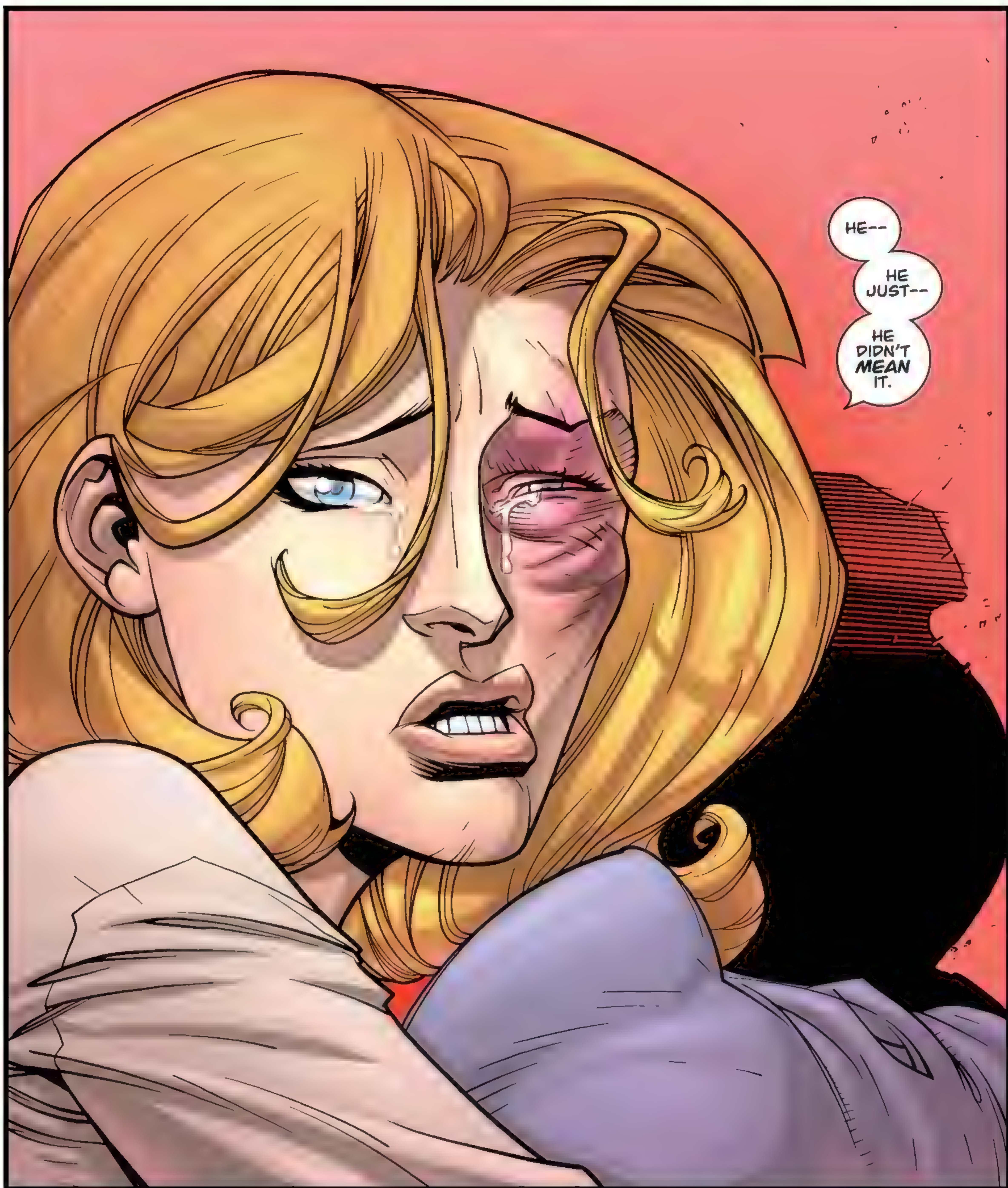


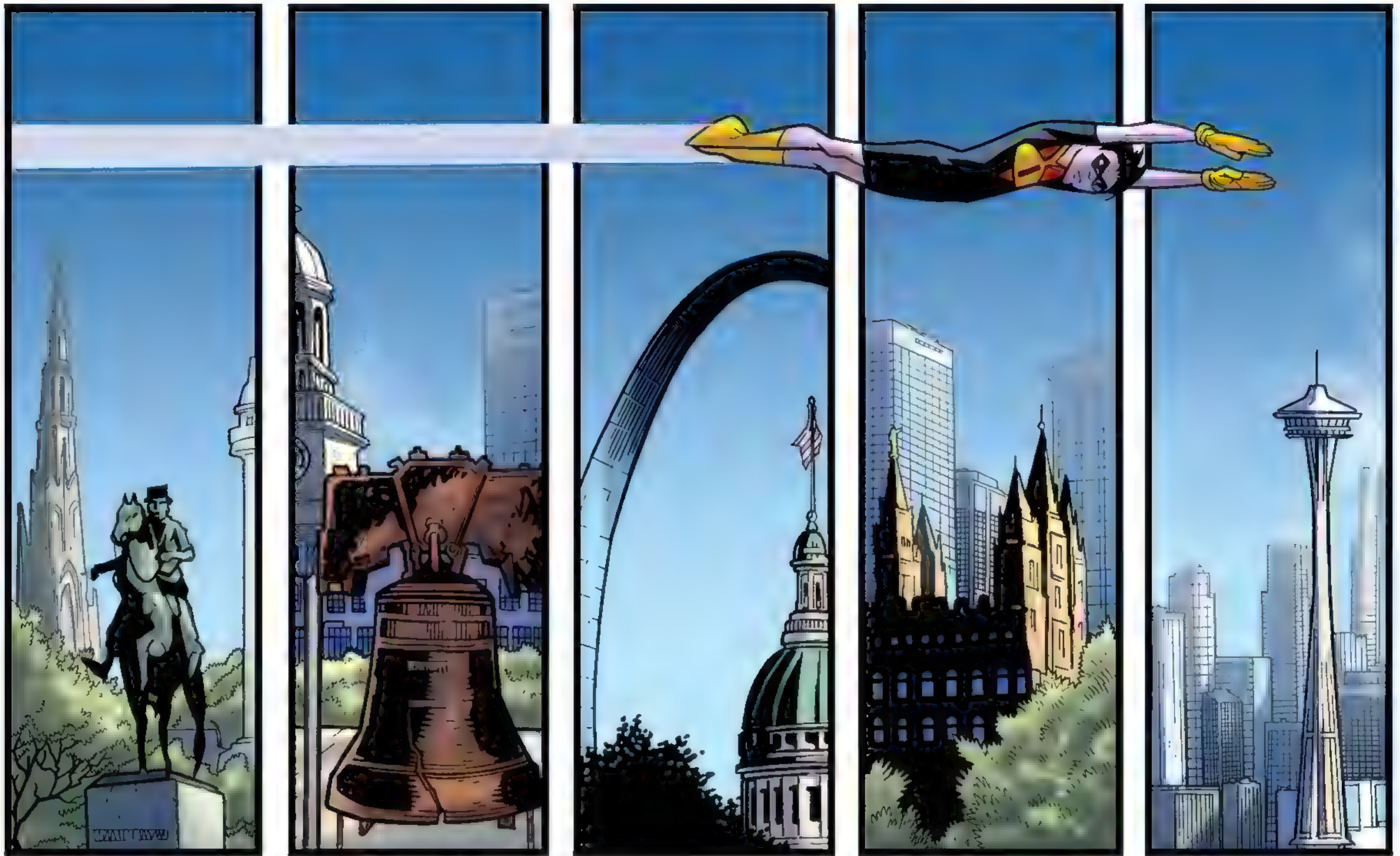
















PLEASE?!
PLEASE
DON'T!!

OH, GOD--
PLEASE!!

YOU DON'T
GET TO DO WHAT
YOU DID! YOU
DON'T EVER HURT
HER AGAIN!

EVER!

I MAY BE
OUT OF HER LIFE
NOW, BUT I STILL
CARE ABOUT HER
A GREAT DEAL. I
WON'T LET YOU
DO THIS
AGAIN!



I'M SORRY!
I TOLD HER I
WAS SORRY! I
LOVE HER!

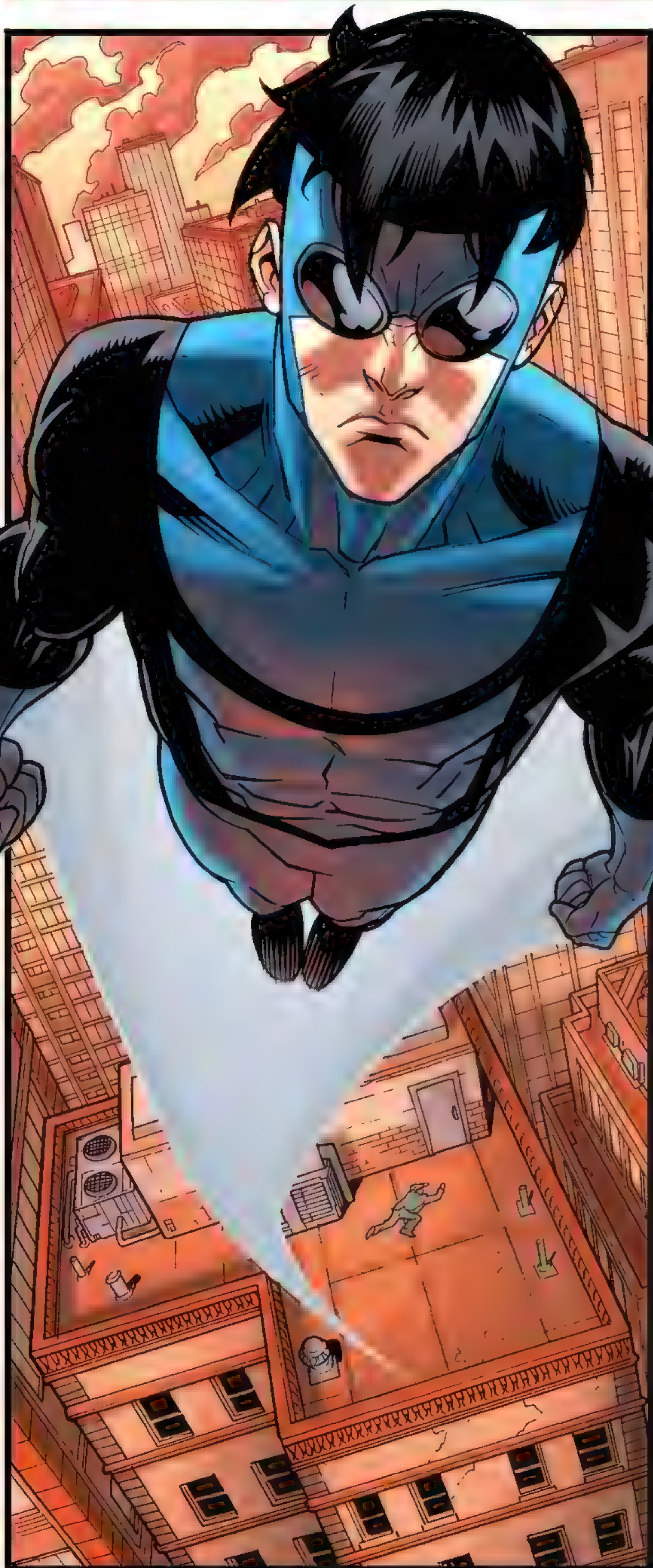
I DIDN'T
MEAN TO--I
JUST--I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
HAPPENED!

I'M
SORRY!
PLEASE LET
ME GO!



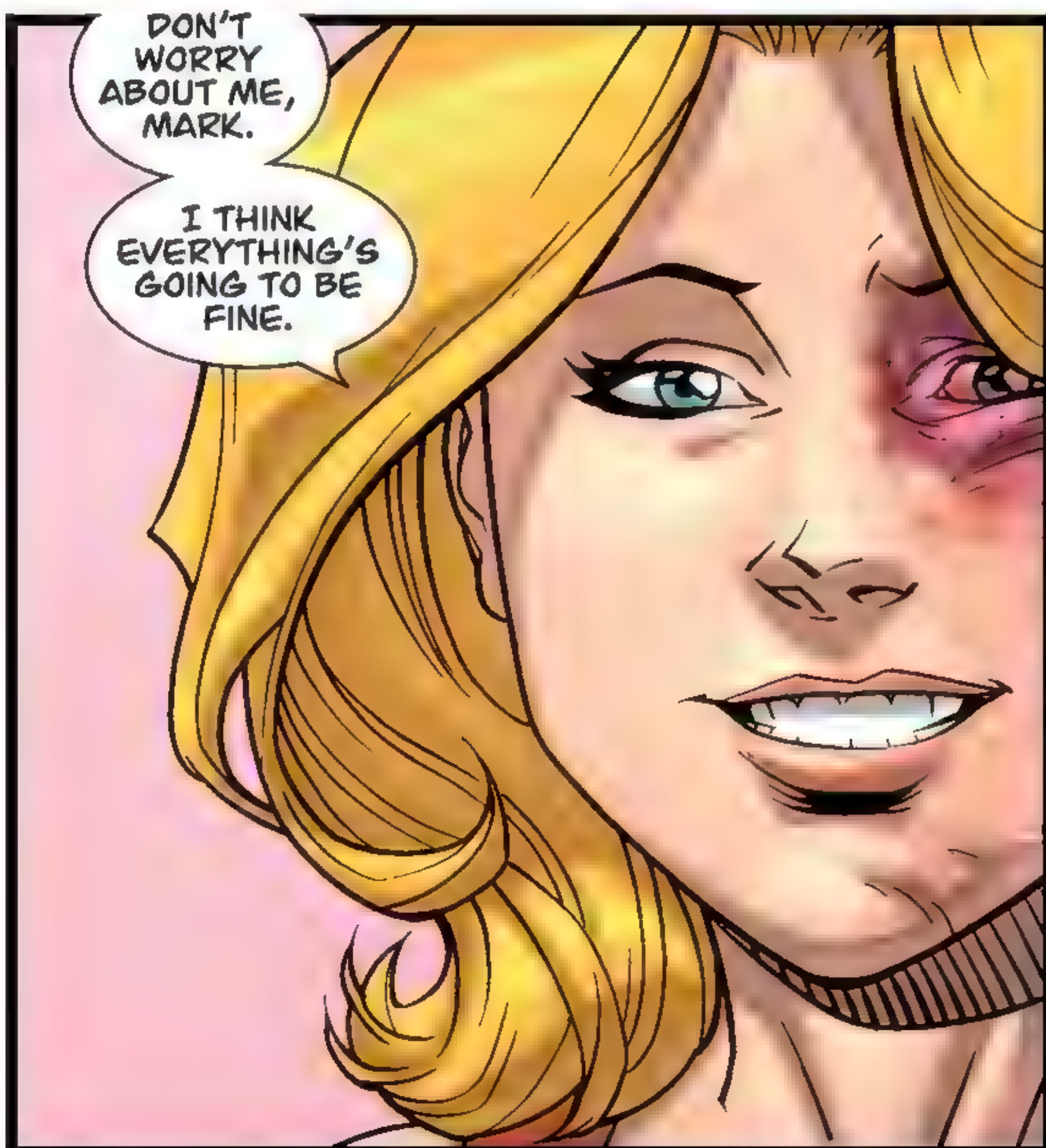
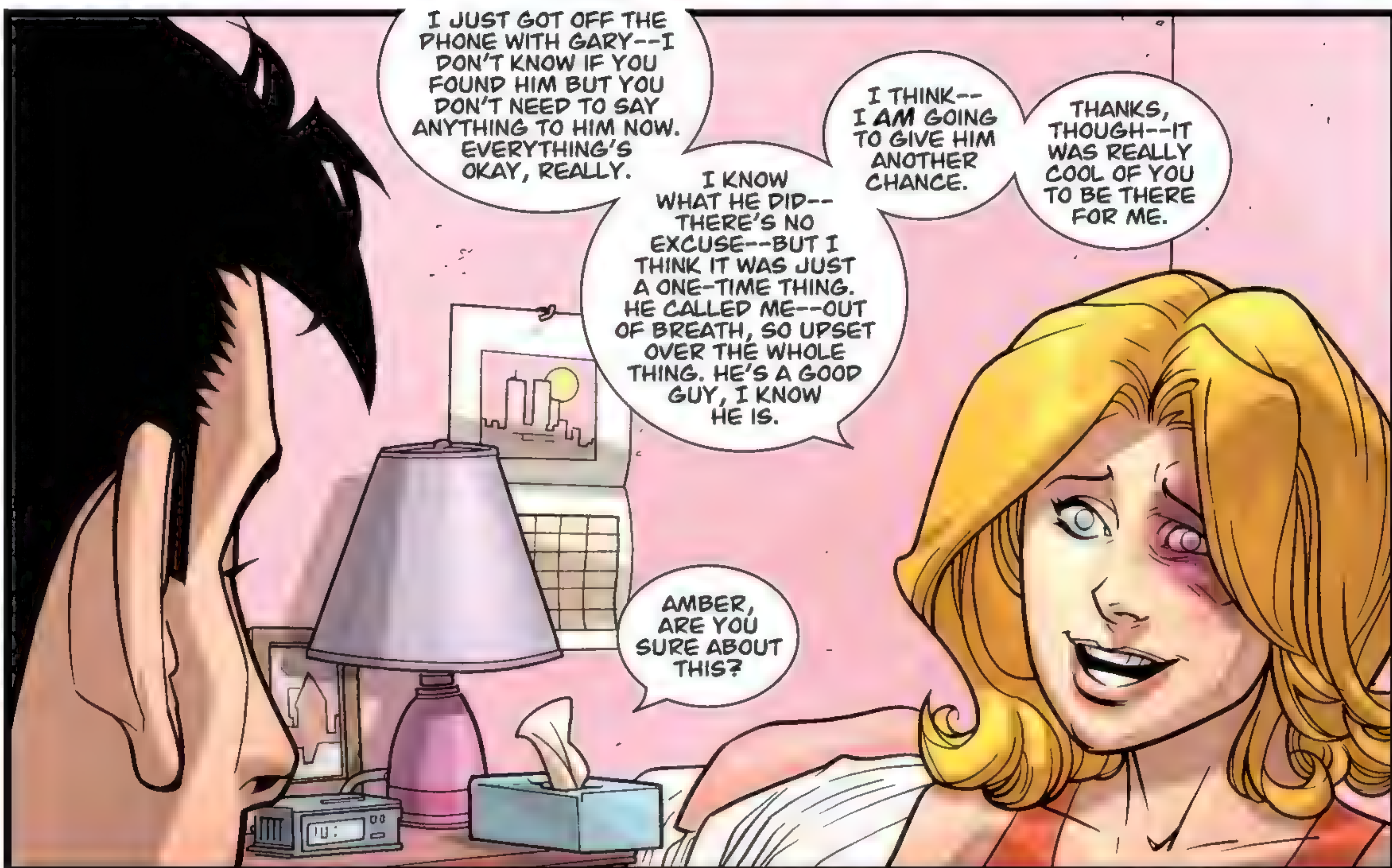
YOU HURT
HER AGAIN--
I'LL KNOW
ABOUT IT...

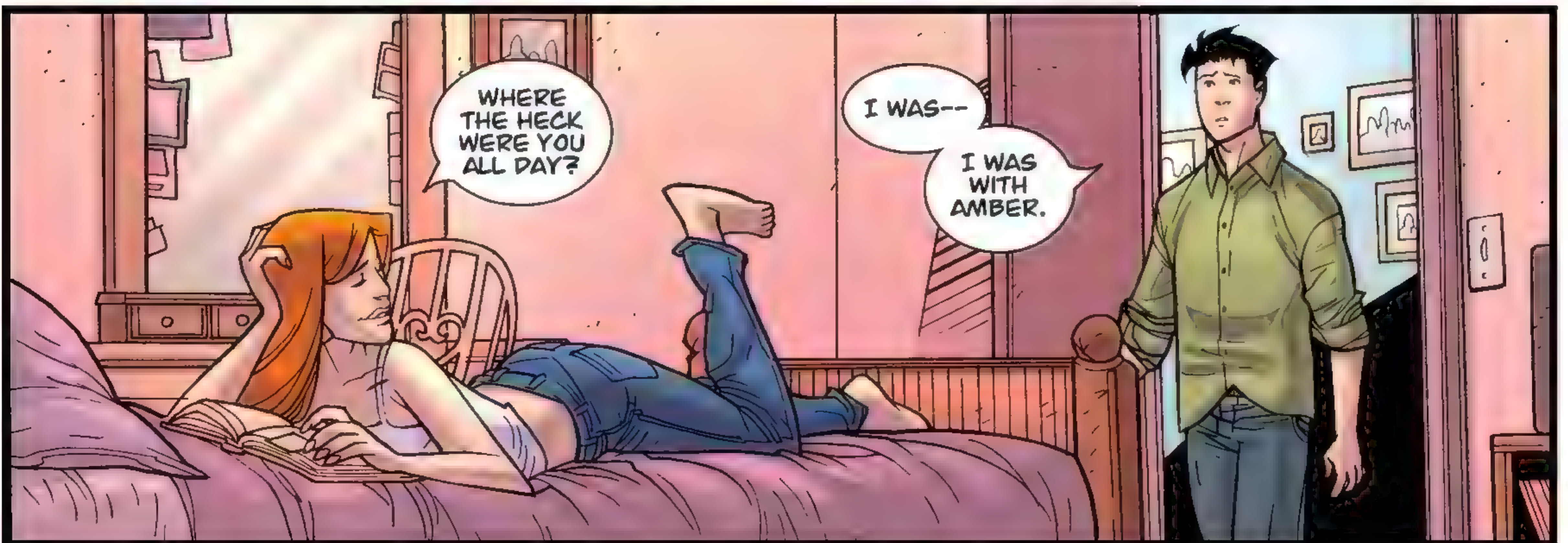
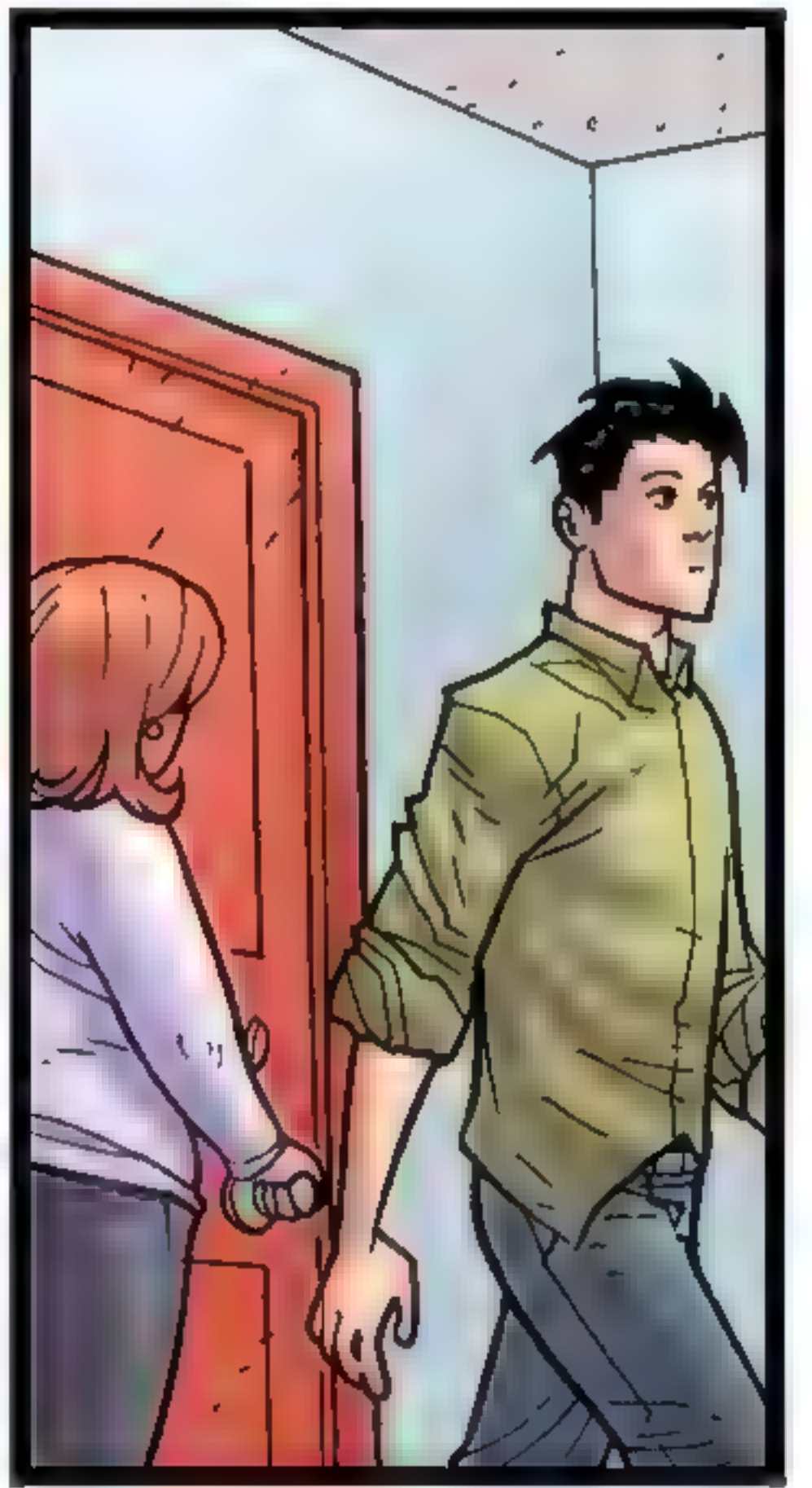
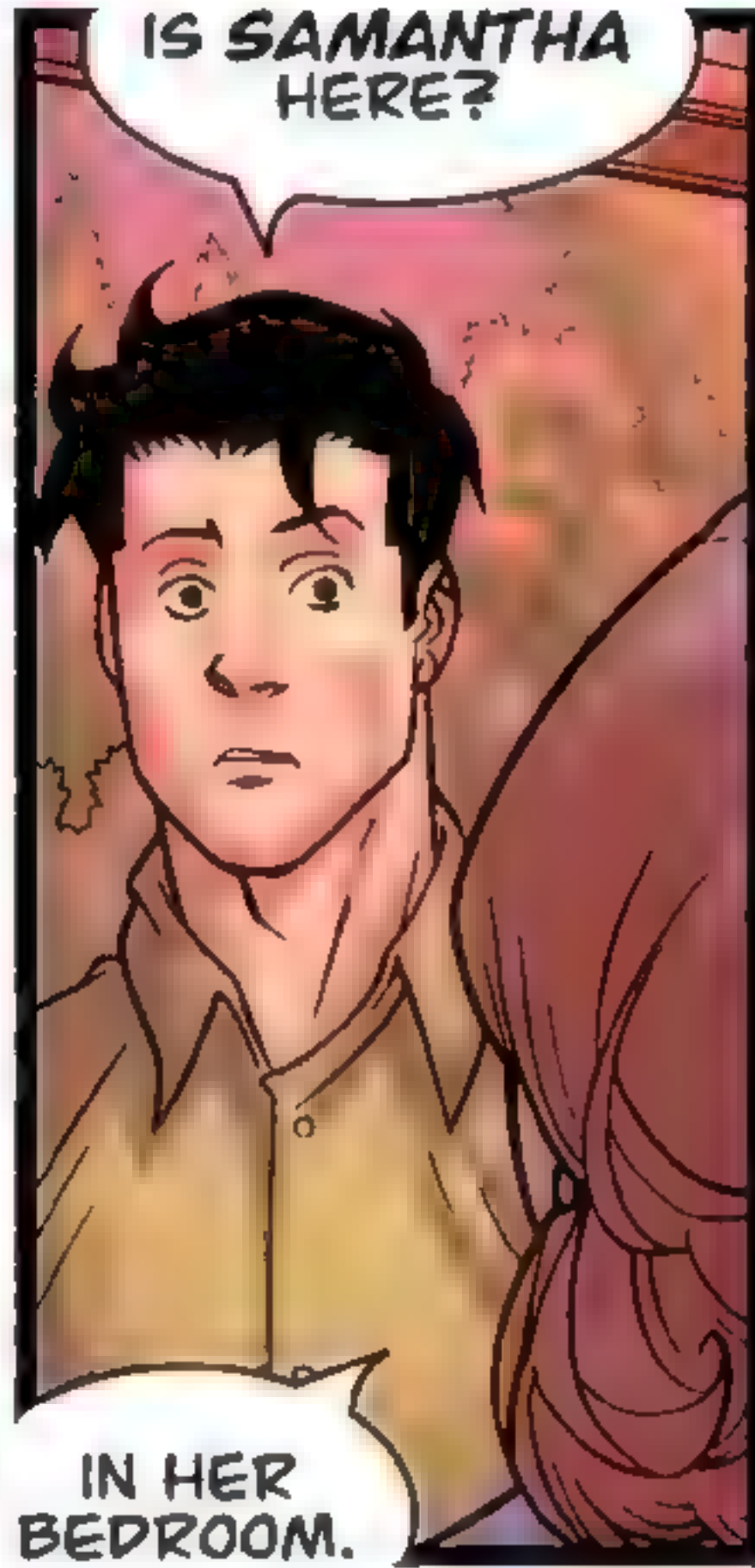
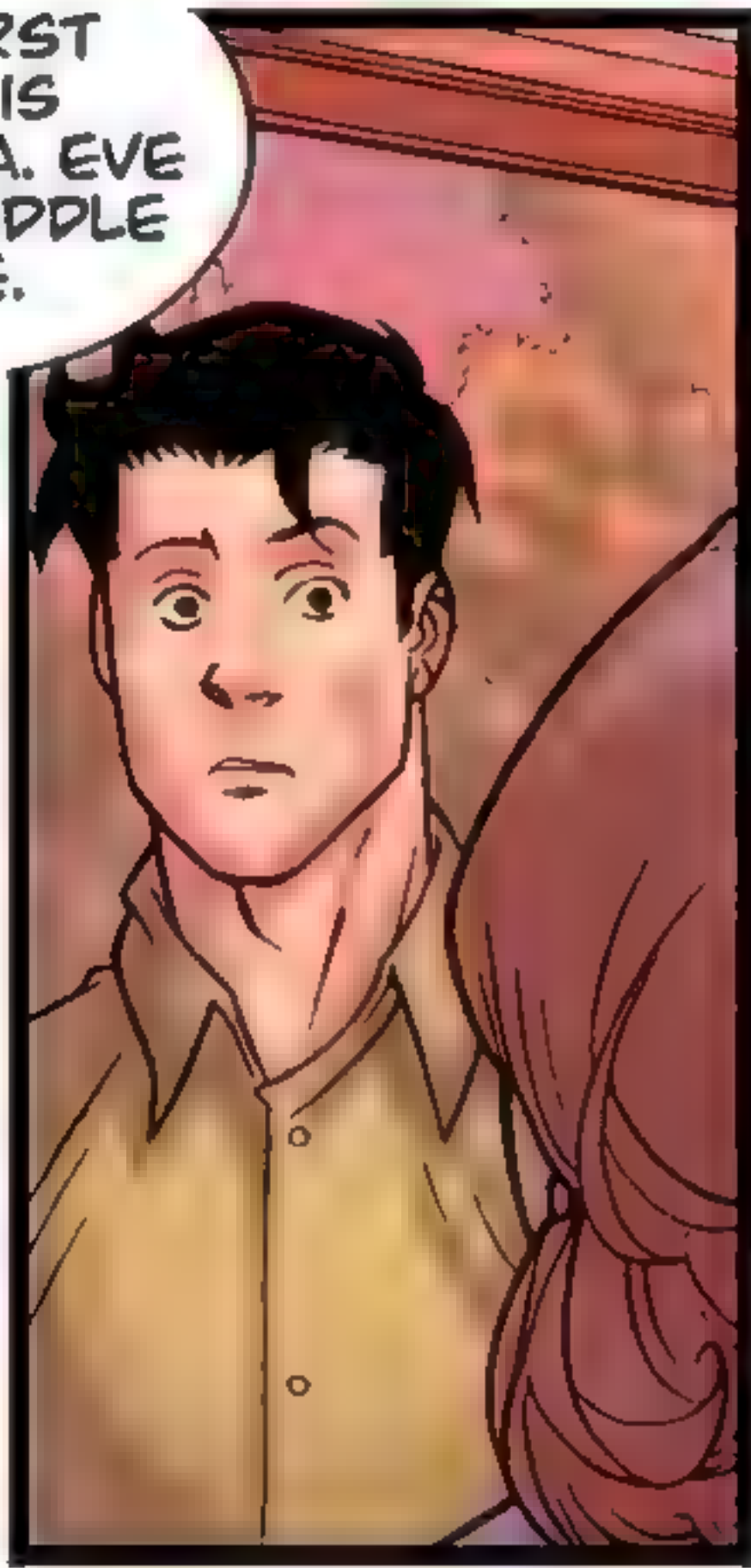
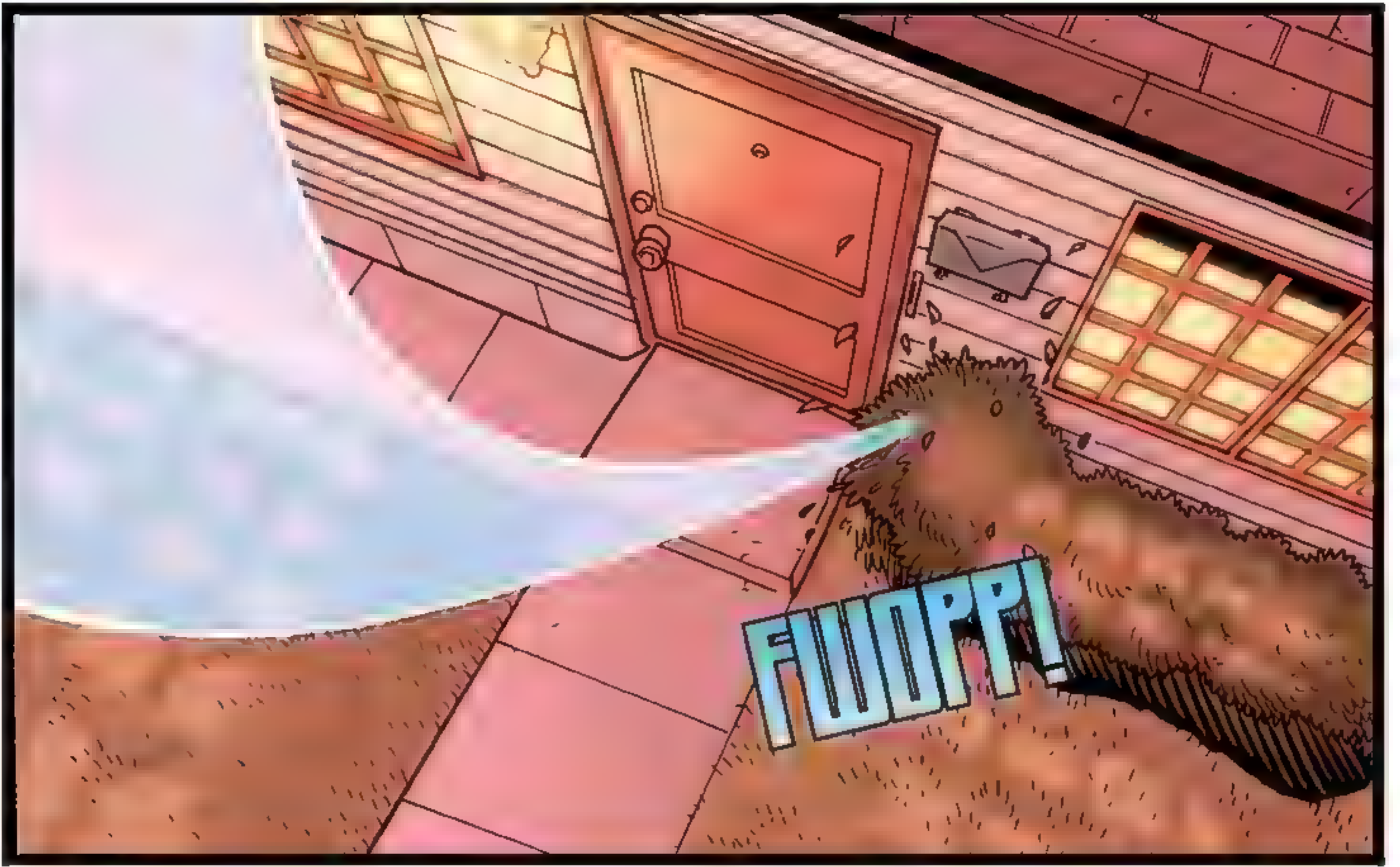
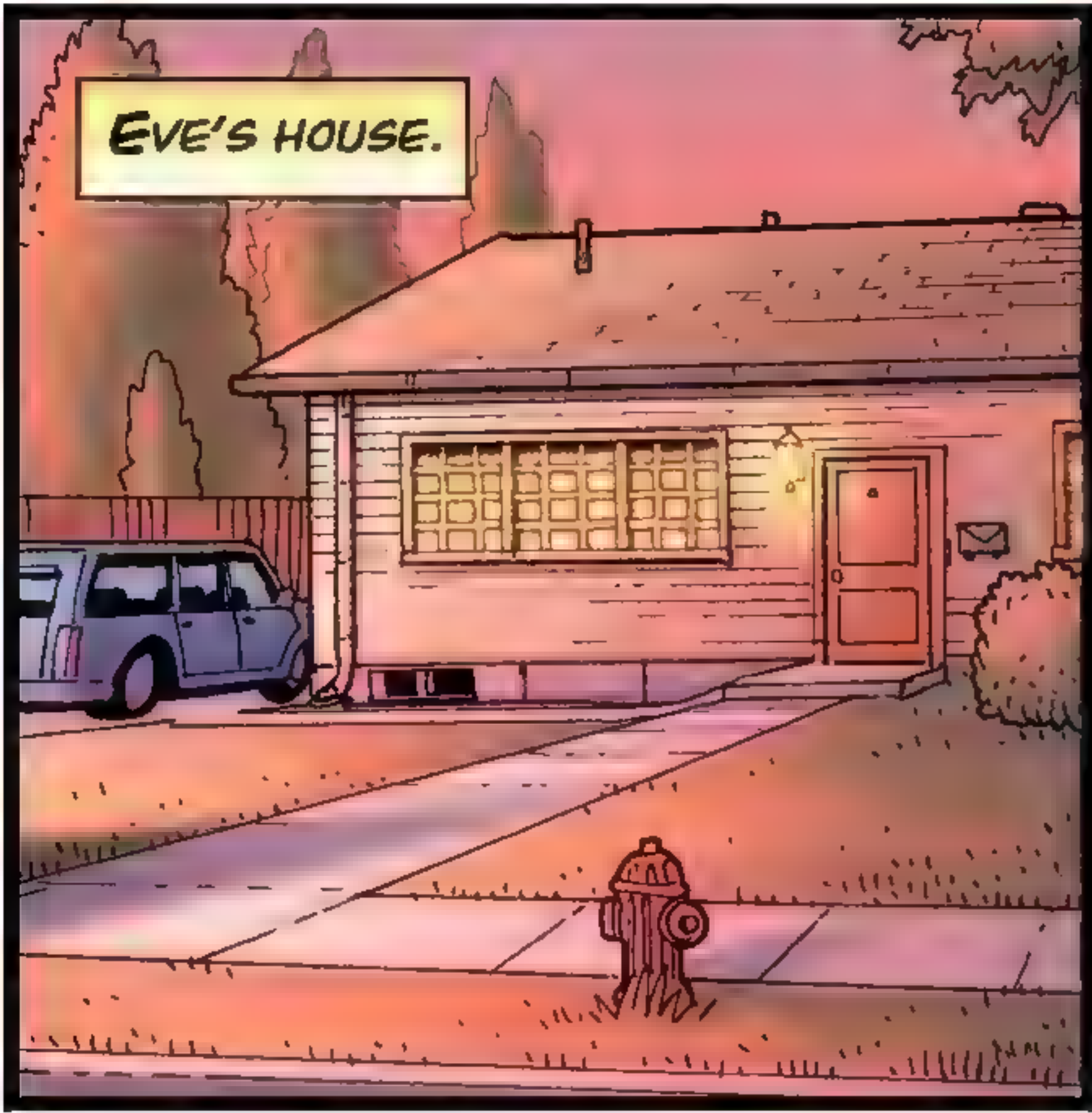
...AND I
WILL KILL
YOU!

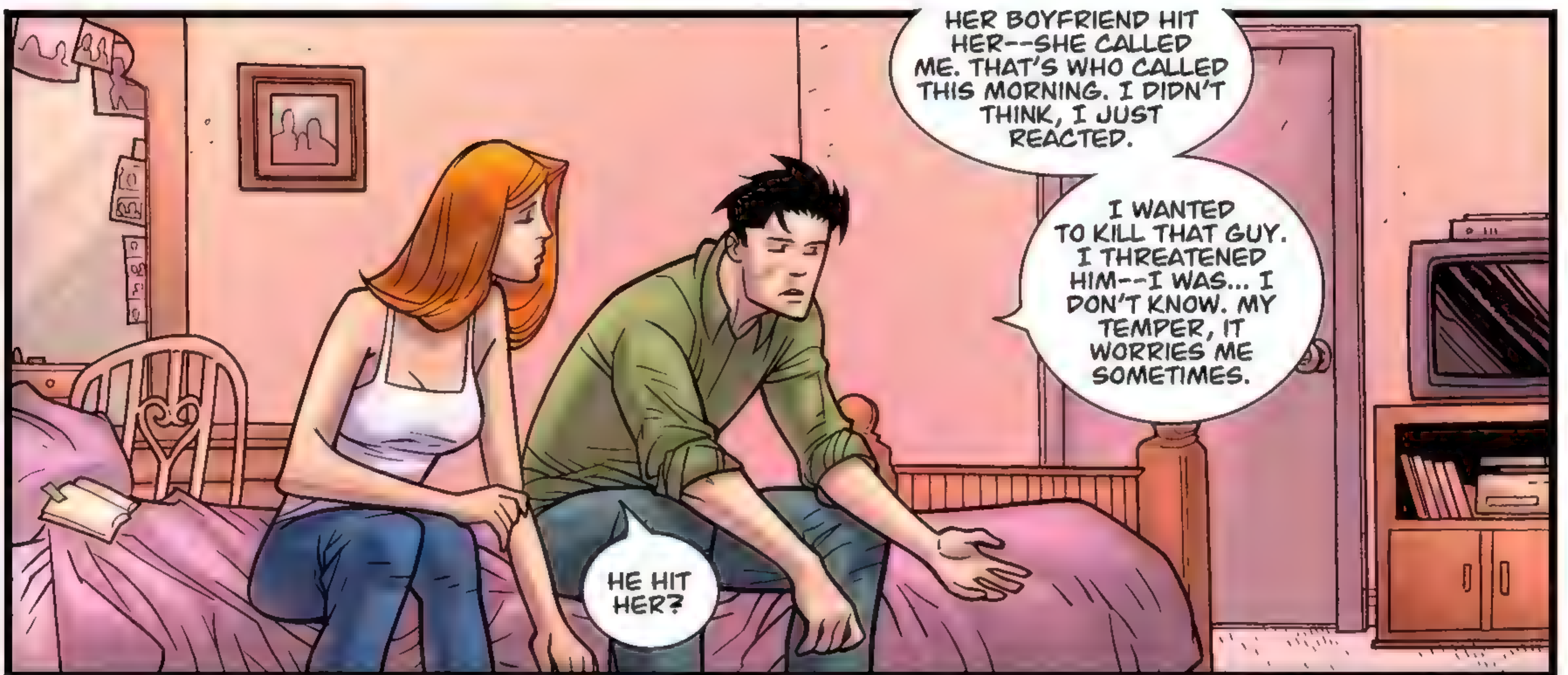
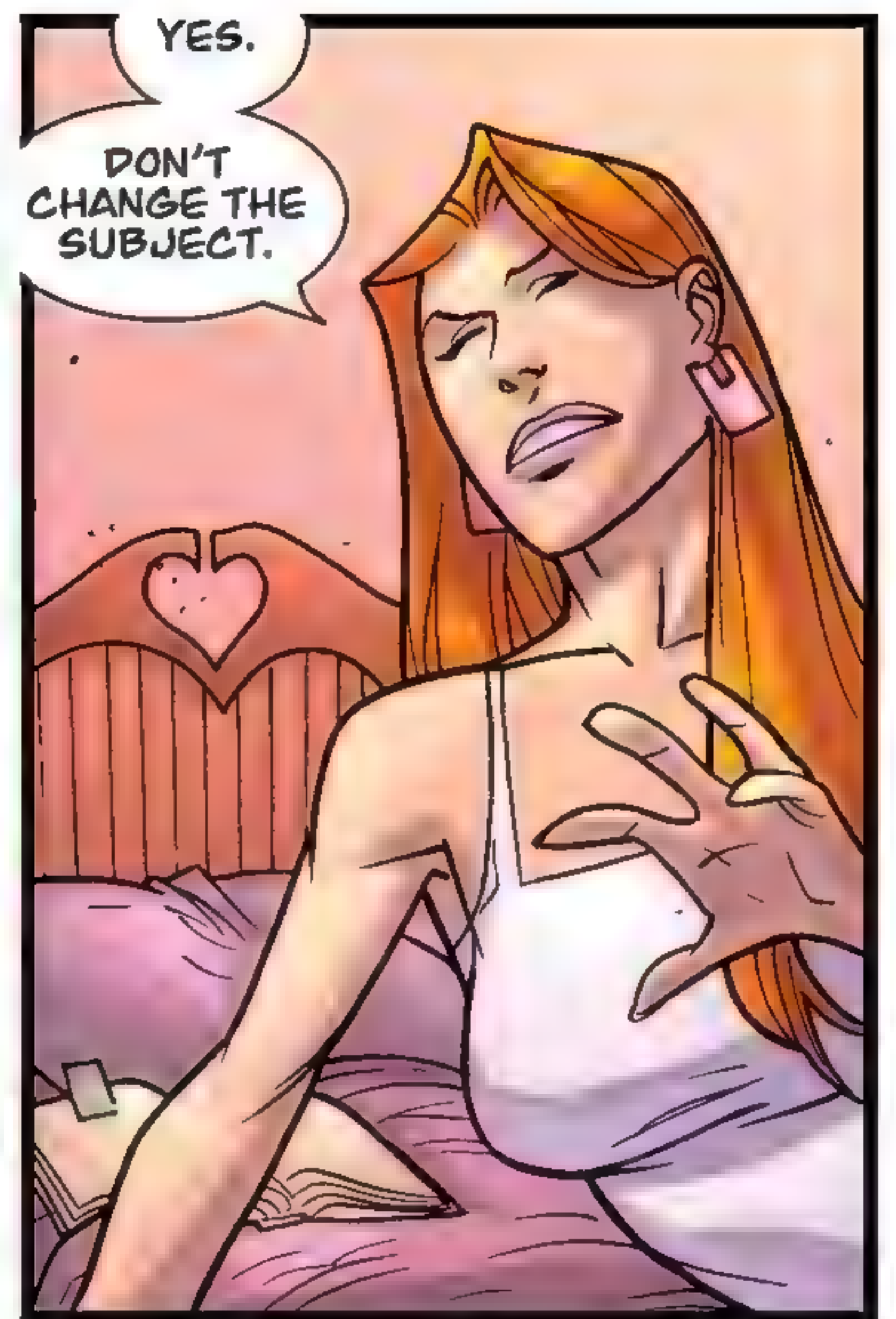








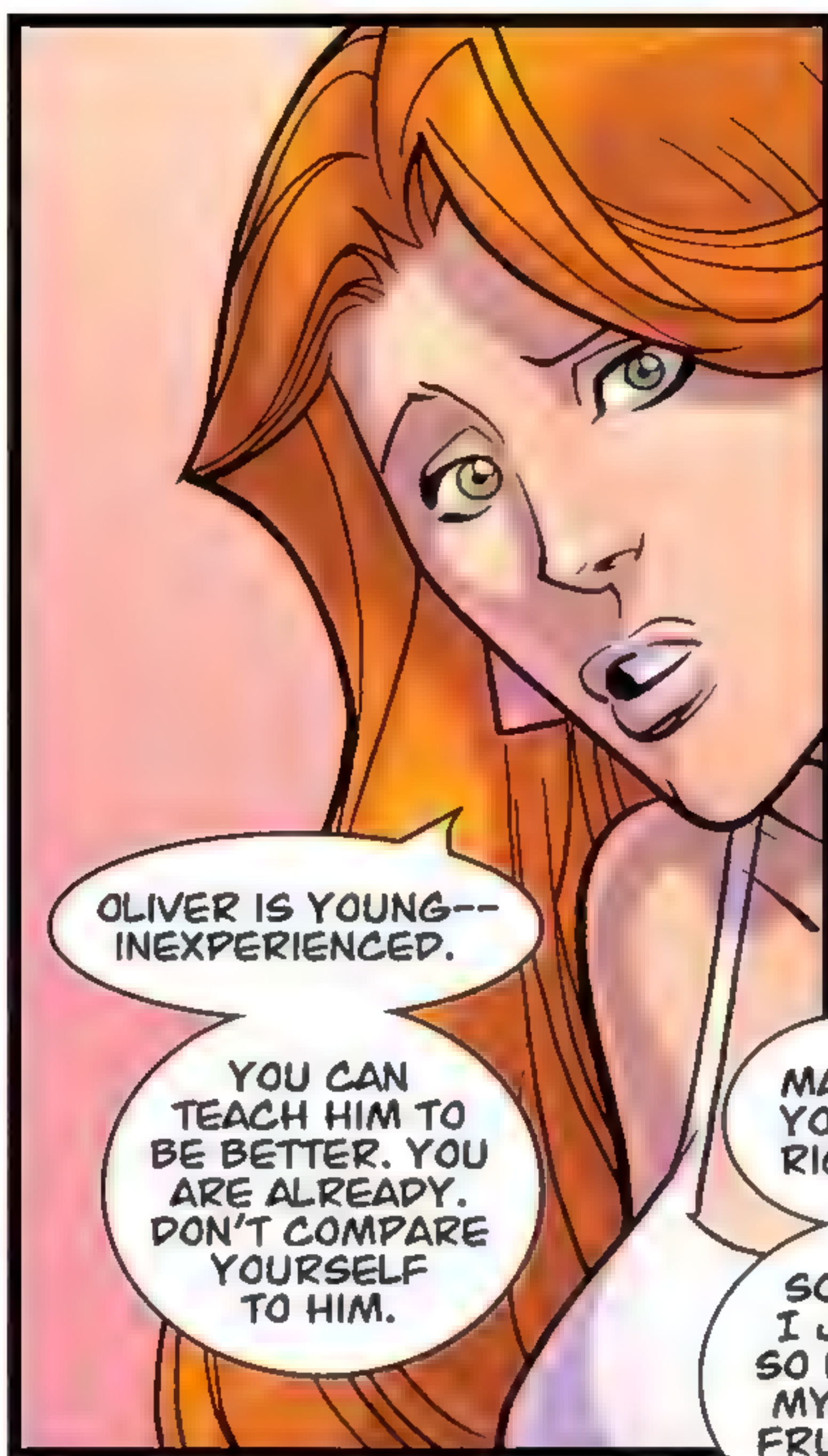






I'VE GOT SO MUCH...
POWER. I JUST, I
HAVE TO MAKE SURE
I CAN CONTROL
IT.

IT'S HARD
NOT TO LOSE
CONTROL.
LOOK AT
OLIVER.

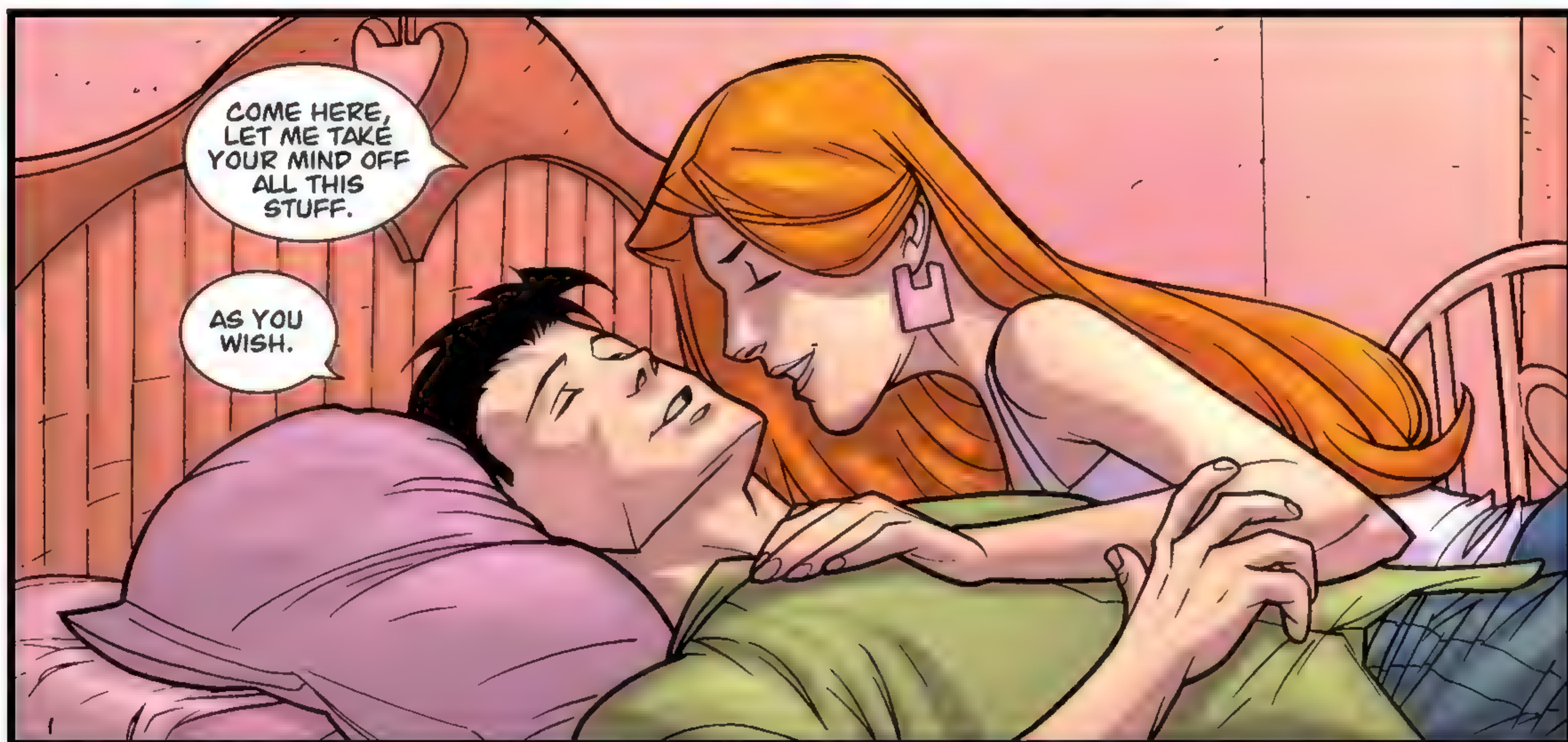


OLIVER IS YOUNG--
INEXPERIENCED.

YOU CAN
TEACH HIM TO
BE BETTER. YOU
ARE ALREADY.
DON'T COMPARE
YOURSELF
TO HIM.

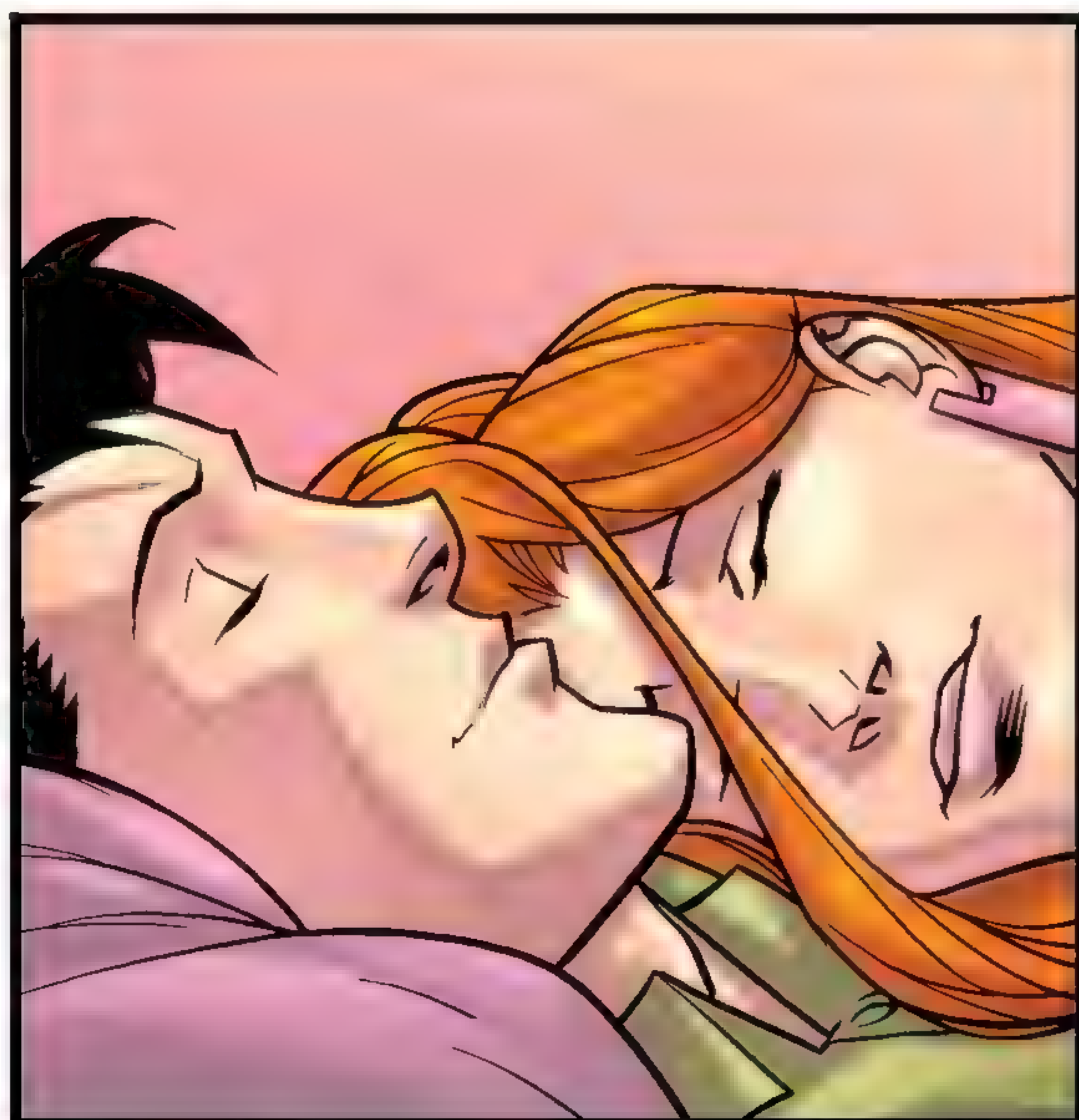
MAYBE
YOU'RE
RIGHT.

SOMETIMES
I JUST FEEL
SO UNSURE OF
MYSELF. IT'S
FRUSTRATING.



COME HERE,
LET ME TAKE
YOUR MIND OFF
ALL THIS
STUFF.

AS YOU
WISH.



THIS IS
NICE.



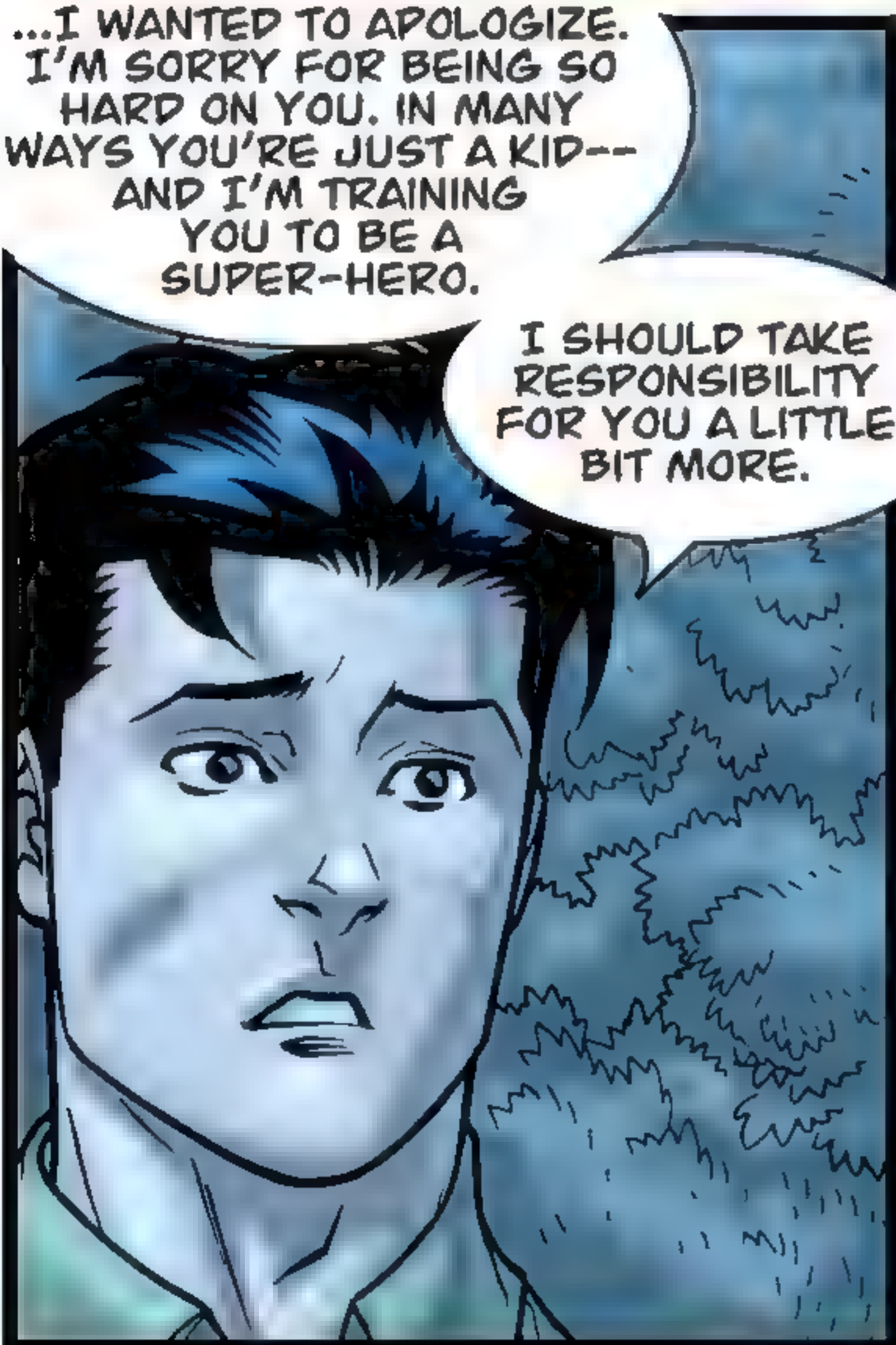
SORRY. I DO A LOT
OF READING AT NIGHT.
I DON'T NEED A LOT
OF SLEEP--GOT THAT
FROM MY MOTHER'S
PEOPLE.



DON'T SWEAT IT,
I'M JUST GLAD
YOU'RE HERE AND
NOT OUT FIGHTING
CRIME ON YOUR
OWN.



ABOUT THAT,
ACTUALLY....

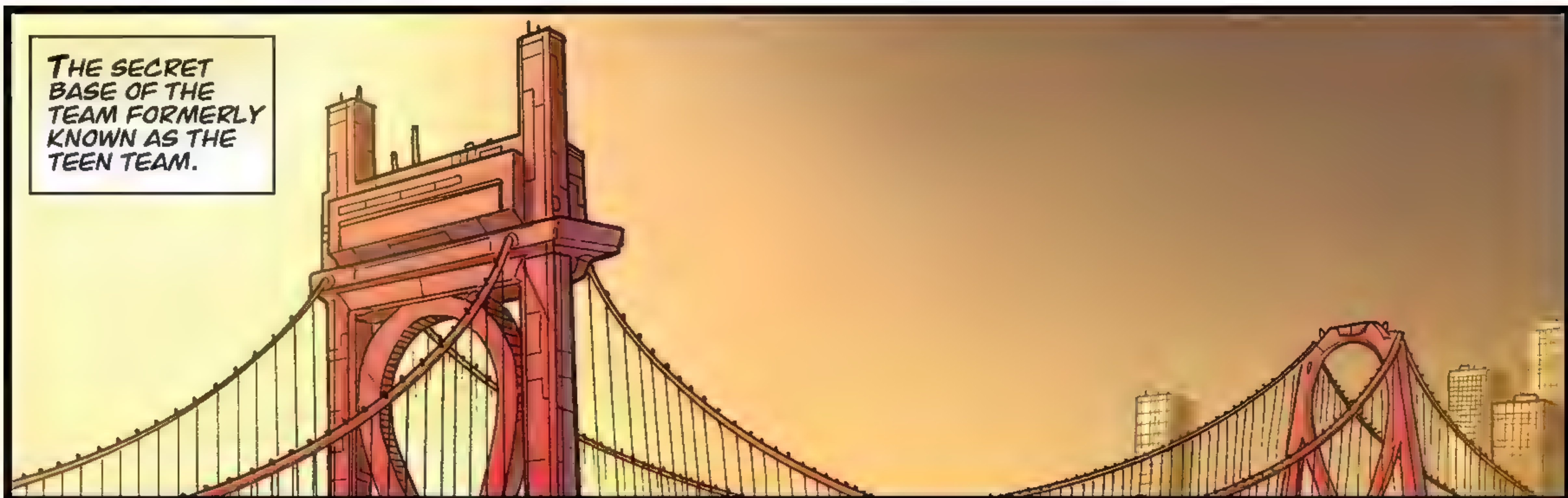






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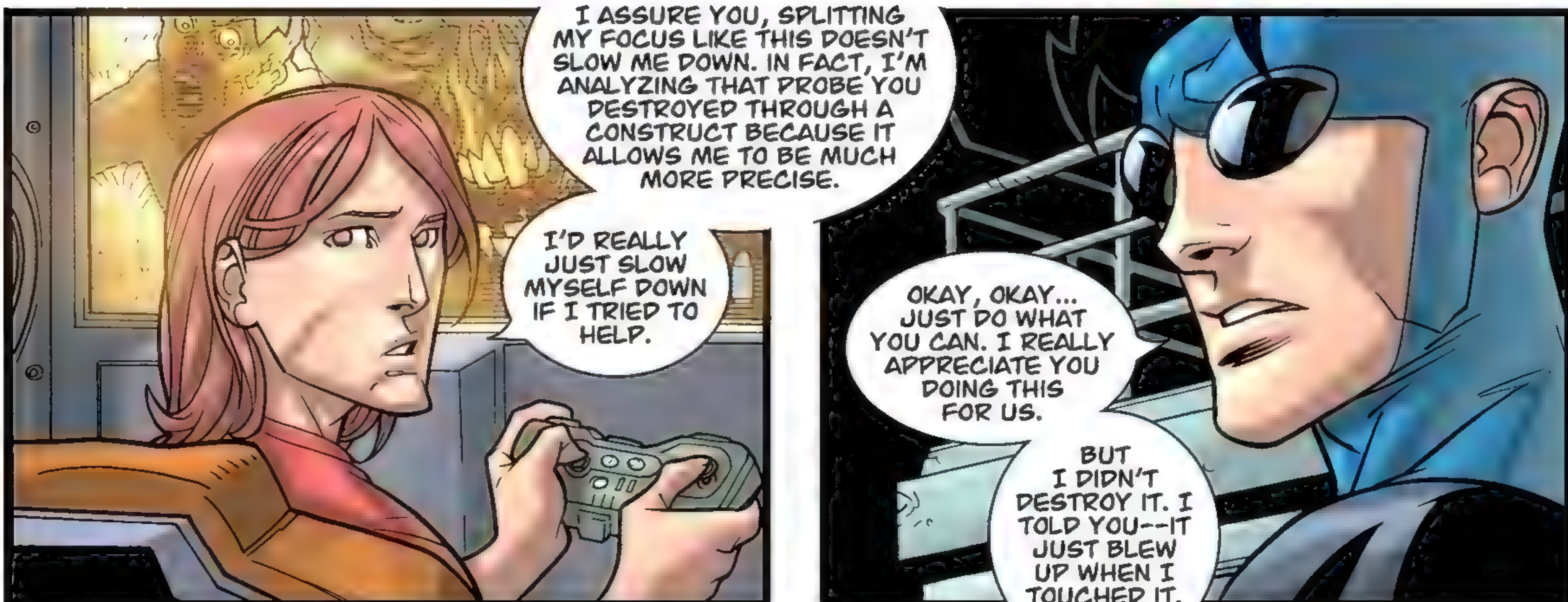


THE SECRET
BASE OF THE
TEAM FORMERLY
KNOWN AS THE
TEEN TEAM.



WE'VE BEEN
HERE ALMOST
ALL DAY. HOW
MUCH LONGER
IS THIS GOING
TO TAKE?

YEAH, ROBOT,
REALLY... WOULD
IT SPEED THINGS
UP IF YOU--I
DON'T KNOW...
HELPED...
YOURSELF?

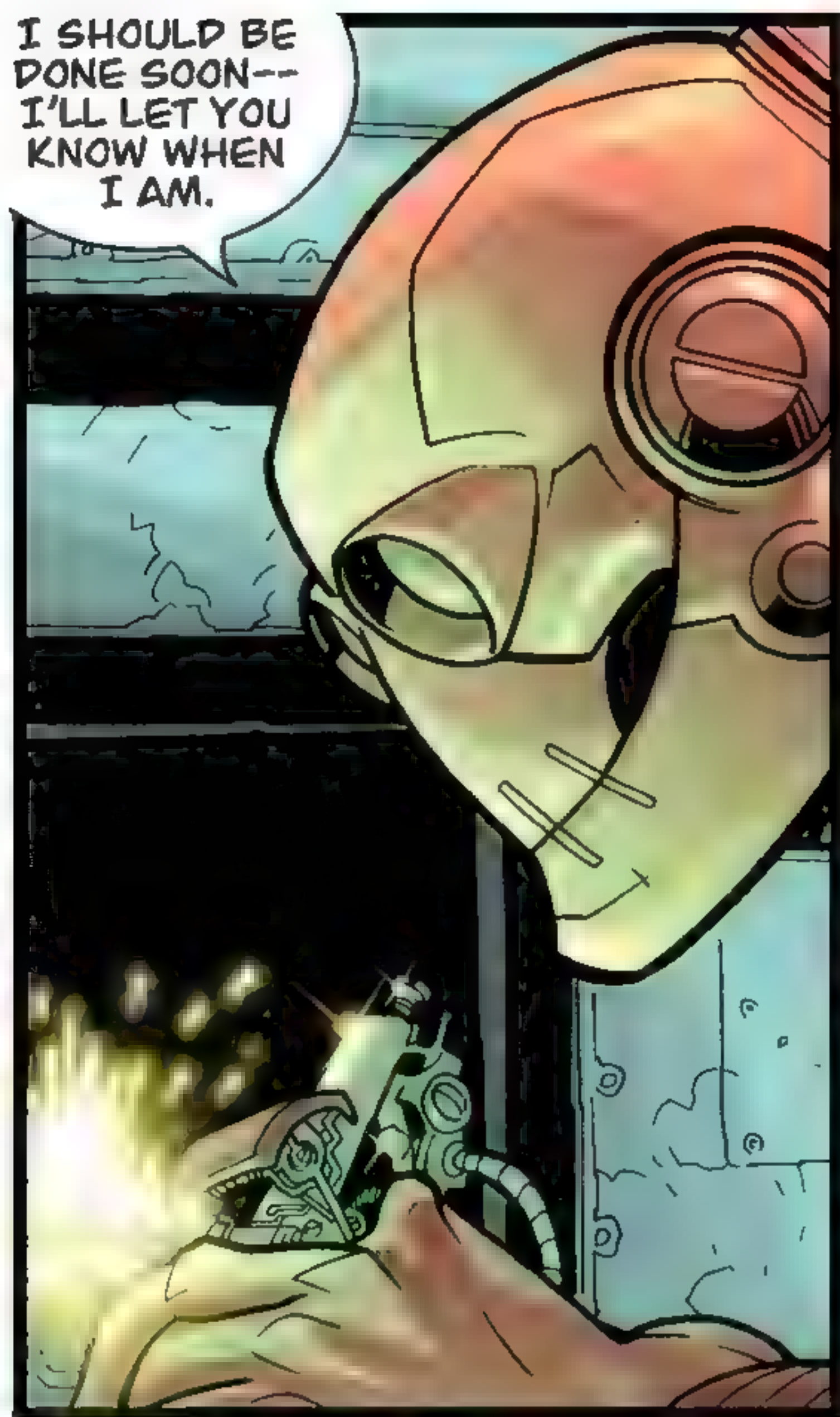


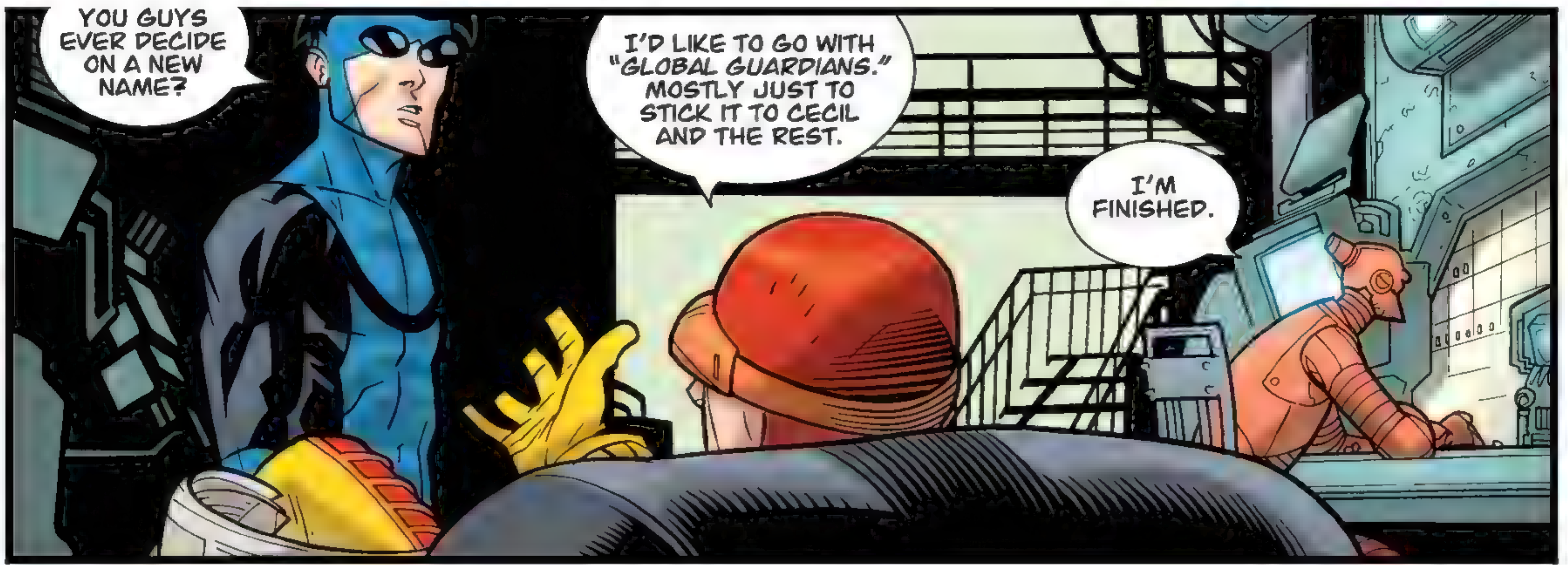
I ASSURE YOU, SPLITTING
MY FOCUS LIKE THIS DOESN'T
SLOW ME DOWN. IN FACT, I'M
ANALYZING THAT PROBE YOU
DESTROYED THROUGH A
CONSTRUCT BECAUSE IT
ALLOWS ME TO BE MUCH
MORE PRECISE.

I'D REALLY
JUST SLOW
MYSELF DOWN
IF I TRIED TO
HELP.

OKAY, OKAY...
JUST DO WHAT
YOU CAN. I REALLY
APPRECIATE YOU
DOING THIS
FOR US.

BUT
I DIDN'T
DESTROY IT. I
TOLD YOU--IT
JUST BLEW
UP WHEN I
TOUCHED IT.





IT WAS DEFINITELY A SURVEILLANCE DEVICE, ALTHOUGH THERE ISN'T ENOUGH LEFT FOR ME TO DETERMINE WHERE IT WAS TRANSMITTING TO--OR HOW LONG IT WAS WATCHING YOU.

SORRY I COULDN'T BE OF MORE HELP.



I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO GIVE ME MORE EVIDENCE-- BUT I'M ALREADY ALMOST CERTAIN I KNOW WHO'S BEEN WATCHING ME.

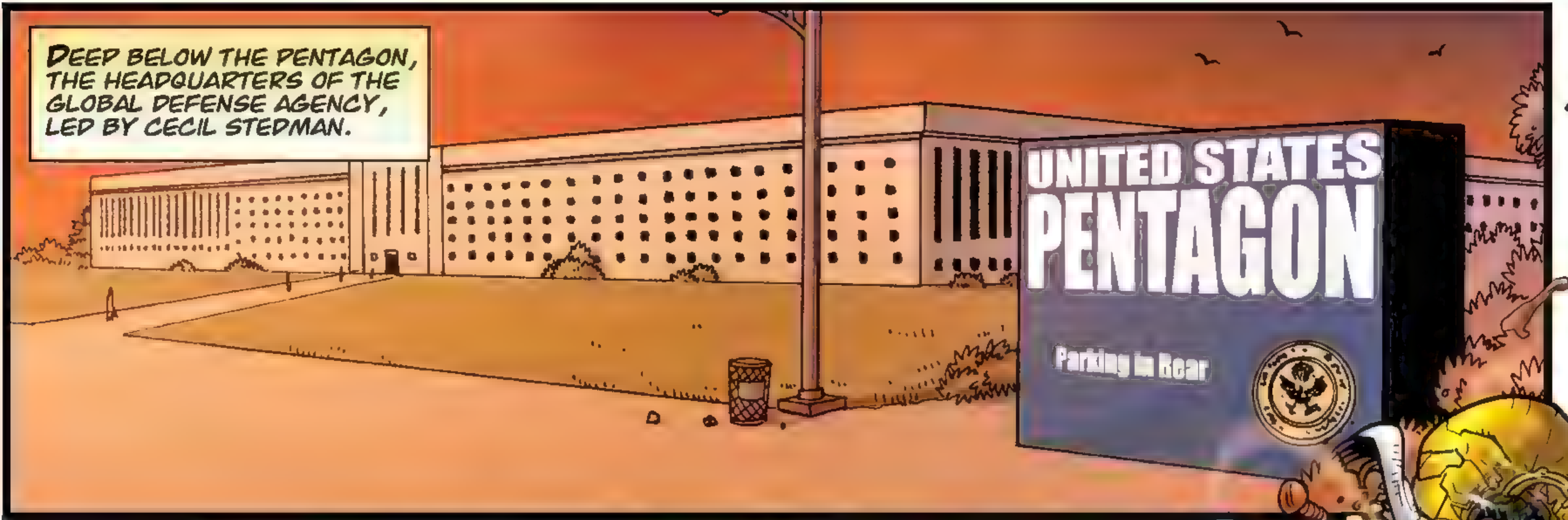
OLIVER-- STAY HERE. I'LL BE BACK SHORTLY.

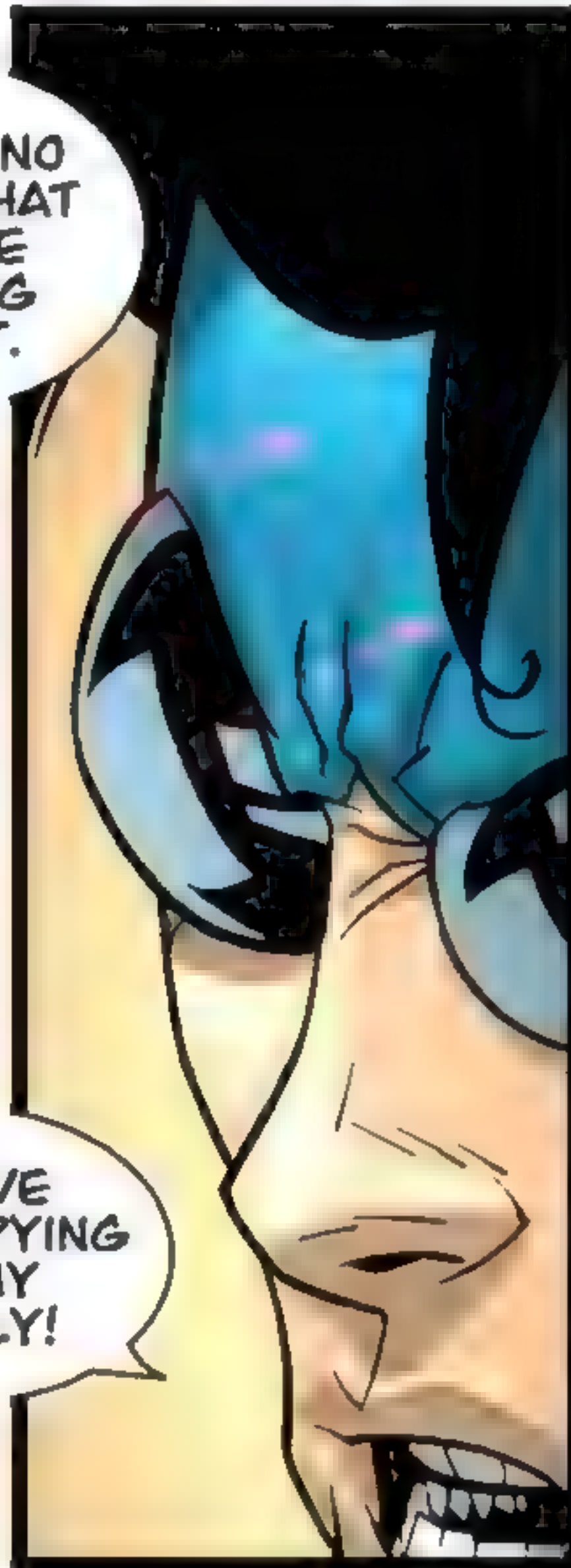
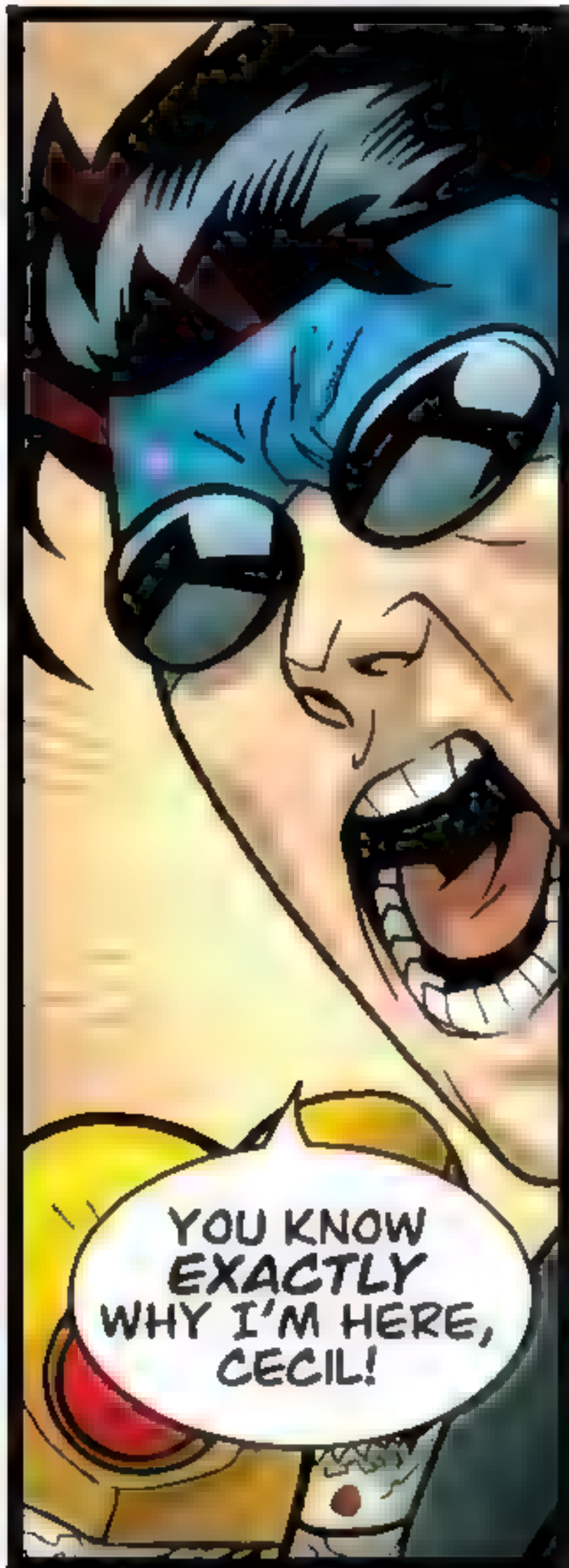


YOU GUYS NEED ANOTHER TEAM MEMBER?

I'M TOTALLY AWESOME.







SOMEWHERE ELSE.

YOU SURVIVED-- GOOD. THAT'S ANOTHER OF MY TESTS YOU'VE SURVIVED. IMPRESSIVE.

IT WASN'T EASY... BUT I MADE IT. WHAT'S NEXT? I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO SEE WHAT YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR ME NOW.

TONIGHT YOUR TEST WILL NOT COME FROM ME... THERE ARE OTHERS WHO CONTROL YOUR FATE THIS EVENING.

OTHERS? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I CAN SENSE IT. THERE ARE MANY DANGERS IN THE FOREST TONIGHT.

RUNNABLE!!





NO WAY!
ARE YOU
KIDDING
ME?!

OF COURSE
NOT--WHY IN THE
WORLD WOULD I
HELP YOU? I DON'T
WORK FOR YOU, CECIL--
I DON'T LIKE YOU.



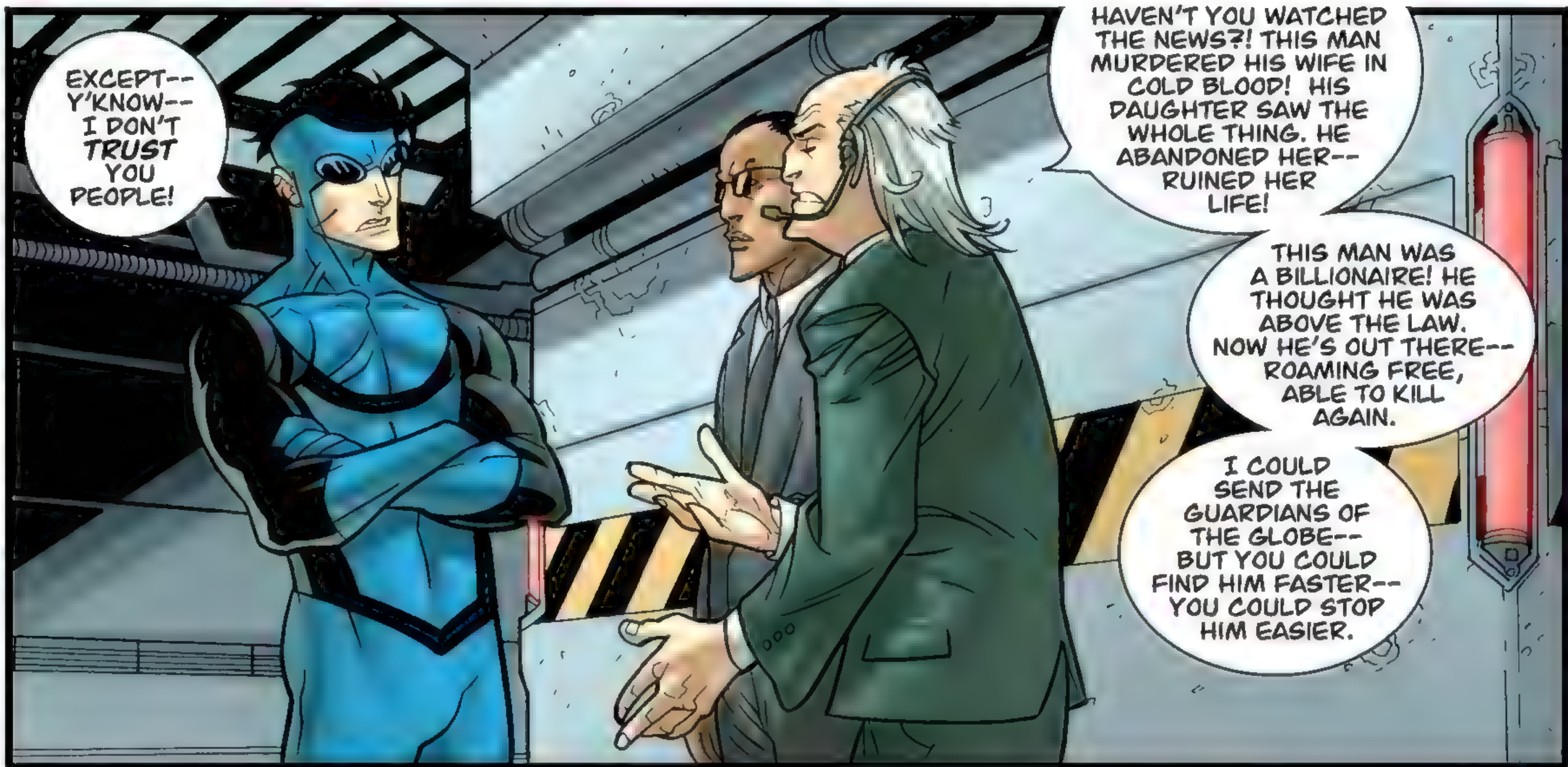
GET REAL HERE, KID.
YOU THINK FOR A MINUTE
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SLEEP
TONIGHT KNOWING THIS
GUY IS OUT THERE--
KNOWING WHAT
HE DID?

I KNOW
YOU TOO
WELL.



LOOK, KID--
YOU THINK WE
WANT TO ASK
FOR THIS? I
TRIED TO TAKE
THIS GUY
OUT--AND I
FAILED.

HE'S TOUGH--
BUT YOU COULD
PROBABLY GET
THIS GUY FOR US
IN AN AFTERNOON.



EXCEPT--
Y'KNOW--
I DON'T
TRUST
YOU
PEOPLE!

HAVEN'T YOU WATCHED
THE NEWS?! THIS MAN
MURDERED HIS WIFE IN
COLD BLOOD! HIS
DAUGHTER SAW THE
WHOLE THING. HE
ABANDONED HER--
RUINED HER
LIFE!

THIS MAN WAS
A BILLIONAIRE! HE
THOUGHT HE WAS
ABOVE THE LAW.
NOW HE'S OUT THERE--
ROAMING FREE,
ABLE TO KILL
AGAIN.

I COULD
SEND THE
GUARDIANS OF
THE GLOBE--
BUT YOU COULD
FIND HIM FASTER--
YOU COULD STOP
HIM EASIER.



JUST HELP
ME THIS
ONCE--IF YOU
DO, I'LL HAVE
MY PEOPLE
LOOK OVER THIS
ORB YOU THINK
I WAS SPYING
ON YOU WITH--
SEE IF WE CAN'T
FIND OUT WHO'S
WATCHING
YOU, AND WHY.

DEAL?

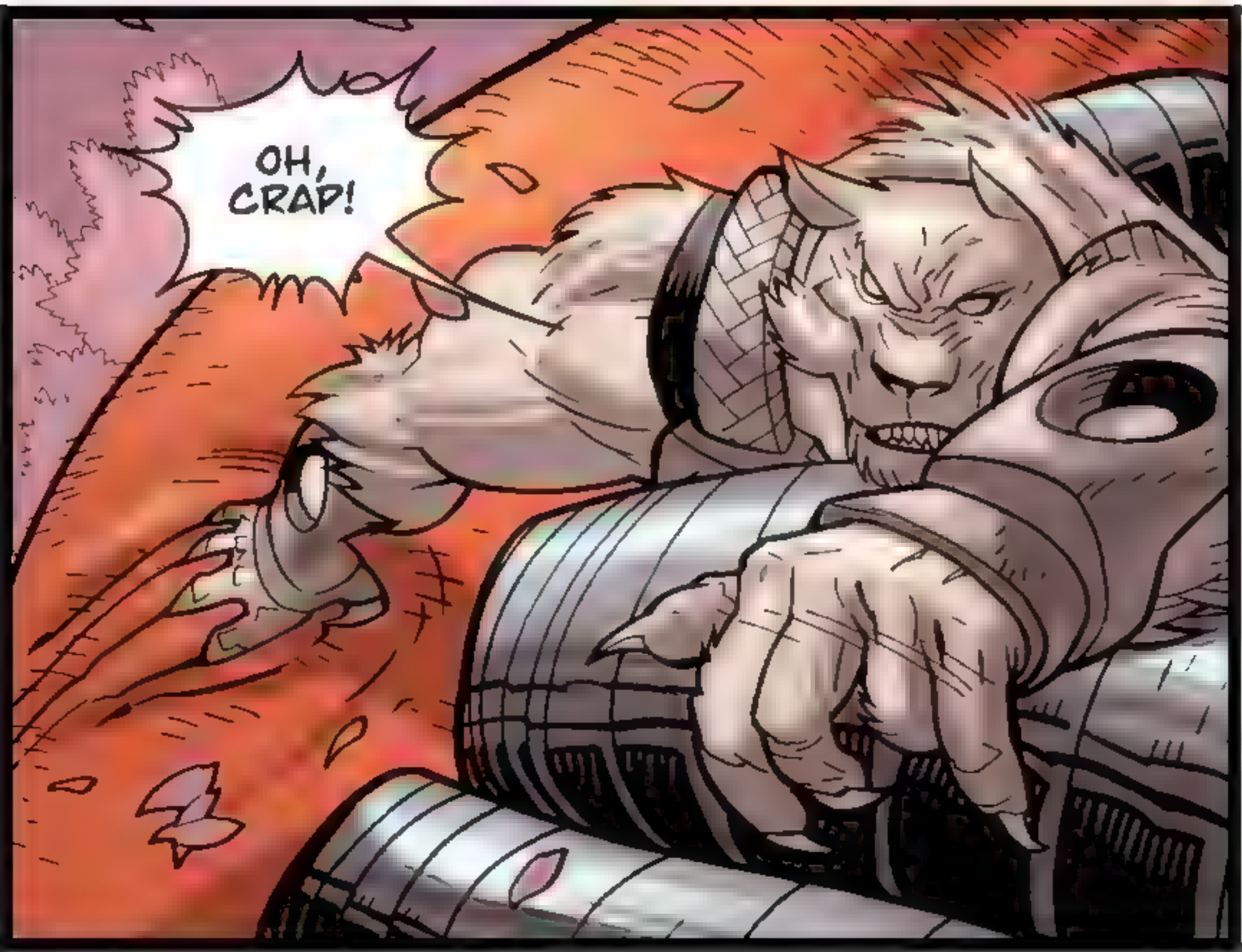


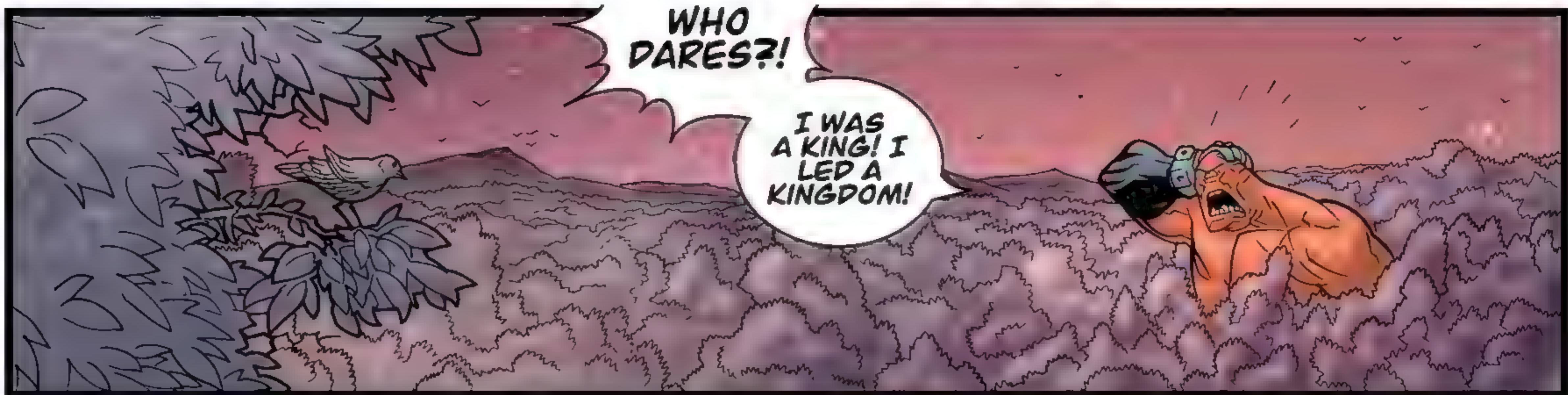
I DON'T THINK YOU HAVE
ANYONE SMARTER THAN
ROBOT ON STAFF--SO
THAT OFFER DOESN'T
MEAN MUCH.

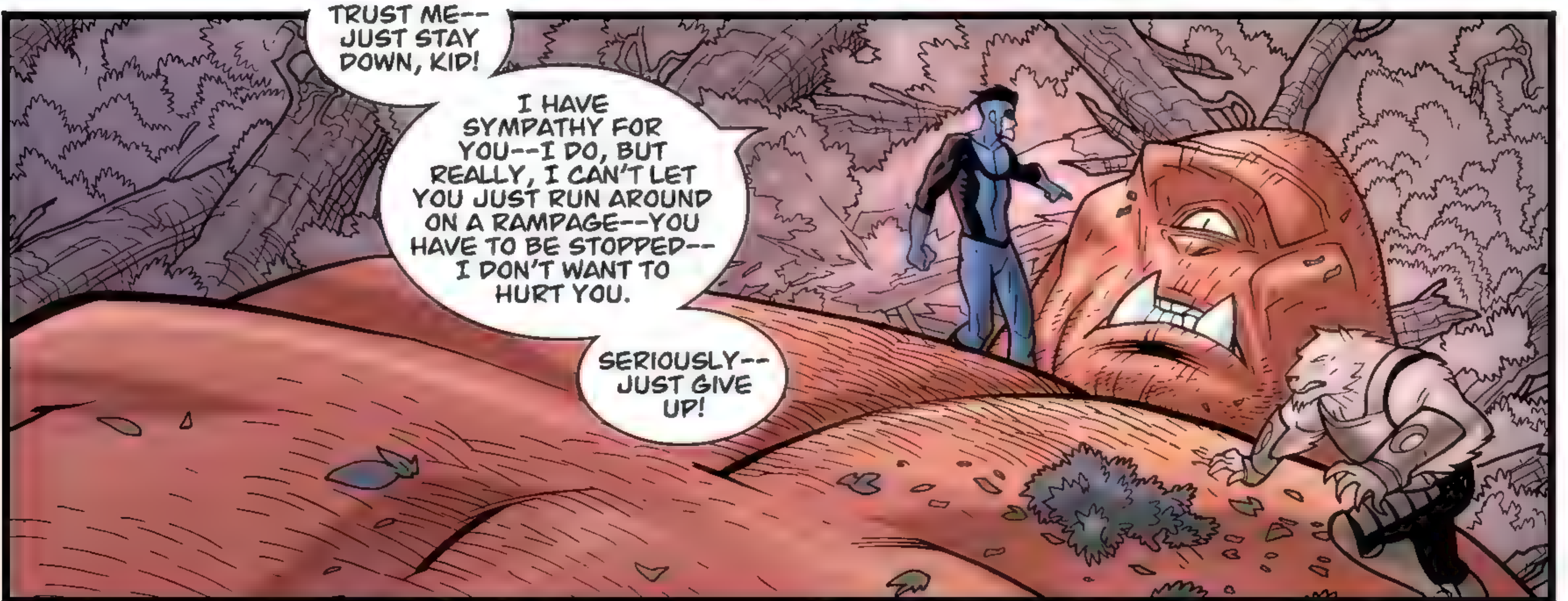
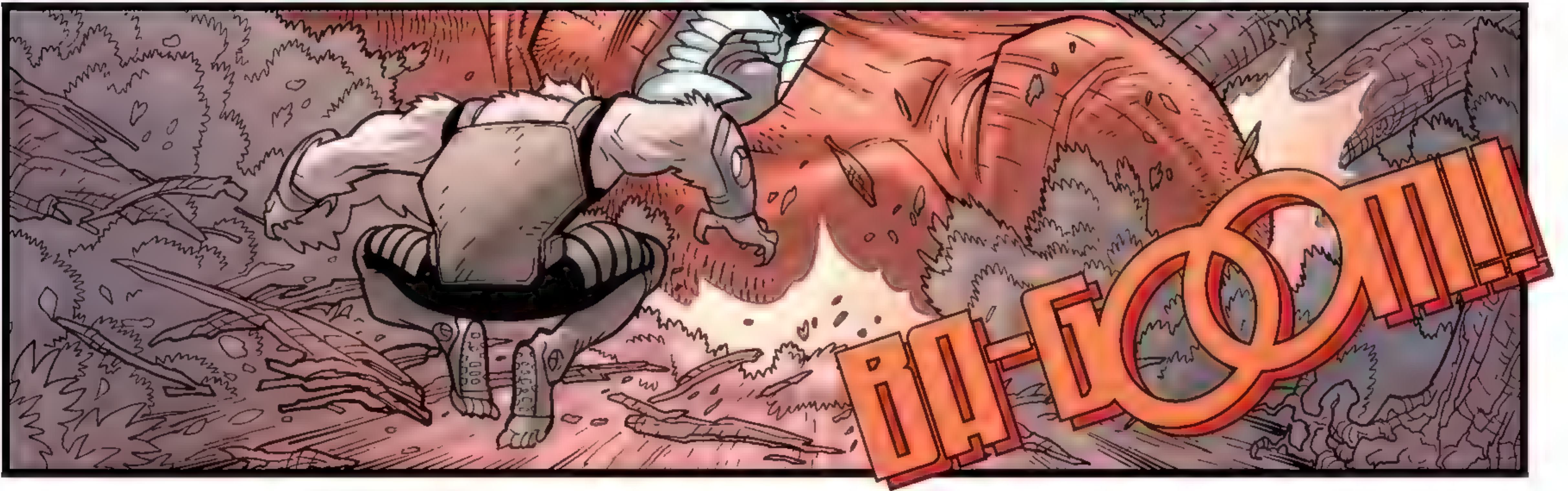
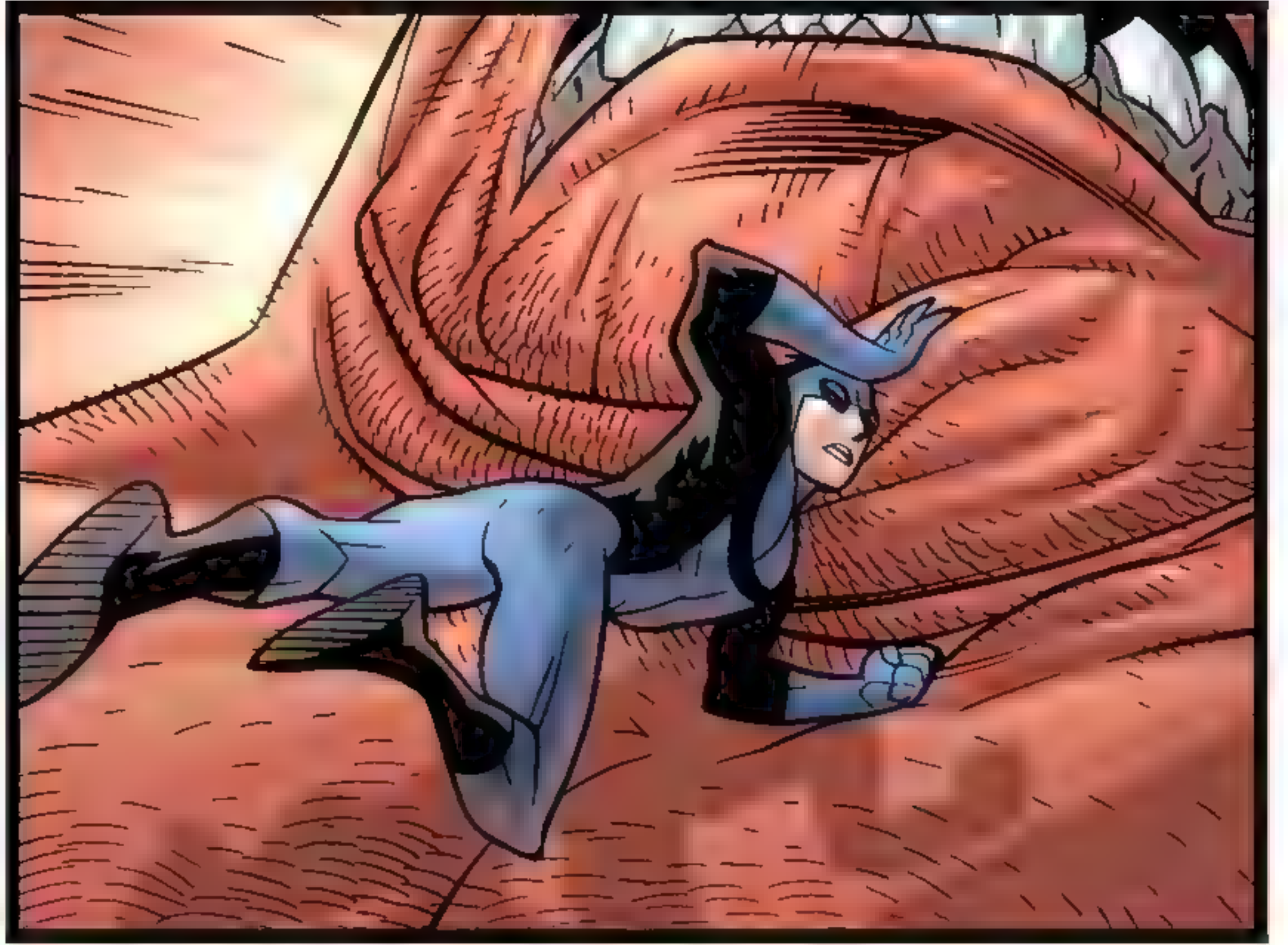


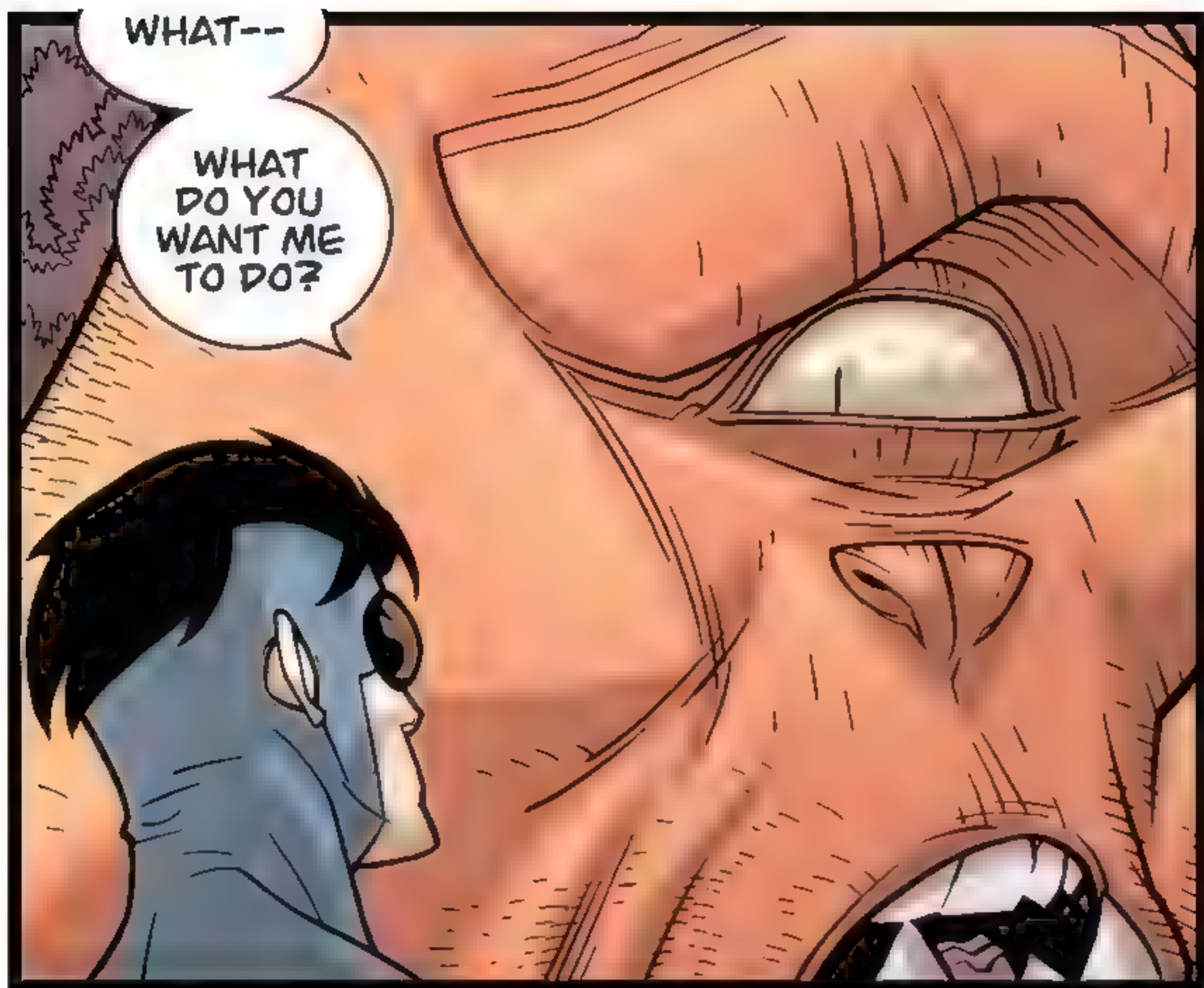
CRAP--WE'VE GOT
A PROBLEM. THE GIANT
HAS ESCAPED AND
IS ON A RAMPAGE--HE'S
TEARING THROUGH--
WELL--THE EXACT SAME
REGION WOLF-MAN
WAS LAST SEEN.

TWO BIRDS
WITH ONE
STONE?









WHAT--

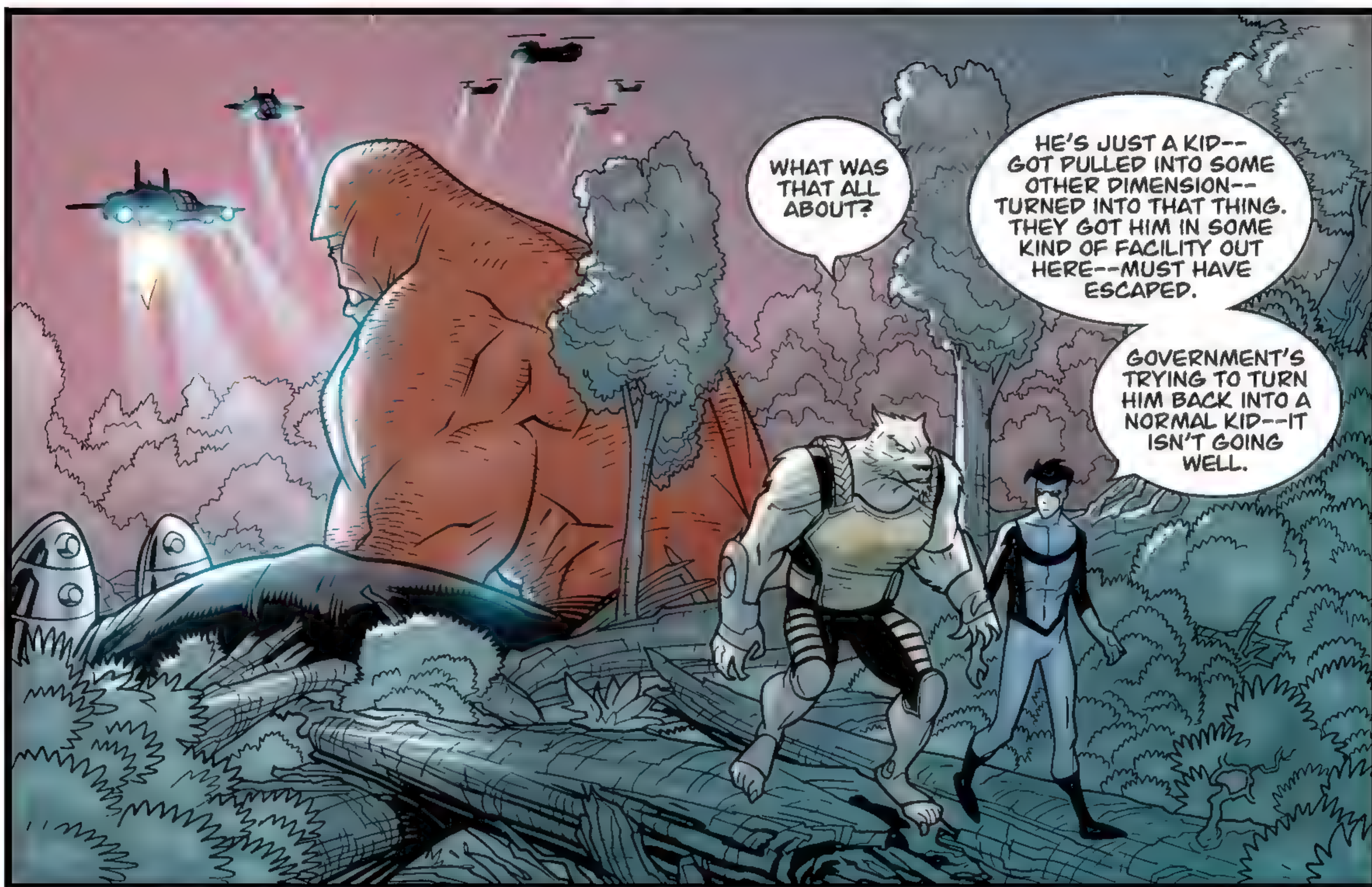
WHAT
DO YOU
WANT ME
TO DO?



JUST--I DON'T
KNOW--SIT HERE
QUIETLY UNTIL
SOMEONE COMES
ALONG TO TAKE
YOU INTO
CUSTODY.

THEY'RE
JUST GOING
TO TRY AND
HELP YOU.

LET
THEM.



WHAT WAS
THAT ALL
ABOUT?

HE'S JUST A KID--
GOT PULLED INTO SOME
OTHER DIMENSION--
TURNED INTO THAT THING.
THEY GOT HIM IN SOME
KIND OF FACILITY OUT
HERE--MUST HAVE
ESCAPED.

GOVERNMENT'S
TRYING TO TURN
HIM BACK INTO A
NORMAL KID--IT
ISN'T GOING
WELL.



WELL, THANKS.
I DON'T THINK I
COULD HAVE
HANDLED HIM
ON MY OWN.

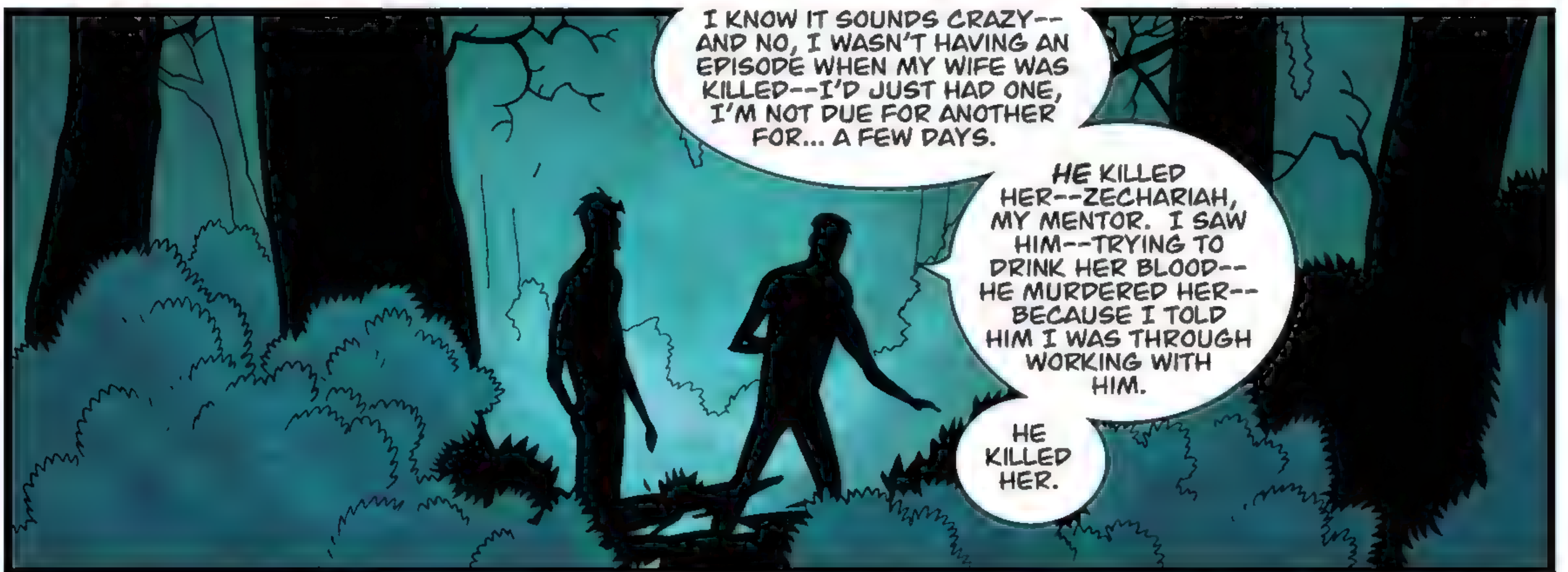
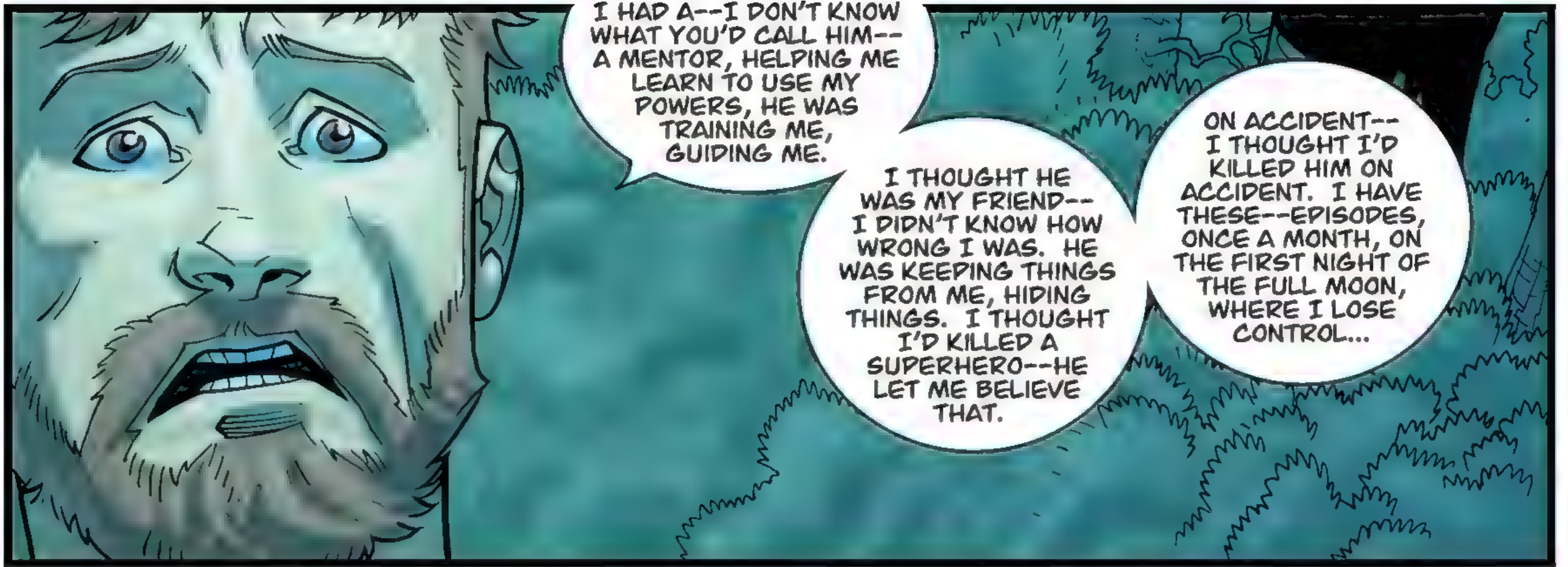


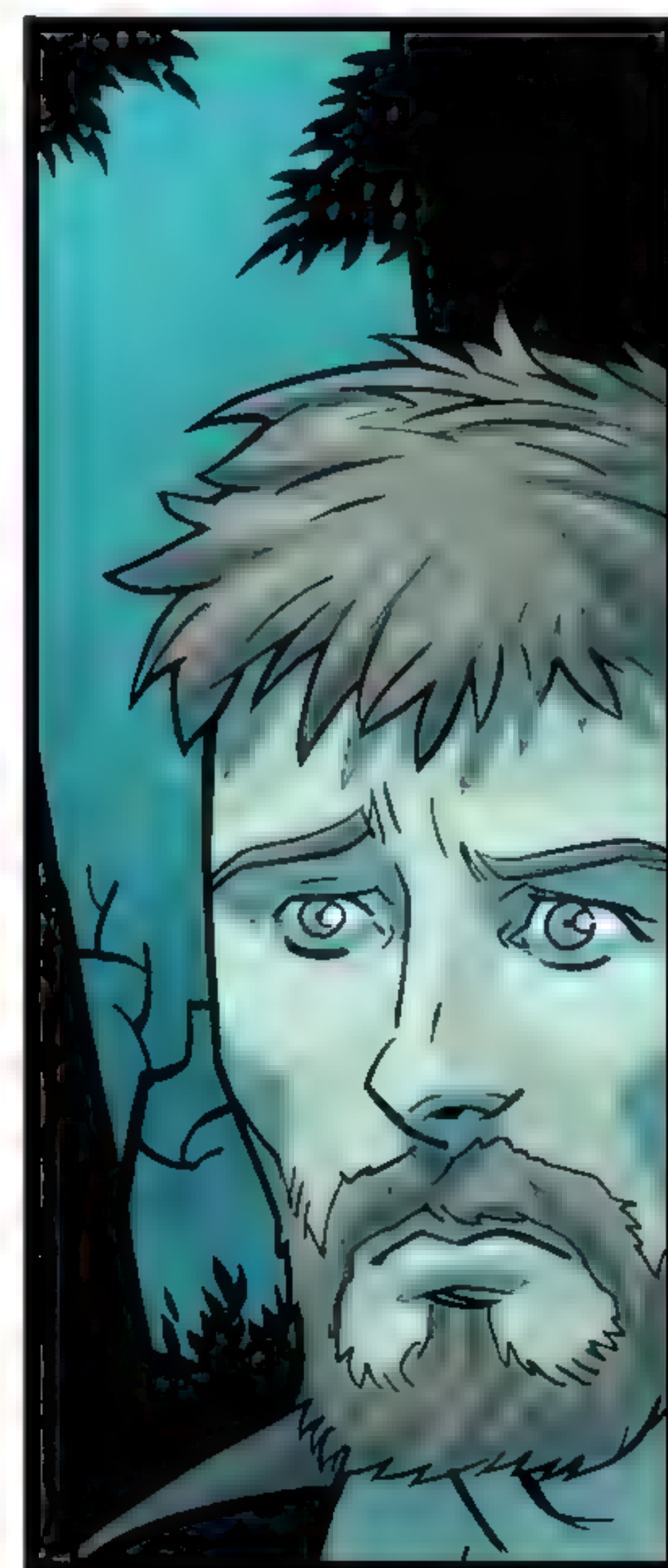
I OWE YOU FOR
HELPING ME OUT
WITH DOC SEISMIC
A FEW WEEKS
BACK.

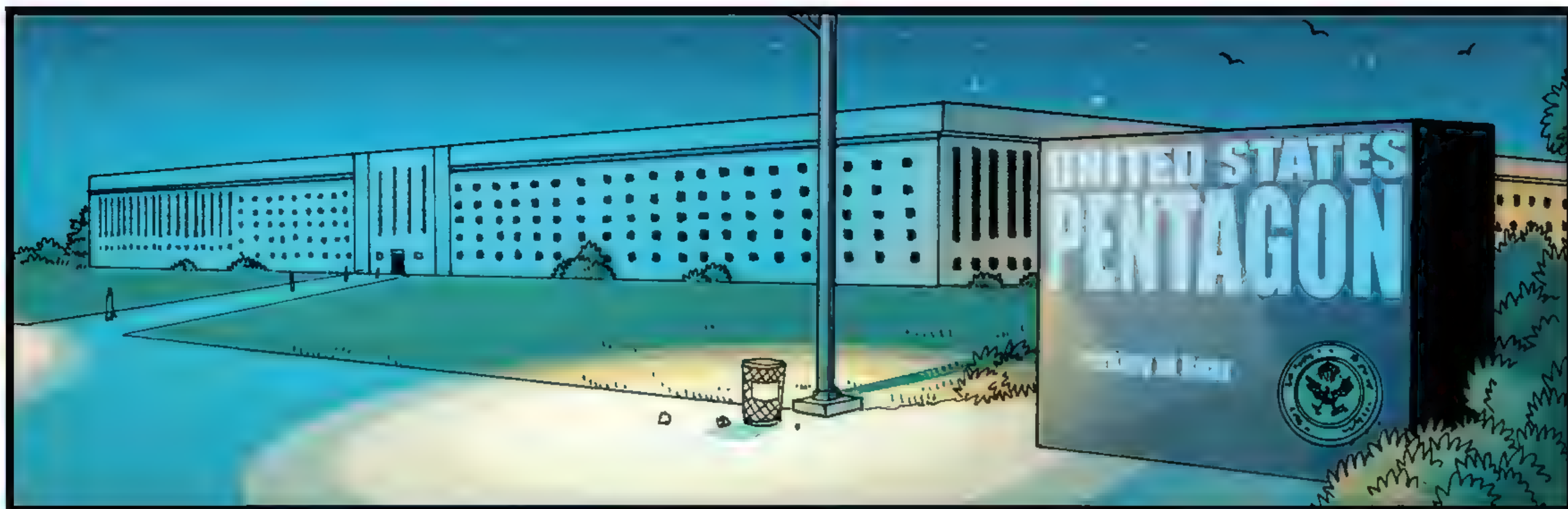
STILL
THOUGH--
I'M GOING
TO HAVE TO
TURN YOU IN.





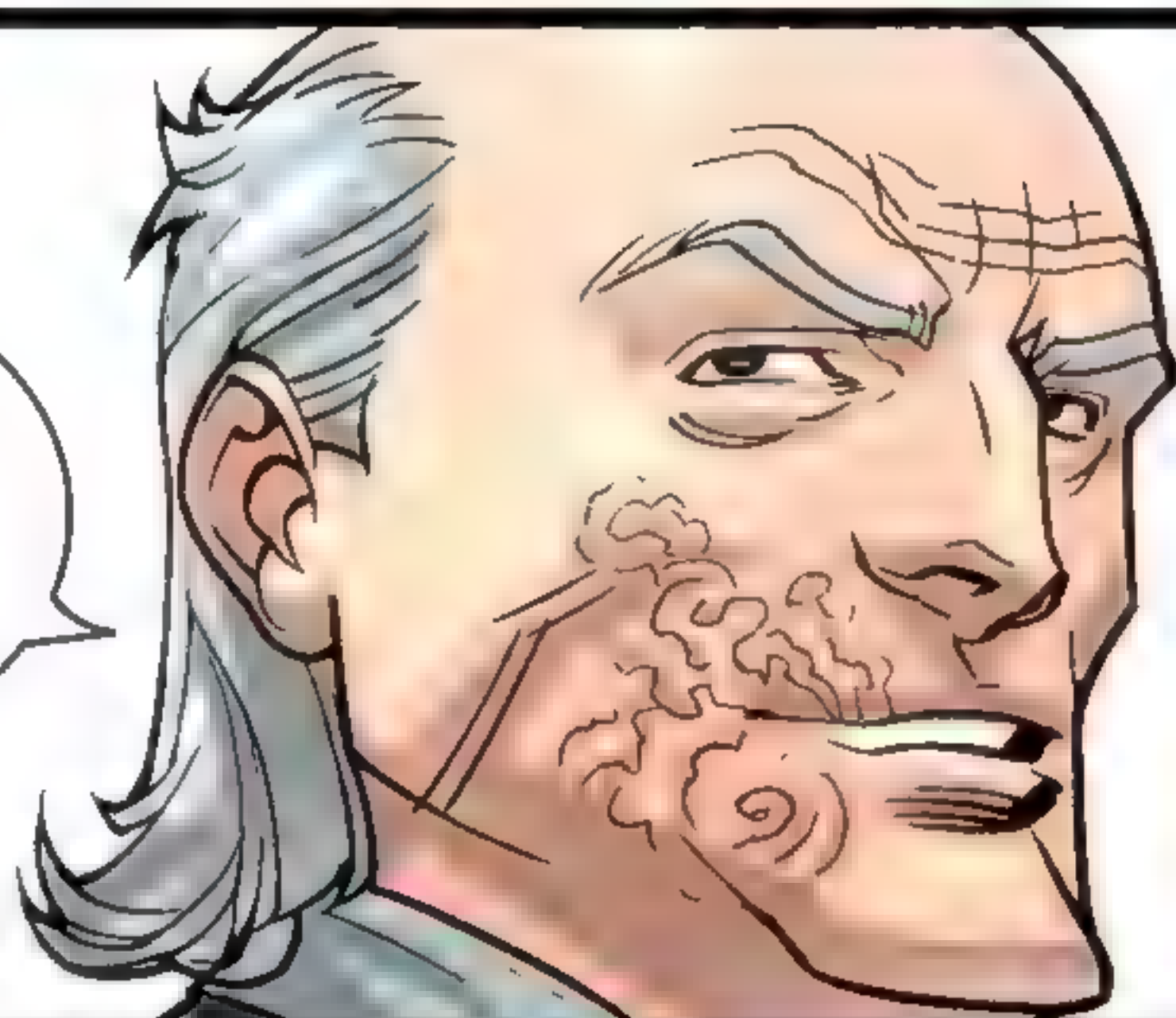






BRAVO, KID. I KNEW YOU COULD DO IT.

AND-- DO MY EYES DECEIVE ME-- YOU GOT HIM TO DO IT-- VOLUNTARILY?



DIDN'T EXPECT THAT. KID'S GOOD.

IMPRESSIVE.



THANKS, BUT HE'S NOT HERE TO TURN HIMSELF IN.

HE'S HERE TO TALK.

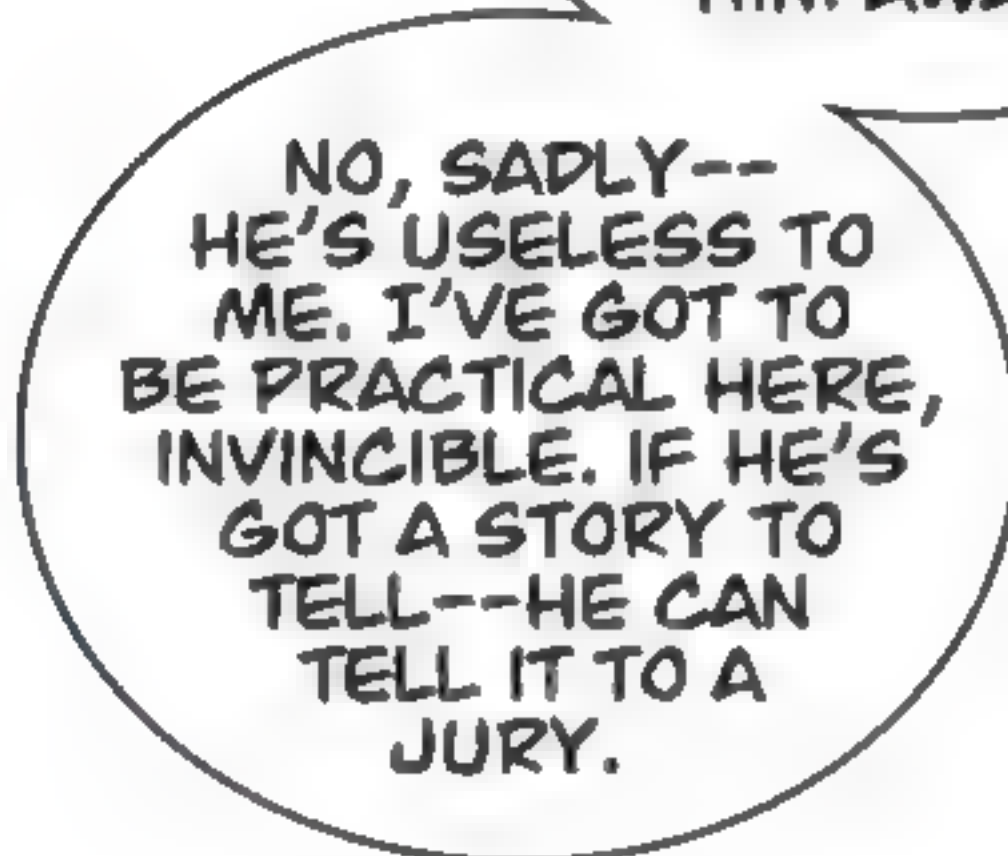
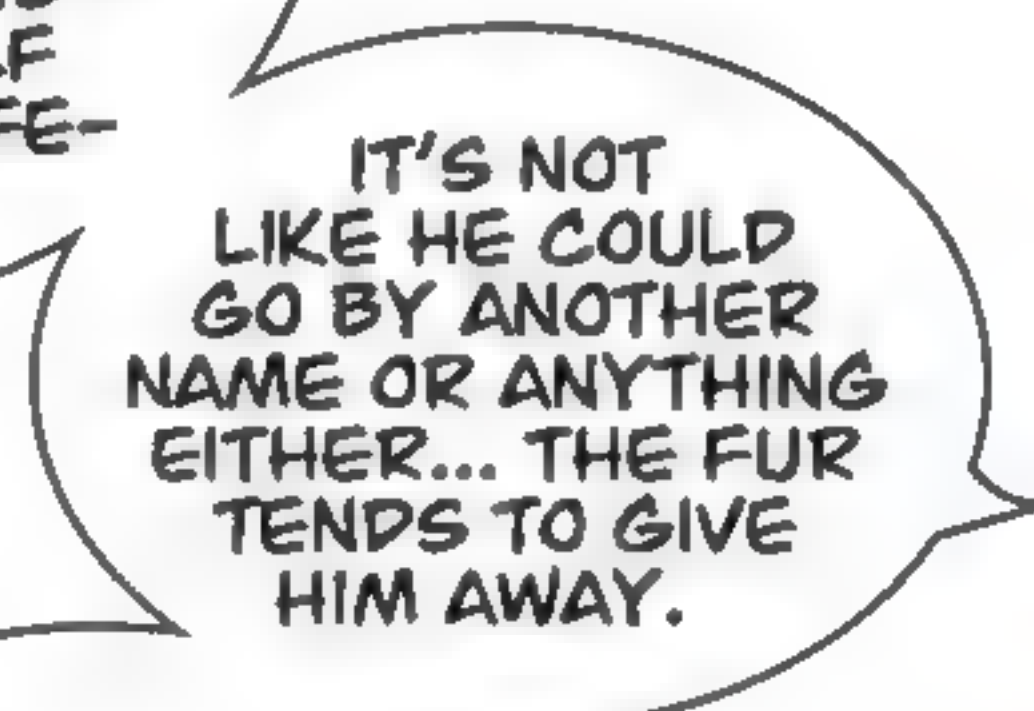
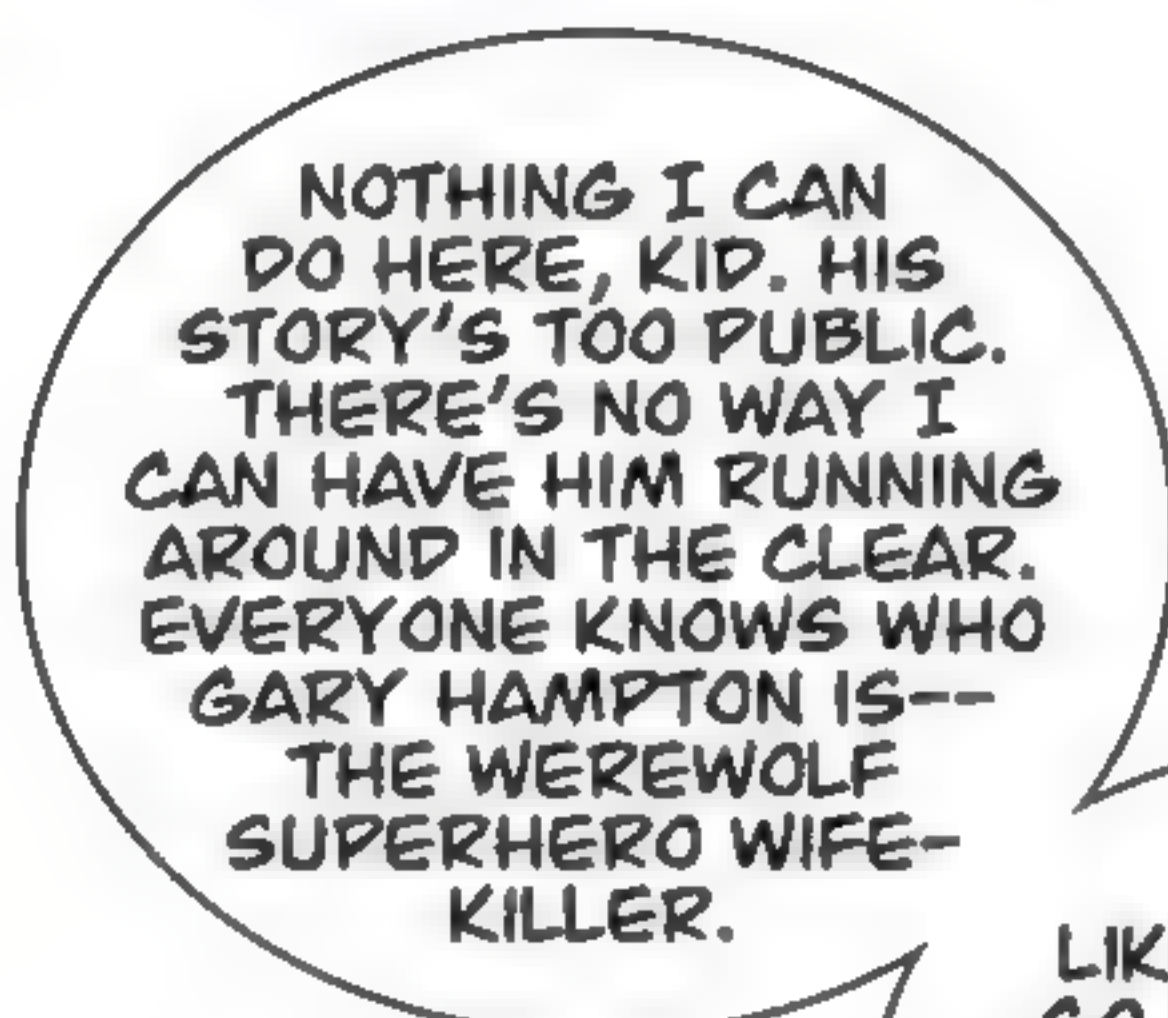
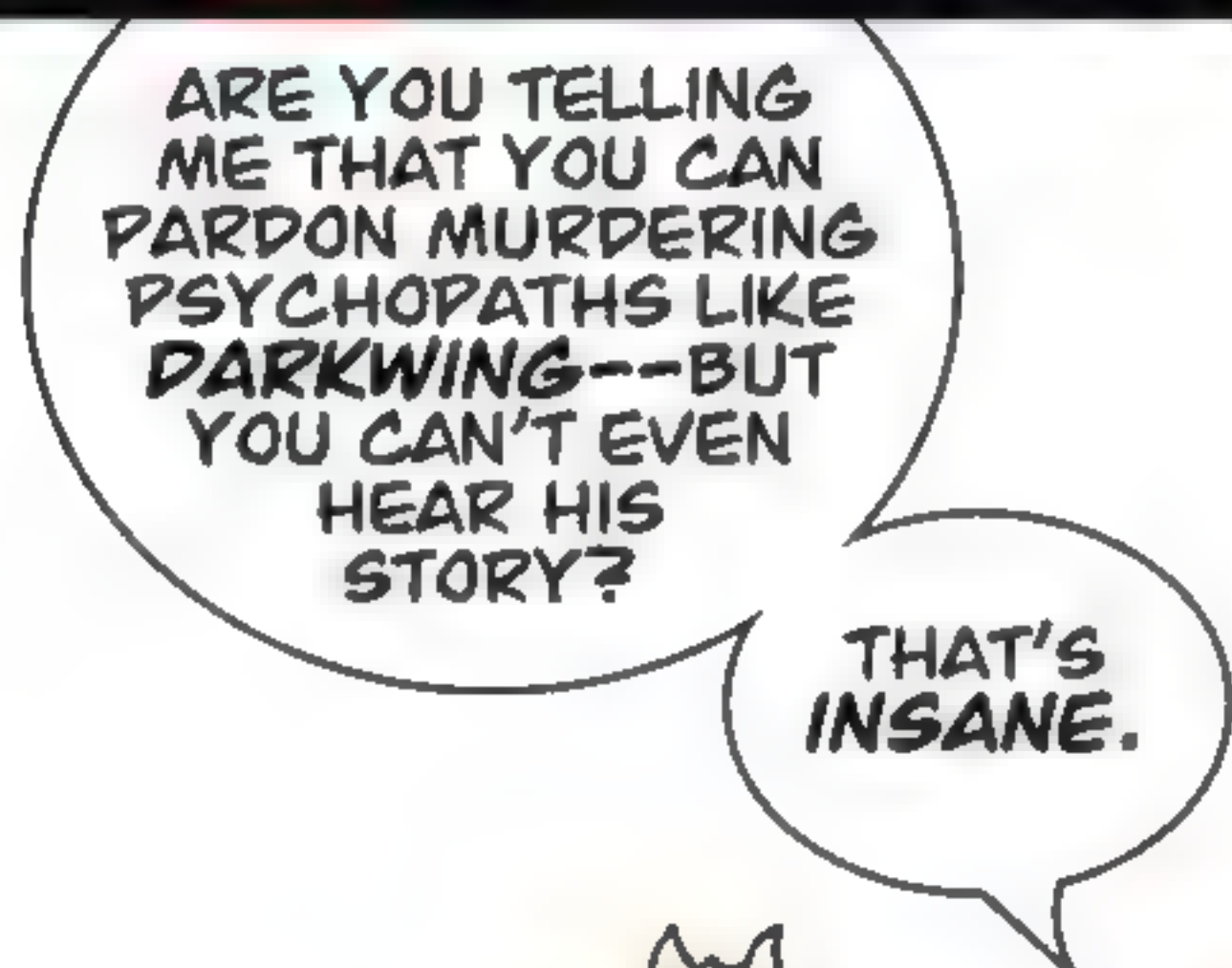


THAT WASN'T PART OF THE DEAL, KID.

HE CAN TALK TO HIS LAWYER. WE'RE ARRESTING HIM.

THEN I'M CHANGING THE DEAL. YOU CAN LISTEN TO WHAT HE HAS TO SAY--THAT DOESN'T HURT ANYTHING.







OH,
GREAT.

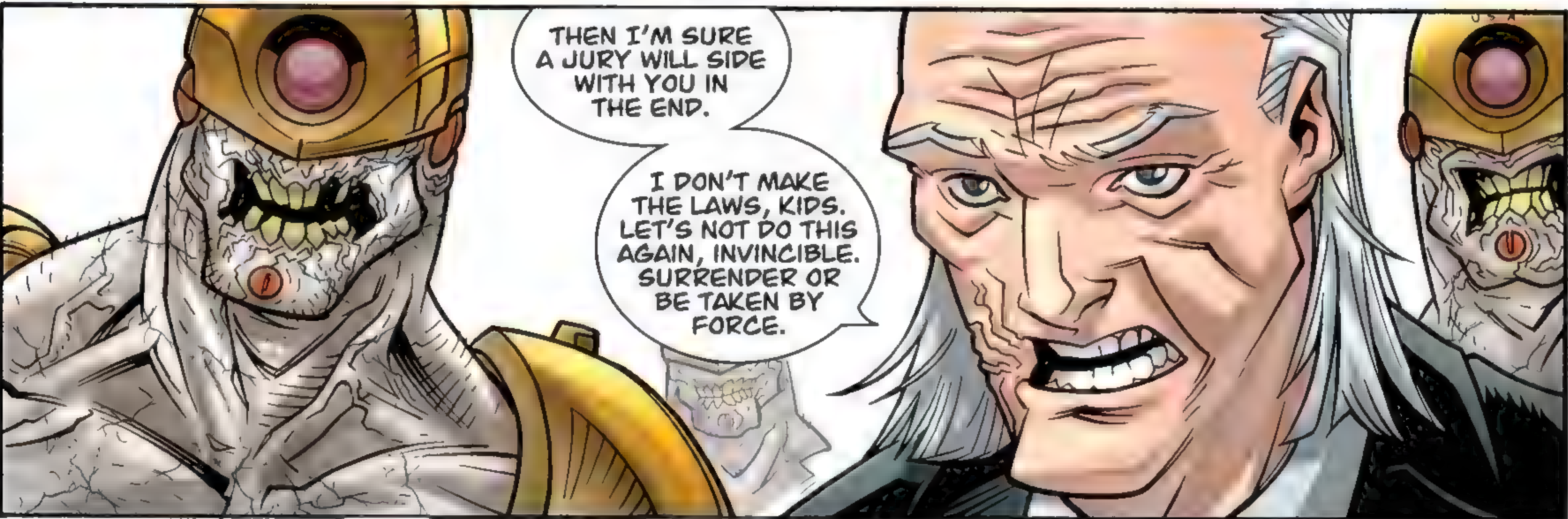
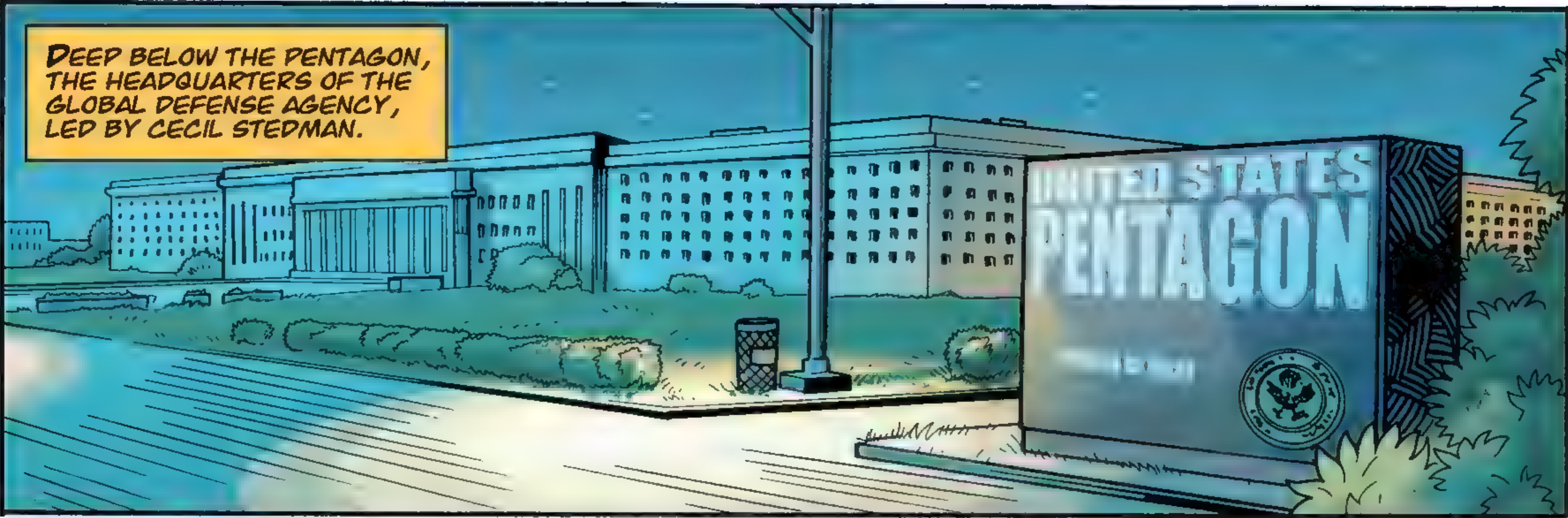
THIS
AGAIN.

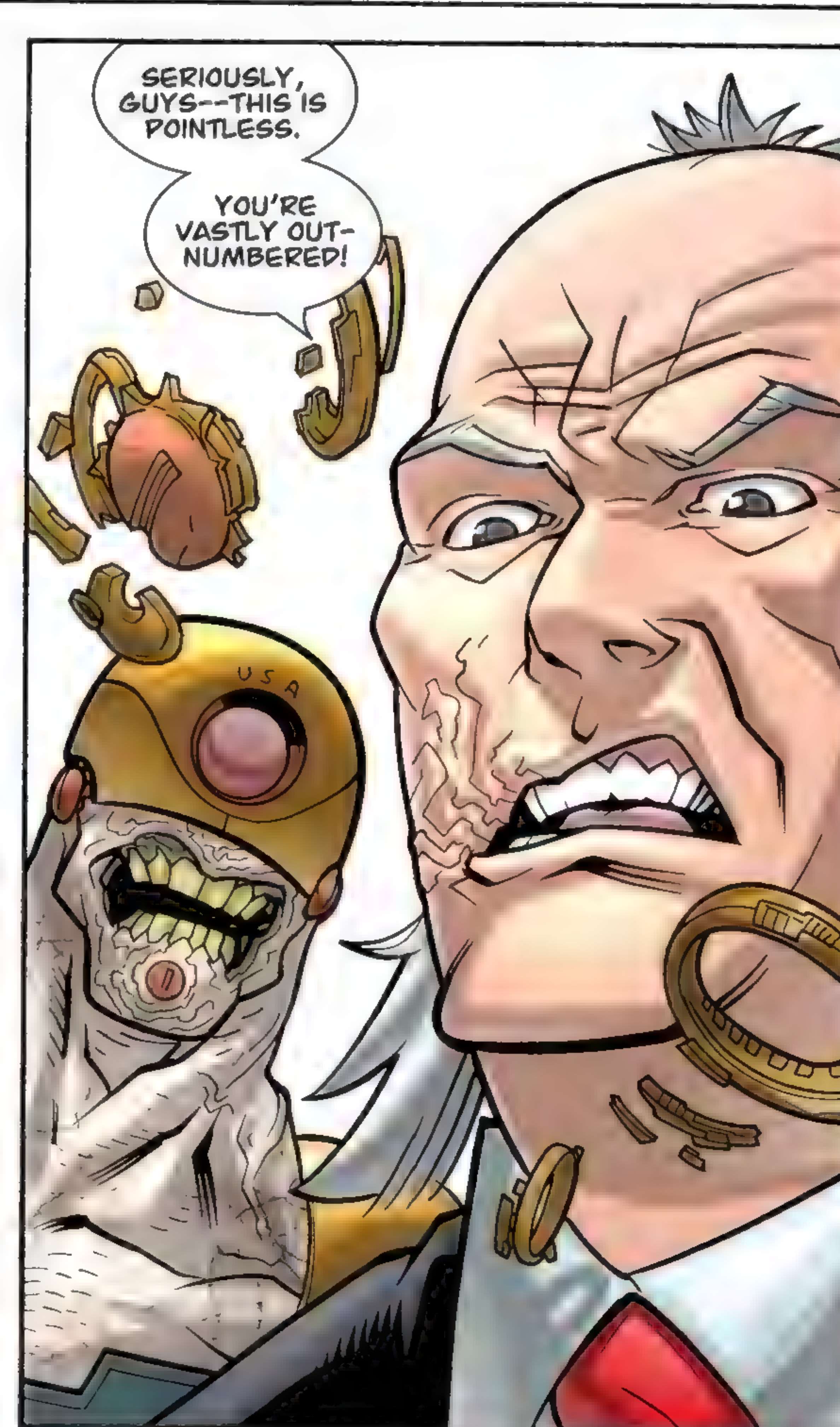


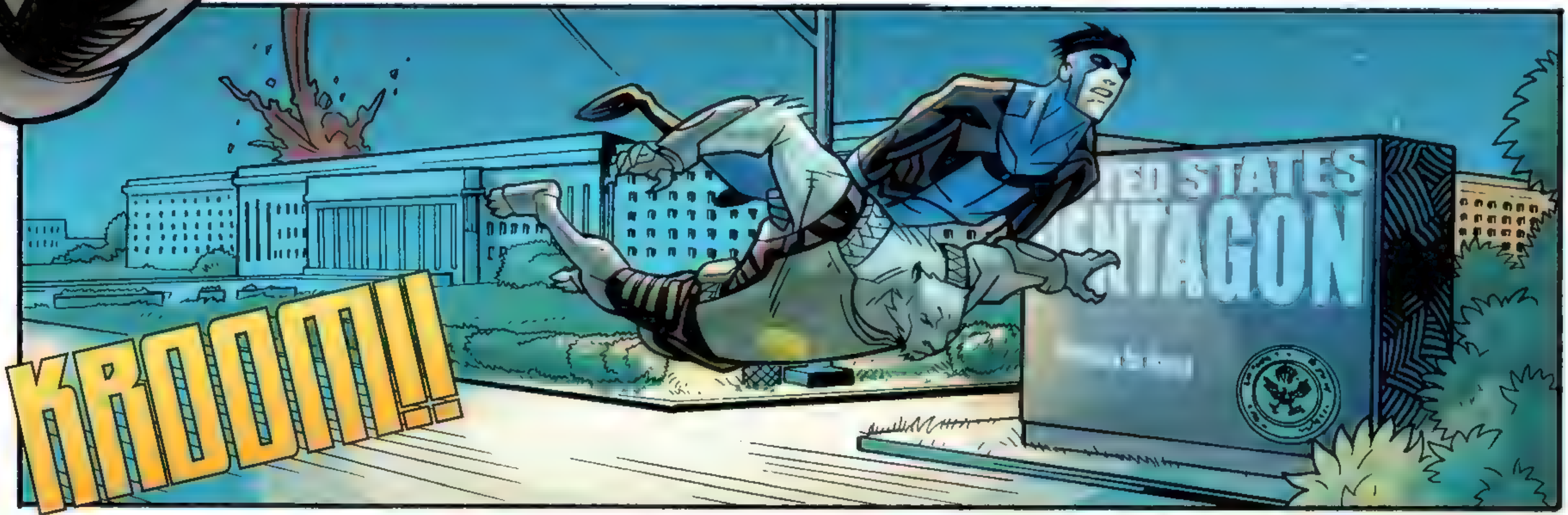
ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN

II









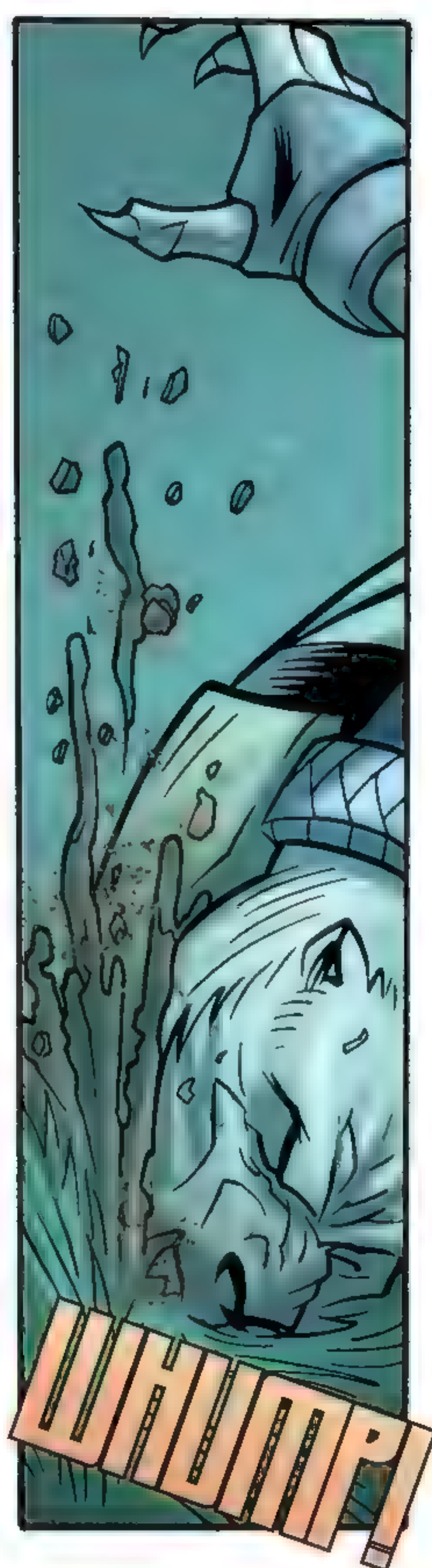
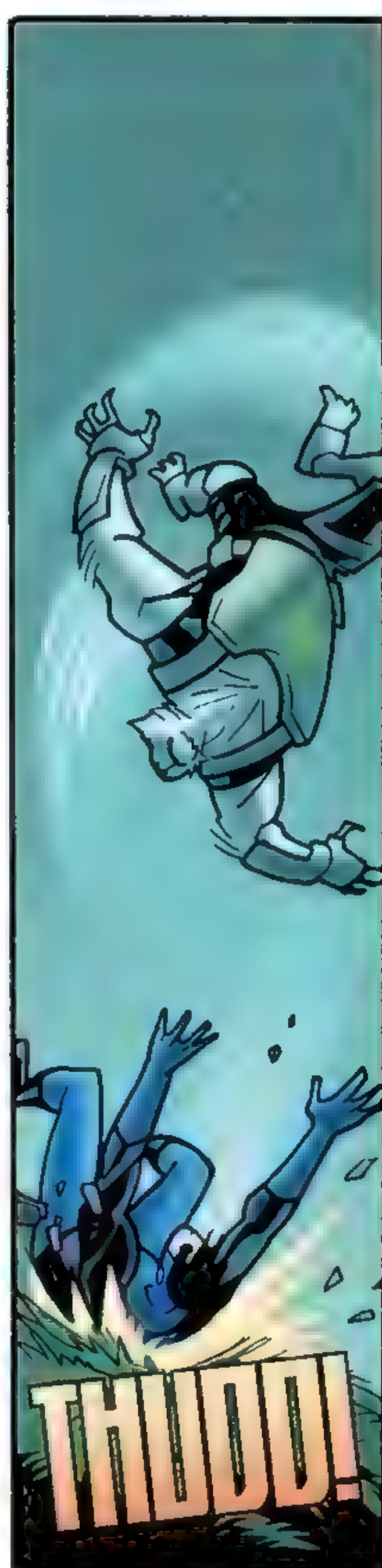
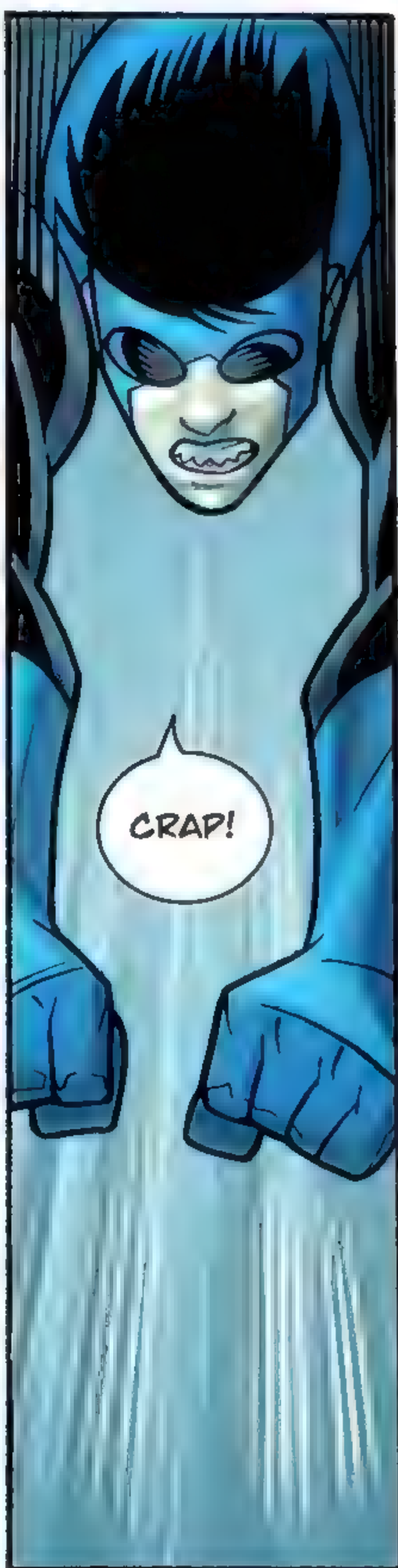
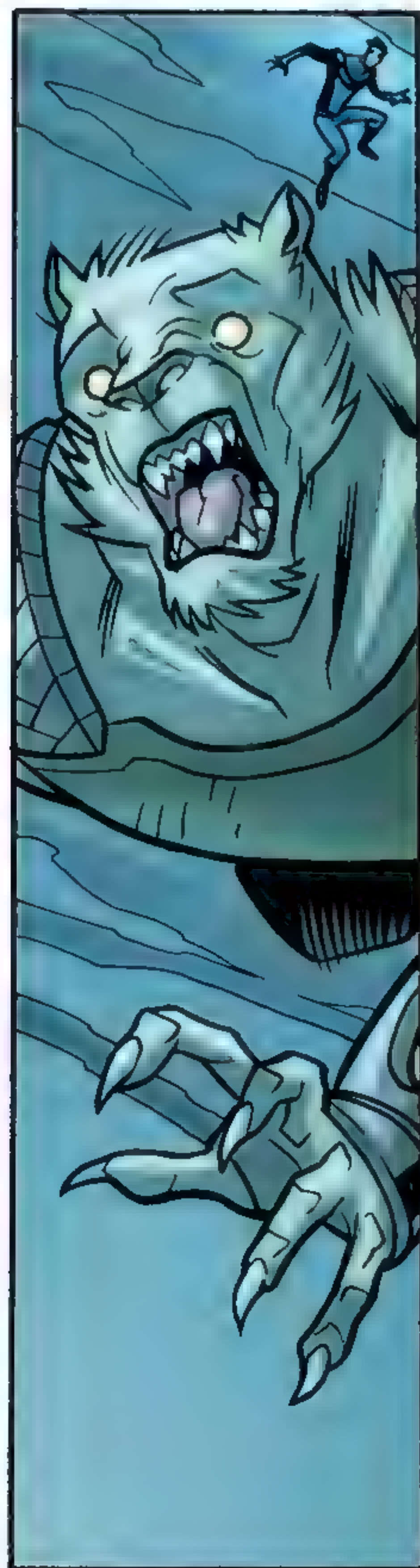


I REALLY APPRECIATE YOU GOING TO BAT FOR ME BACK THERE.

I HOPE IT DOESN'T GET YOU IN TOO MUCH TROUBLE.



I'LL WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER. WE'RE--





WHAT
THE HELL
WAS
THAT?

UGH.



YOU DIDN'T
REALLY THINK
CECIL WOULD
JUST LET YOU
GO AGAIN,
DID YOU?

YOU'RE
IN DEEP,
INVINCIBLE.
PROTECTING A
MURDERER
IS SERIOUS
BUSINESS.



PROTECTING A
MURDERER, HUH?
THAT'S SOMETHING
YOU GUYS ARE
AGAINST?

YOU
KEEP ODD
COMPANY,
THEN.



MY PAST IS MY PAST--
WHY CAN'T YOU GET
OVER THAT?! I WAS
NOT WELL--I'M
BETTER NOW.

I SEEM
TO RECALL A
FEW BLACK
MARKS ON
YOUR--



THAT ISN'T
WHAT THIS IS
ABOUT.

WE DON'T
HAVE TO DO
THIS, MARK--
WE DON'T
HAVE TO
FIGHT YOU.



OH, REALLY?!
YOU'RE JUST
GOING TO LET
US GO?

SWEET!

I DON'T
THINK THAT'S
WHAT HE
MEANT.

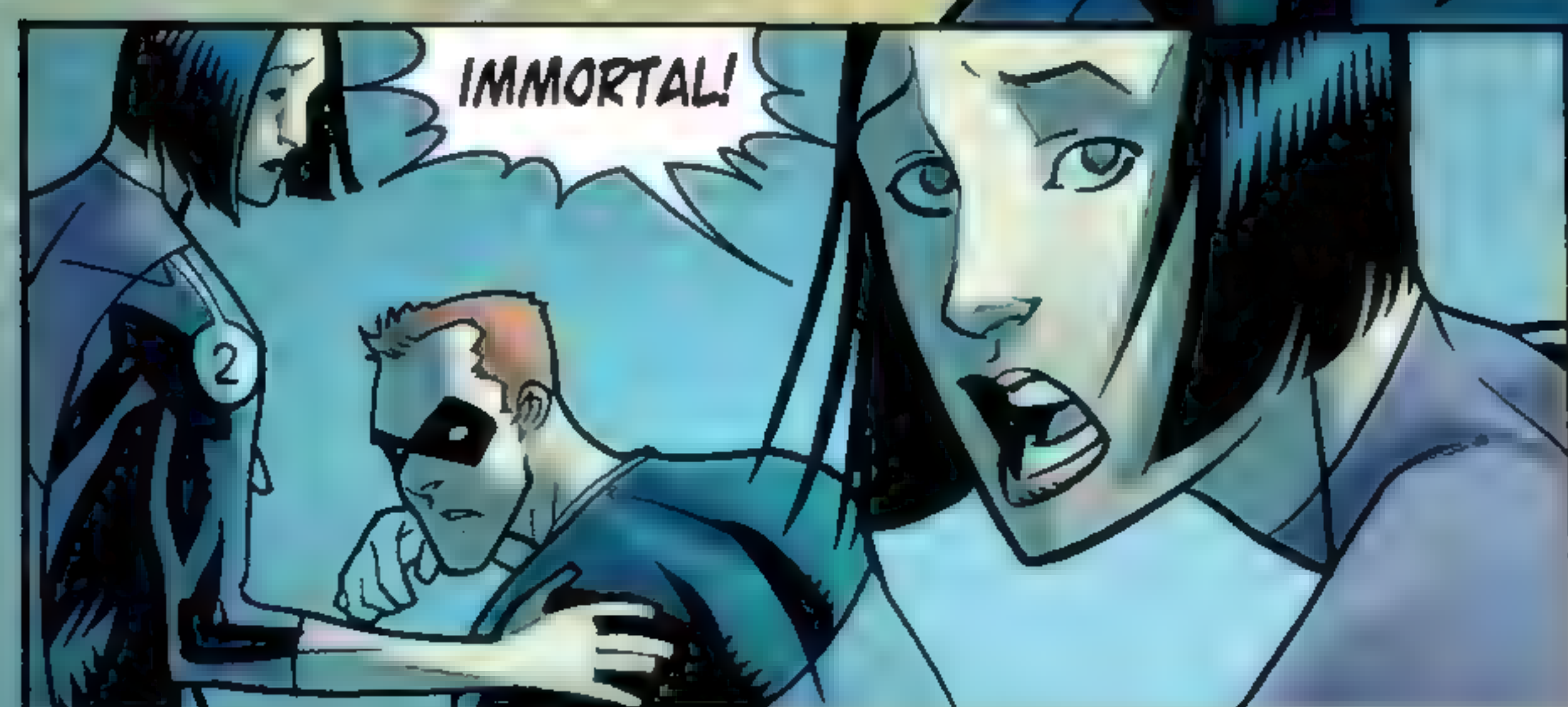


IT
WASN'T.

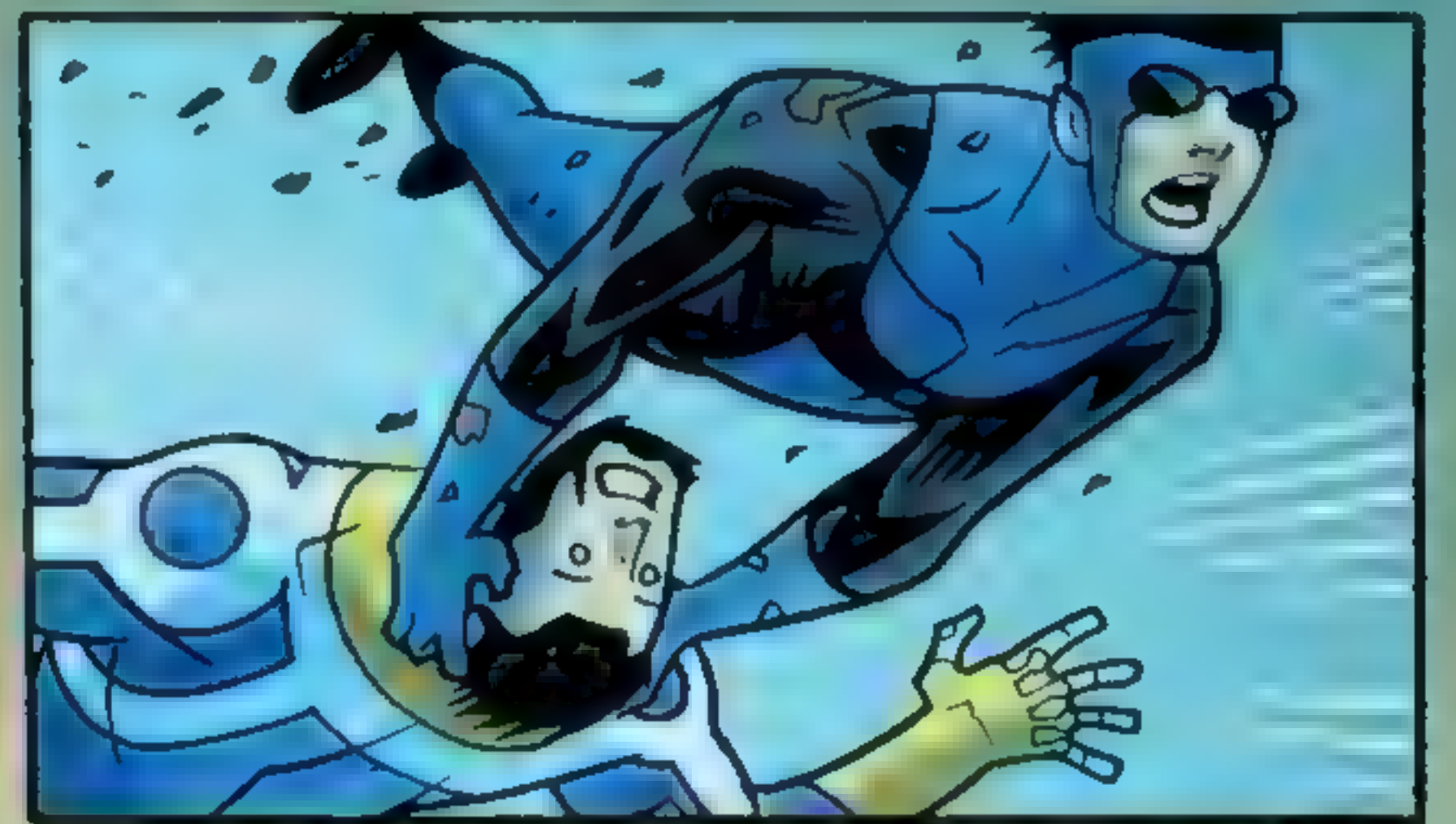


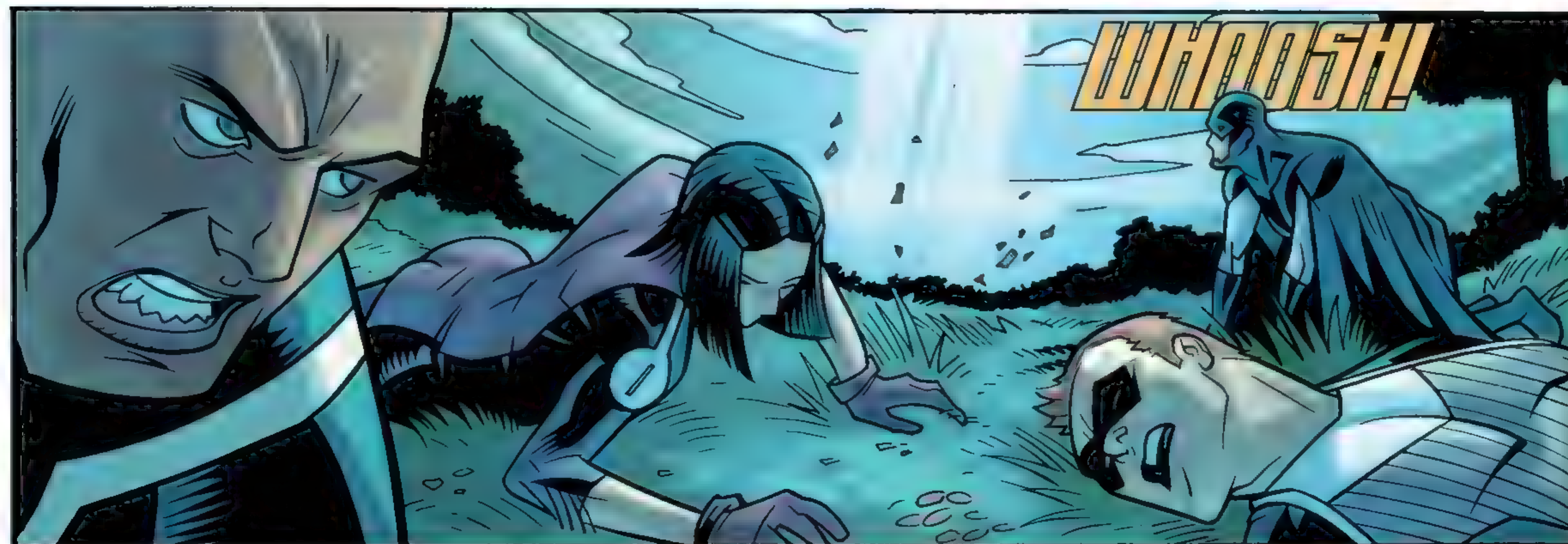
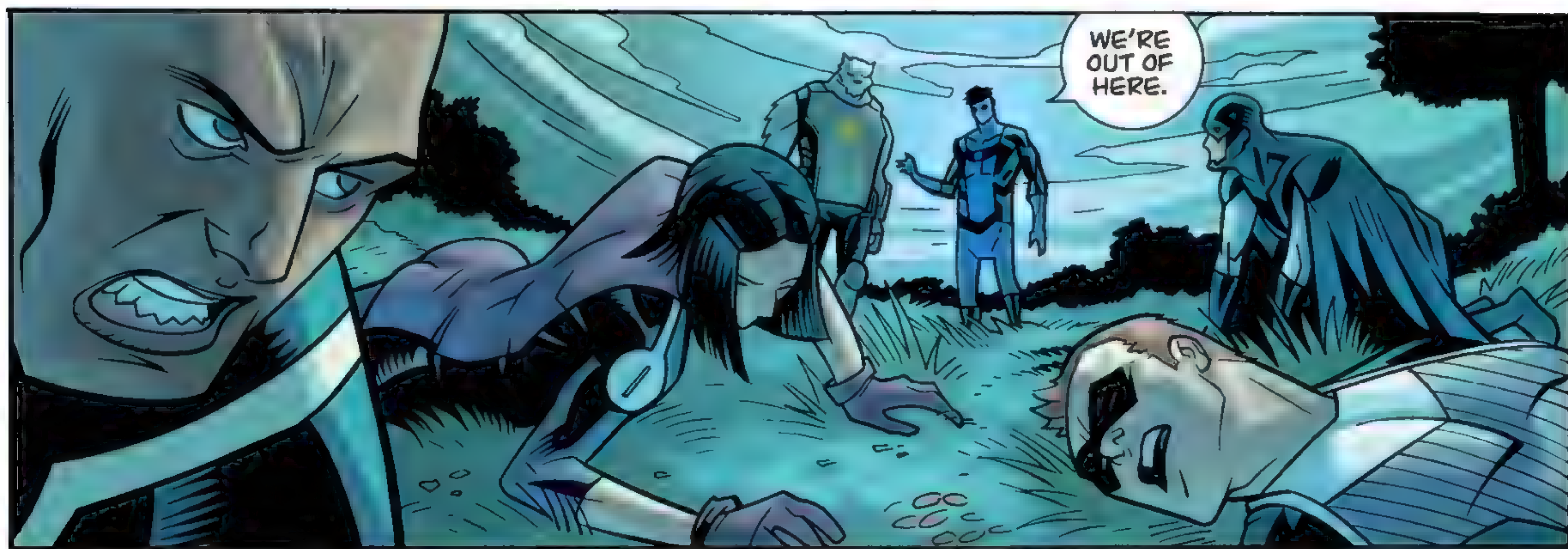
I KNOW.













COOL.
I THINK
WE LOST
THEM.

GREAT.



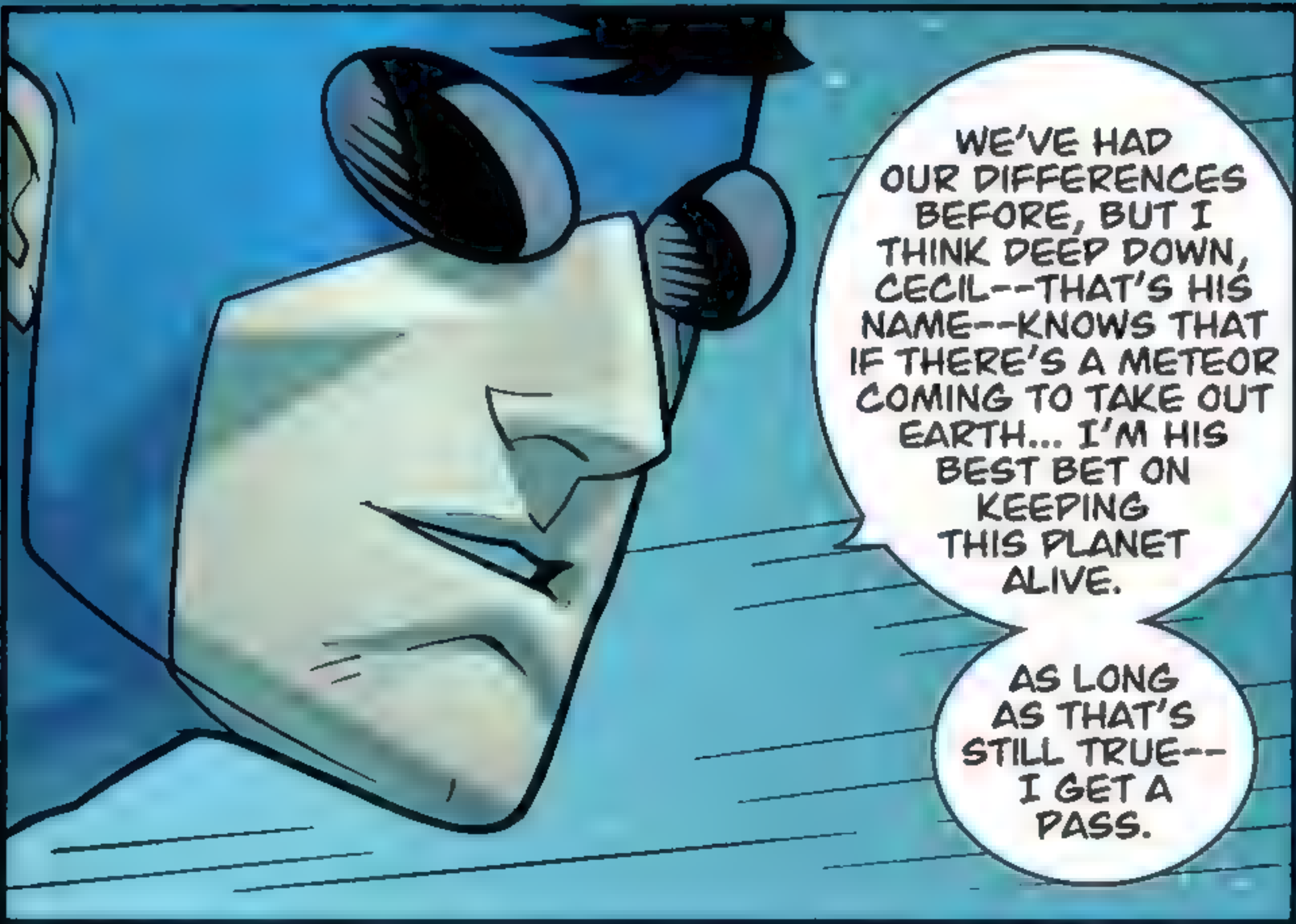
THAT TOTALLY
DID NOT WORK
OUT THE WAY I
THOUGHT IT
WOULD.

I'M
REALLY
SORRY
ABOUT
THAT.



YOU
COULDN'T
HAVE PLANNED
FOR THAT--DON'T
WORRY ABOUT IT.
I JUST HOPE I
DIDN'T GET YOU IN
TROUBLE WITH
SCAR FACE
BACK
THERE.

I DON'T
WANT THEM
HUNTING
YOU DOWN
BECAUSE
OF ME.



WE'VE HAD
OUR DIFFERENCES
BEFORE, BUT I
THINK DEEP DOWN,
CECIL--THAT'S HIS
NAME--KNOWS THAT
IF THERE'S A METEOR
COMING TO TAKE OUT
EARTH... I'M HIS
BEST BET ON
KEEPING
THIS PLANET
ALIVE.

AS LONG
AS THAT'S
STILL TRUE--
I GET A
PASS.



STILL,
THANKS FOR
STICKING YOUR
NECK OUT FOR
ME--MEANS
A LOT.

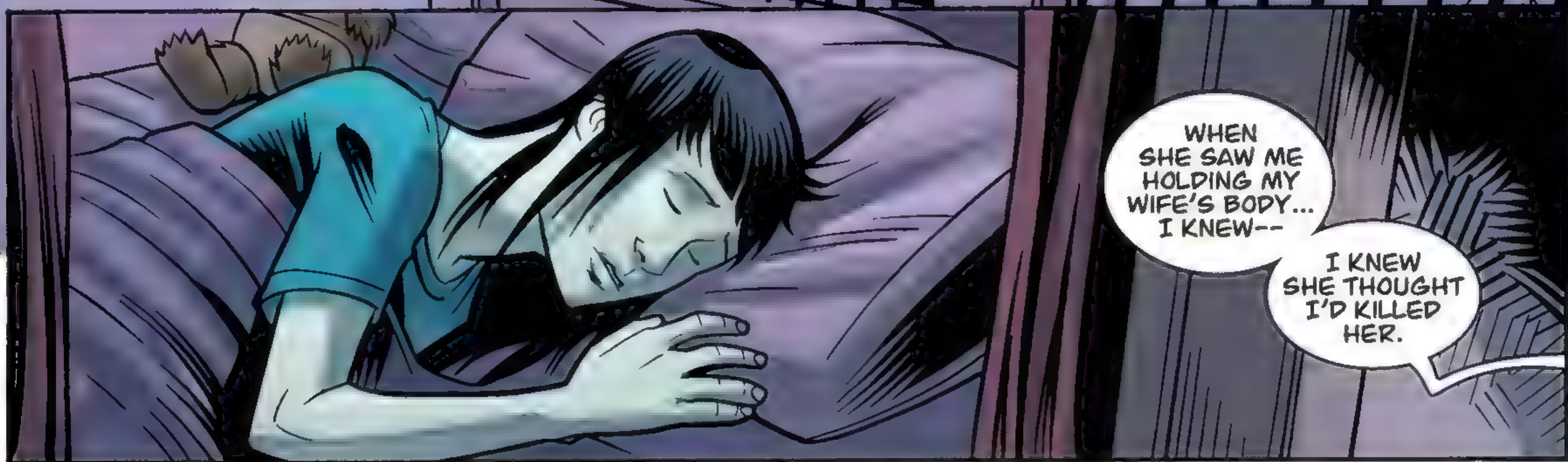


DON'T
MENTION
IT.

...

SO...
WHERE
TO?

THE HAMPTON ESTATE.



WHEN SHE SAW ME HOLDING MY WIFE'S BODY... I KNEW--

I KNEW SHE THOUGHT I'D KILLED HER.



I DIED MYSELF, THAT VERY INSTANT... MY LIFE WAS OVER.

GETTING CAUGHT--WHAT THOSE PEOPLE WILL DO TO ME--NONE OF THAT SCARES ME. THAT'S NOT WHY I RAN. I NEED TIME TO SET THINGS STRAIGHT...

...TO SHOW HER SHE STILL HAS A FATHER.



AND HE'S STILL OUT THERE--THE MAN WHO DID KILL YOUR WIFE?



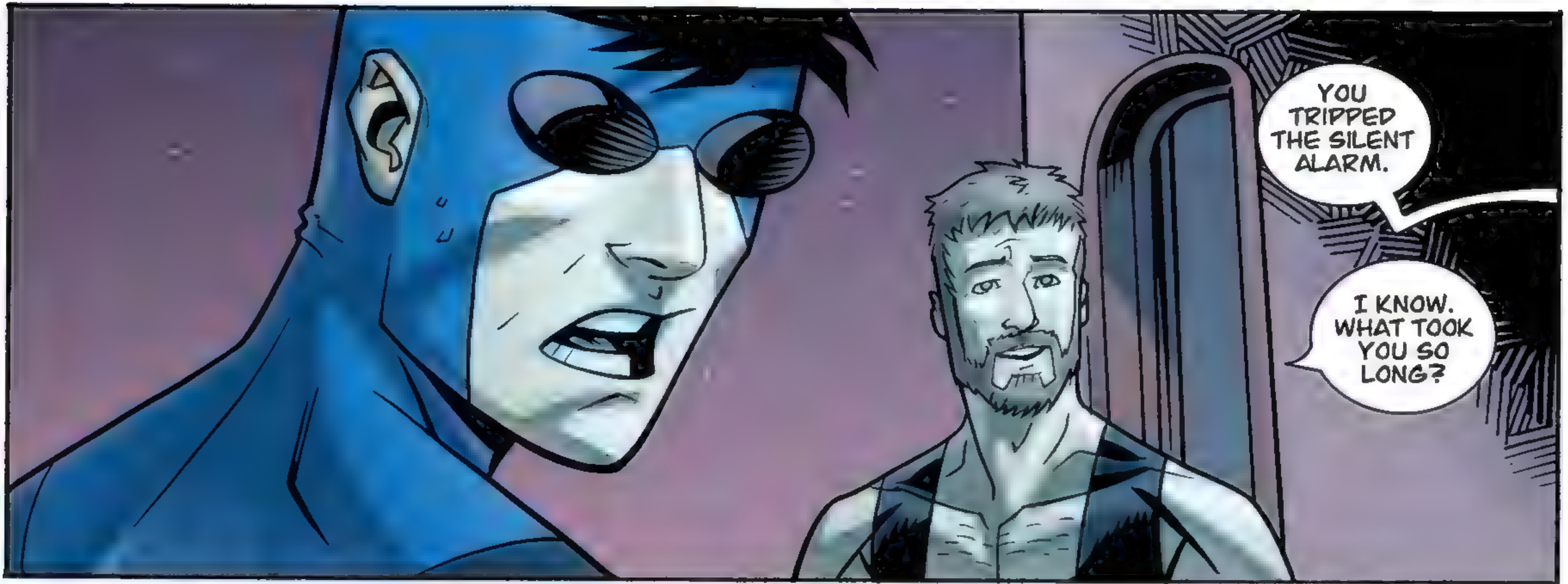
SOMEWHERE, YEAH. I DON'T KNOW WHERE.

I NEVER KNEW WHERE HE WENT WHEN WE WEREN'T WORKING TOGETHER--HE ALWAYS FOUND ME.



HE'S STILL OUT THERE.

ZECHARIAH--







I'M TRYING TO BE SUPPORTIVE, I KNOW SHE'S GOING THROUGH A LOT--BUT I WAS NEVER CUT OUT TO BE A PARENT. I DON'T KNOW IF I'M DOING WHAT SHE NEEDS.

I'M GIVING HER SPACE. SHE DOESN'T SPEND A LOT OF TIME HERE. SHE'S STILL GOING TO SCHOOL, BUT HER GRADES ARE SUFFERING.

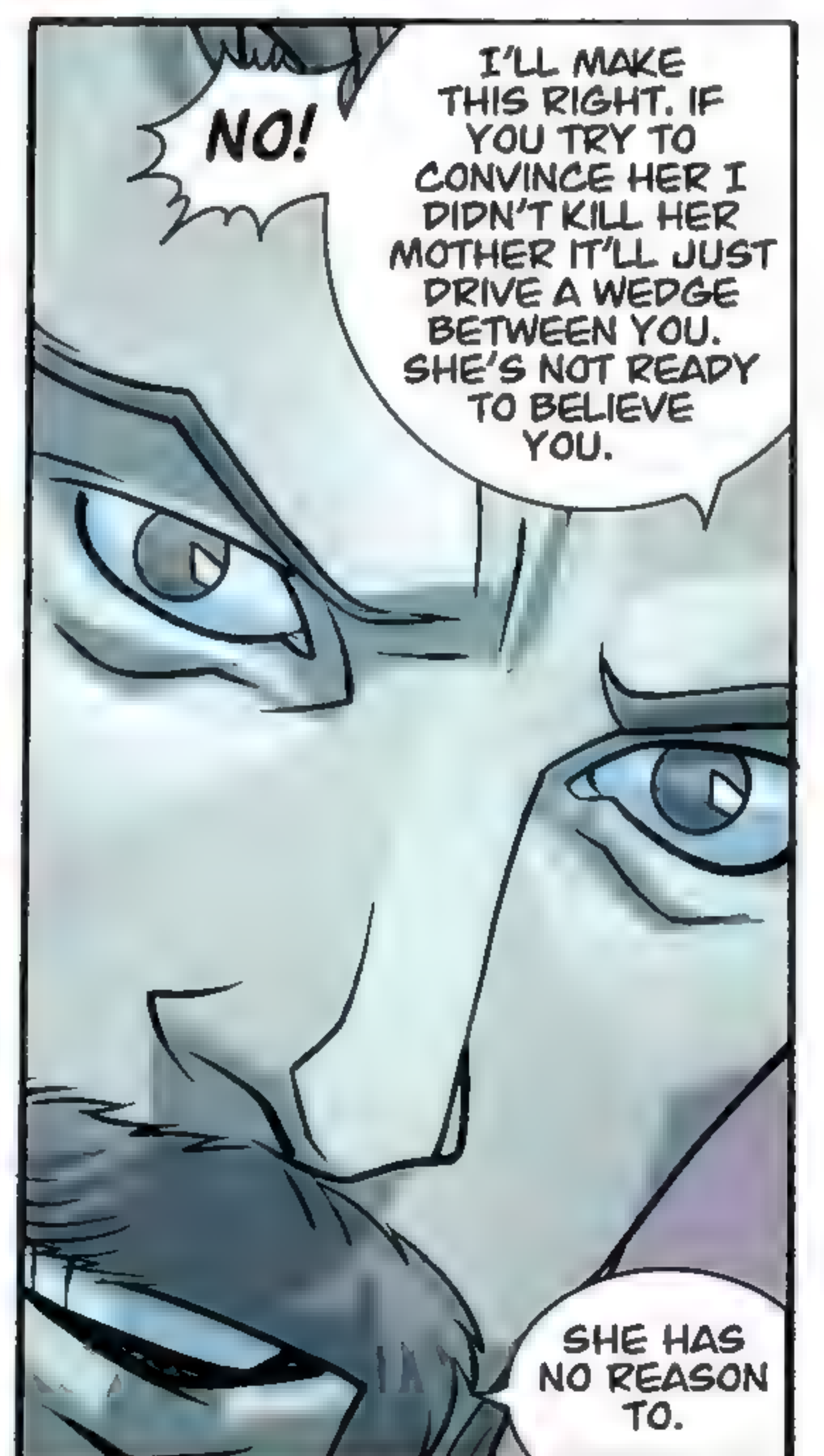
THE SCHOOL KNOWS THE SITUATION--THEY'RE BEING VERY UNDERSTANDING.

SHE'S JUST SO... **ANGRY**. SHE DOESN'T TALK TO ME... I'VE TRIED TO GET HER TO OPEN UP TO ME--BUT NOTHING SEEMS TO WORK. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.



SHE DOES. SHE THINKS YOU LOST CONTROL--WENT INTO A RAGE AND REBECCA...

I HAVEN'T TALKED TO HER ABOUT IT--MAYBE I SHOULD--



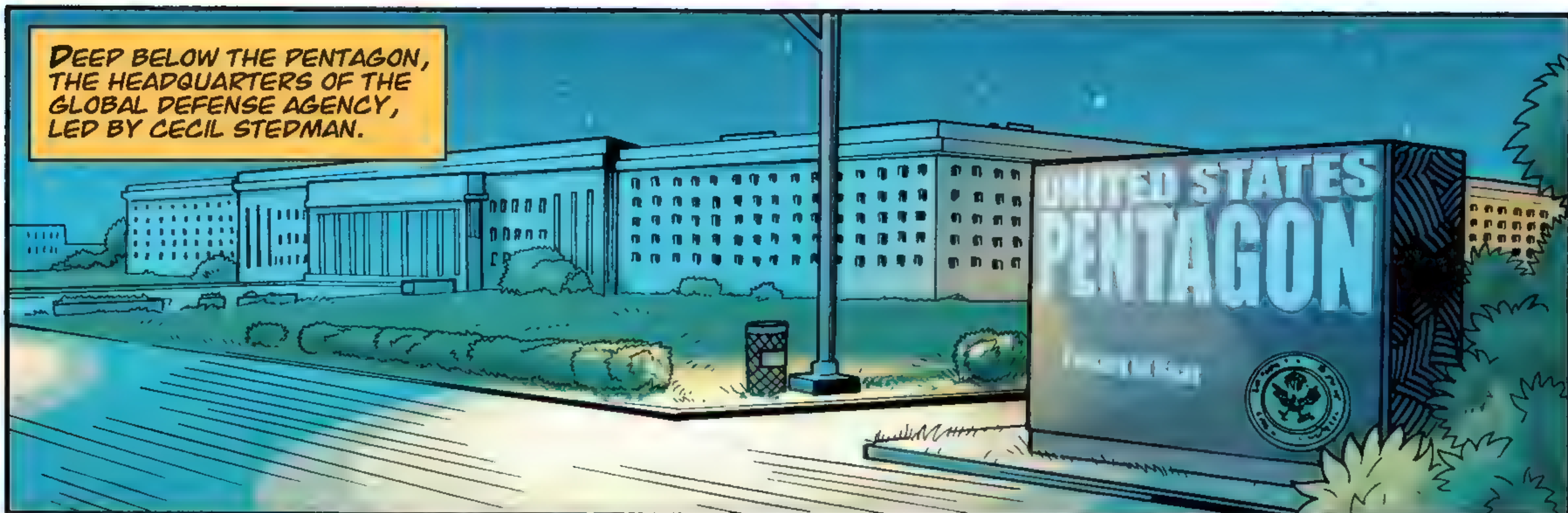
NO!

I'LL MAKE THIS RIGHT. IF YOU TRY TO CONVINCE HER I DIDN'T KILL HER MOTHER IT'LL JUST DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN YOU. SHE'S NOT READY TO BELIEVE YOU.

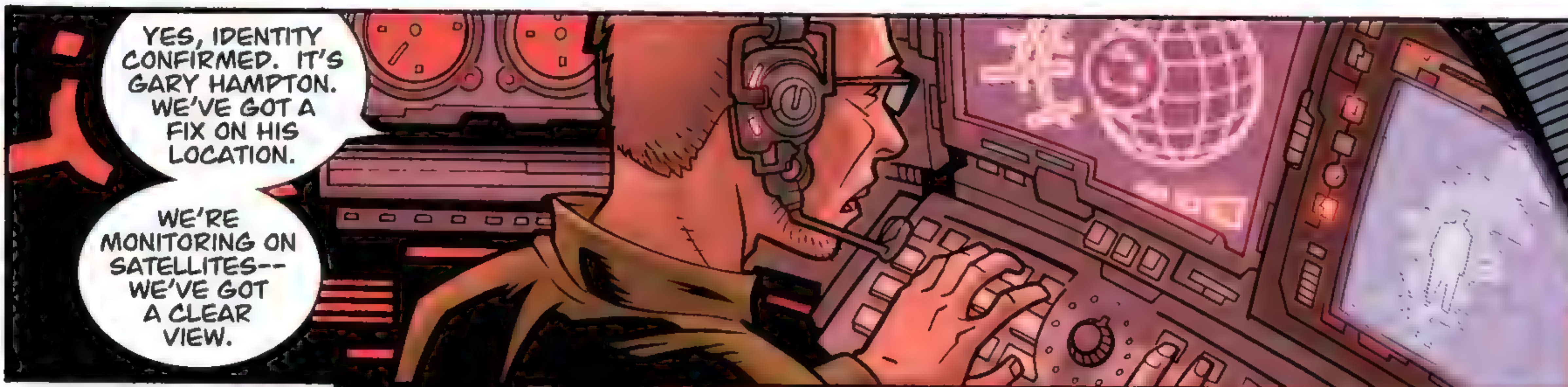
SHE HAS NO REASON TO.







DEEP BELOW THE PENTAGON,
THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE
GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY,
LED BY CECIL STEPMAN.



YES, IDENTITY
CONFIRMED. IT'S
GARY HAMPTON.
WE'VE GOT A
FIX ON HIS
LOCATION.

WE'RE
MONITORING ON
SATELLITES--
WE'VE GOT
A CLEAR
VIEW.



STAND BY FOR
INSTRUCTIONS.

NO.

WE KNOW
WHERE HE IS--
WE'LL KEEP
HIM UNDER
SURVEILLANCE.

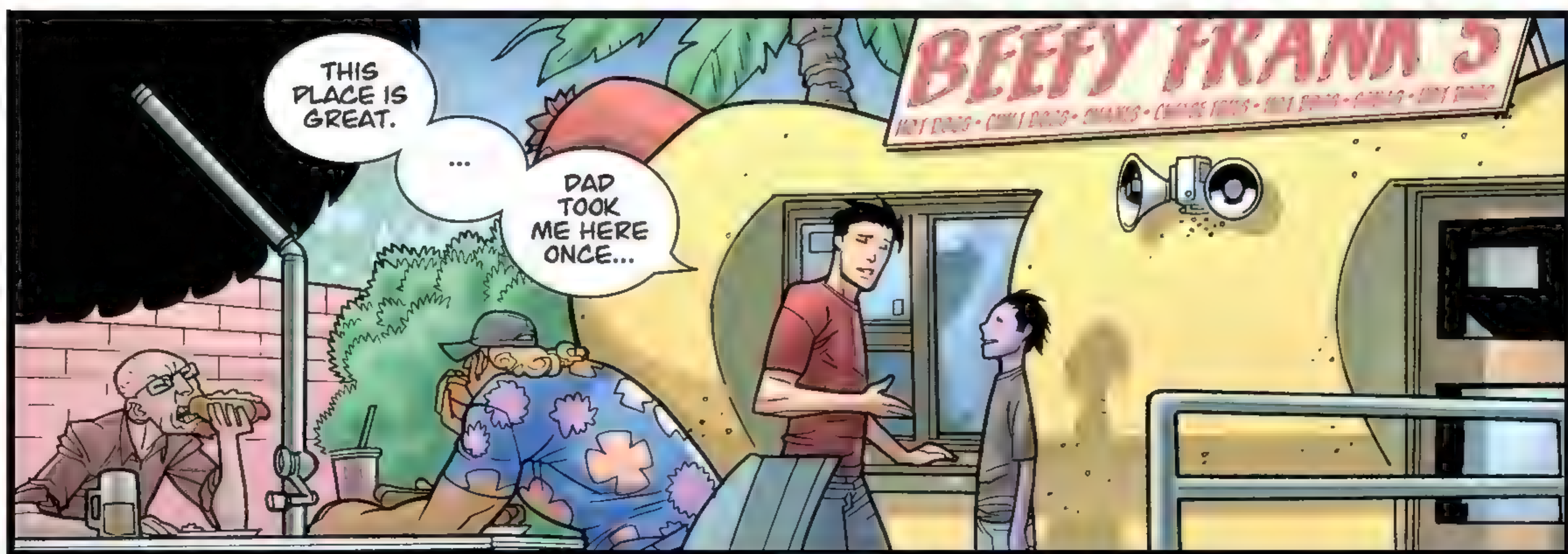
I'M STILL
DECIDING WHAT
TO DO WITH HIM.
HE MAY STILL
PROVE USEFUL
TO ME...

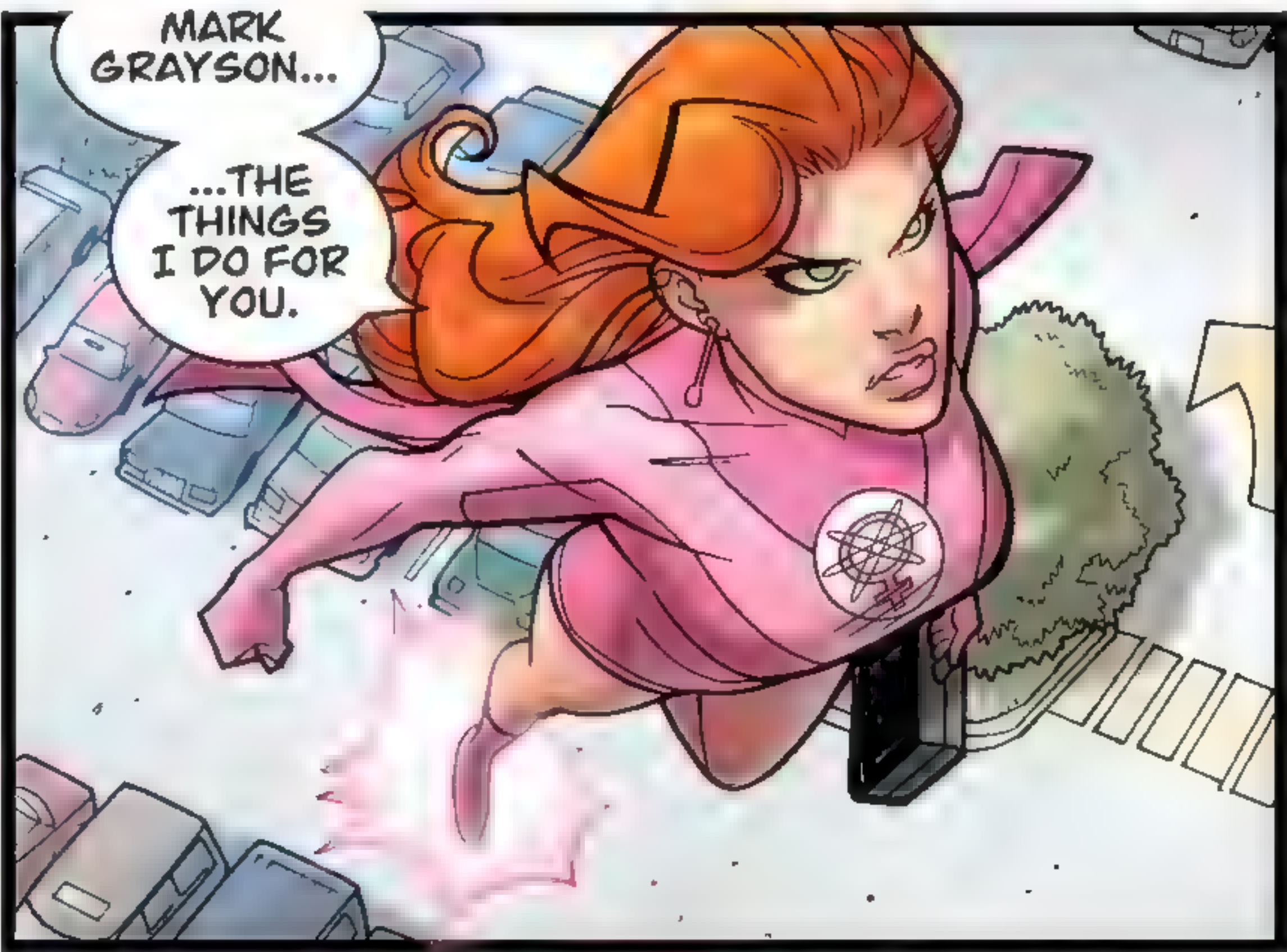
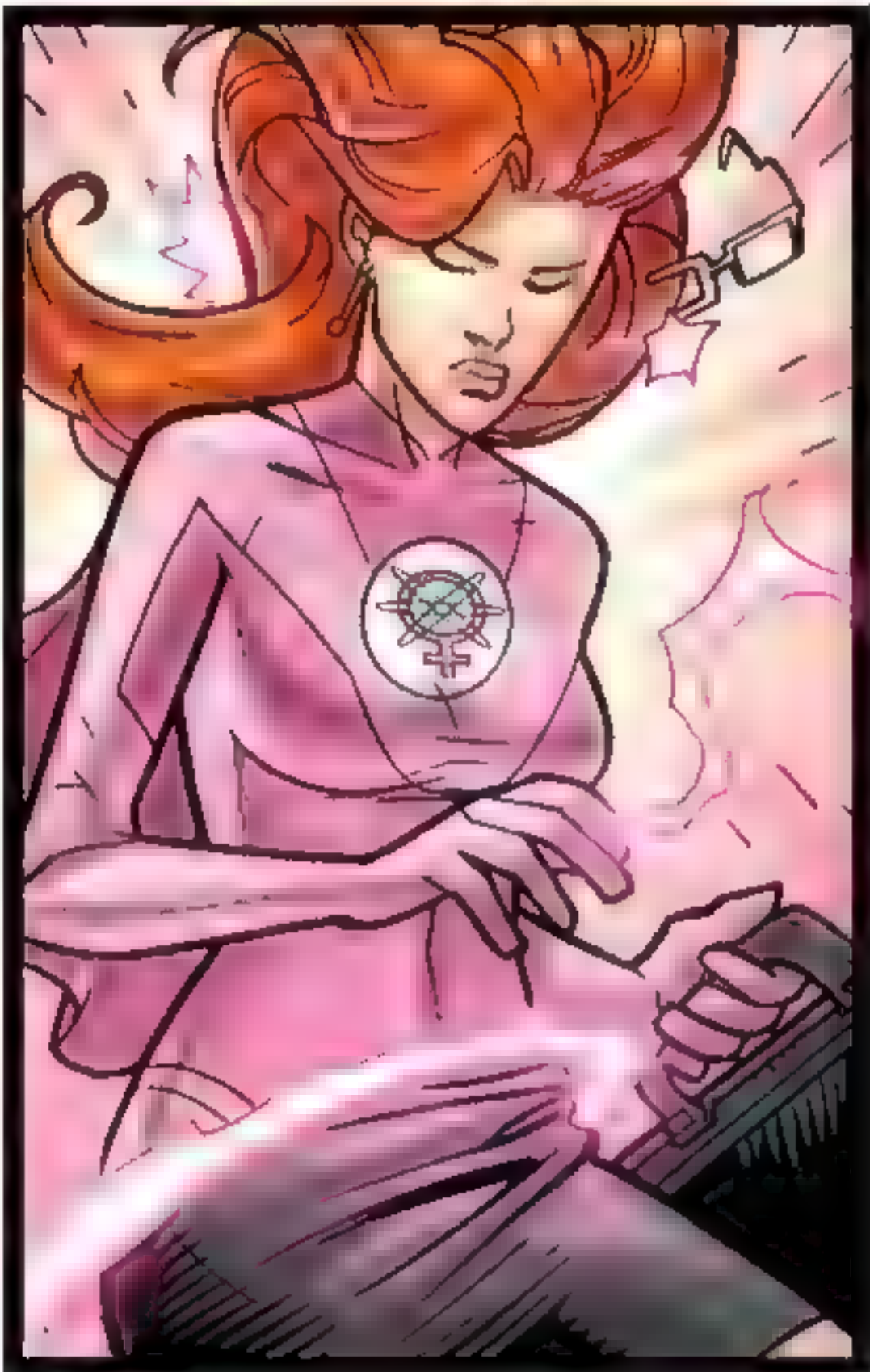
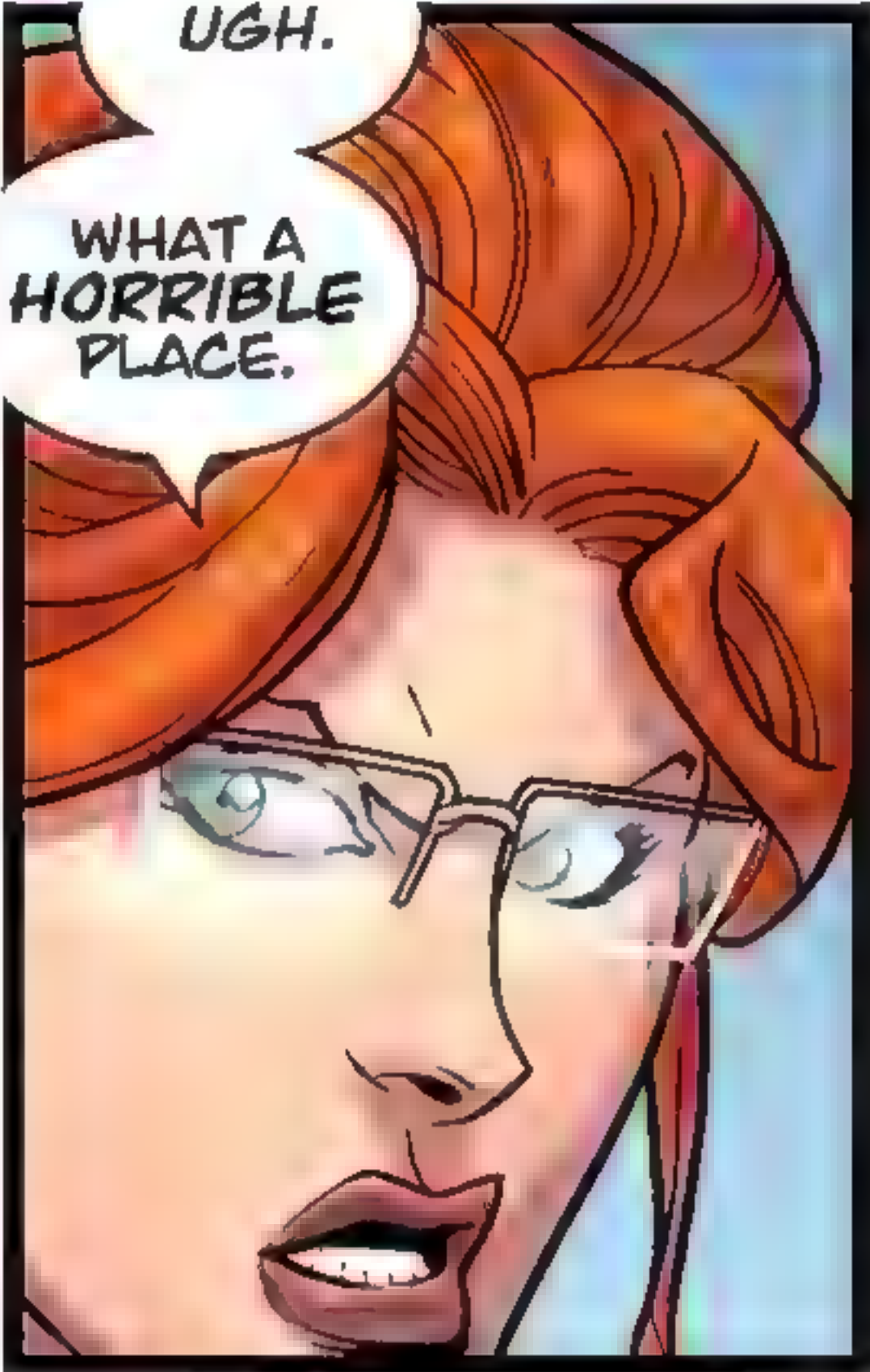
YOU
WANT ME
TO GO
IN?



CHAPTER 58









GLOBAL GUARDIANS!
THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD
CALL OURSELVES.



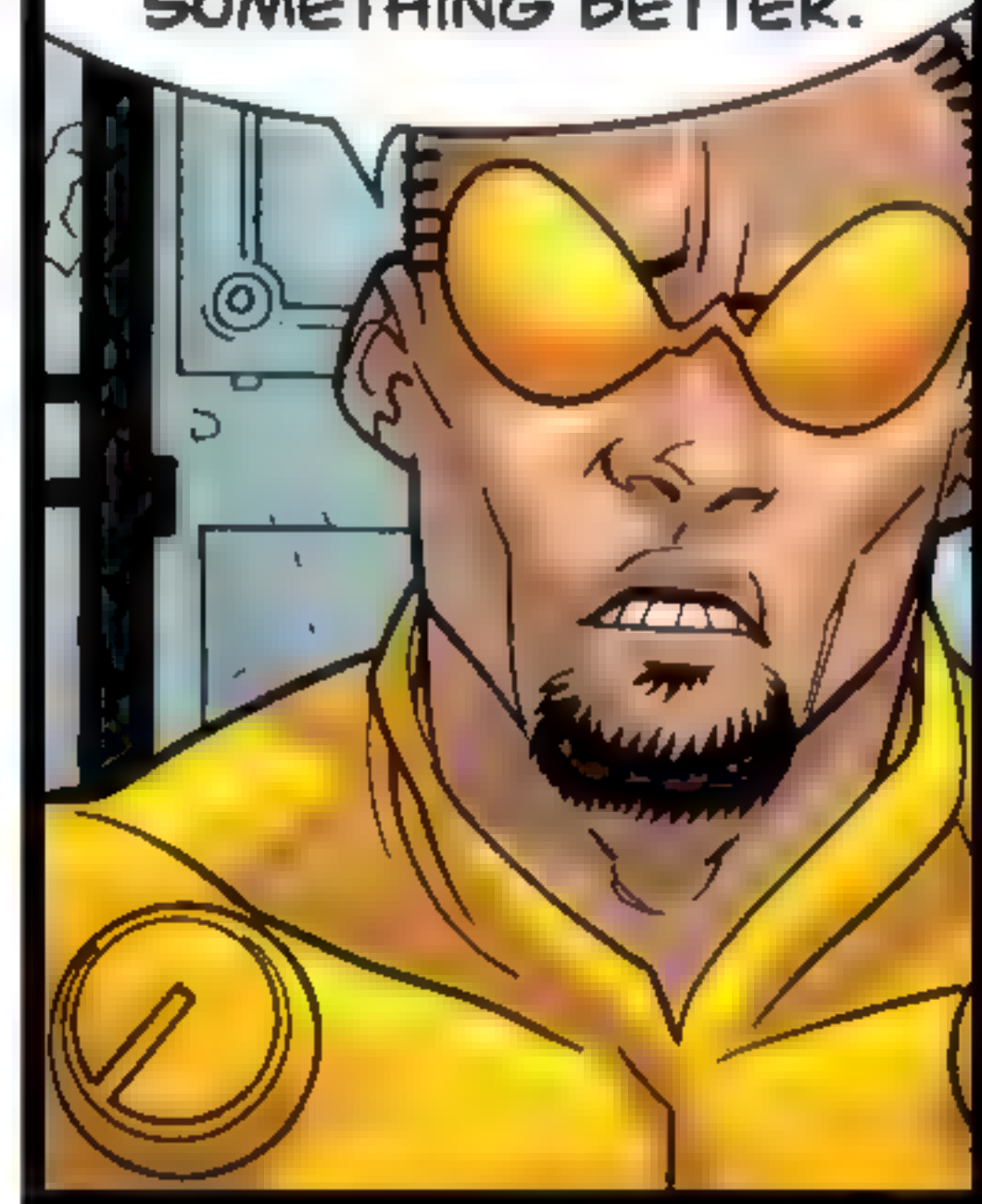
THAT MAY
BRING US LEGAL
ENTANGLEMENTS. BESIDES,
WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF
THE GLOBAL DEFENSE
AGENCY--OUR RANGE
ISN'T EXACTLY GLOBAL.

OH, PLEASE.
HOW MANY TIMES
DID WE DO SOMETHING
OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTRY
WHEN WE WERE WITH THE
GUARDIANS? TWICE?
THREE TIMES?

NOT
COUNTING
THE SPACE
STUFF.



I DON'T LIKE THE NAME,
EITHER. IT SOUNDS
SILLY. I THINK WE CAN
COME UP WITH
SOMETHING BETTER.



THEN WHY DON'T YOU
SUGGEST SOMETHING.
STOP CRAPPING ALL
OVER MY IDEAS AND
SUBMIT SOME OF
YOUR OWN!



IS THE NAME
OF OUR STUPID
TEAM REALLY
THIS
IMPORTANT?!



AMANDA?

I'M PISSED, OKAY?! WE'RE
WORKING ON COMING UP WITH
A NAME FOR OUR TEAM WHILE
I'M STILL GETTING YOUNGER
EVERY TIME I USE MY
POWERS!



YOU SAID
YOU'D FIX ME,
RUDY! YOU WERE
CONFIDENT! DAMN
IT, I BELIEVED
IN YOU!



I'M SORRY, I REALLY
AM... I HAVE BEEN
WORKING ON YOU--I
RECENTLY MADE A
BREAKTHROUGH... I
WANTED TO
SURPRISE YOU--



I THINK I'VE
FOUND THE
SOLUTION.

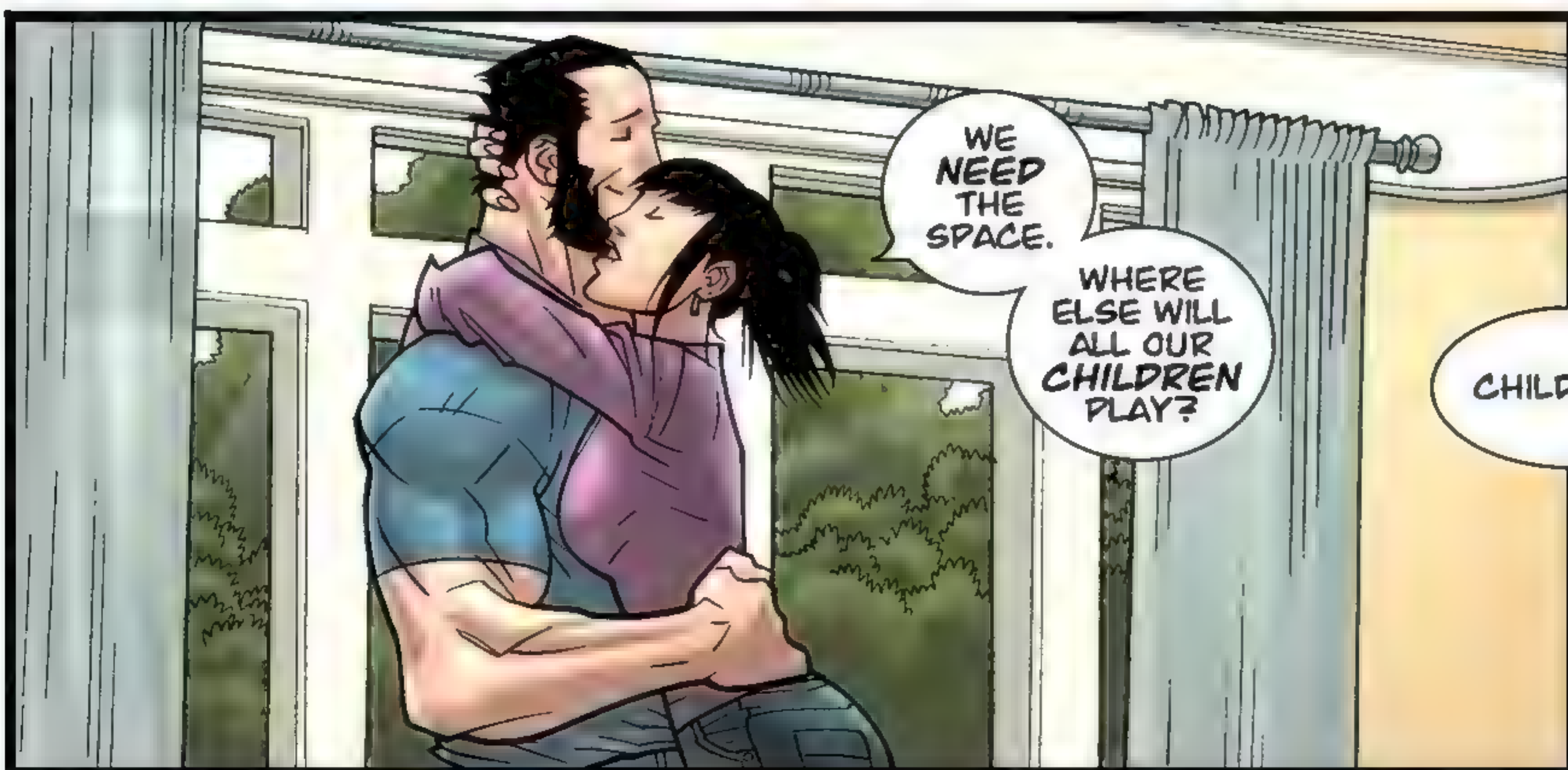
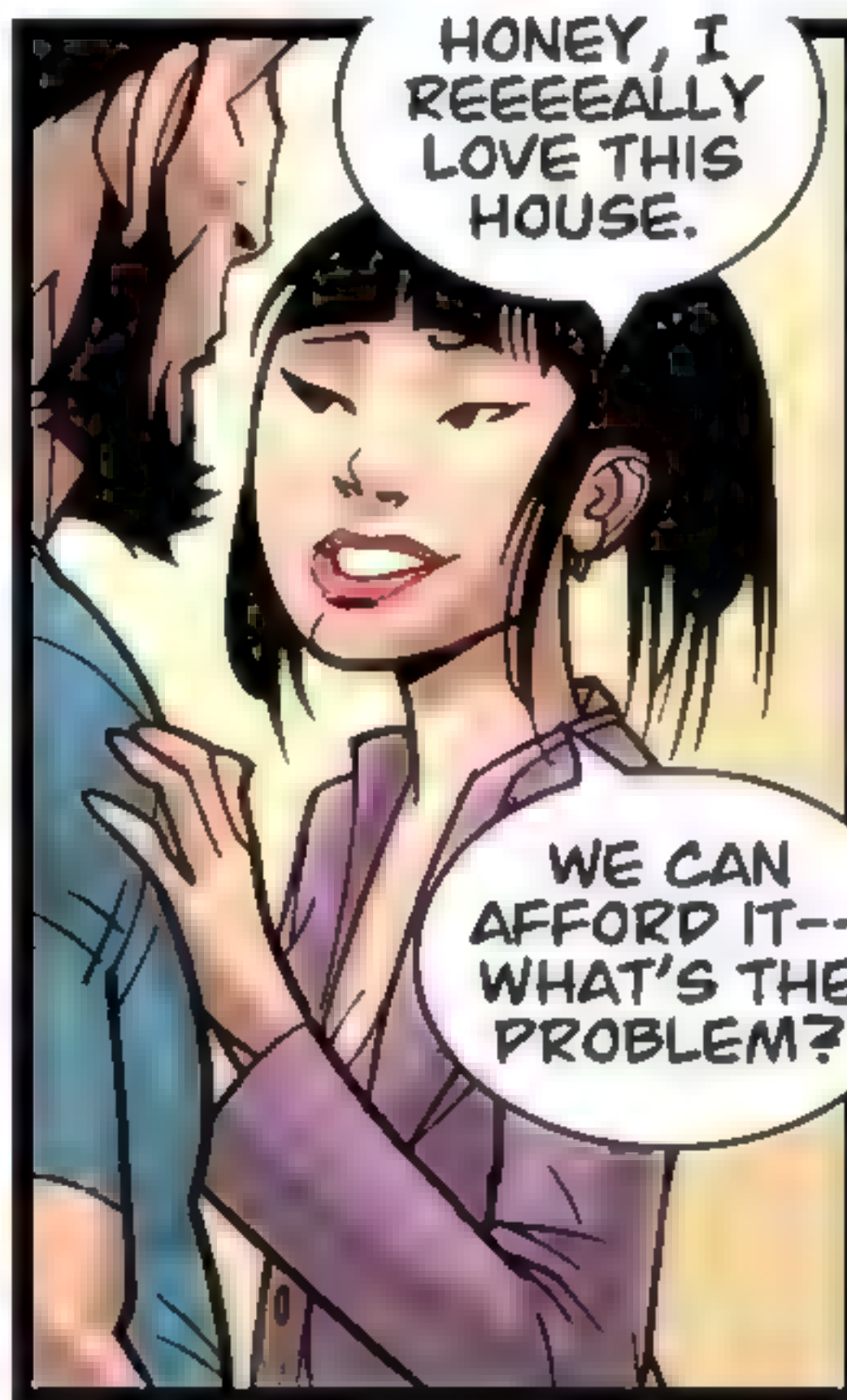
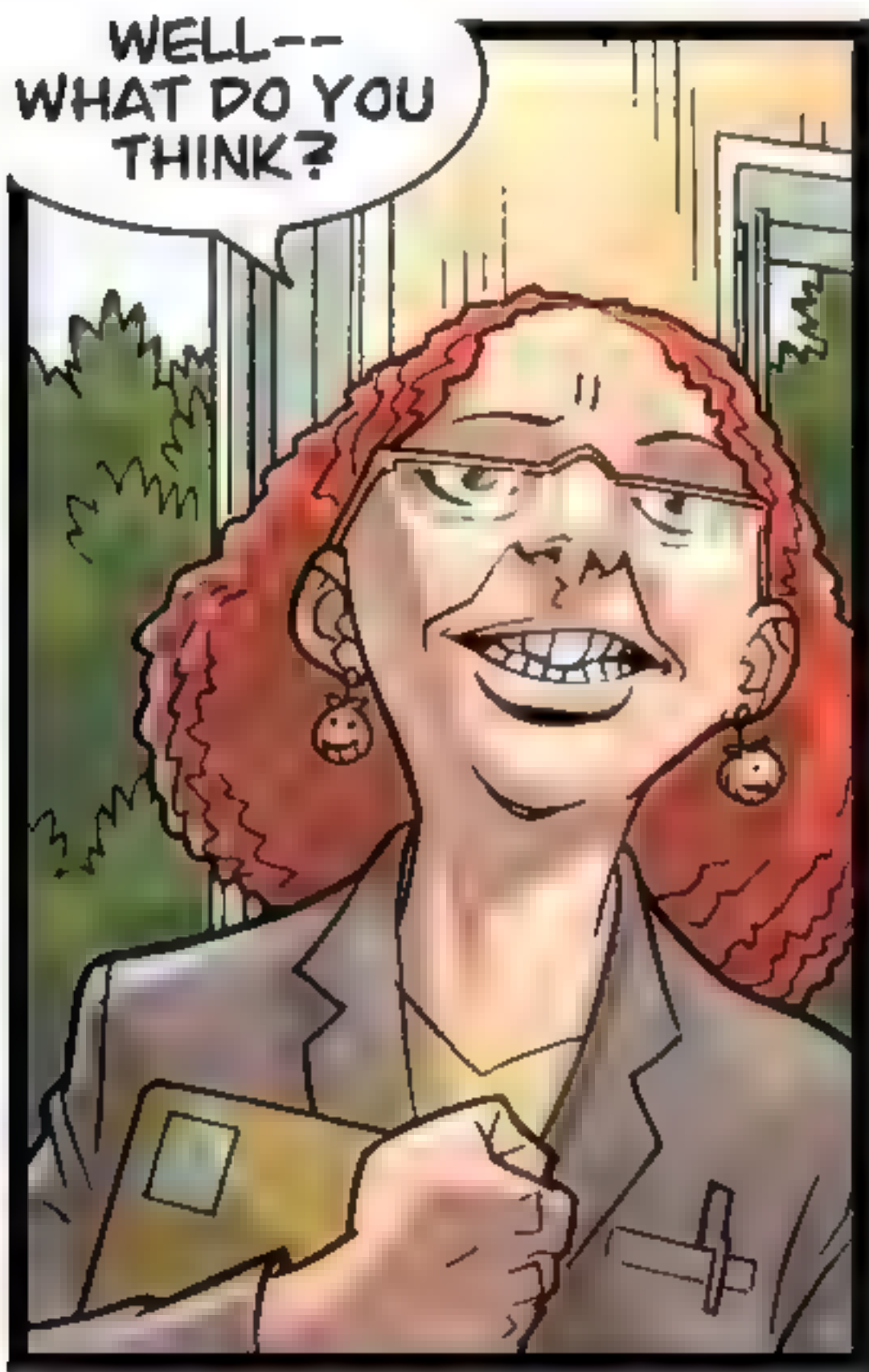
OH MY
GOD--
REALLY?!

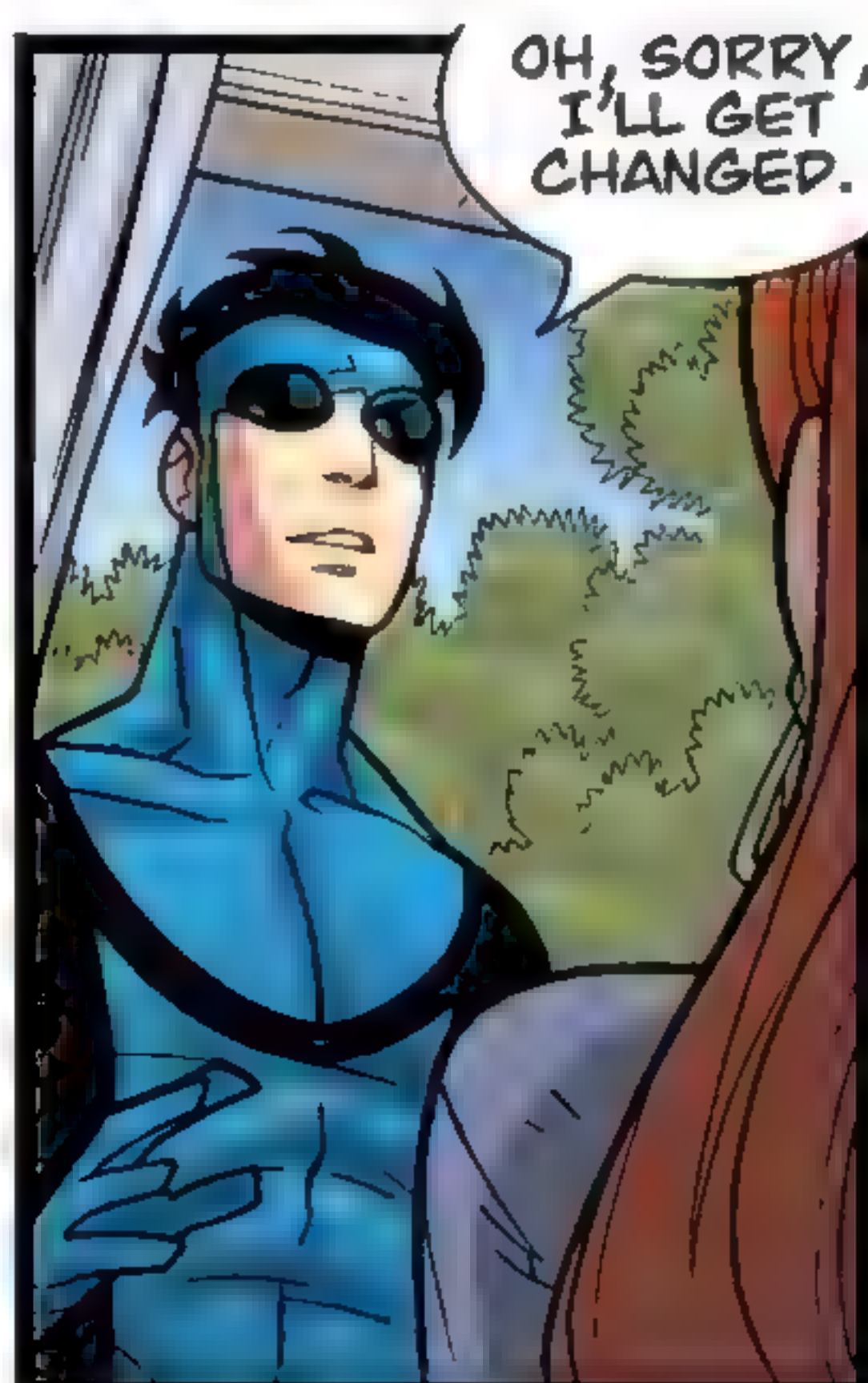


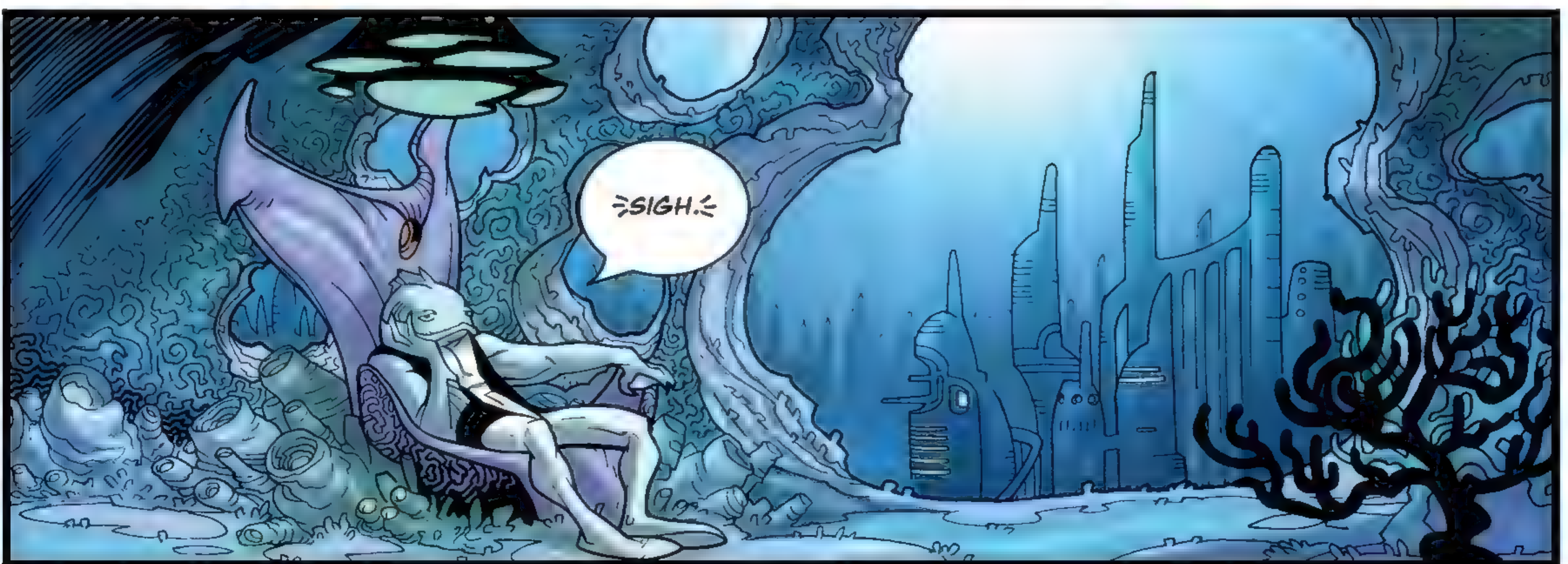
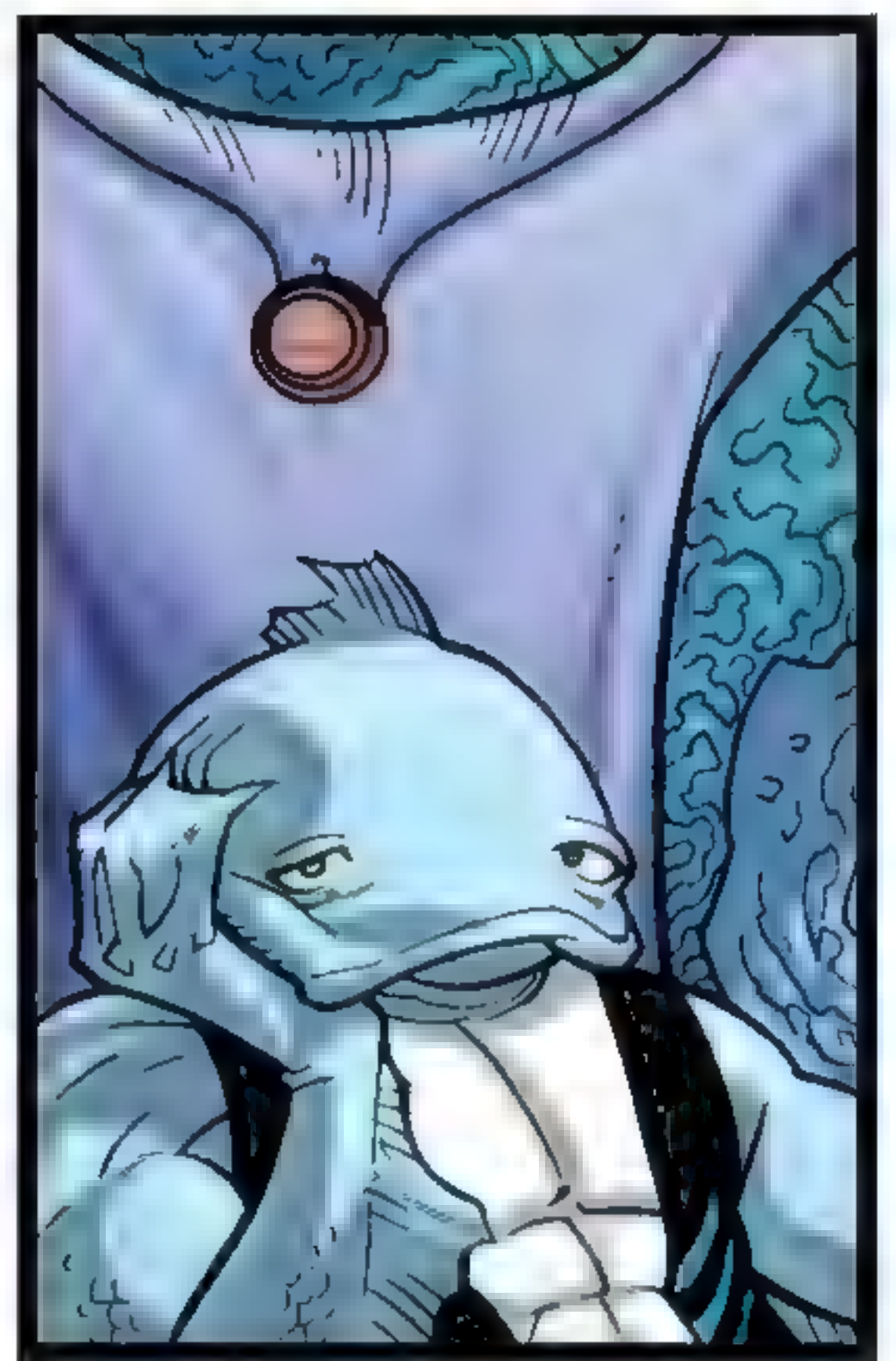
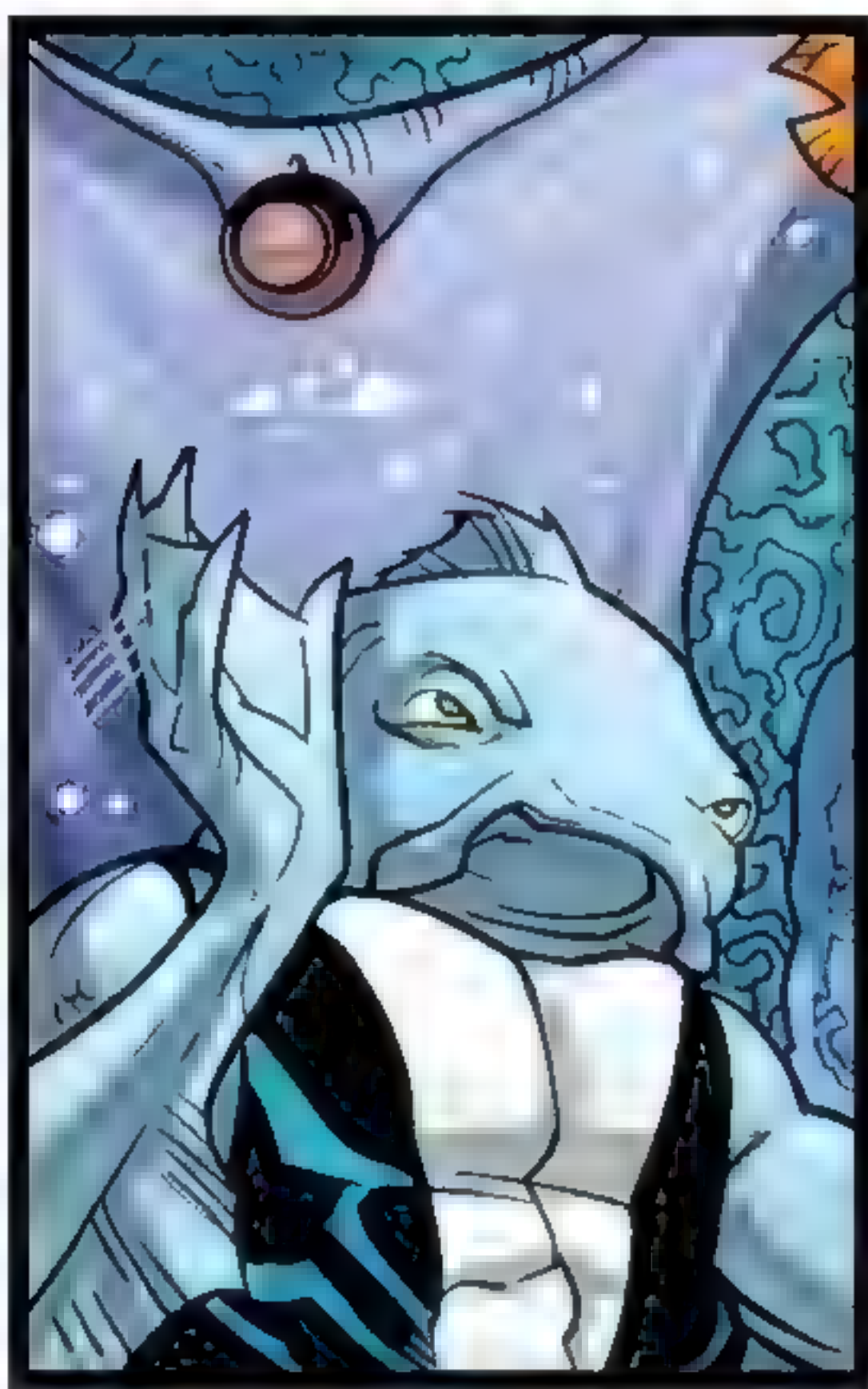
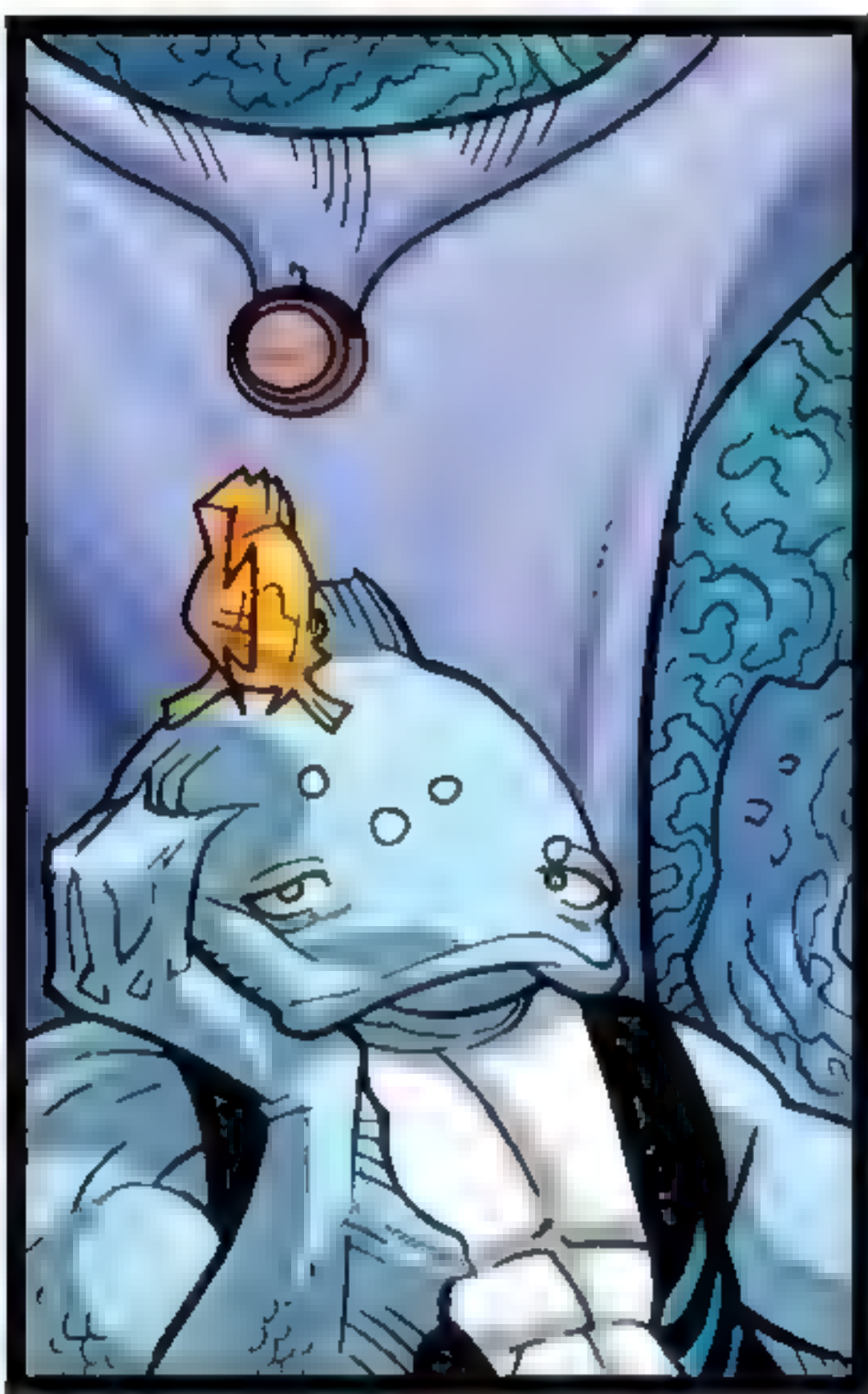
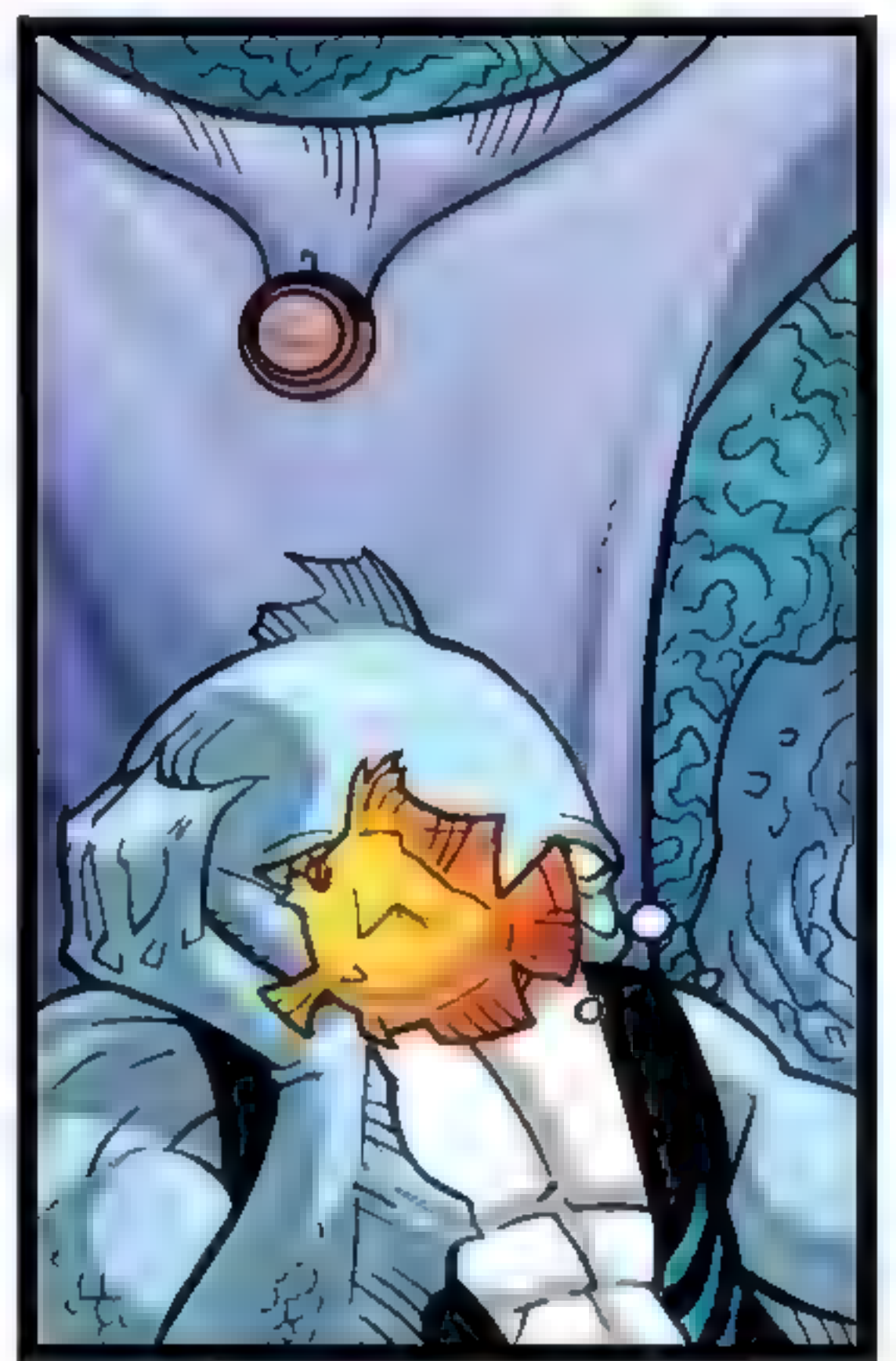
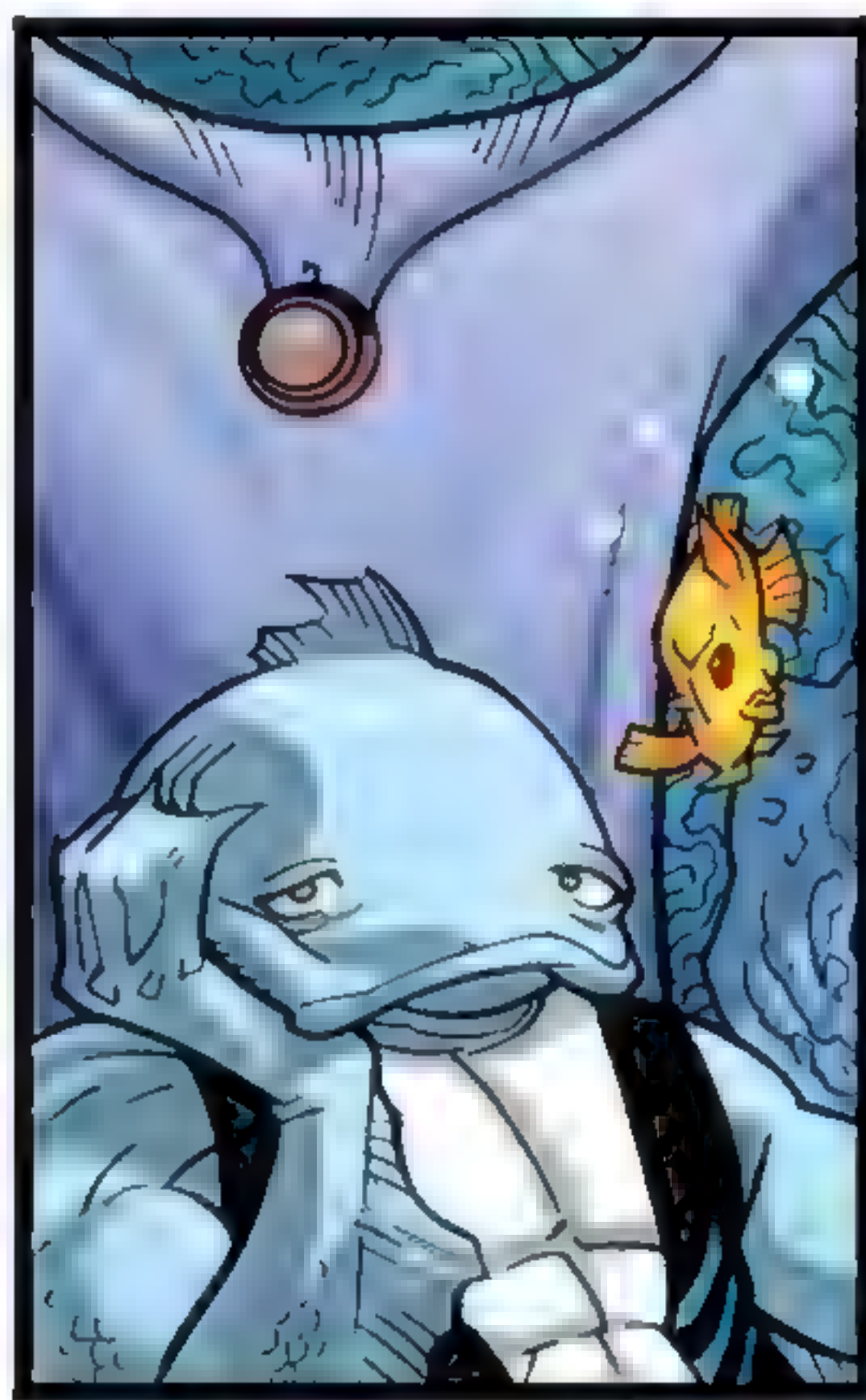
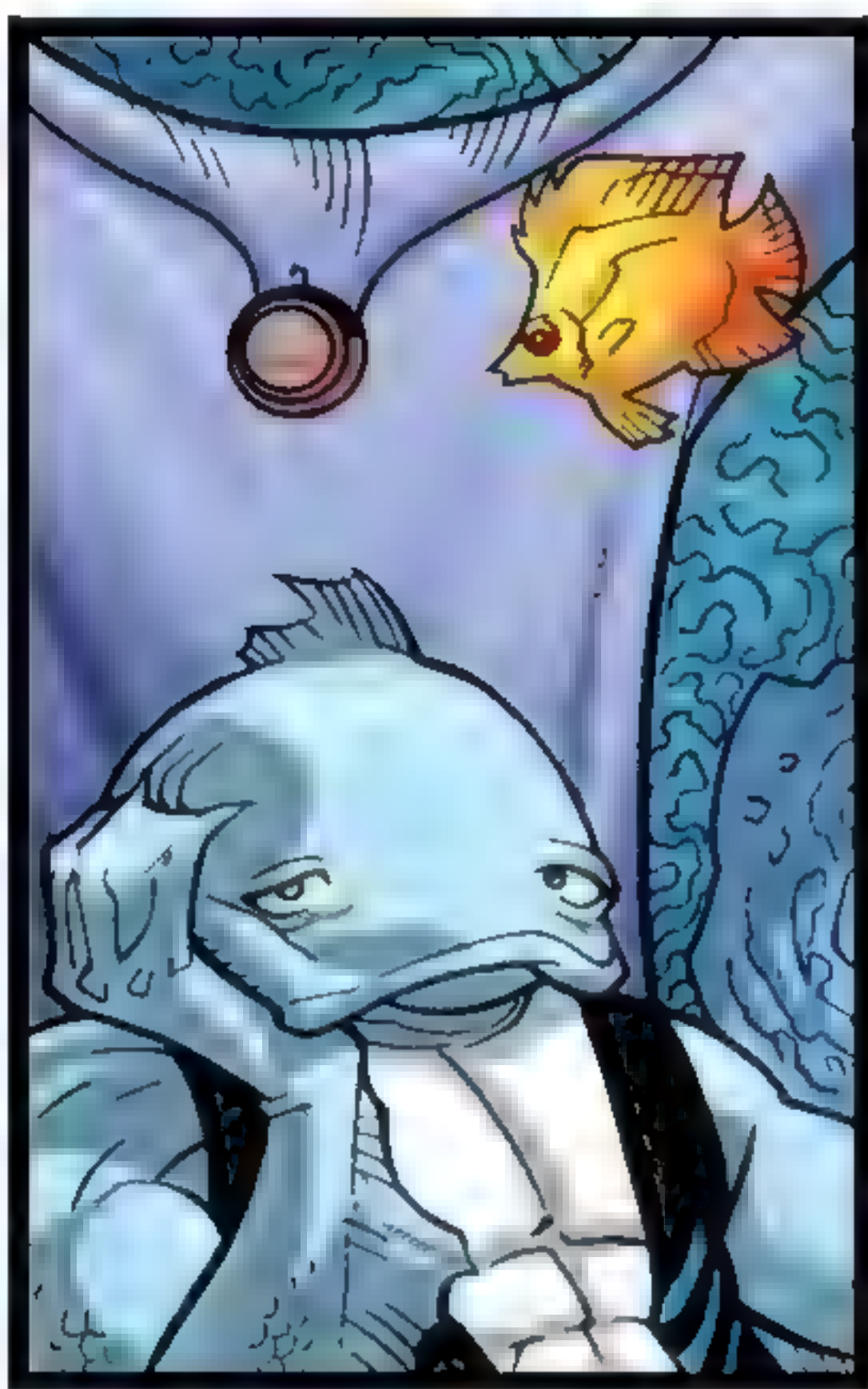
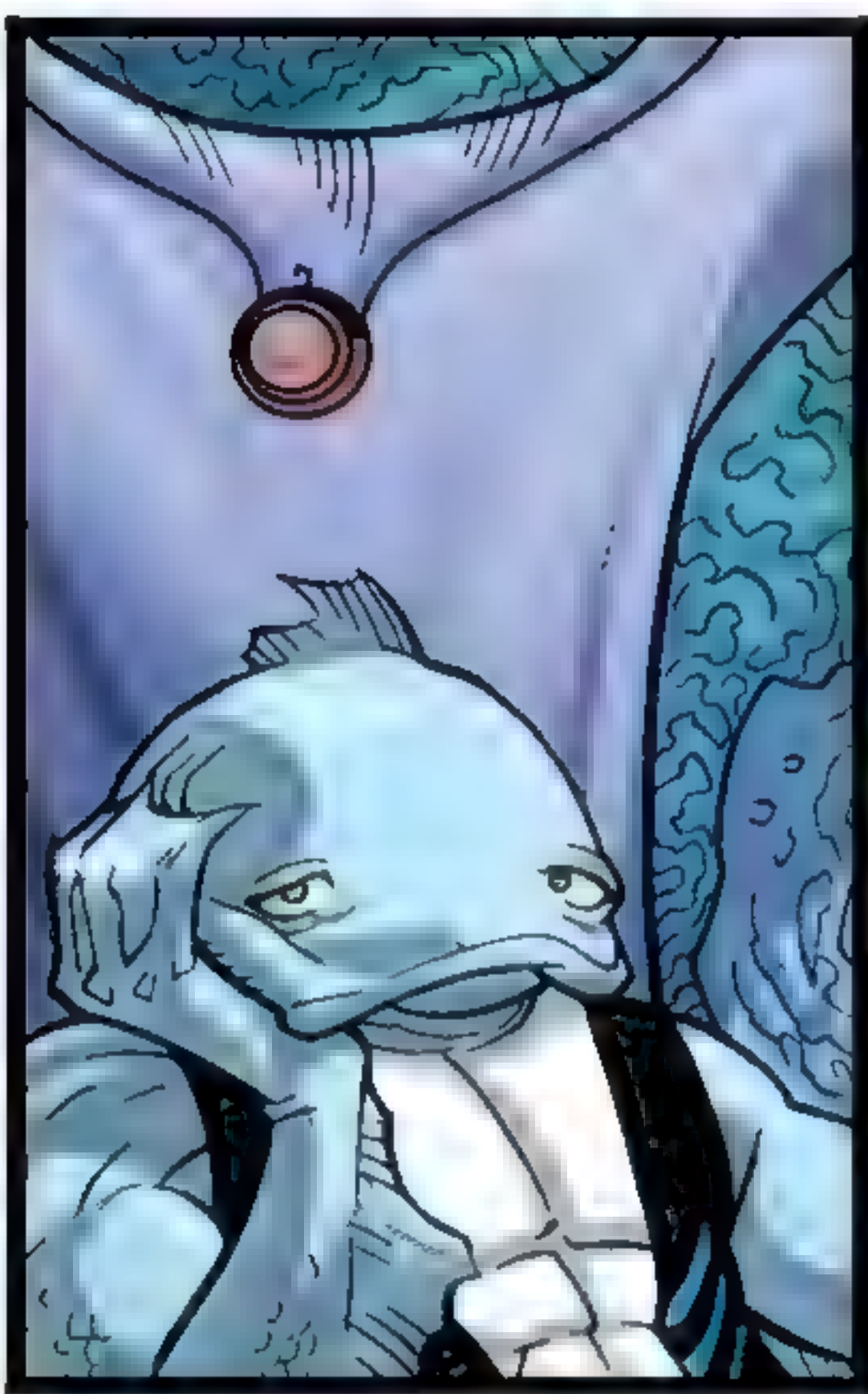
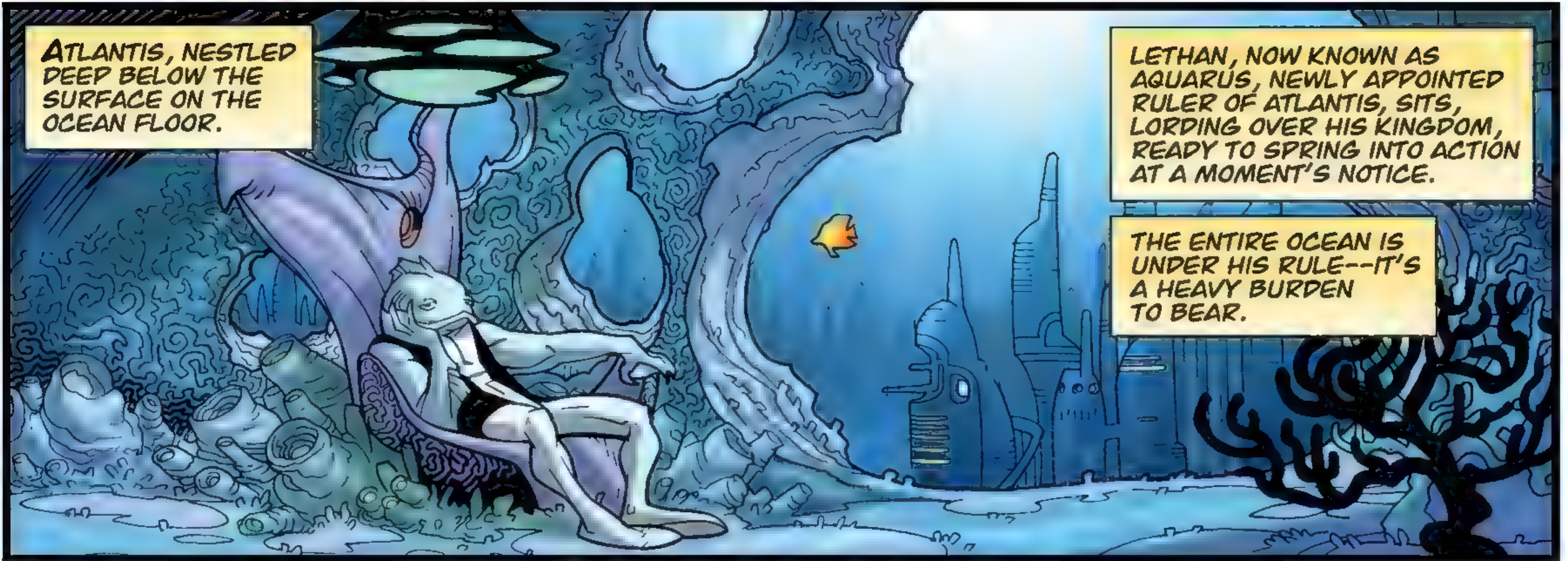
THANK
YOU!

THANK
YOU!

THANK
YOU!









SO...
WHAT ARE
WE GOING
TO DO?

MOVIE?
DINNER? THERE'S
THIS COOL PLACE
THAT'LL LET YOU
PAINT YOUR OWN
POTTERY.

NO, THAT'S
NOT WHAT I--AND
DEFINITELY NO TO THE
POTTERY THING. I
MEAN, WHAT ARE WE
GOING TO DO ABOUT
BEING TOGETHER?



I MEAN
WITH YOU LIVING
WITH YOUR
PARENTS--ME
LIVING WITH
MY MOM.



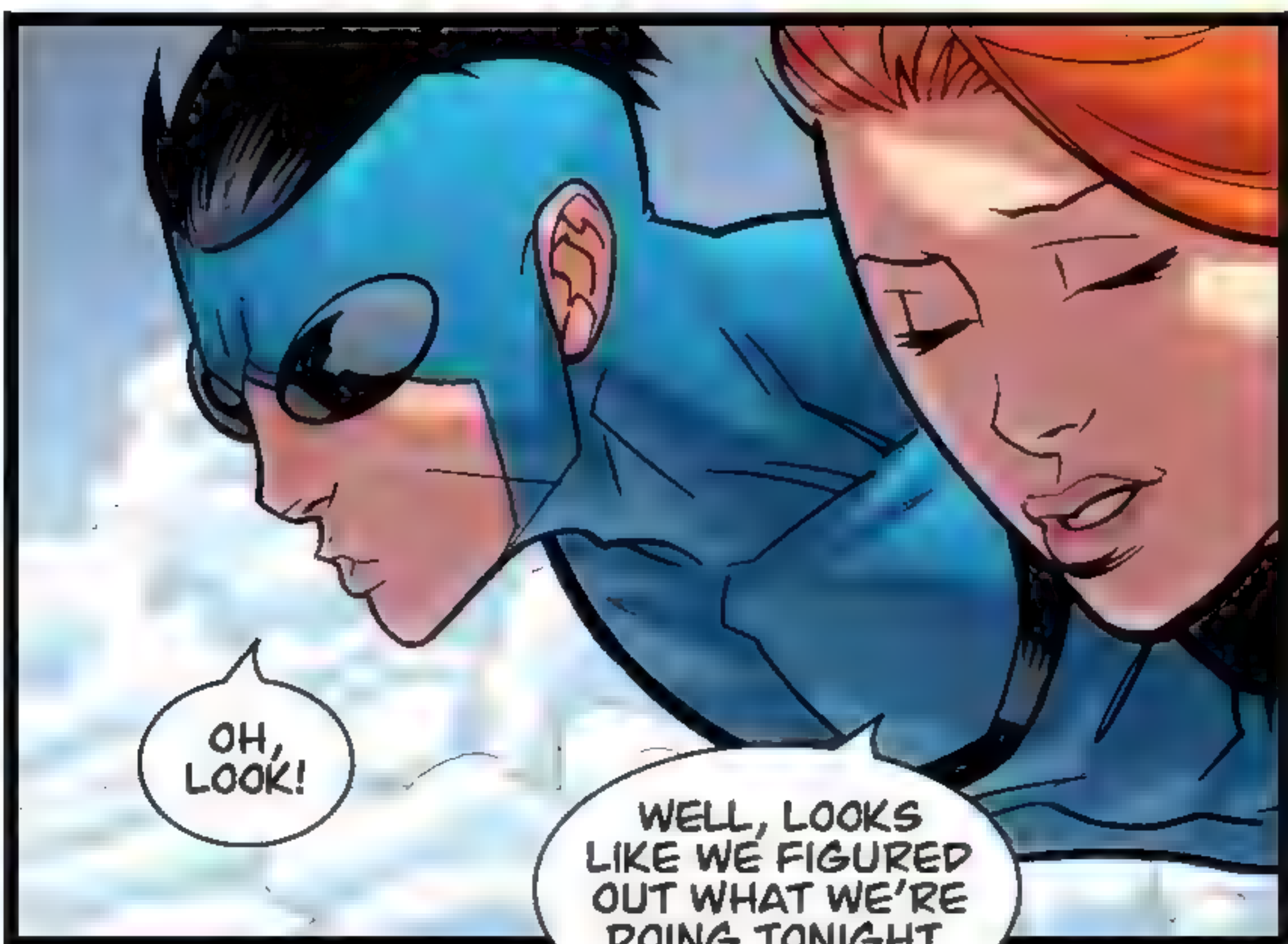
I'M
TAKING
CARE
OF IT.



OH, YOU
ARE, ARE
YOU?



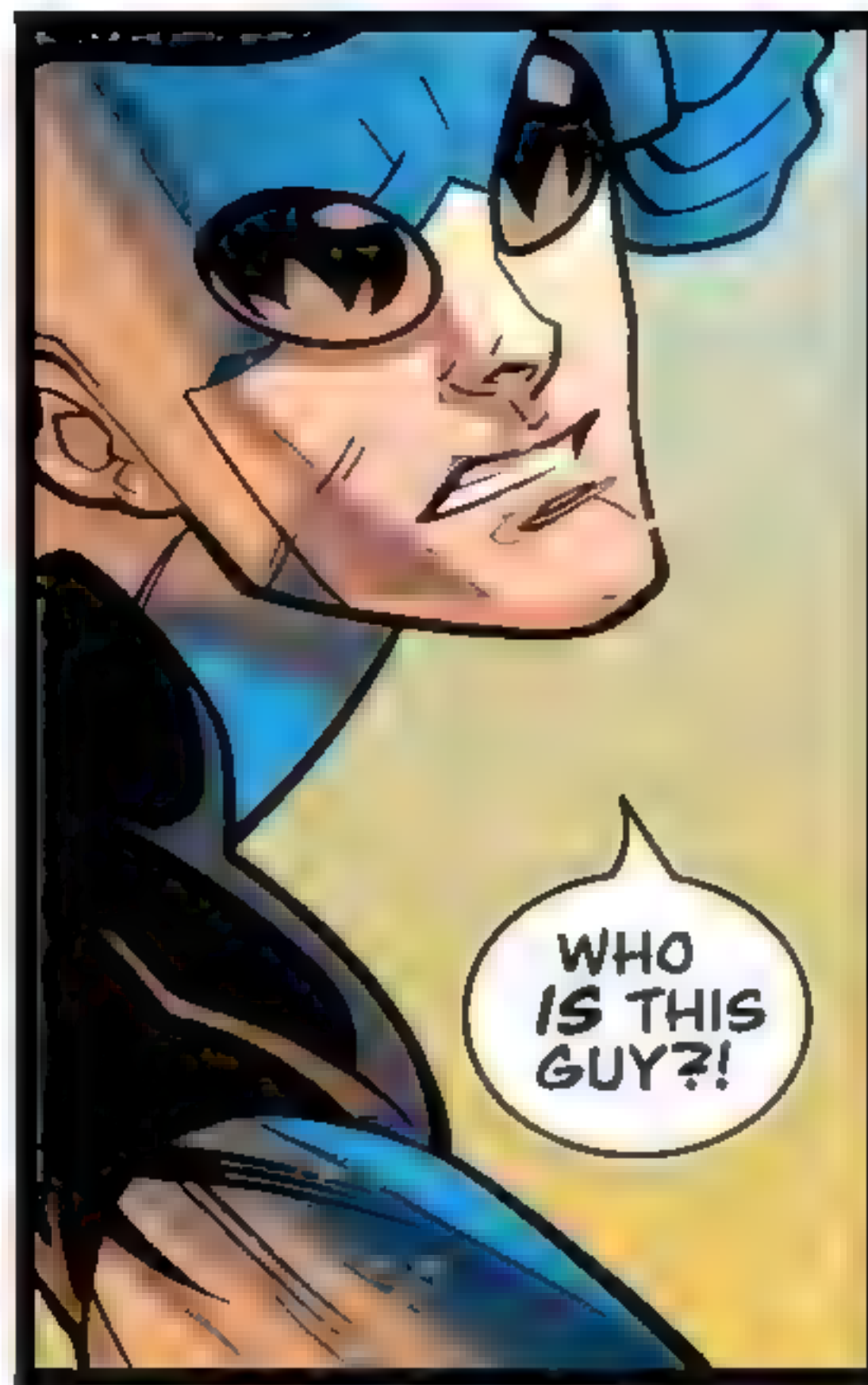
MAYBE
I AM.
SURPRISED?



OH,
LOOK!

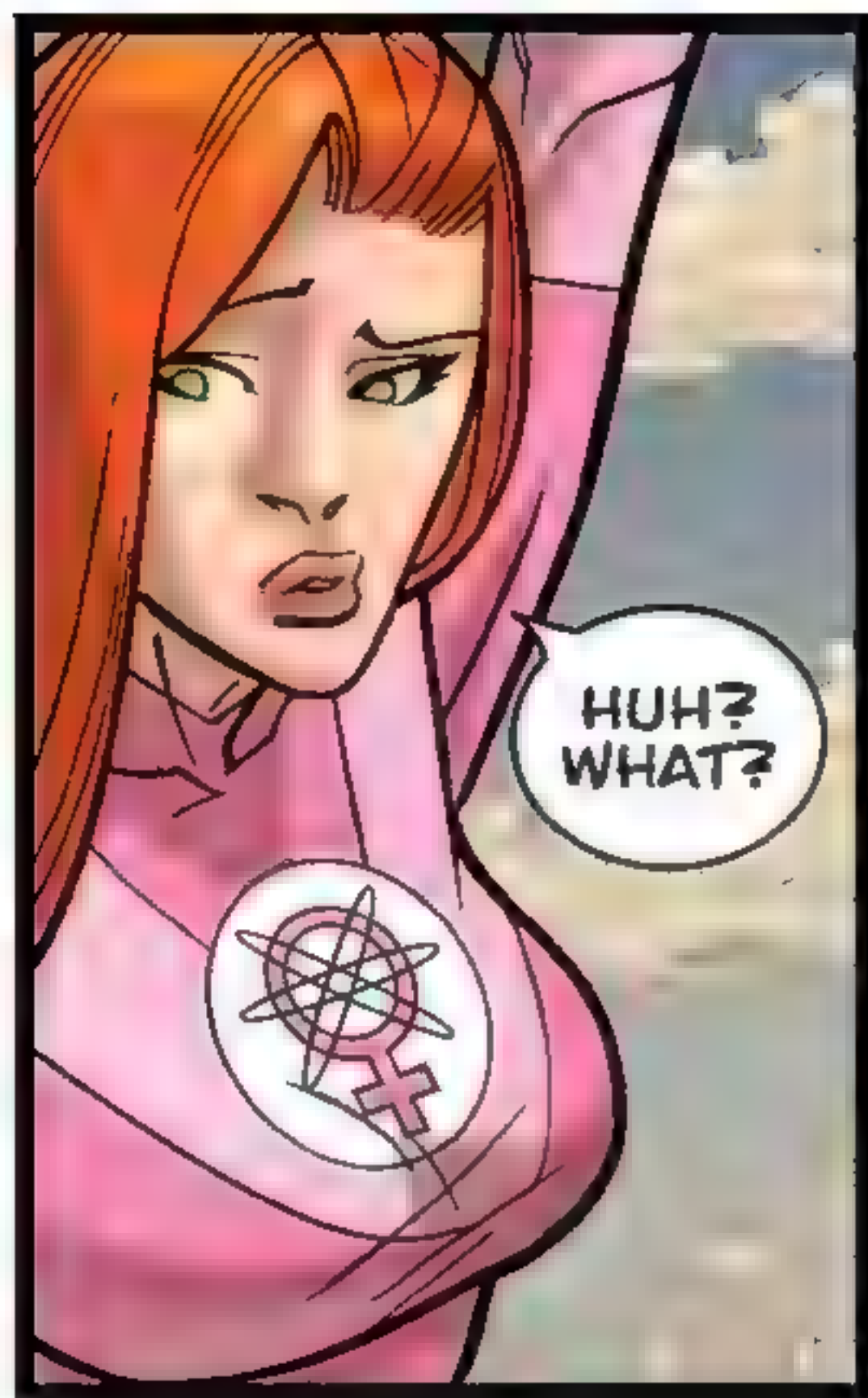
WELL, LOOKS
LIKE WE FIGURED
OUT WHAT WE'RE
DOING TONIGHT.







HEY--
WHAT THE
HECK WAS
THAT HE
SAID?



HUH?
WHAT?



HE SAID
HE SAW YOU
AT A PRISON
TODAY.

IS HE
CRAZY? DID
HE REALLY
SEE YOU?

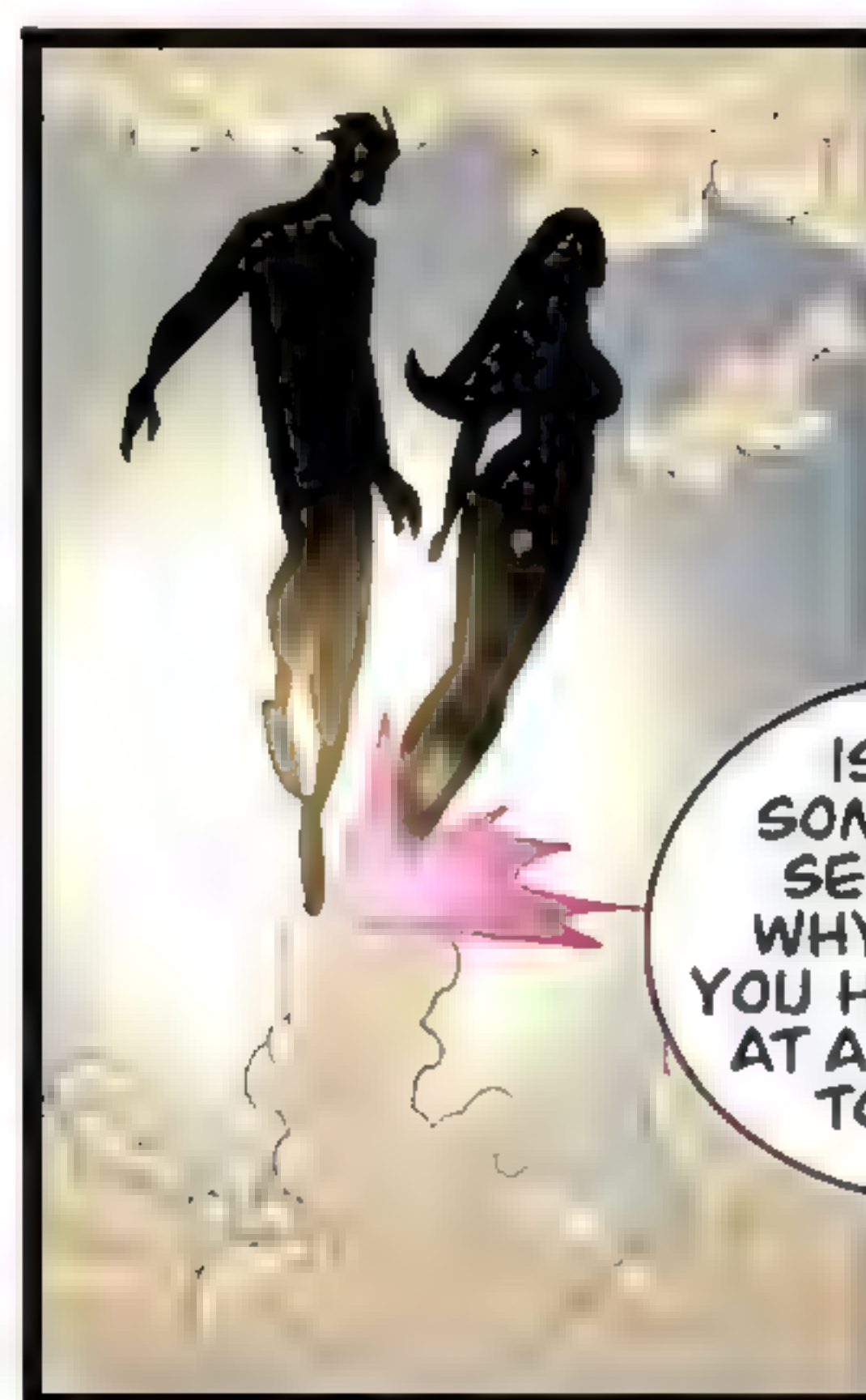


I DON'T
KNOW.
UM.

I DIDN'T
HEAR HIM
SAY THAT.



I KNOW WE
HAVEN'T BEEN
OFFICIALLY
TOGETHER FOR
VERY LONG--
BUT I CAN
TOTALLY TELL
WHEN YOU'RE
LYING.



IS THIS
SOMETHING
SERIOUS?
WHY WOULD
YOU HAVE BEEN
AT A PRISON
TODAY?



EVE?



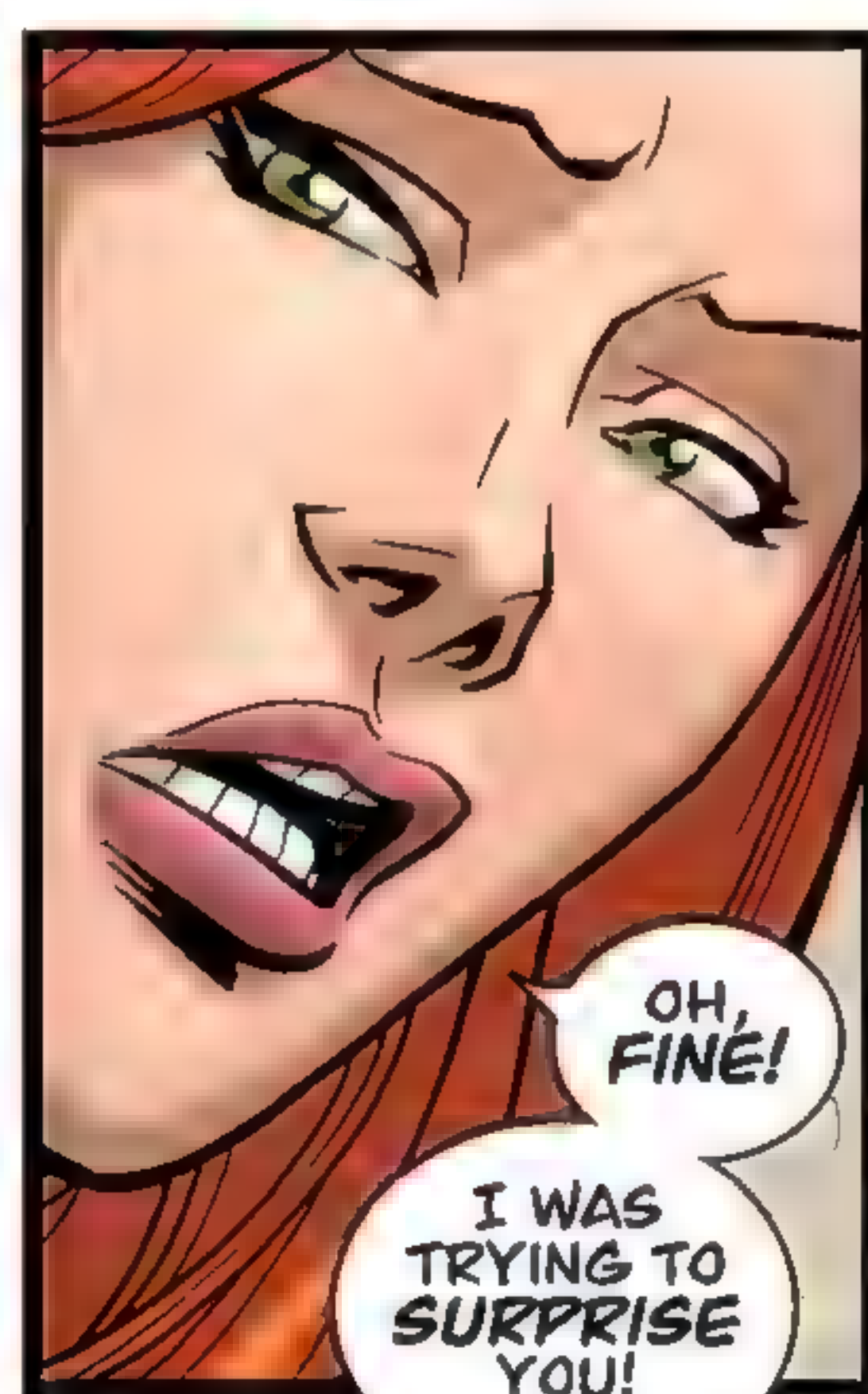
IT'S NOT
SOMETHING
SERIOUS.

CAN
WE DROP
IT?



I DON'T
THINK SO.
NO.

DEFINITELY
NOT.



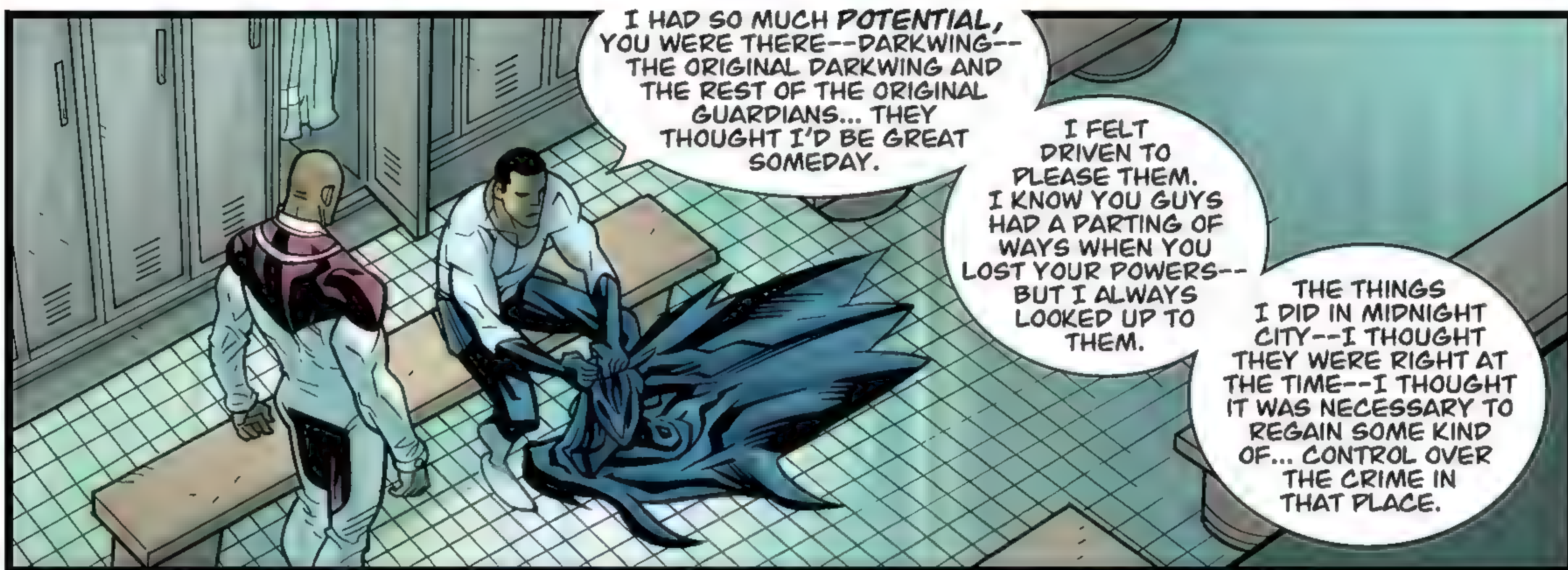
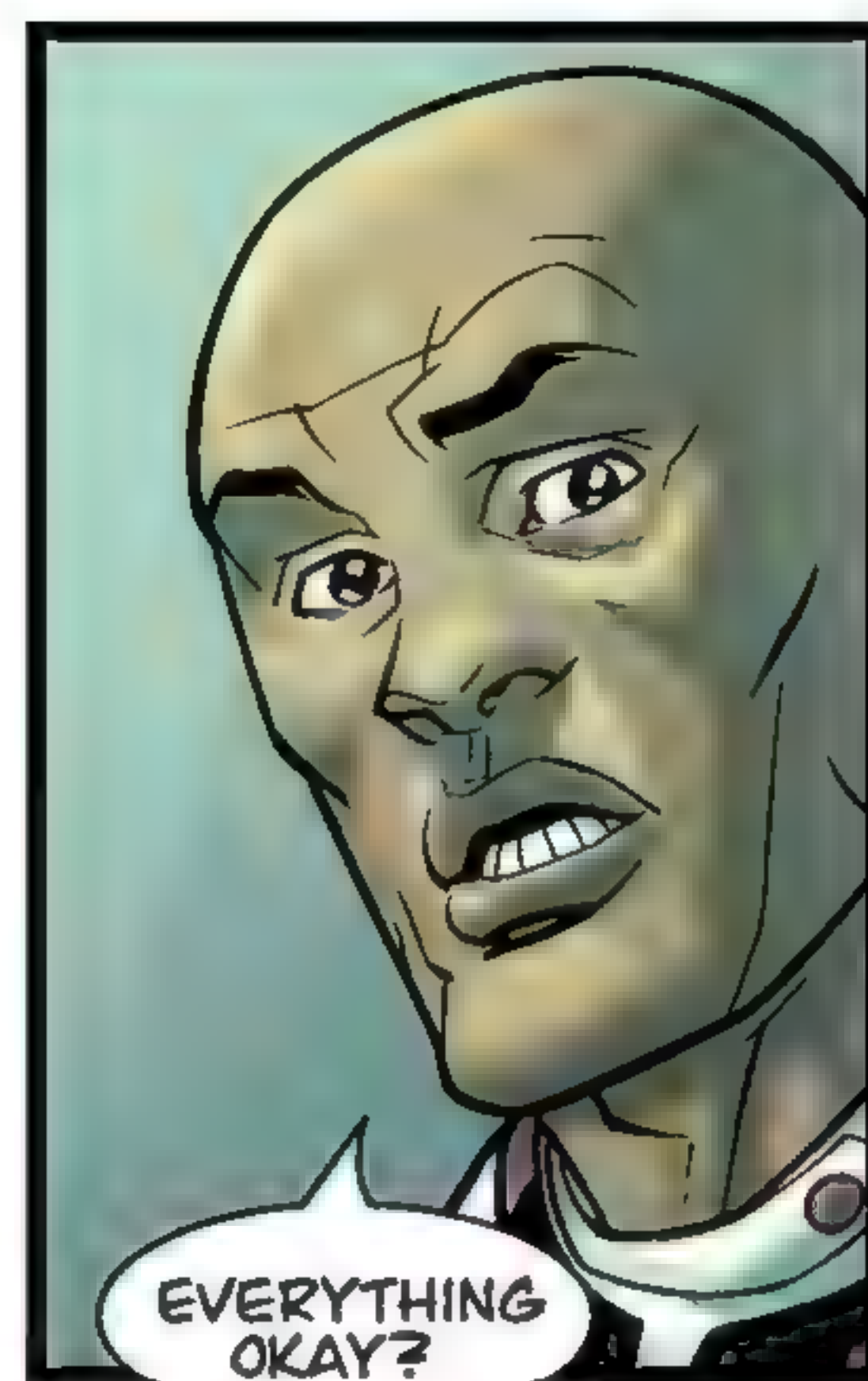
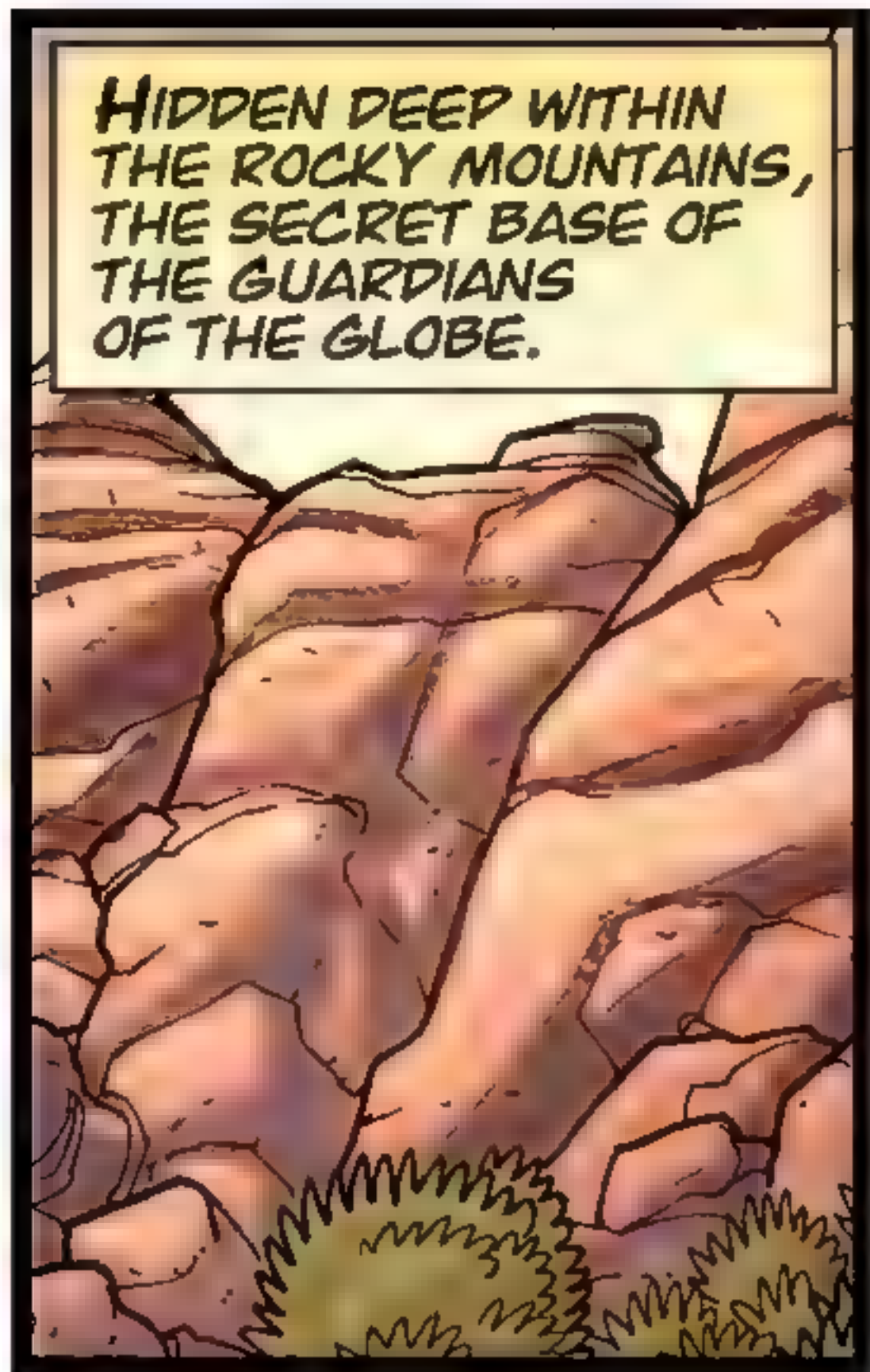
OH,
FINE!

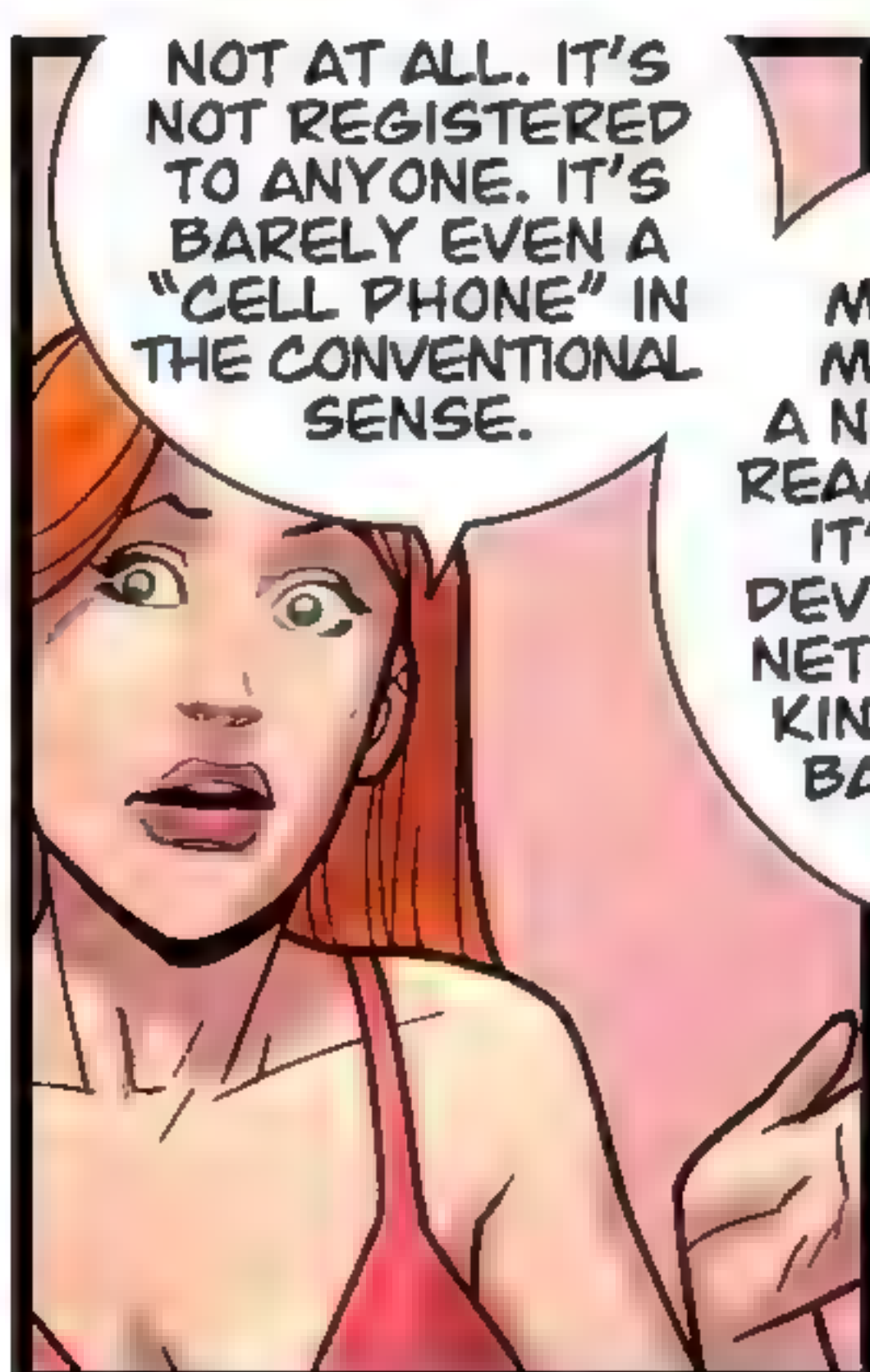
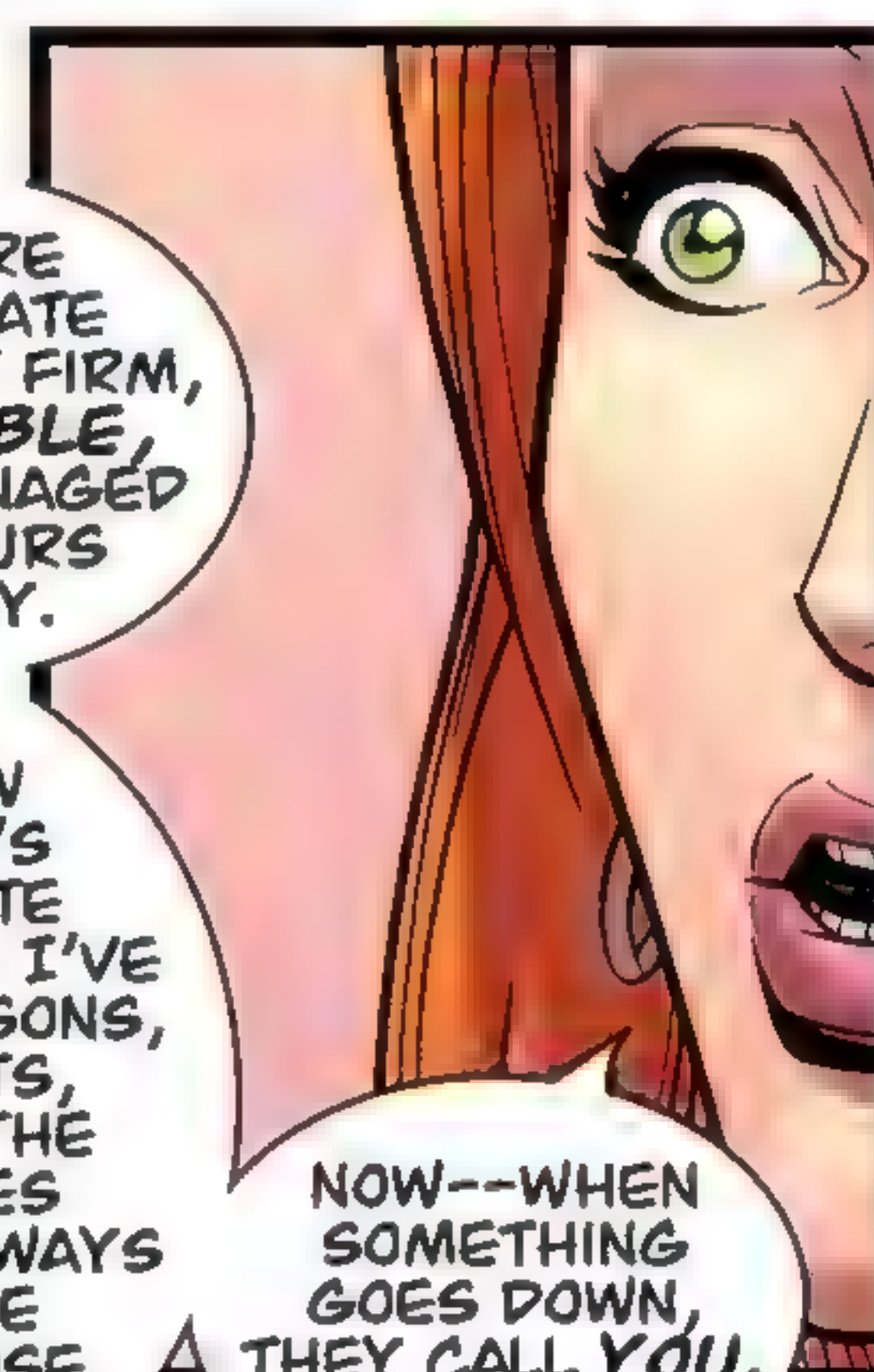
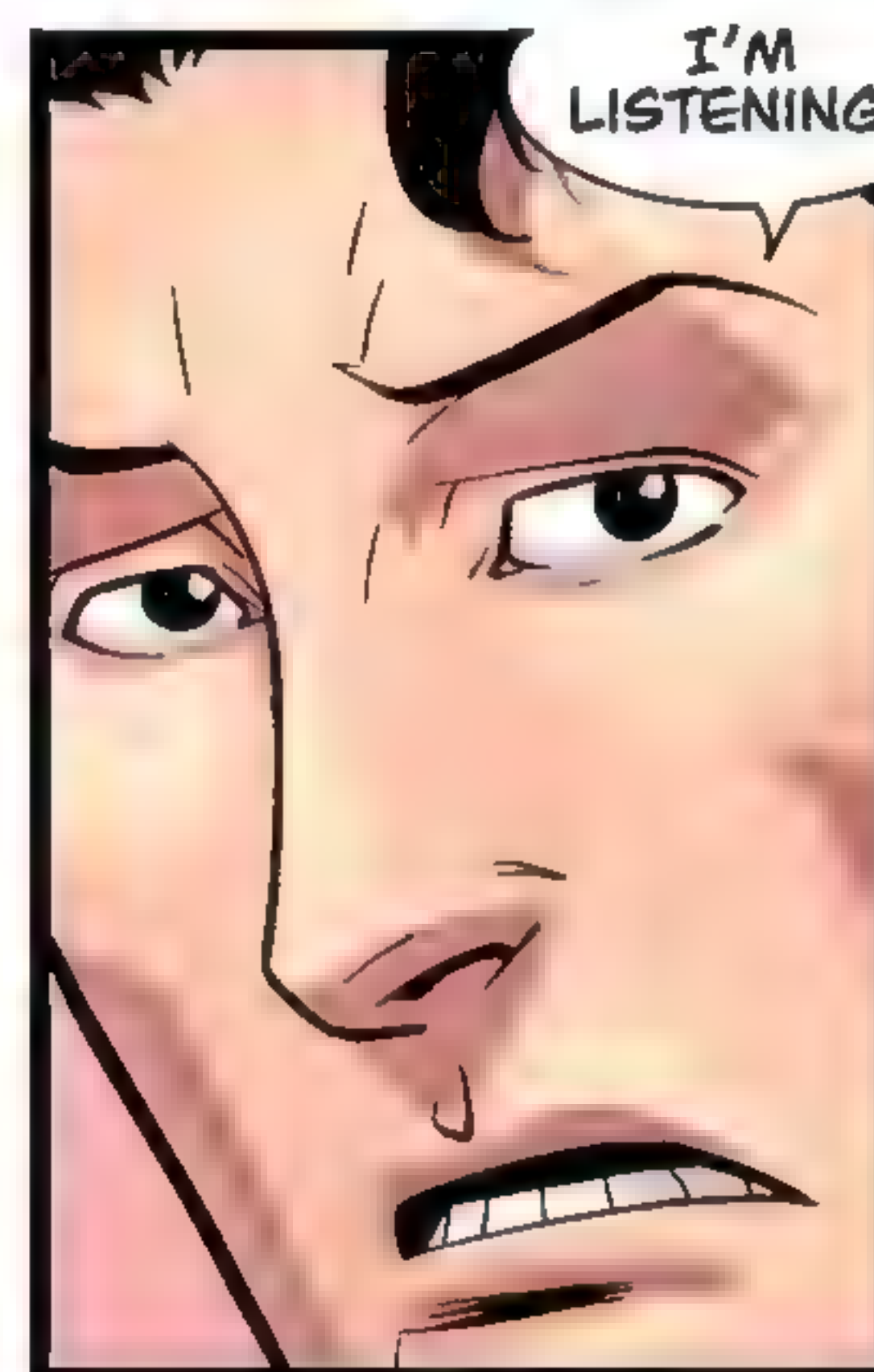
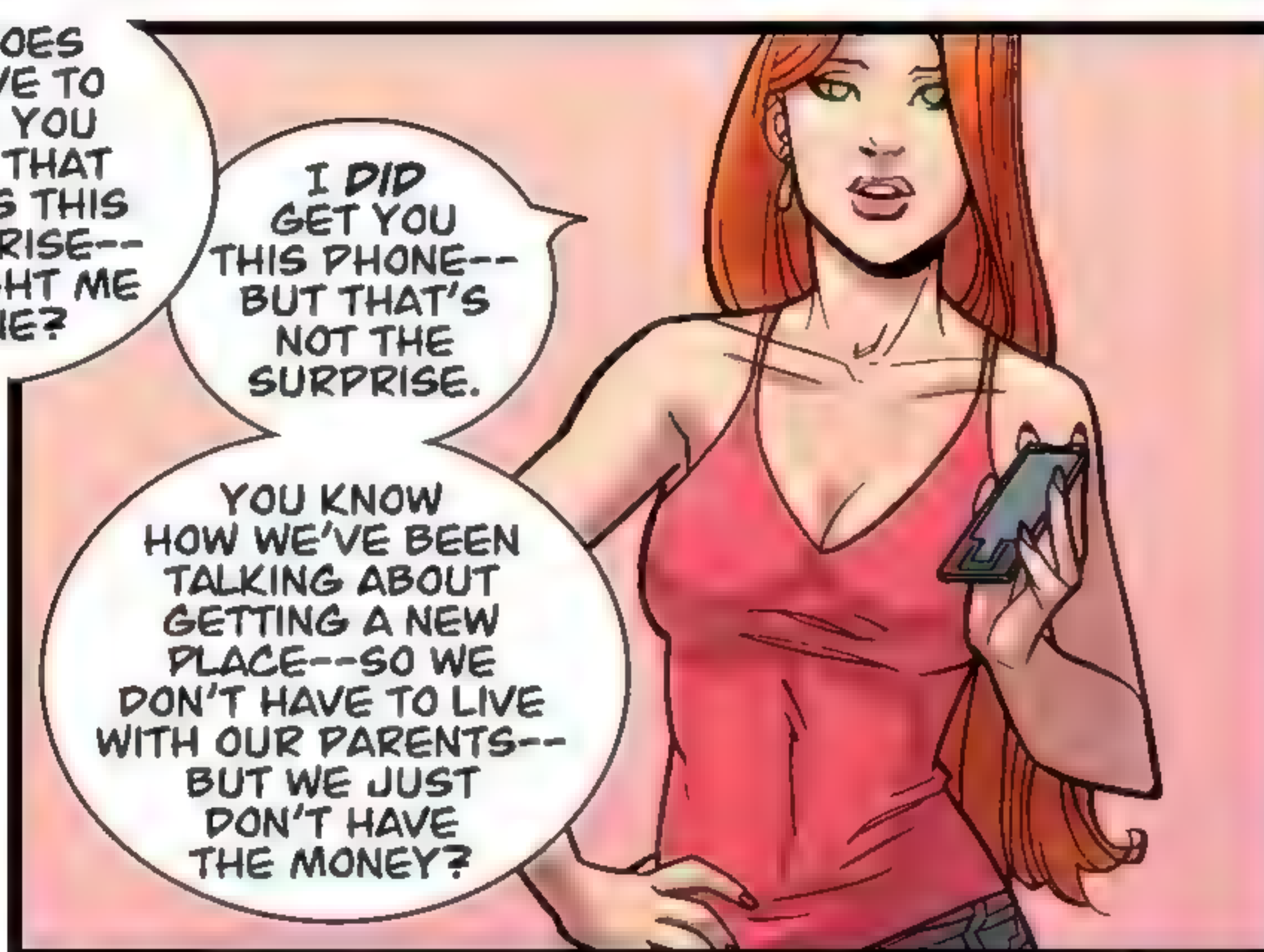
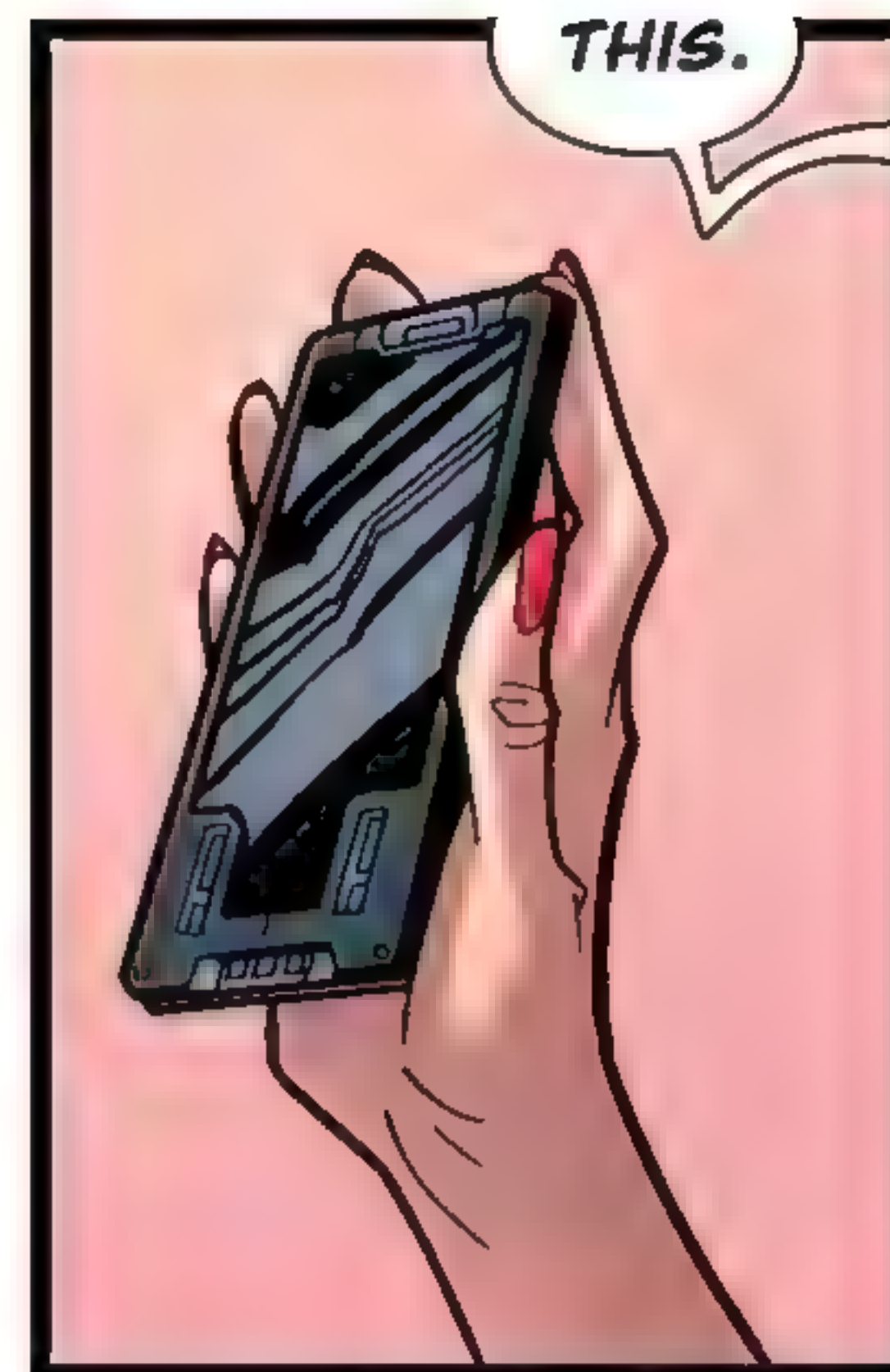
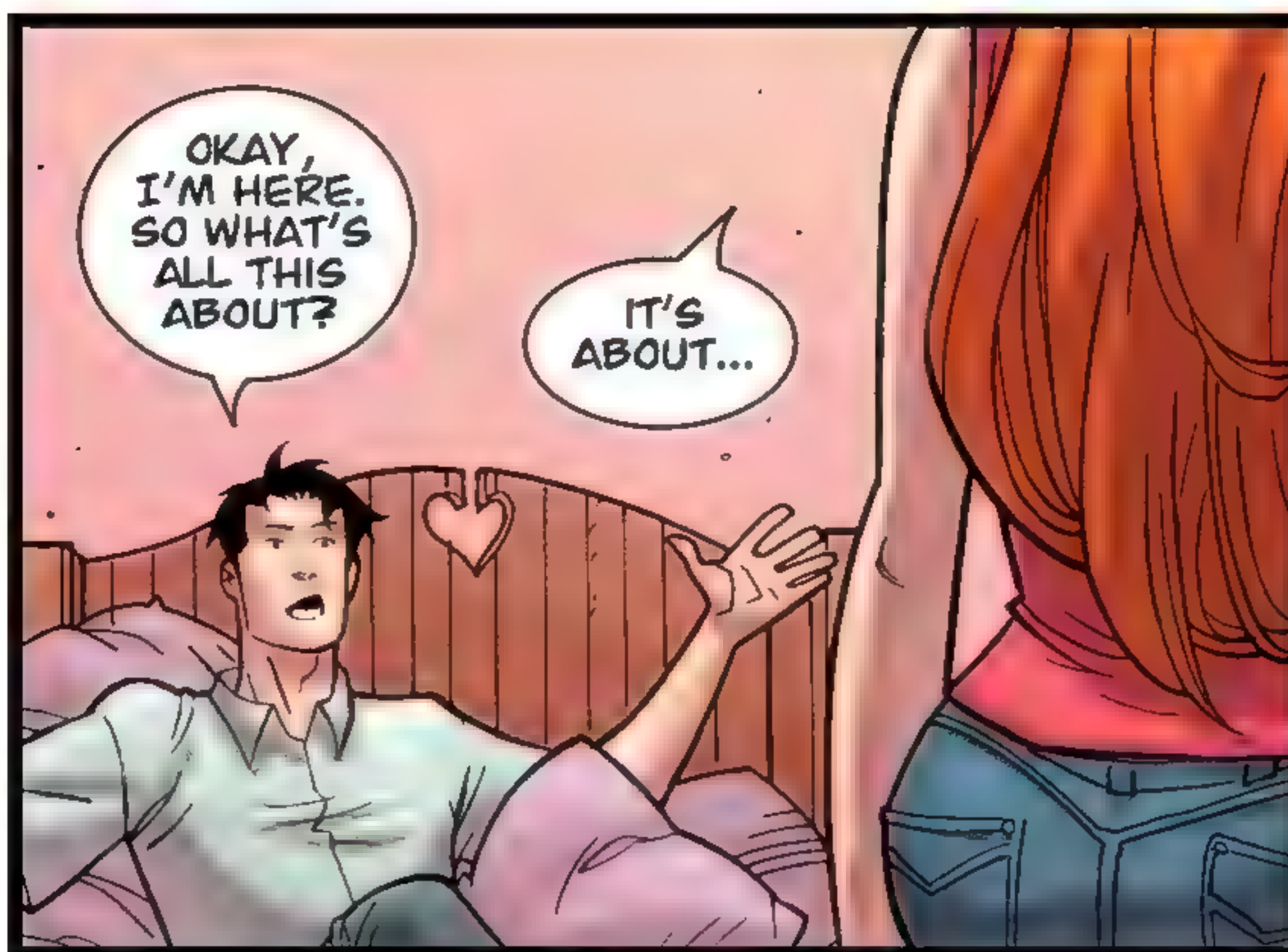
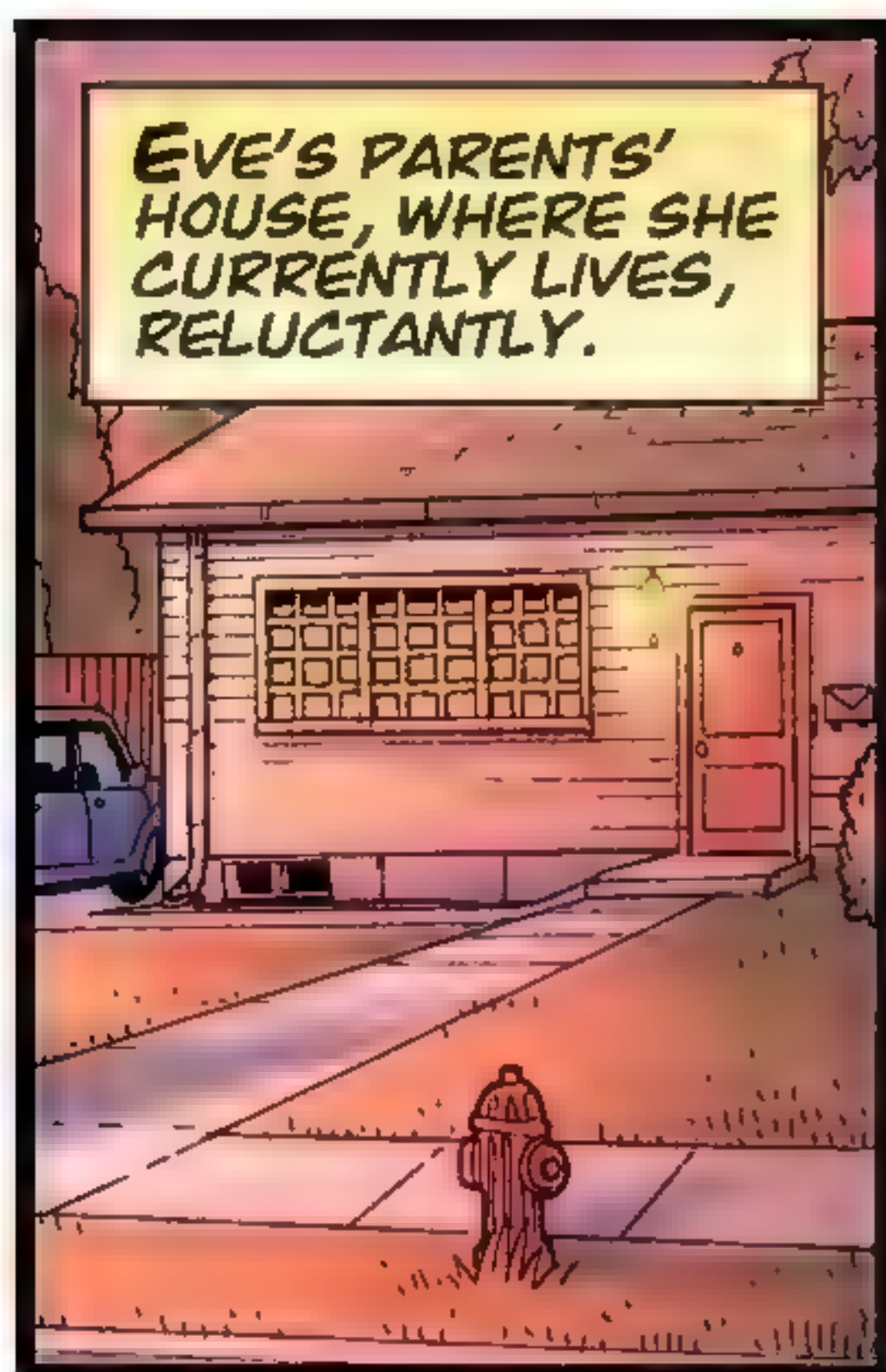
I WAS
TRYING TO
SURPRISE
YOU!

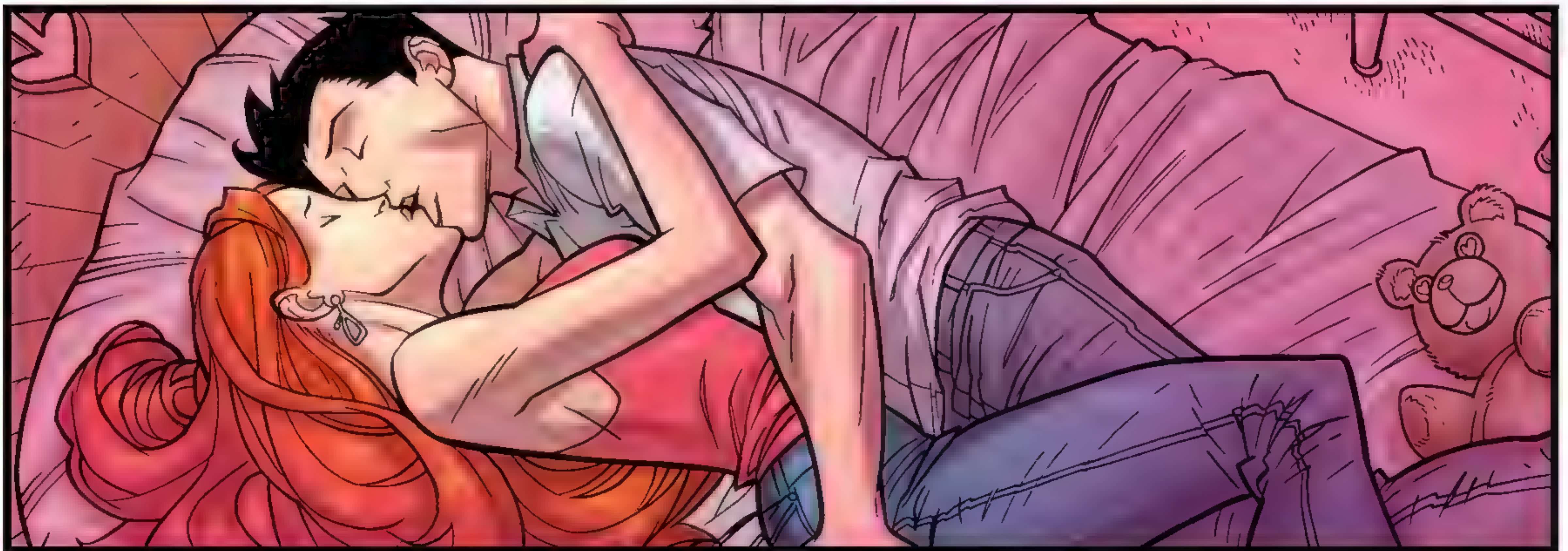
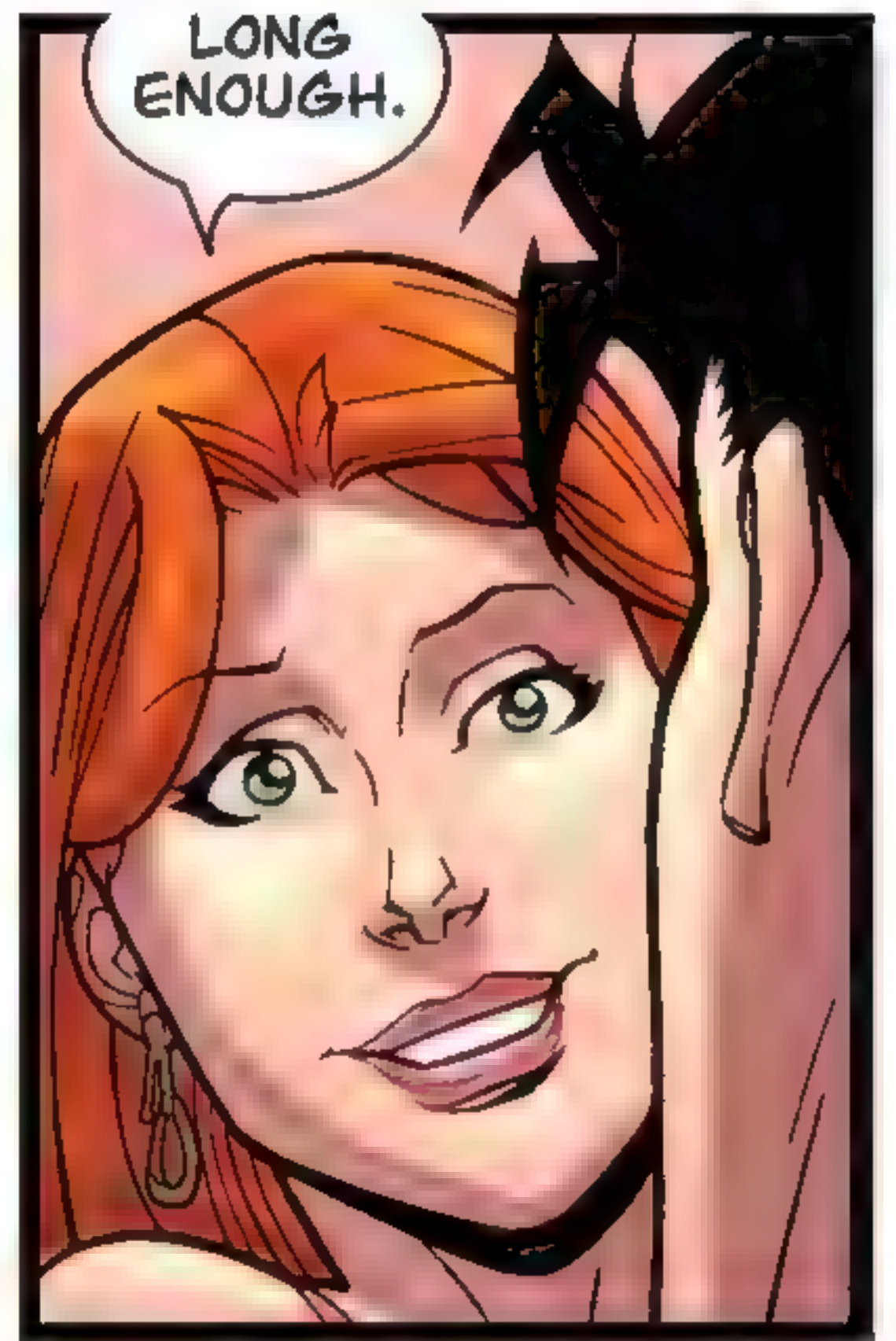
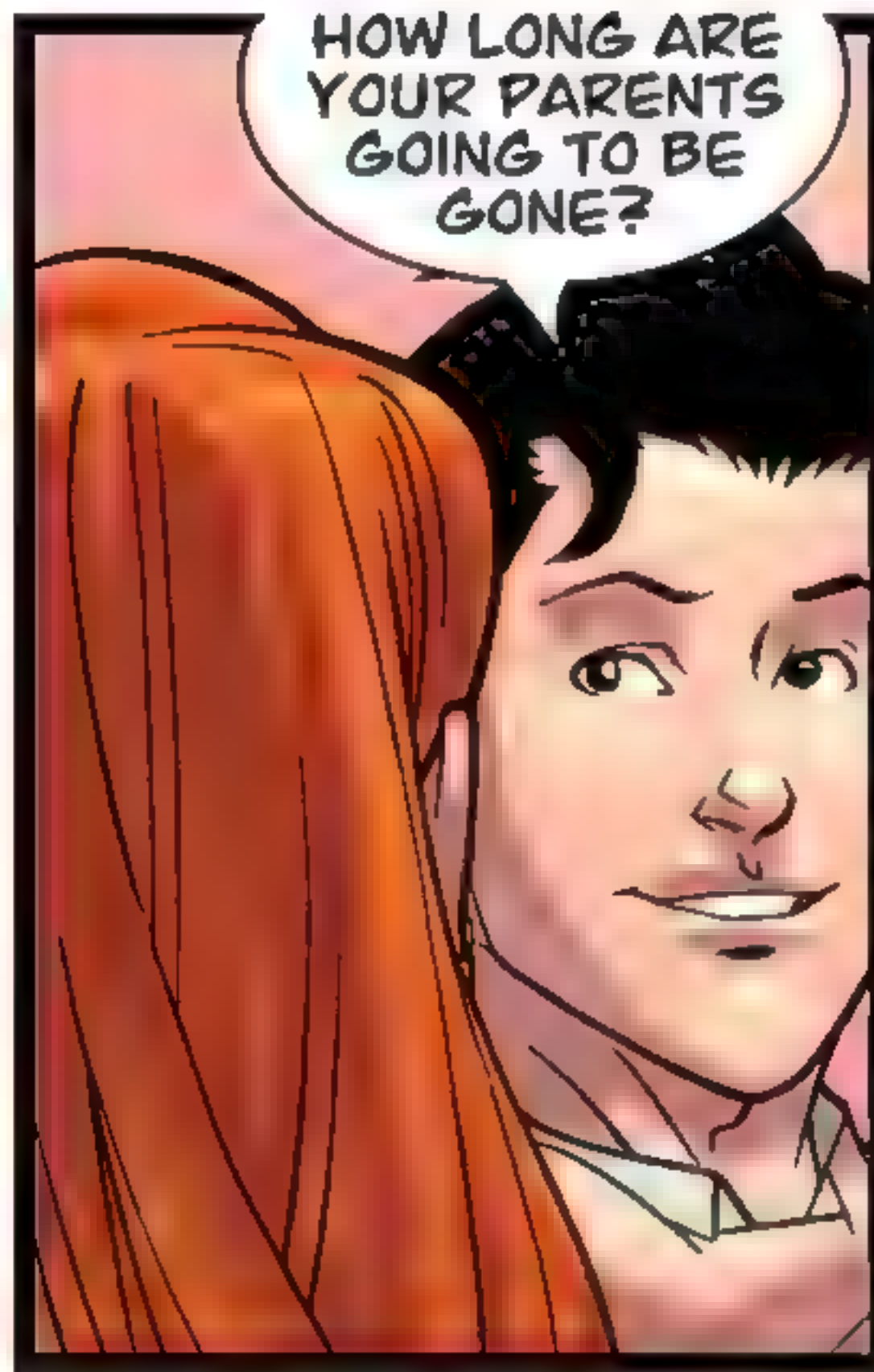
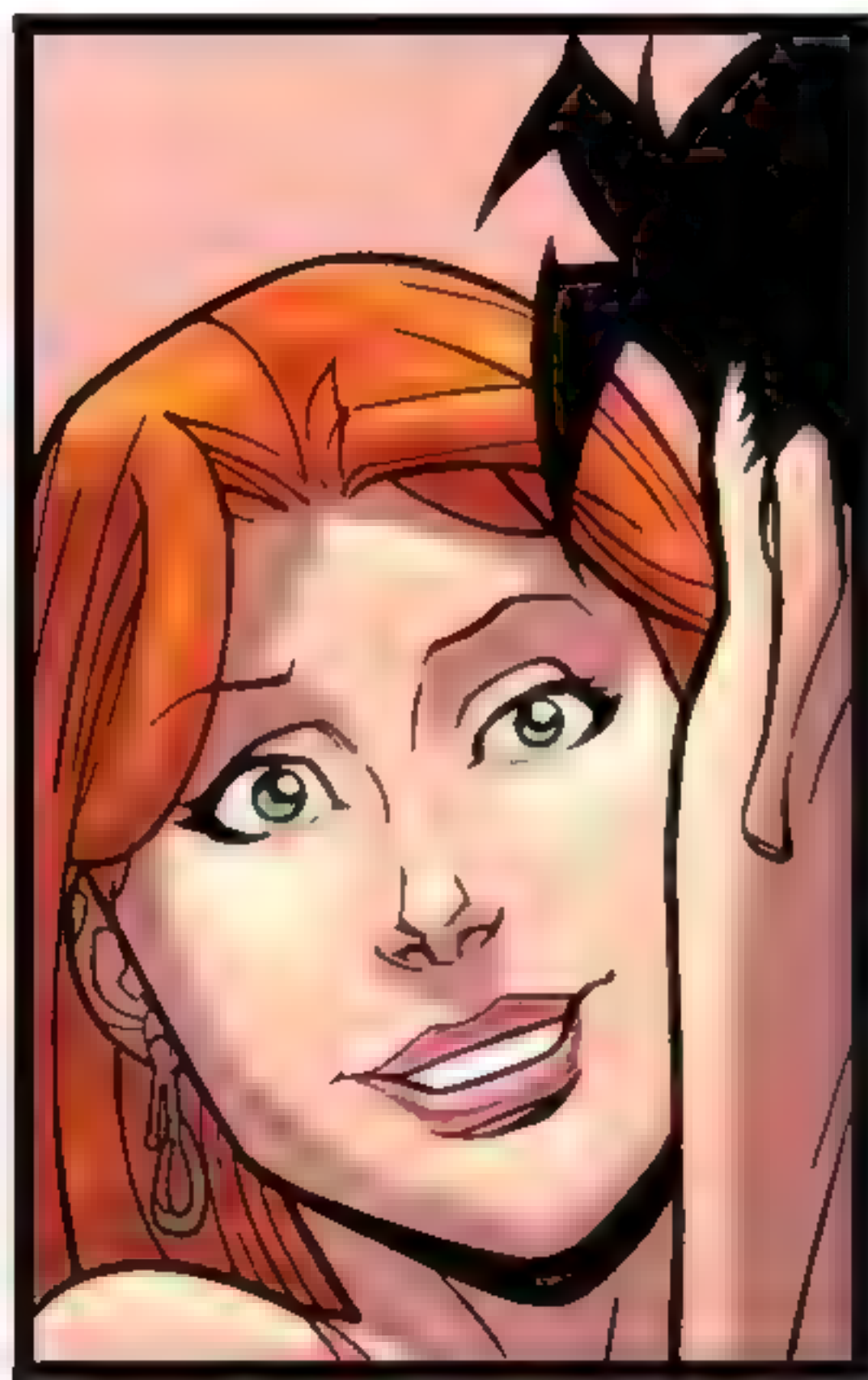
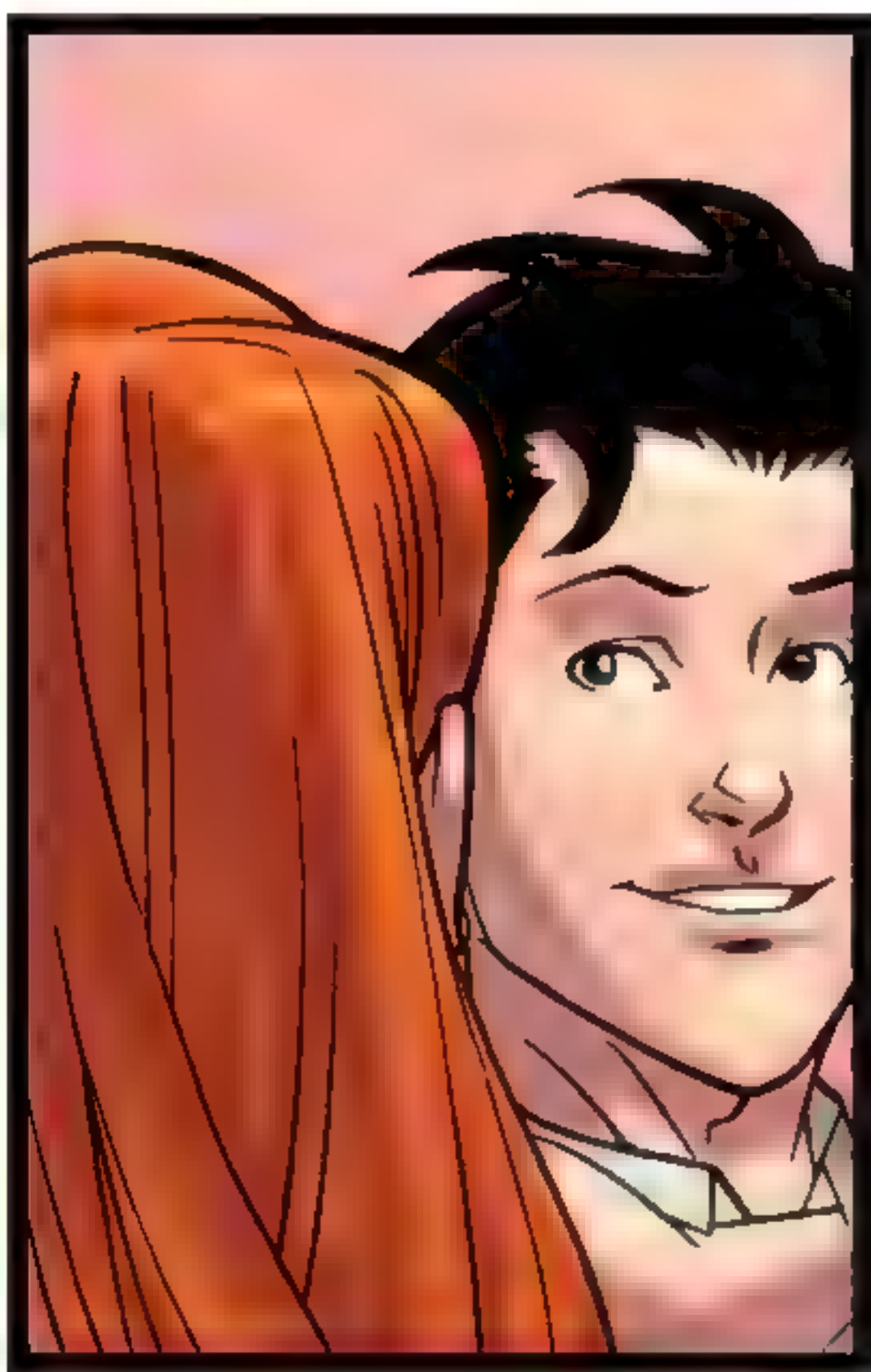
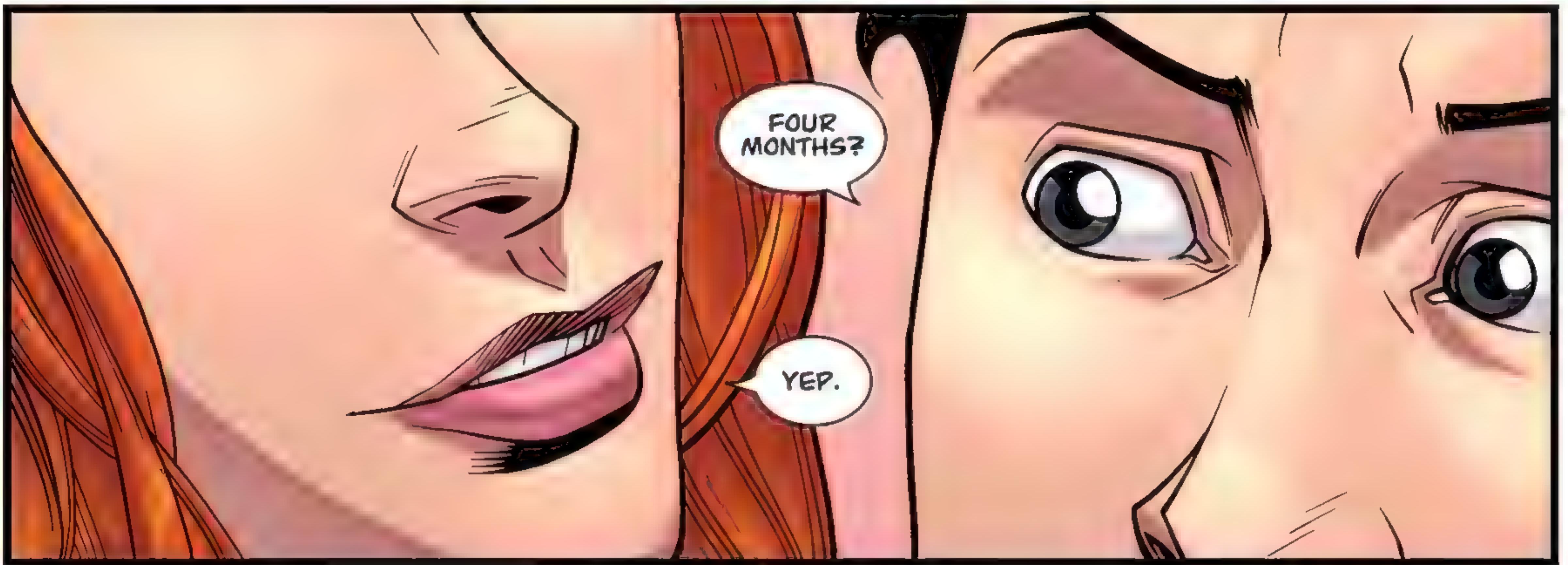
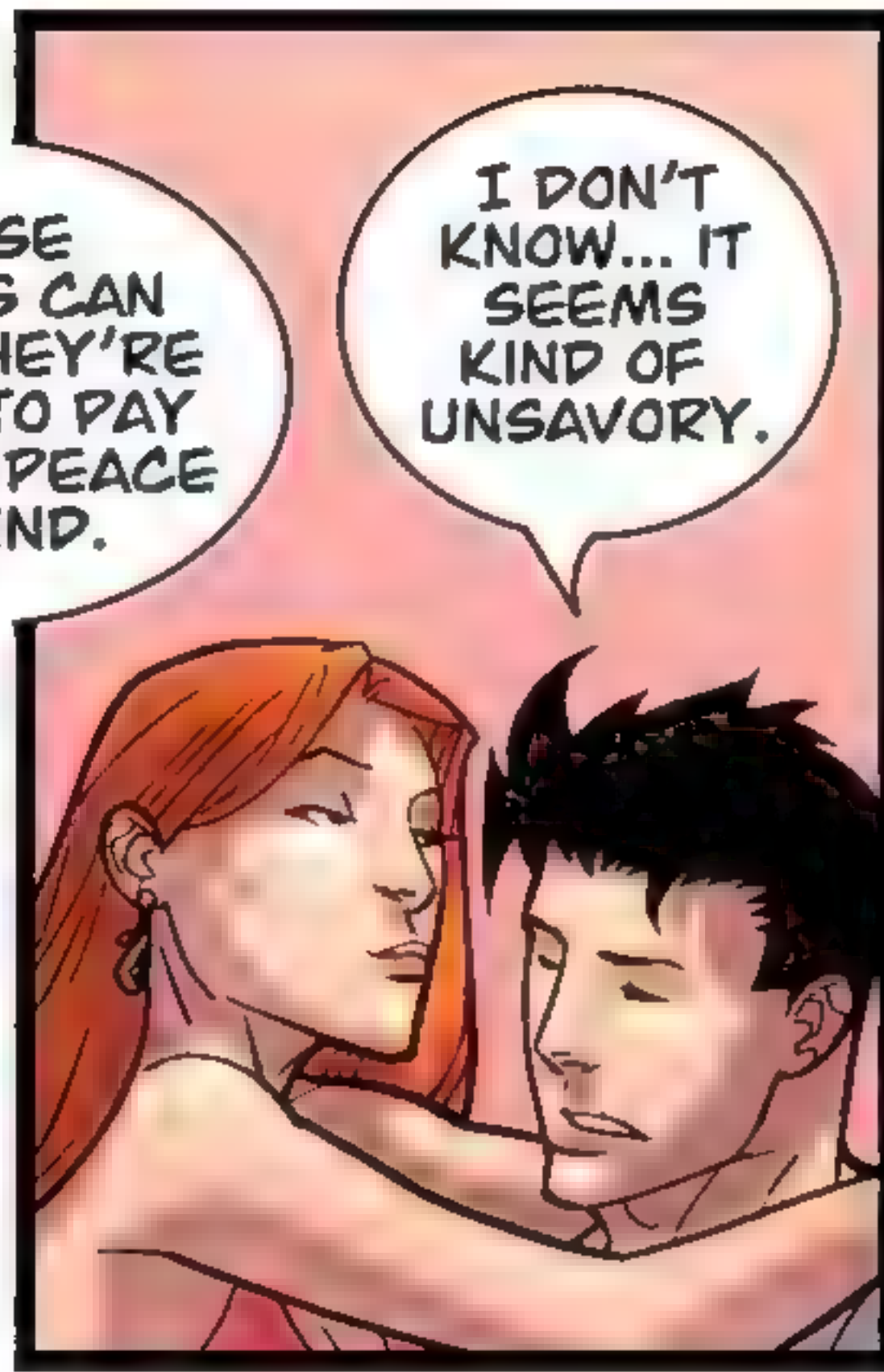
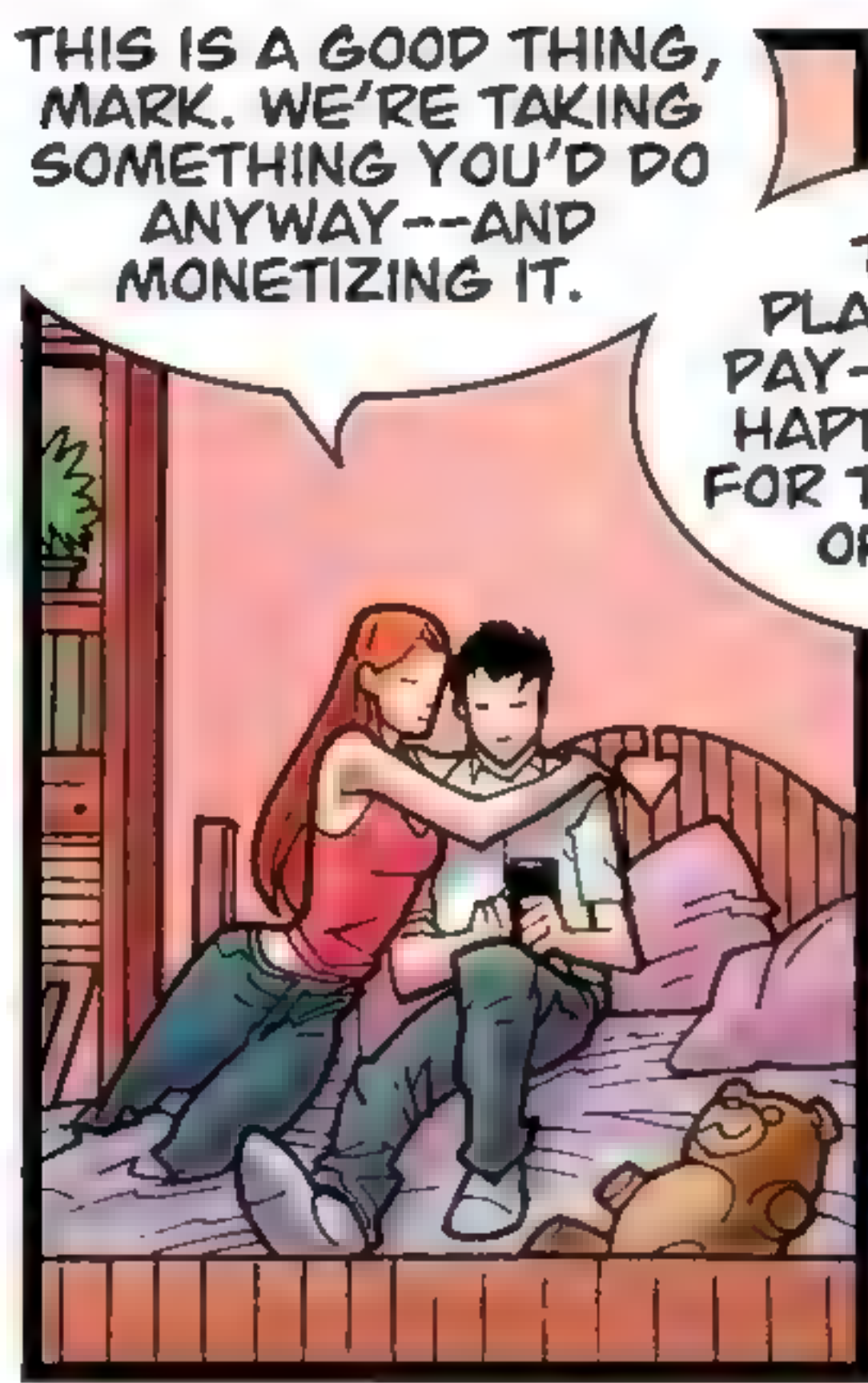


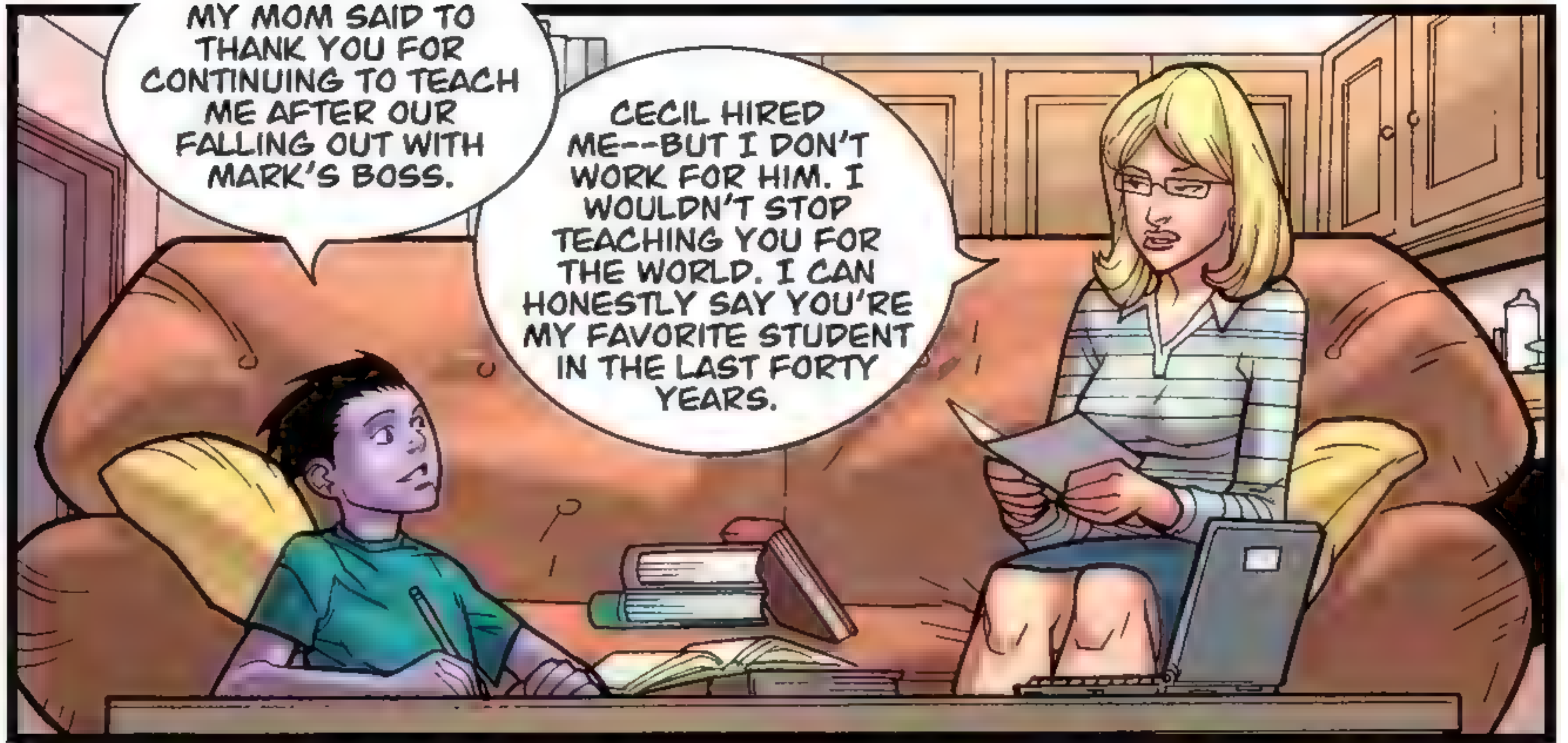
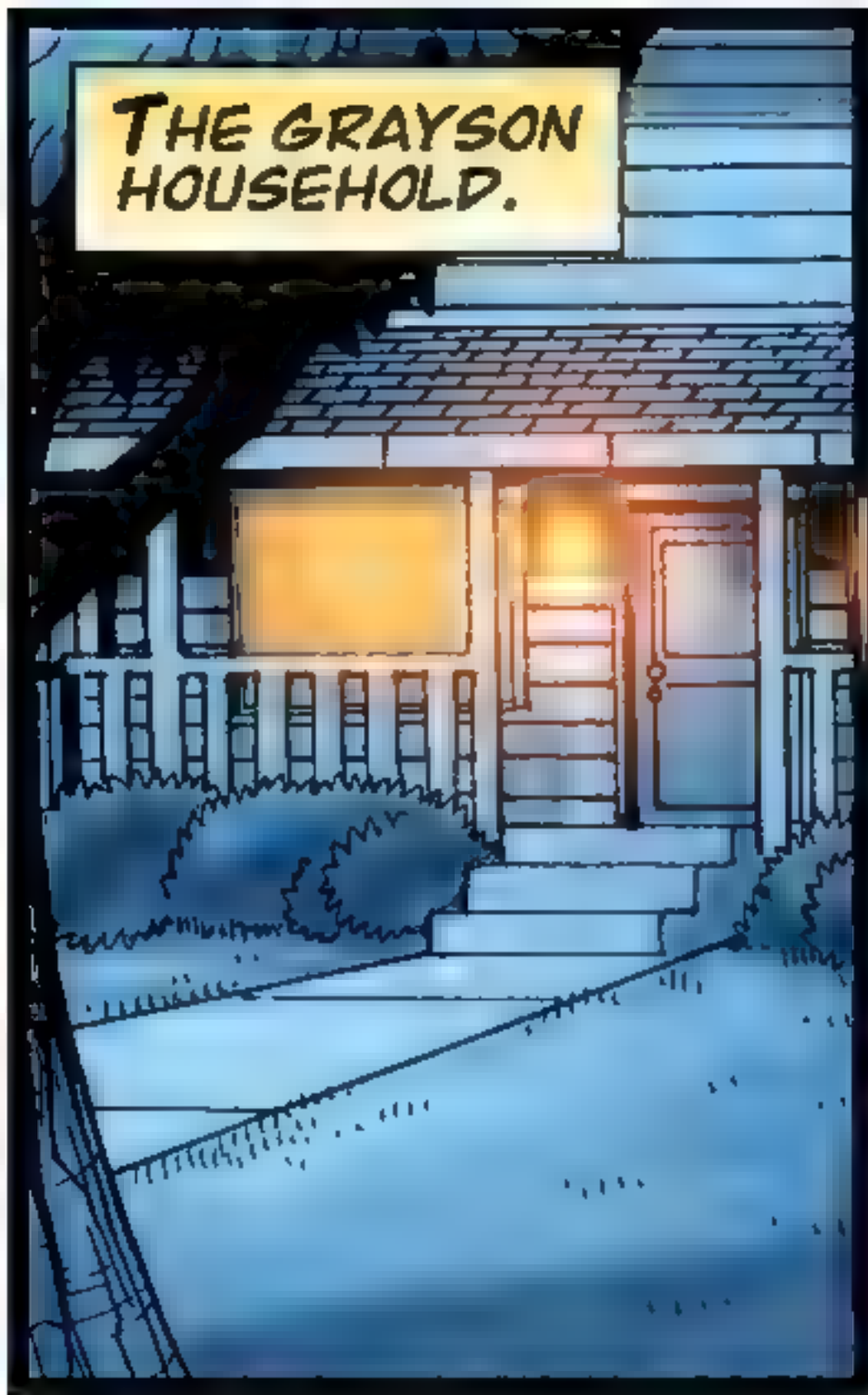
FOLLOW
ME TO MY
PARENTS'
HOUSE.

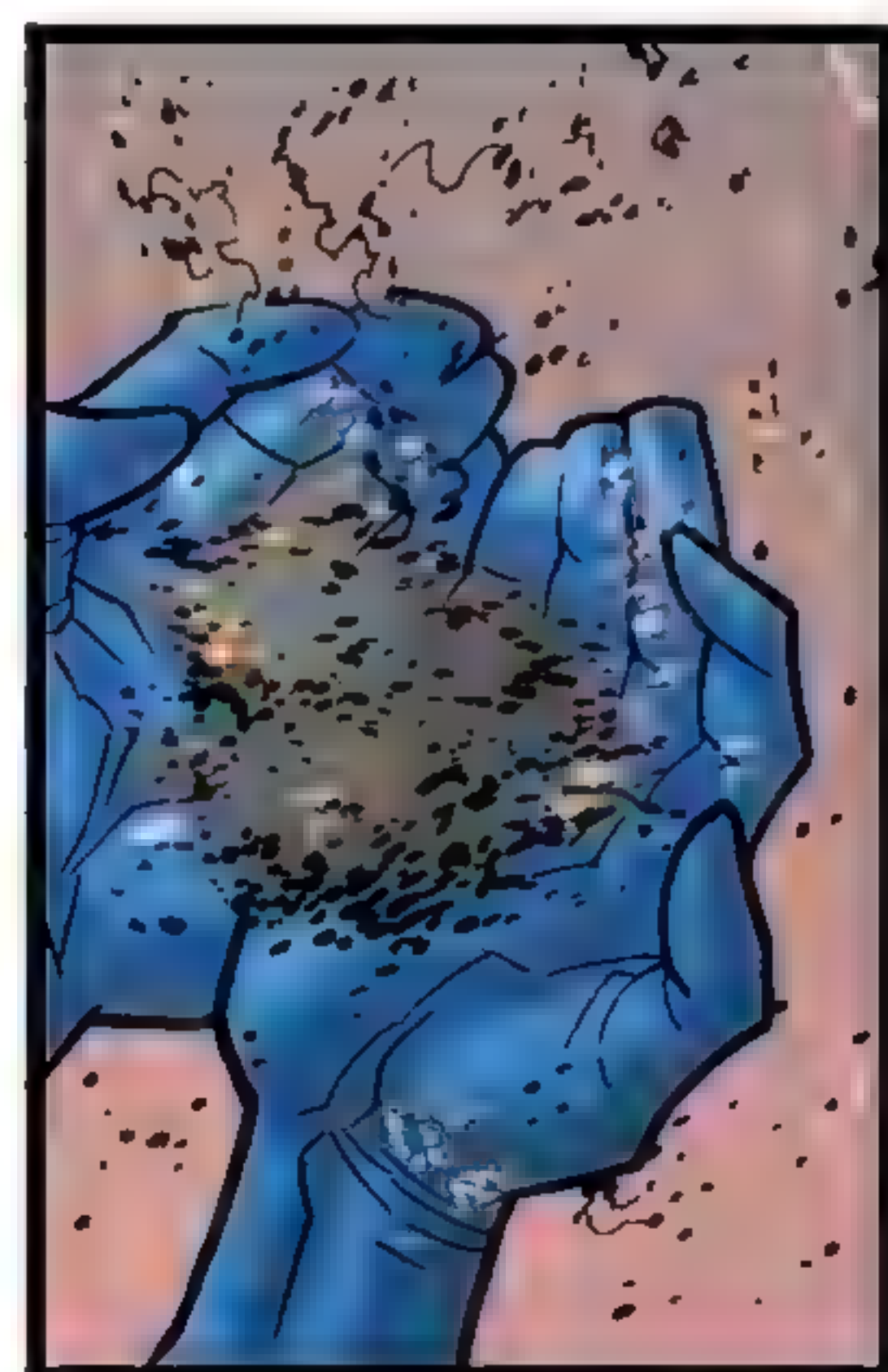
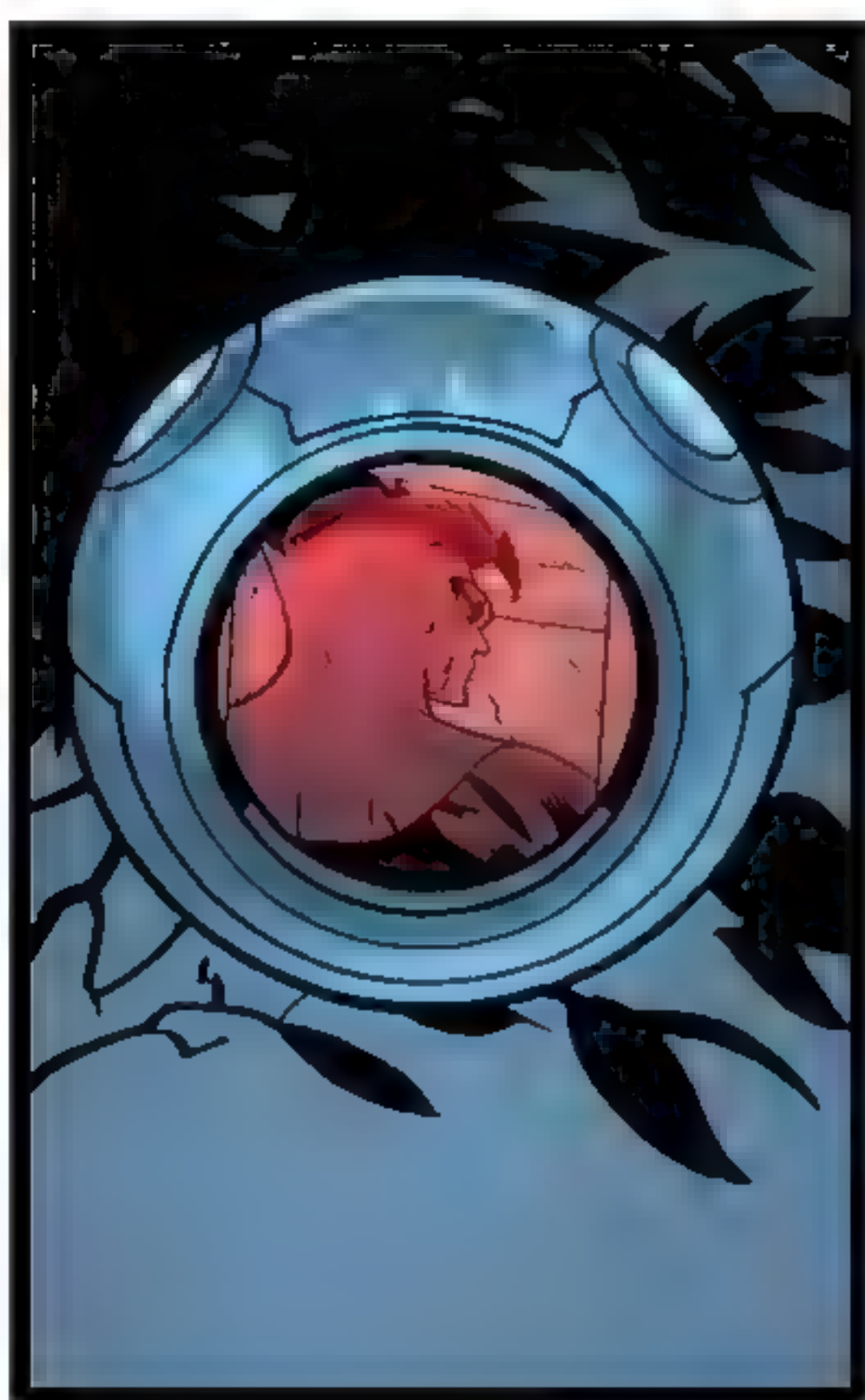
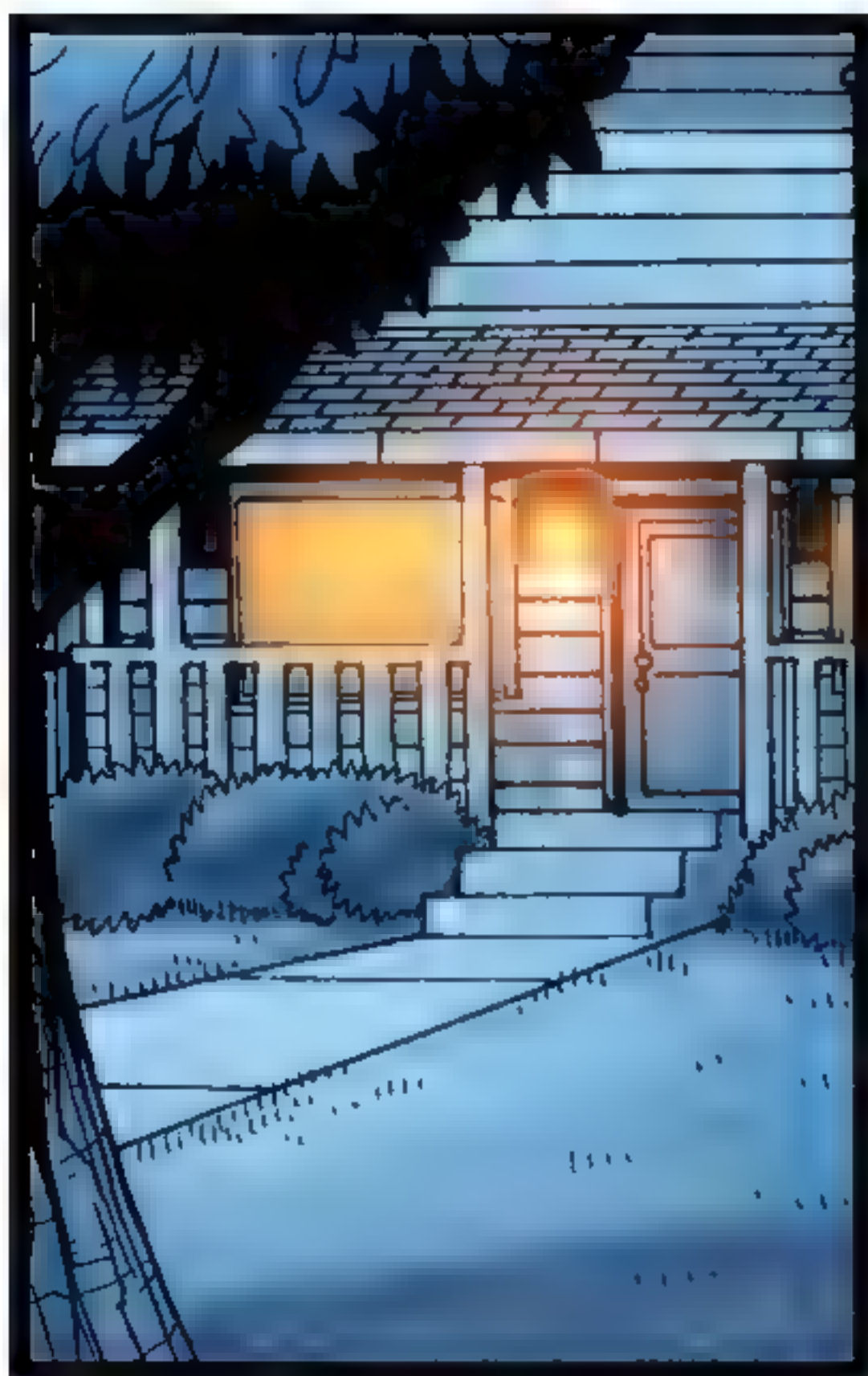


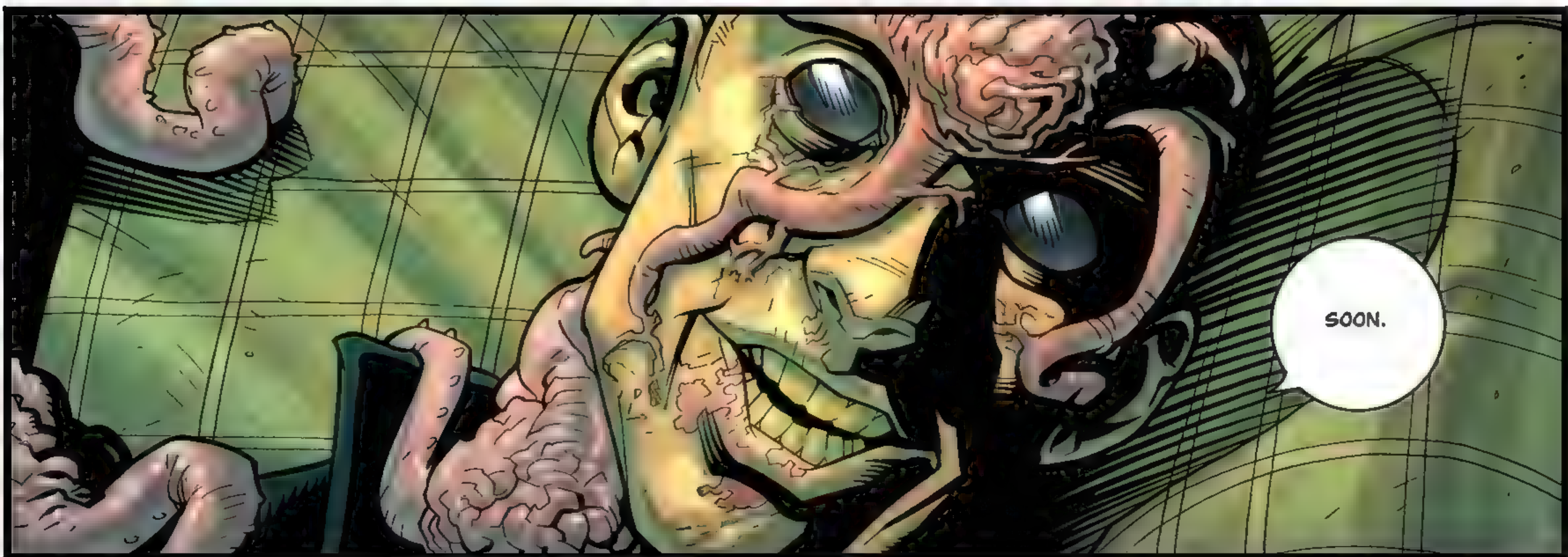


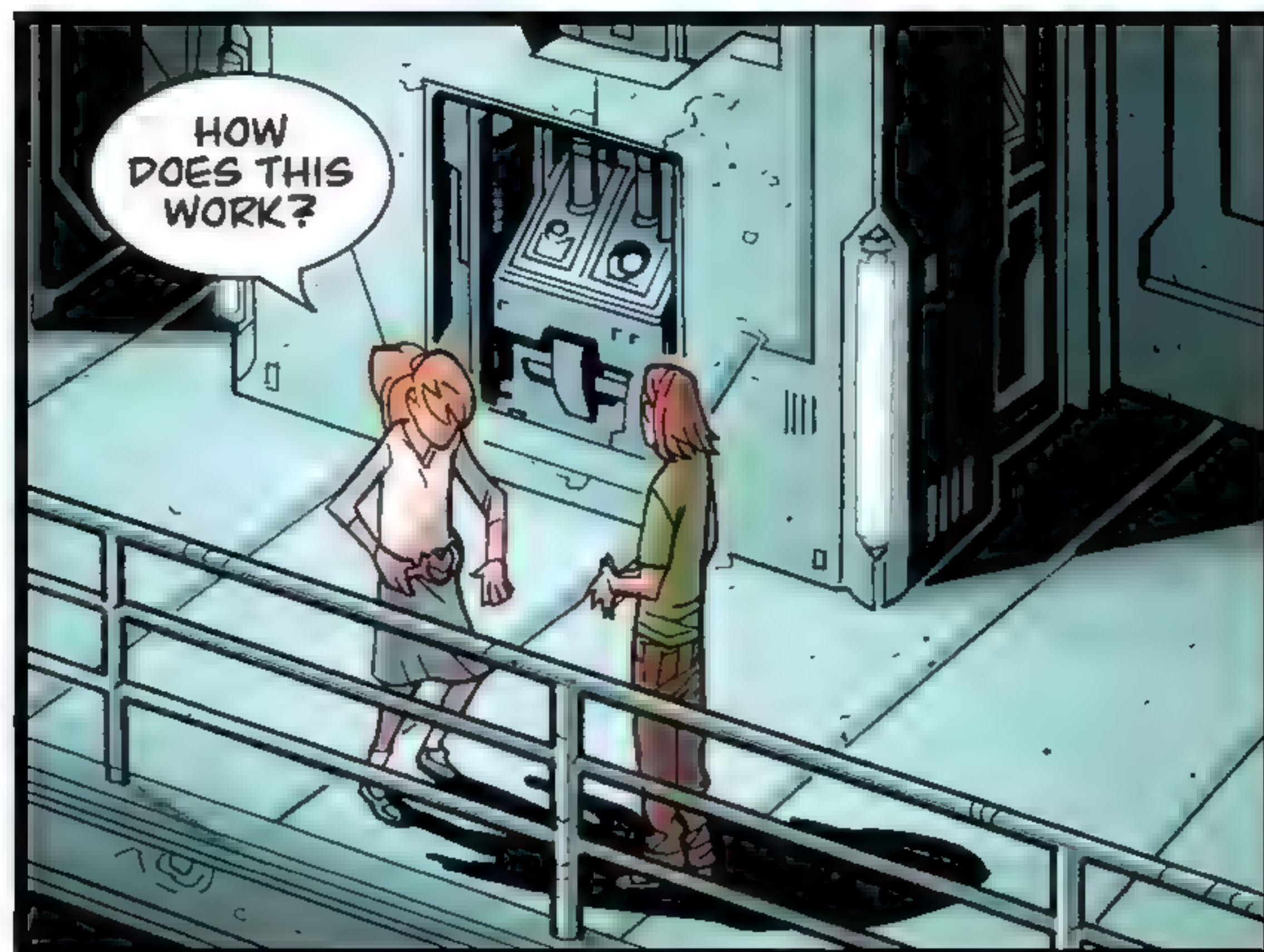
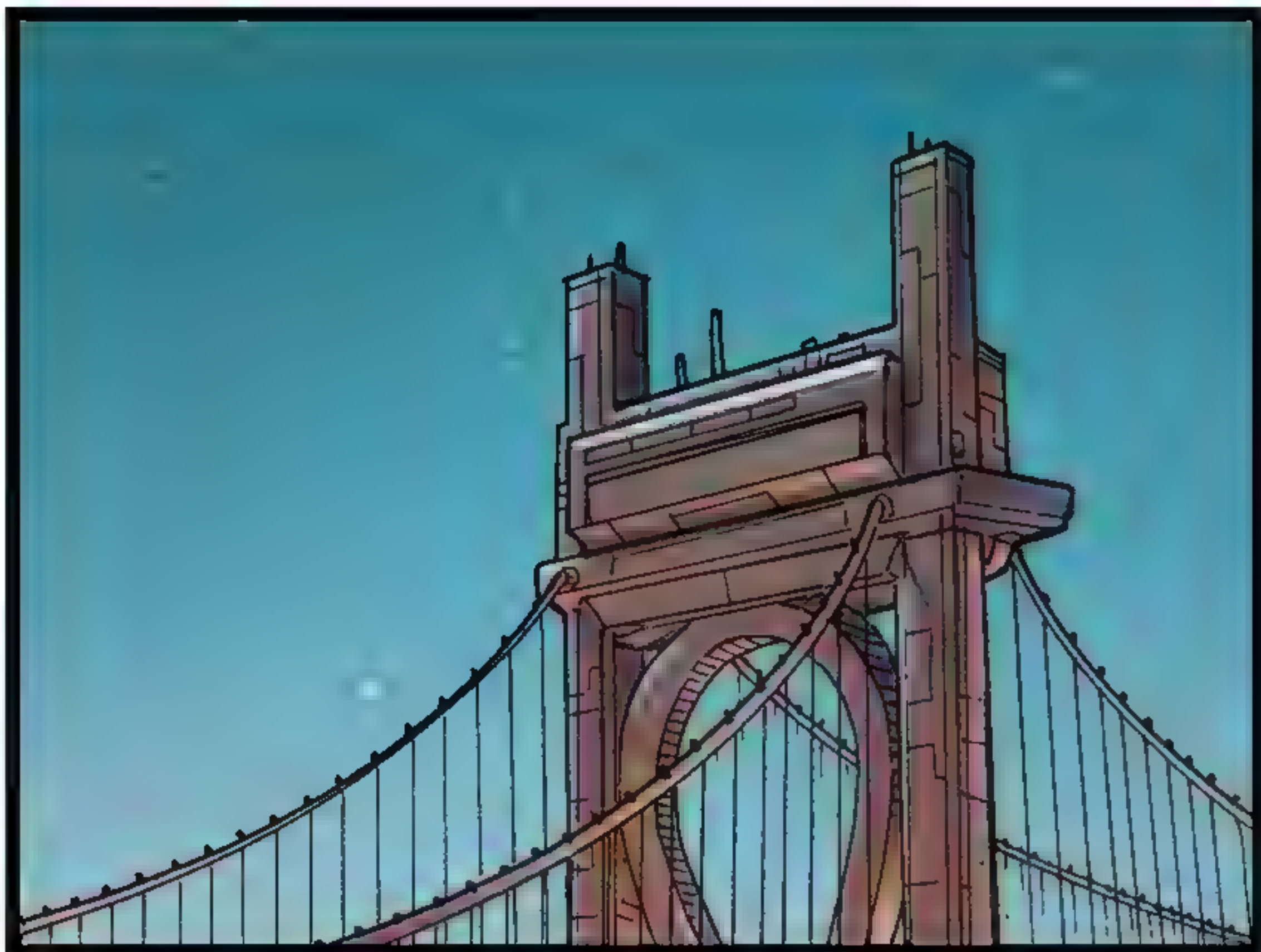












I'VE BEEN STUDYING YOUR CELLS FOR MANY MONTHS--SAMPLES TAKEN BEFORE YOUR TRANSFORMATION--AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER.

I'VE FINALLY FOUND THE SOURCE OF YOUR "CURSE."

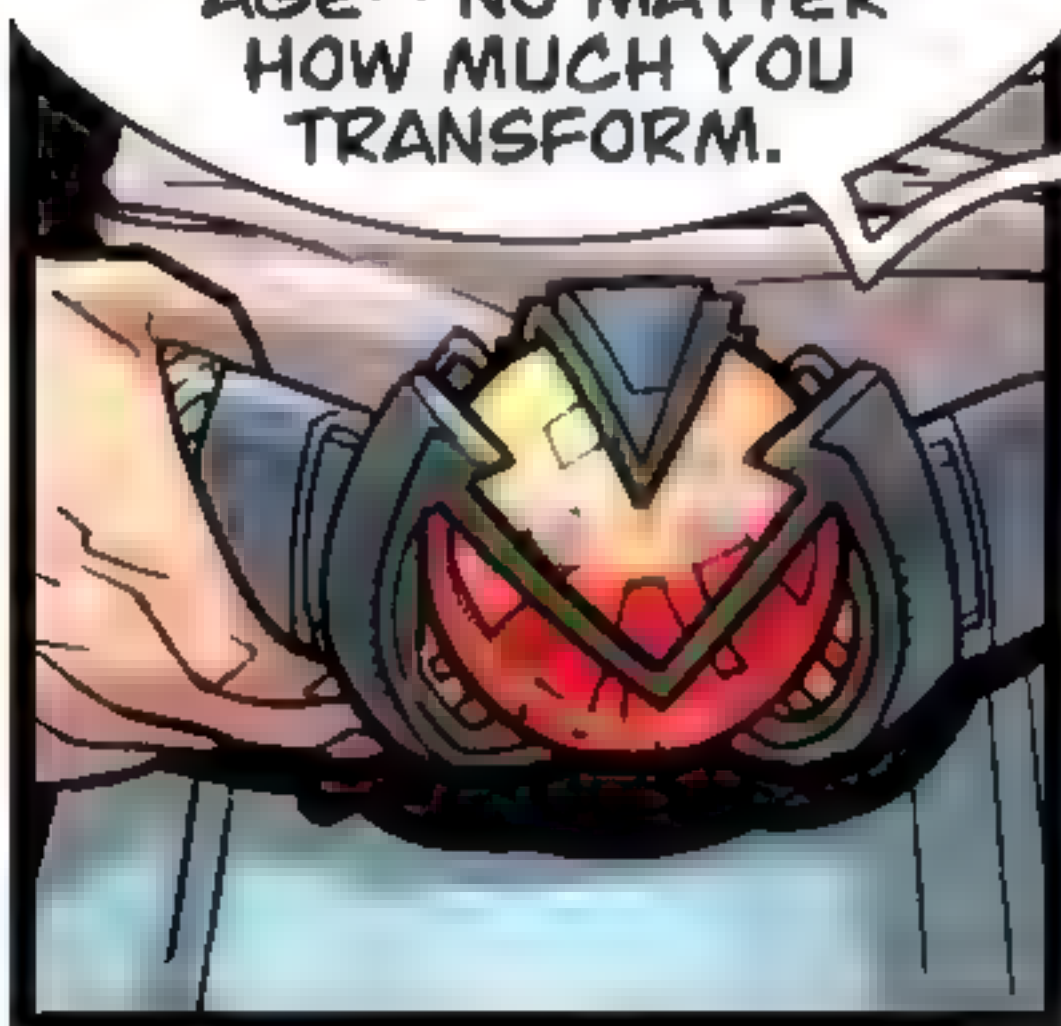
YOUR MONSTER FORM ROBS FROM YOUR CELLS--ESSENTIALLY DESTROYING THEM IN THE TRANSFORMATION. WHEN YOU REVERT TO YOUR HUMAN FORM--IT'S ESSENTIALLY REBUILDING YOU--CELL BY CELL.

AND IT'S DOING IT WRONG.

THAT'S WHY I'M GETTING YOUNGER? BECAUSE I'M BEING REBUILT INCORRECTLY?

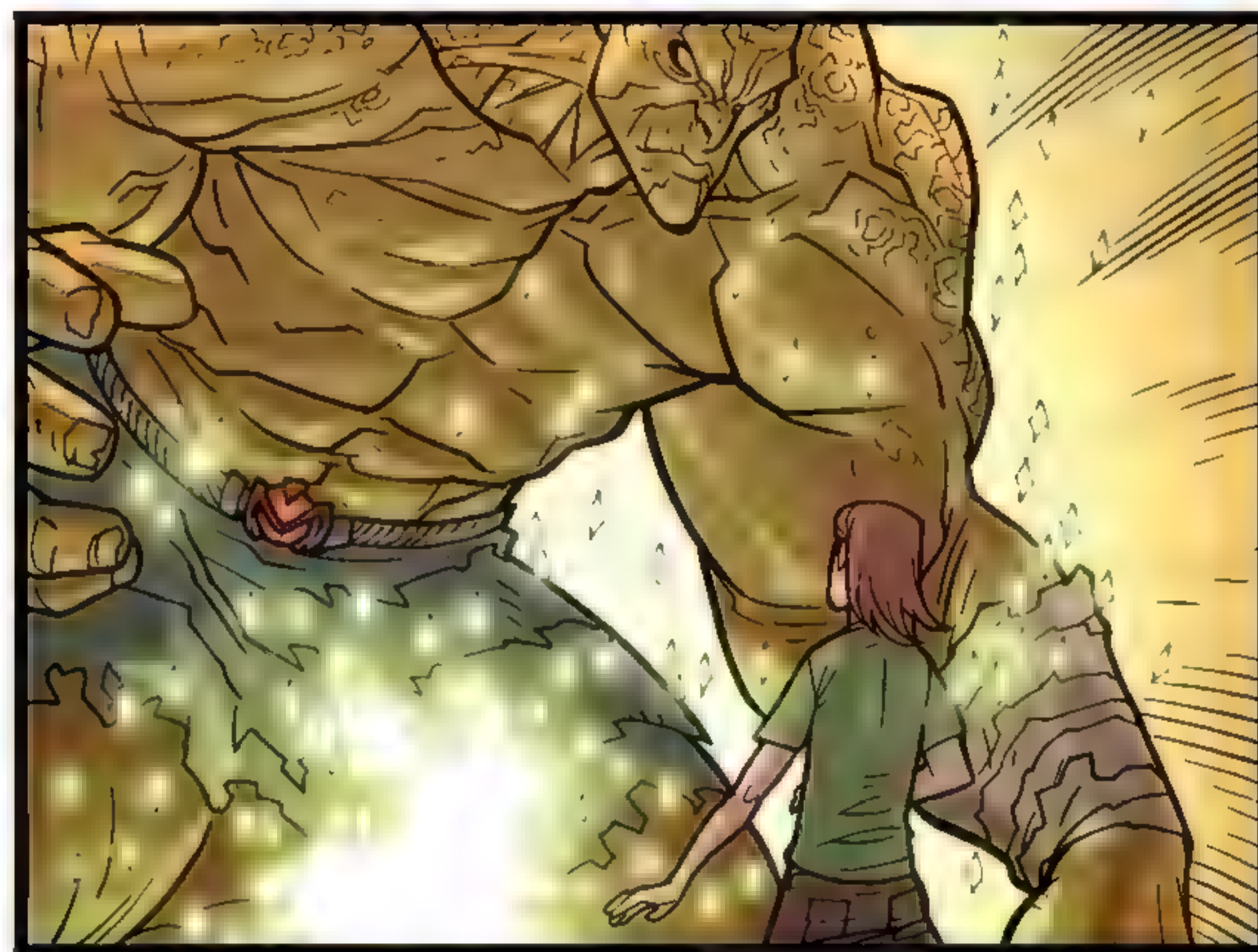
EXACTLY. IT PUTS YOU BACK TOGETHER BUT NOT ALL OF YOUR CELLS SURVIVE THE TRANSFORMATION--IT REVERSES GROWTH.

THAT BELT WILL TAKE AN EXACT COPY OF YOUR CELL STRUCTURE A FRACTION OF A SECOND BEFORE YOUR TRANSFORMATION--IT WILL STORE IT, AND IT WILL ASSIST IN YOUR RESTRUCTURING--MAINTAINING YOUR AGE--NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU TRANSFORM.



TRY IT OUT.

HERE GOES....

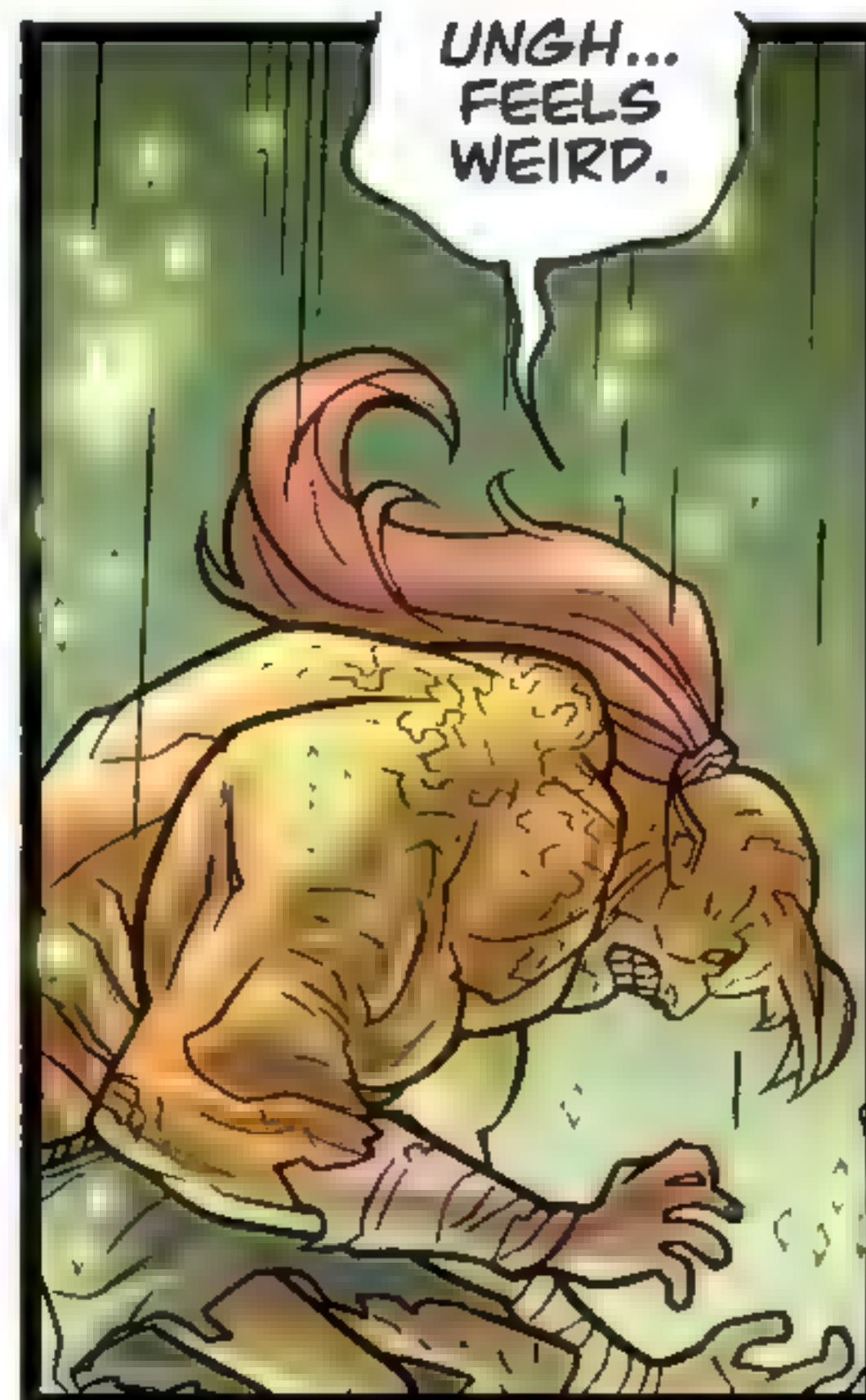


IT'S DESIGNED TO RESIST YOUR TRANSFORMATION--IT WON'T CHANGE WITH YOUR CLOTHING.

NOW, REVERT BACK.



UNGH... FEELS WEIRD.



IT--I FEEL... DIFFERENT. NOT, OLDER--I DON'T KNOW IF I COULD FEEL THAT-- BUT SOMETHING'S DIFFERENT.

I THINK IT WORKED.

OF COURSE IT WORKED.

OH, MY GOD-- I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

"THANK YOU" WORKS.

WE'VE GOT COMPANY.

SORRY TO INTRUDE, BUT I FOUND ANOTHER ORB--TRIED TO CONTAIN THE BLAST SO I WOULDN'T LOSE ANY FRAGMENTS AND WELL--I THINK I JUST INTENSIFIED IT.

NOTHING BUT DUST THIS TIME.

HAVE YOU FIGURED OUT WHERE THE FIRST ORB CAME FROM?

I'VE PERFORMED EVERY KIND OF ANALYSIS I CAN IMAGINE--THERE'S SIMPLY NOTHING THERE TO GIVE AWAY WHO'S BEHIND IT.

I'M SORRY.

IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO?

THANKS BUT NO, I DON'T THINK SO.

I'VE GOT MY MOM STAYING WITH HER BOYFRIEND--AND MY LITTLE BROTHER IS ALMOST AS STRONG AS I AM... SO WE'RE JUST WAITING AROUND--WAITING UNTIL WHOEVER IT IS MAKES THEIR MOVE.

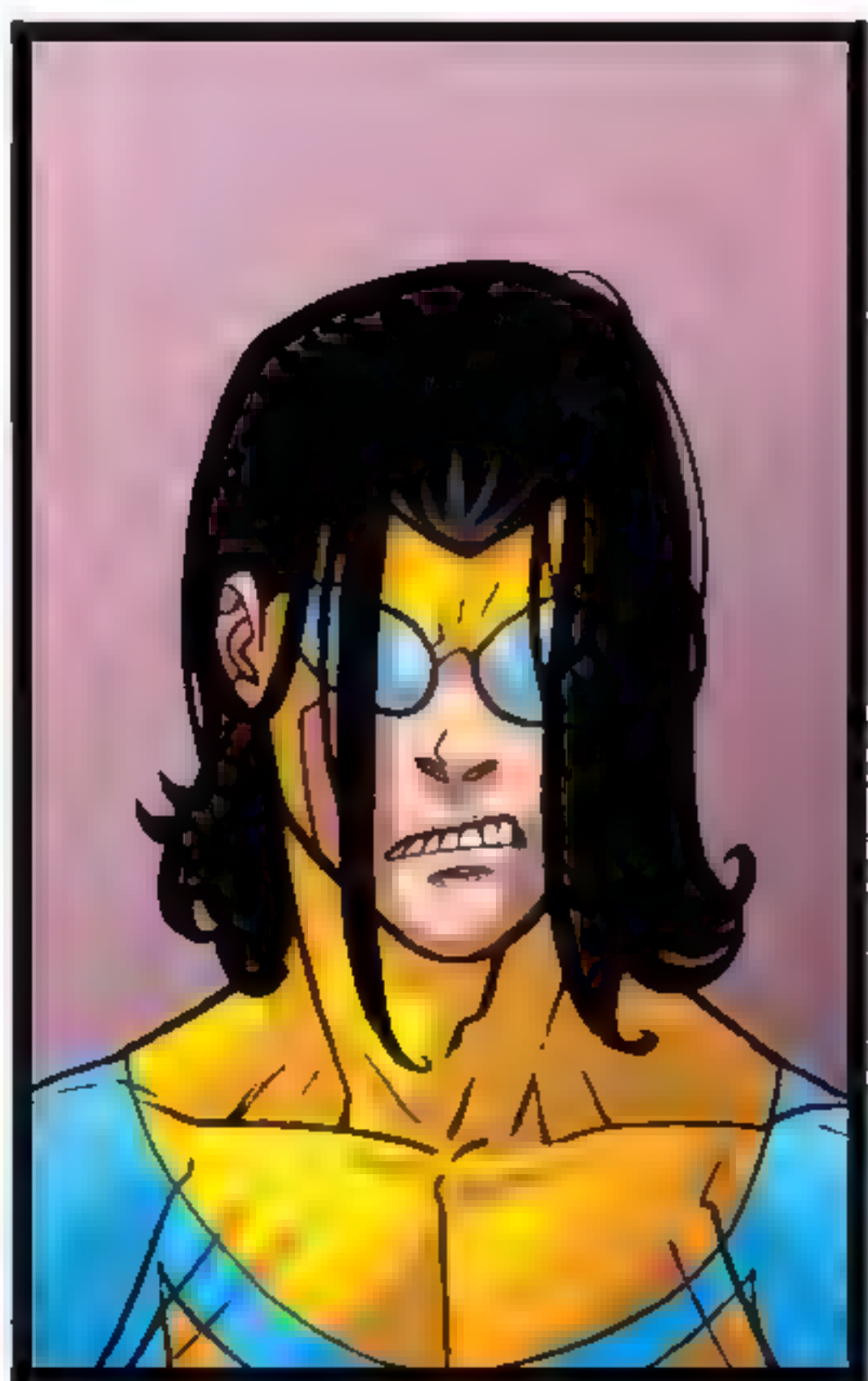
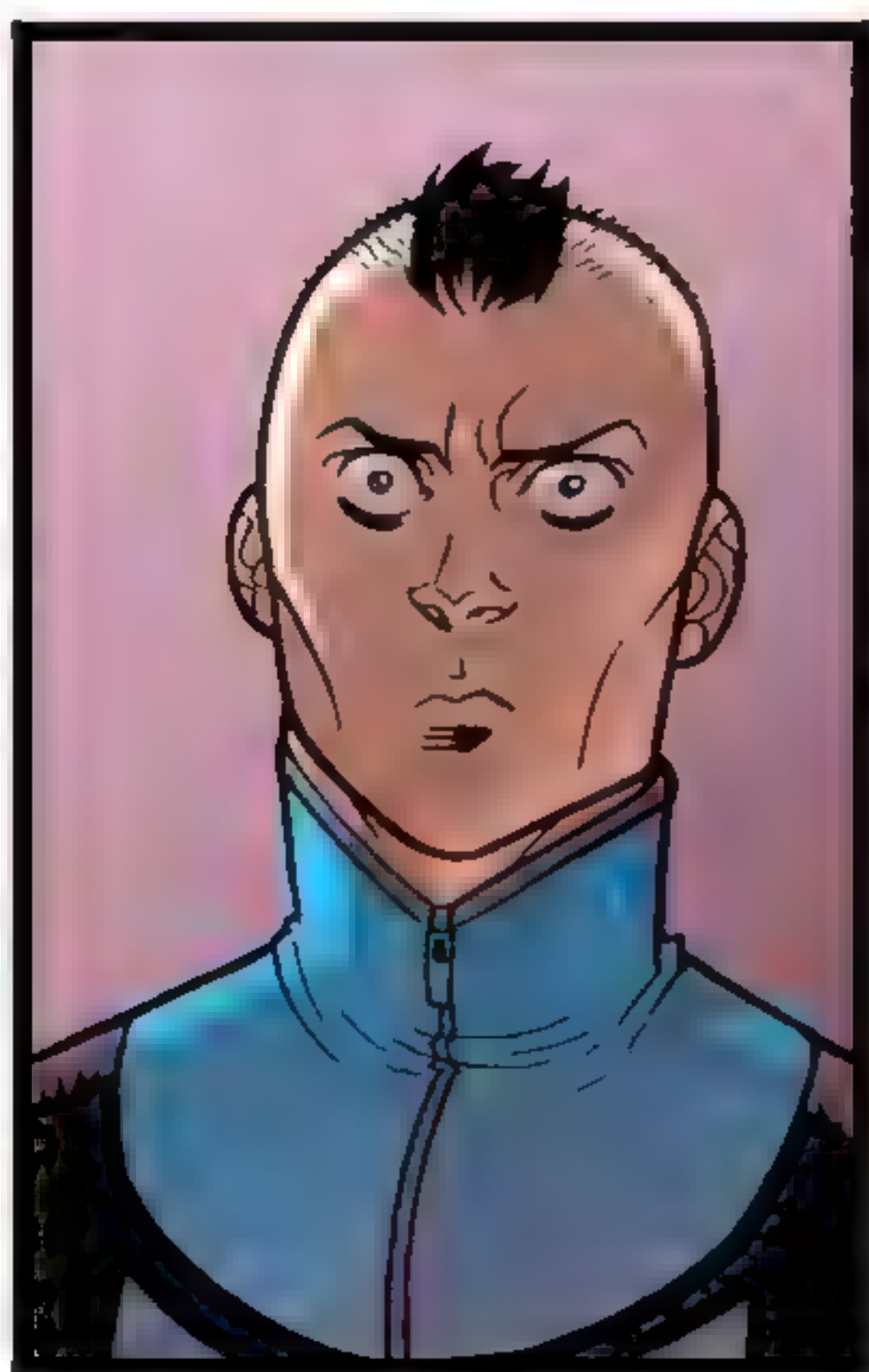
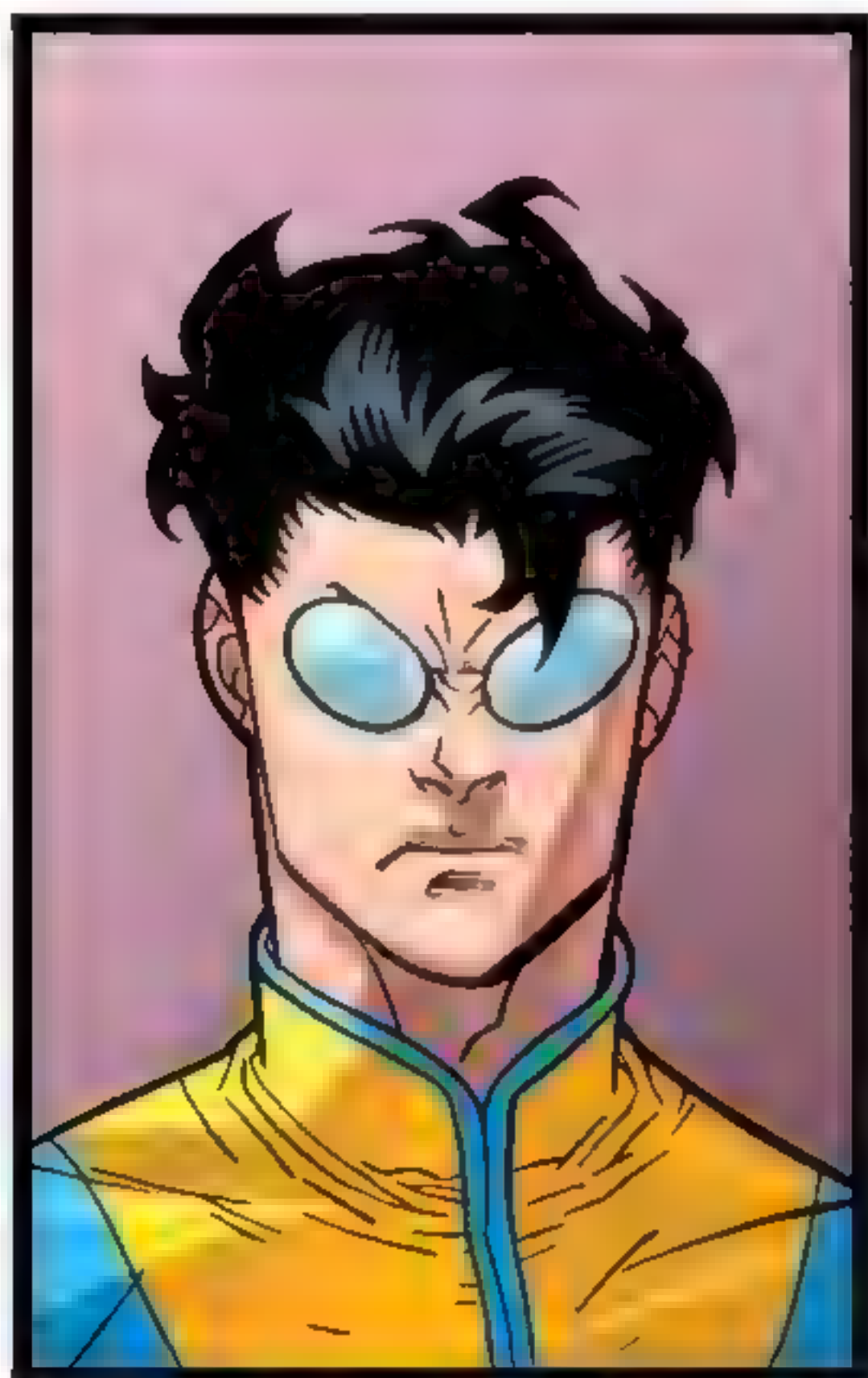
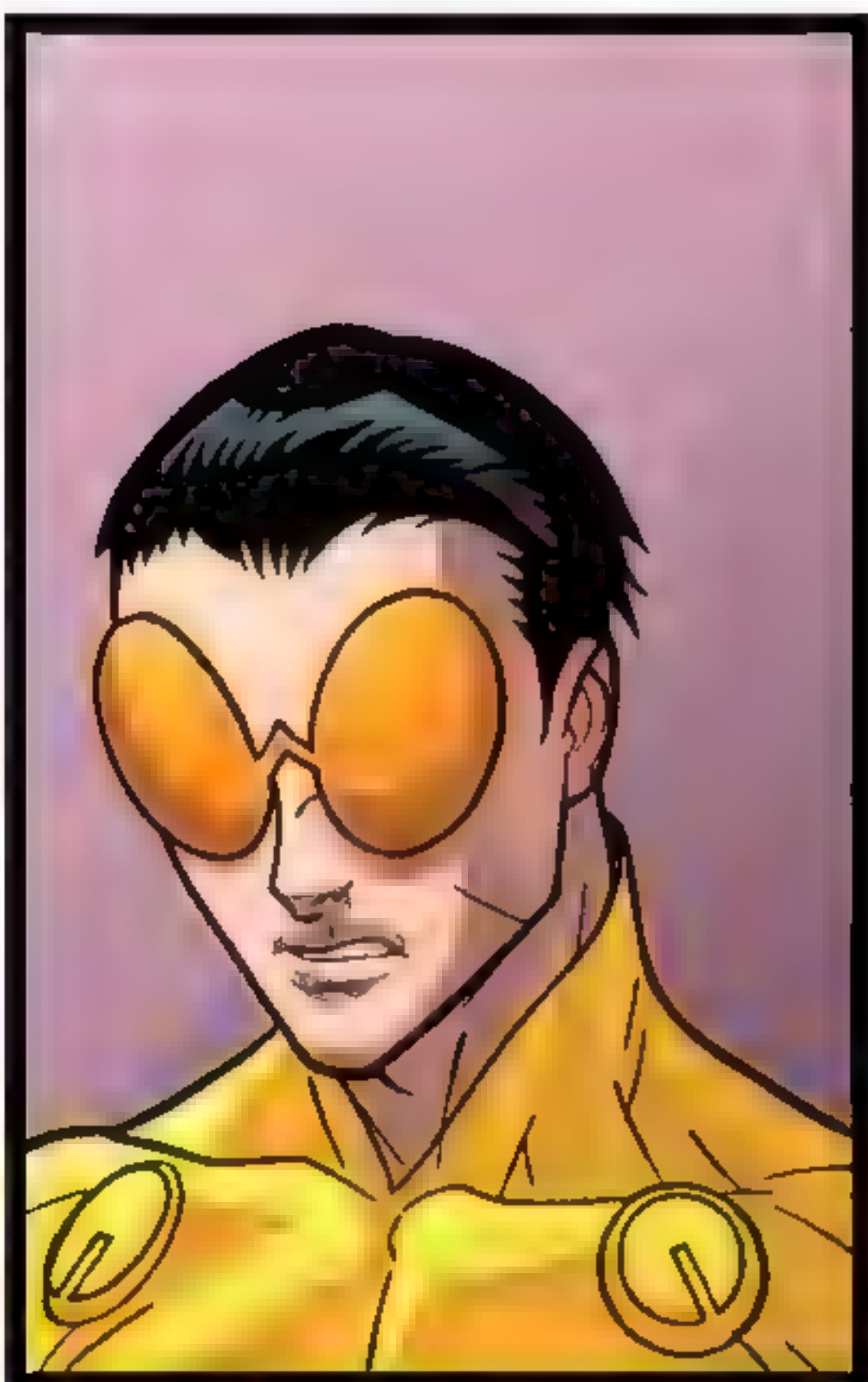
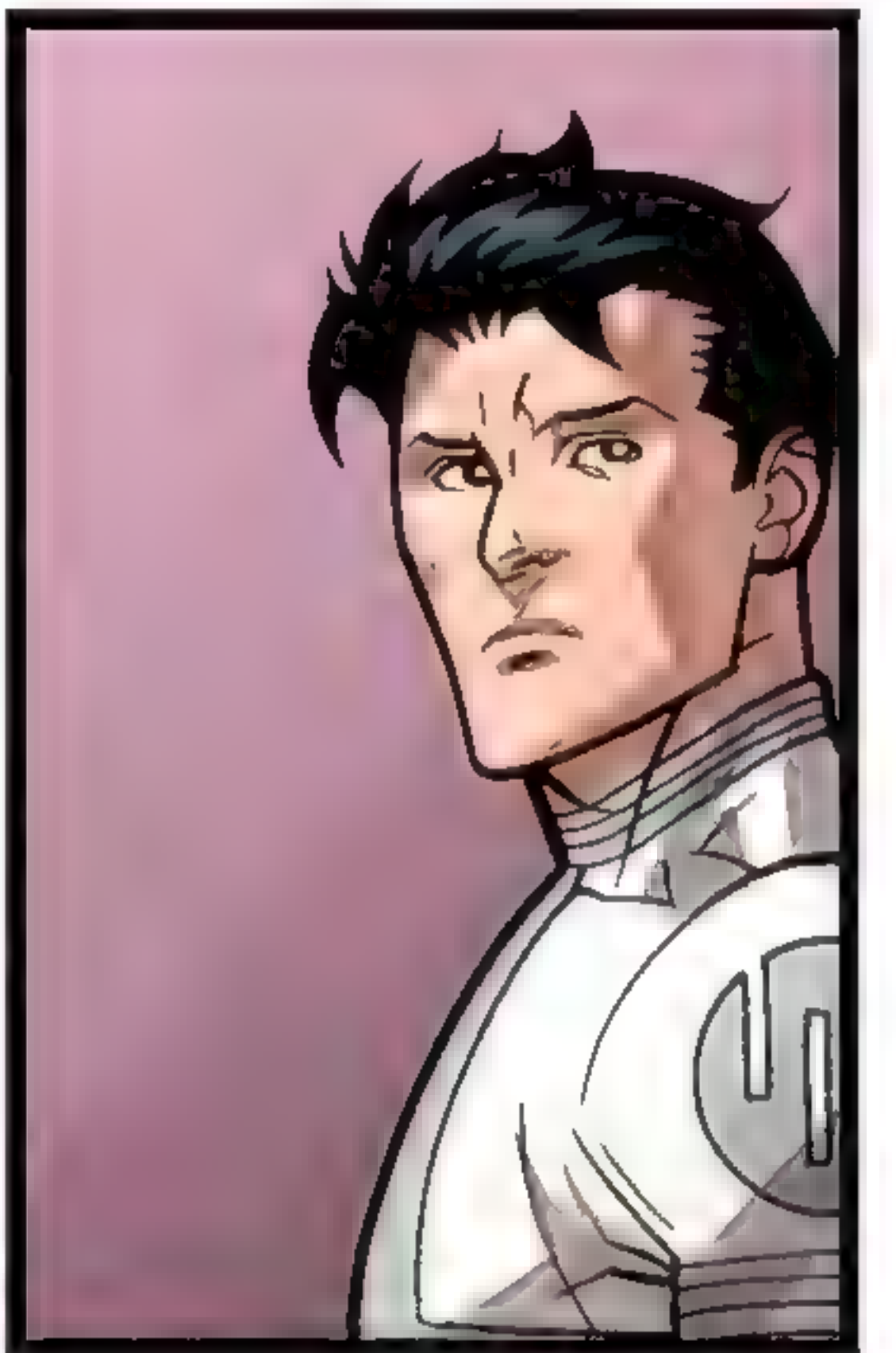
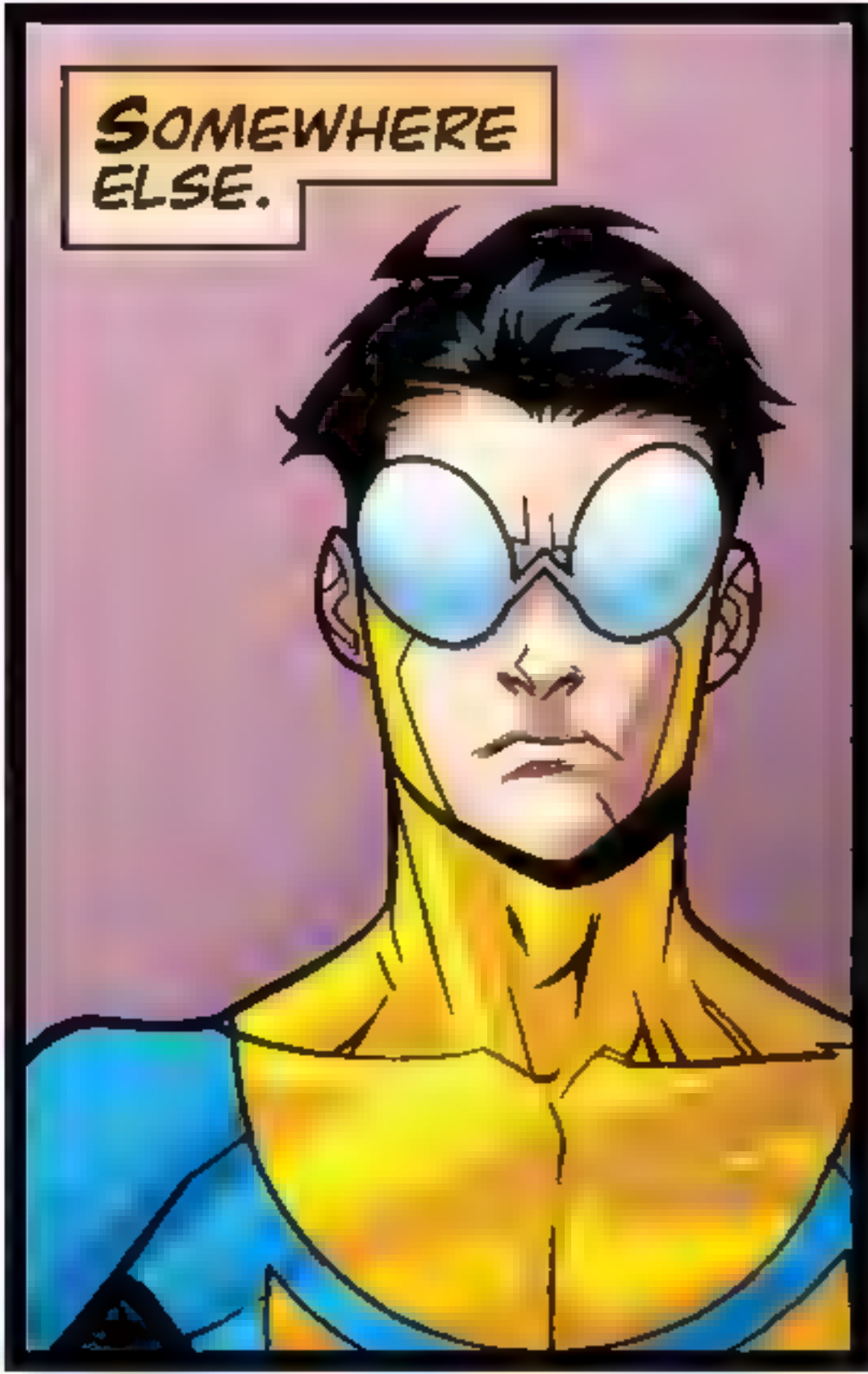
WELL, I HOPE IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT WHATEVER HAPPENS--YOU CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON US.

I KNOW THAT. THANK YOU.

JUST STAY ALERT, INVINCIBLE. THAT ORB WAS NOTHING SHORT OF A TECHNOLOGICAL MARVEL. ONE THING THAT MAKES IT SO HARD TO TRACK IS HOW ADVANCED IT IS.

IT SEEMS ALMOST-- OTHER-WORDLY.

WHOEVER IS SPYING ON YOU IS NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY. THEY COULD VERY WELL BE THE WORST THREAT YOU'VE EVER FACED.





IT'S A
START.



CHAPTER 59





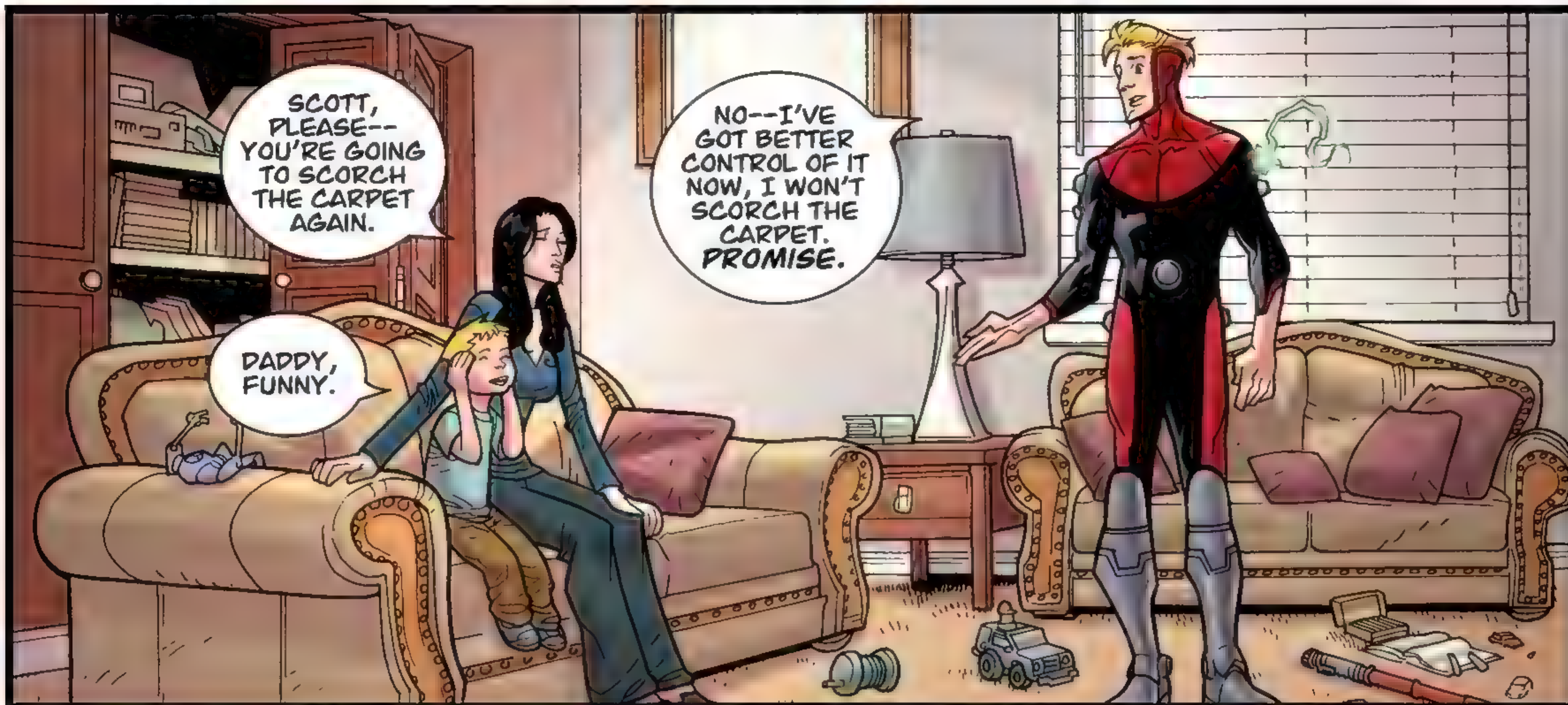
INVINCIBLE!!

YOU THINK
YOU ARE ABOVE
THE LAW---YOU
THINK YOUR
ACTIONS HOLD NO
CONSEQUENCE!

YOU ARE
WRONG!

YOU
WILL PAY
FOR YOUR
CRIMES
AGAINST
HUMANITY!

POWERPLEX
WILL MAKE
YOU PAY!!



SCOTT,
PLEASE--
YOU'RE GOING
TO SCORCH
THE CARPET
AGAIN.

NO--I'VE
GOT BETTER
CONTROL OF IT
NOW, I WON'T
SCORCH THE
CARPET.
PROMISE.

DADDY,
FUNNY.

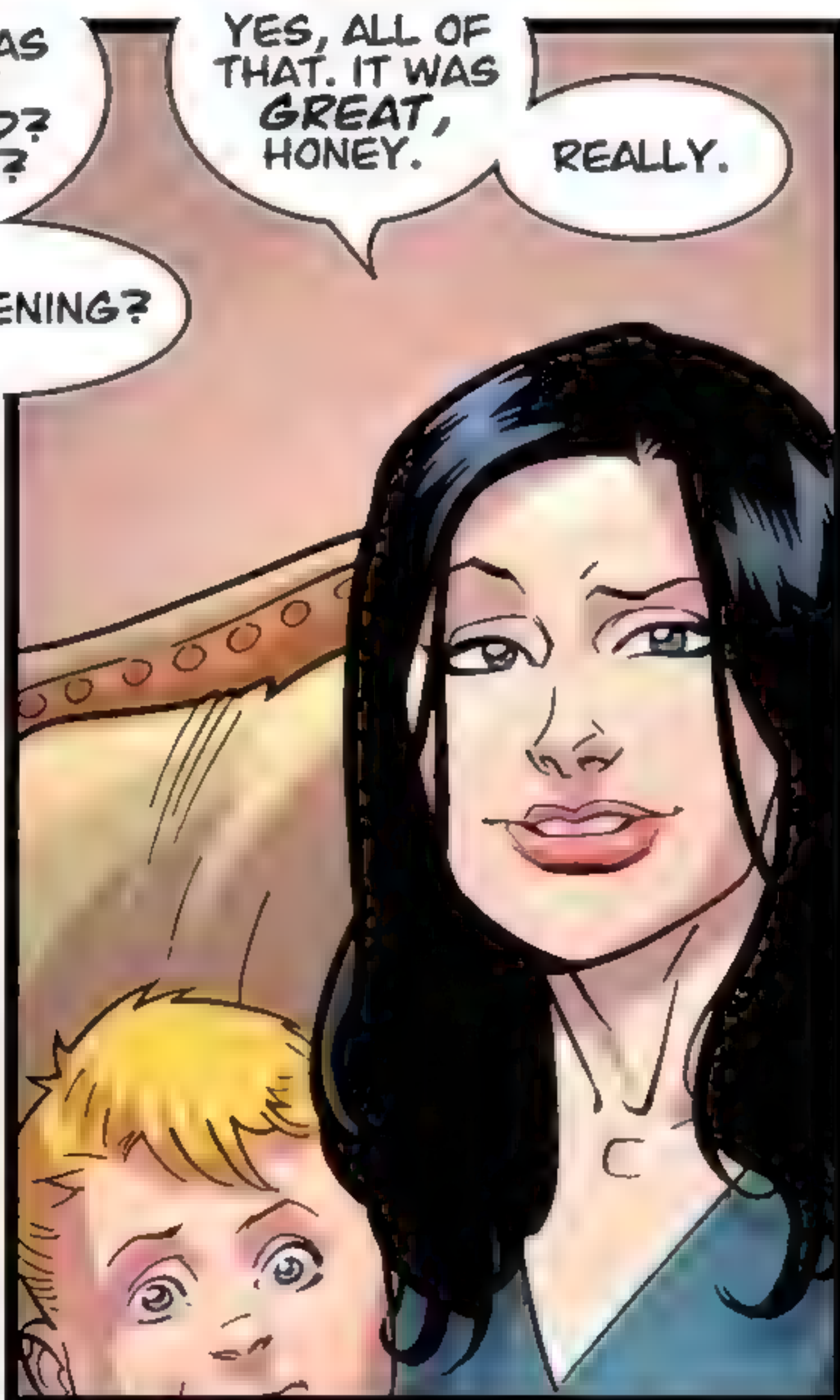


BUT HOW WAS
IT? DID IT
SOUND GOOD?
POWERFUL?

YES, ALL OF
THAT. IT WAS
GREAT,
HONEY.

REALLY.

THREATENING?



THANKS, BECKY.
THAT'S FOR
LETTING ME DO
THIS. I KNOW
YOU'RE PUTTING
UP WITH A
LOT.

NOT SO
MUCH, THIS IS
IMPORTANT TO
ME, TOO. I
LOVED JESSICA.



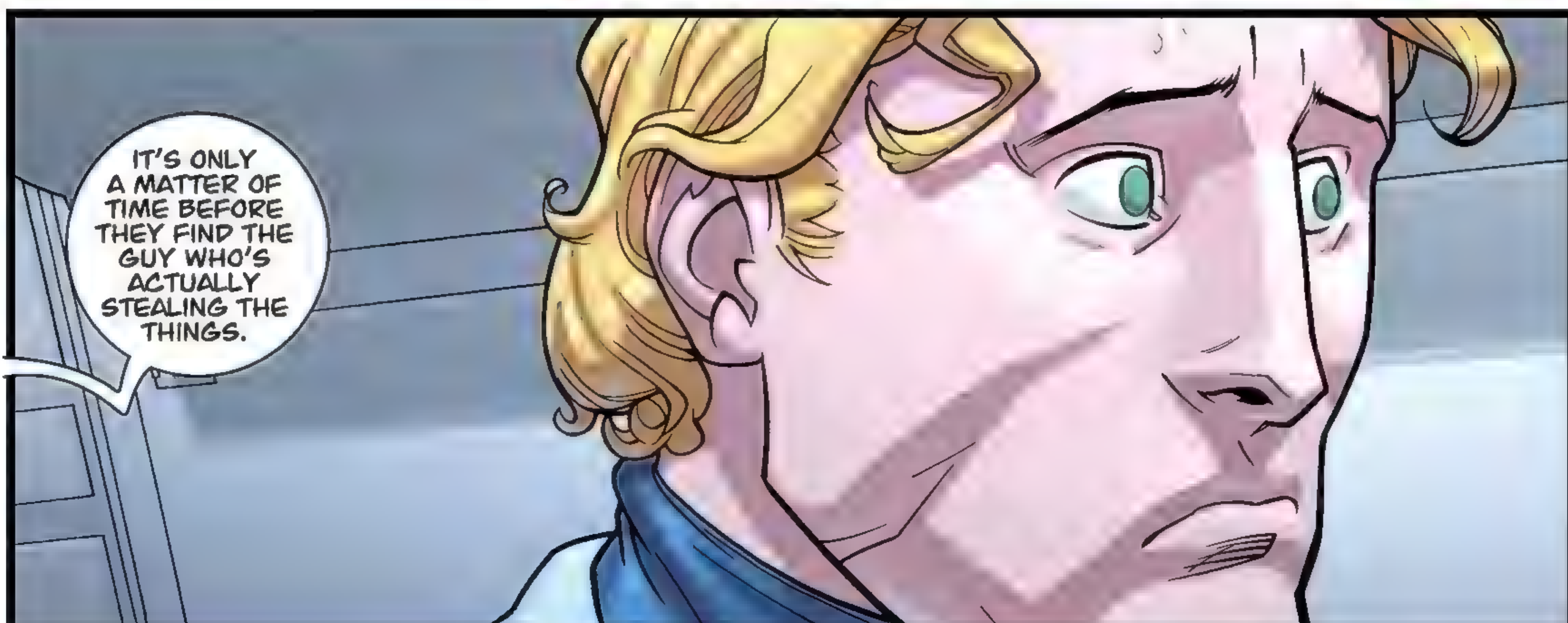
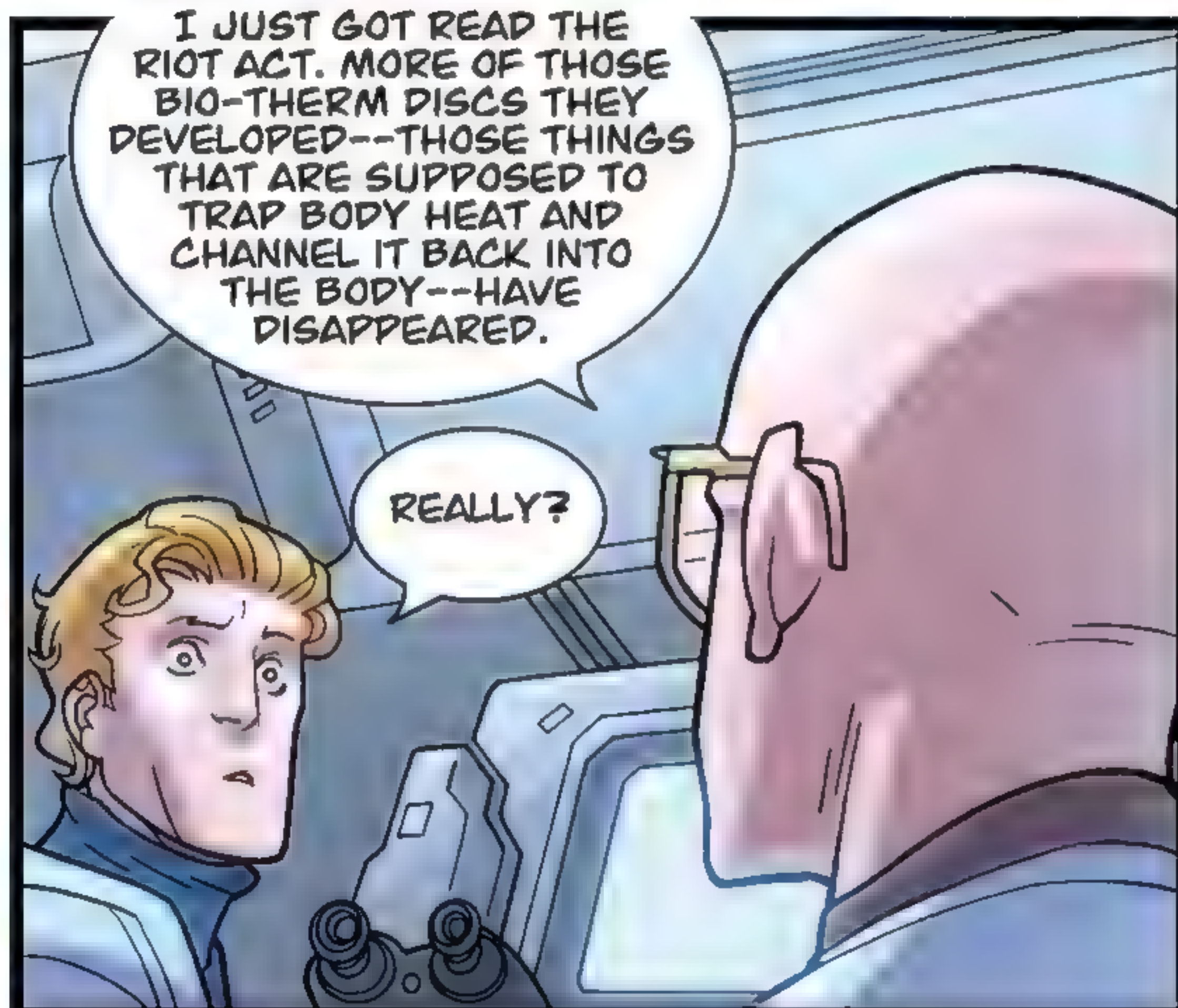
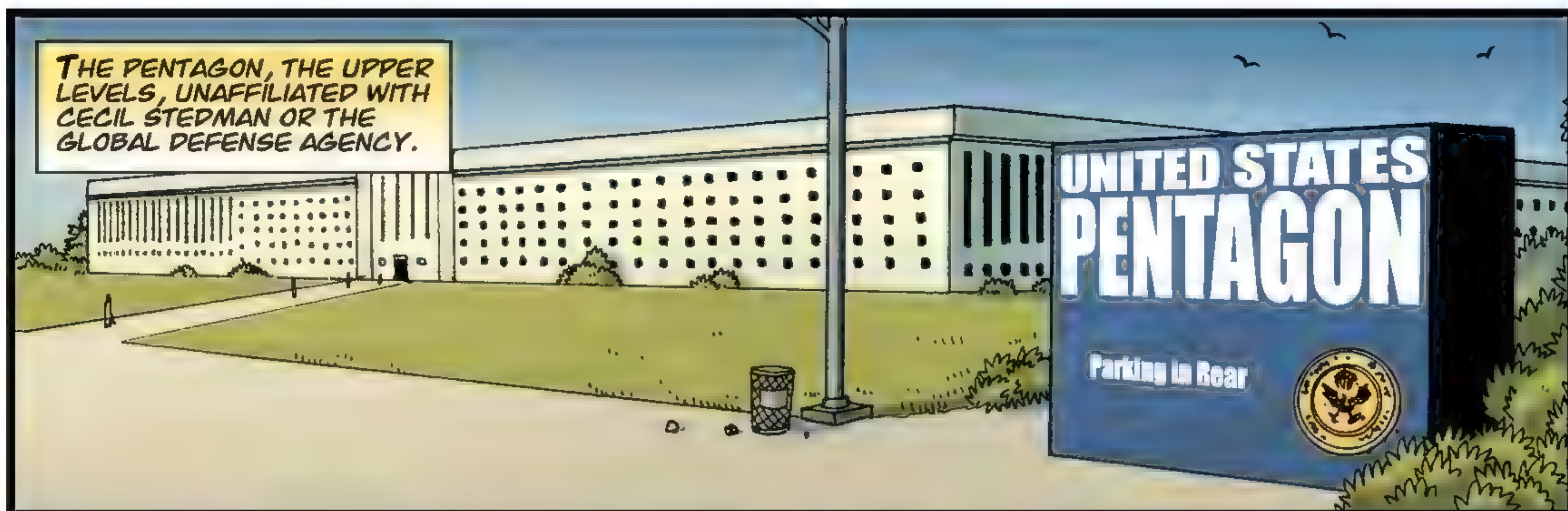
IT WON'T BE MUCH
LONGER, NOW--I'M
READY--I CAN FEEL
IT. IT'S GOING
TO BE SOON.

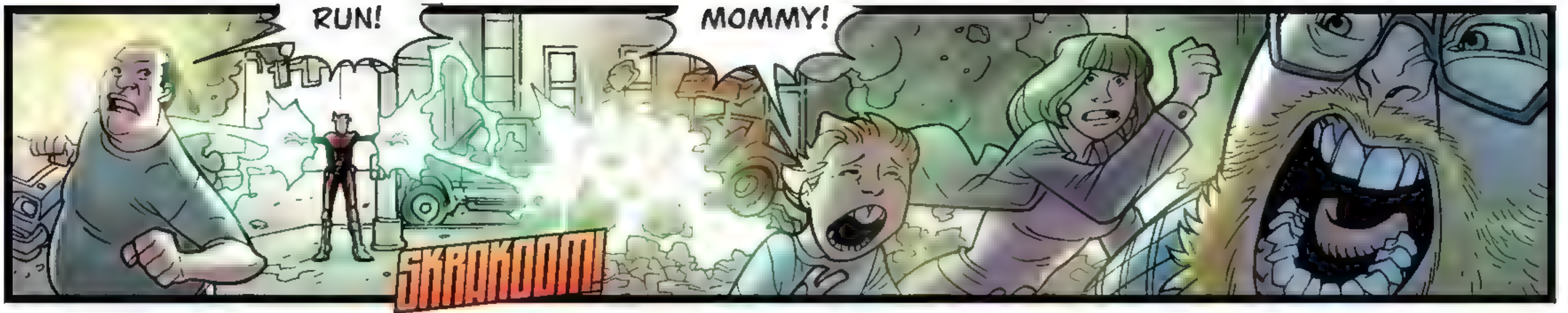
THAT'S SO
EXCITING,
SCOTT. YOU'VE
WORKED
SO HARD FOR
THIS.

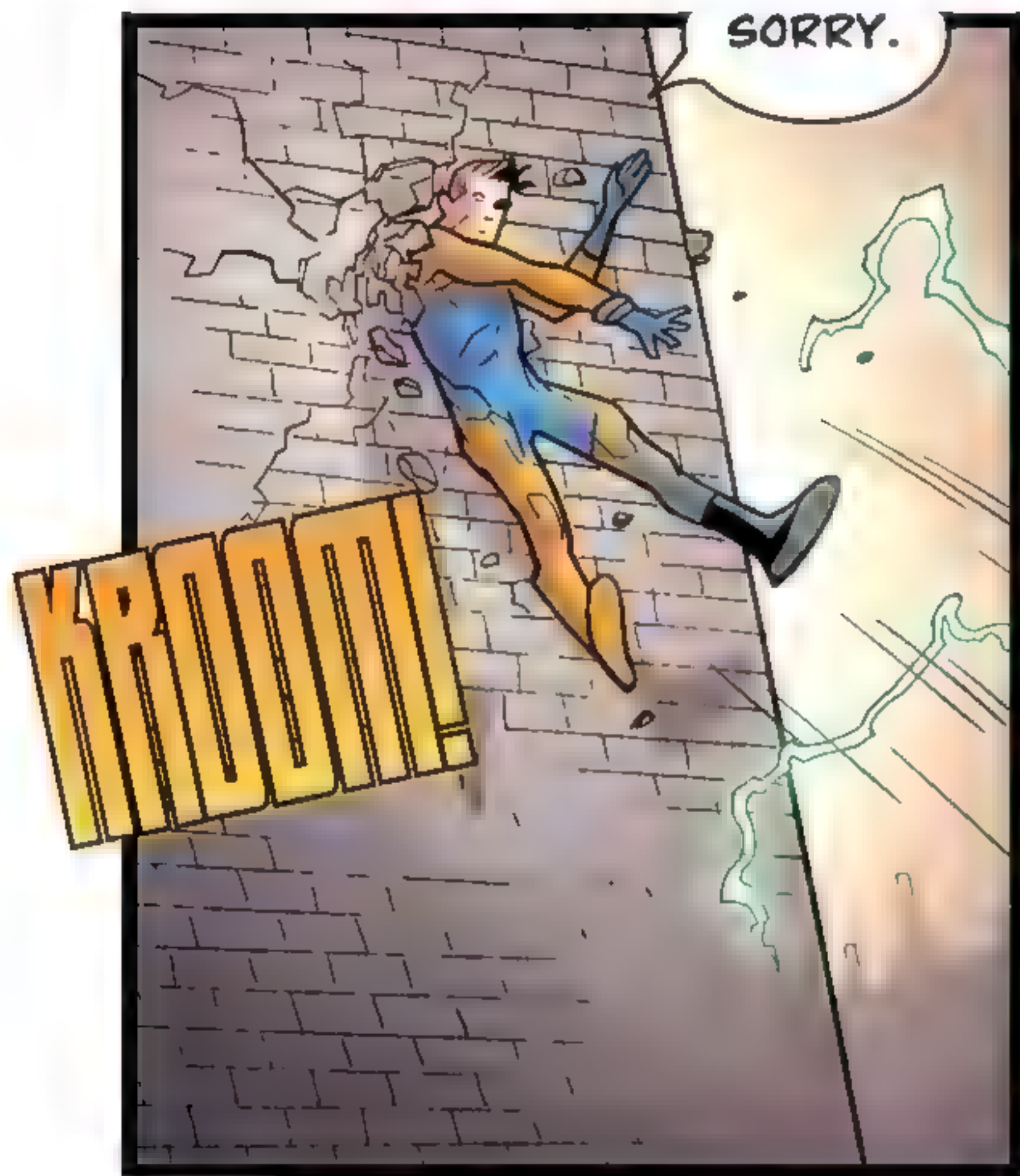
HEY, ARE YOU
GOING TO GO TO
THE GROCERY
STORE WITH US?
JACK AND I
ARE LEAVING
SOON.

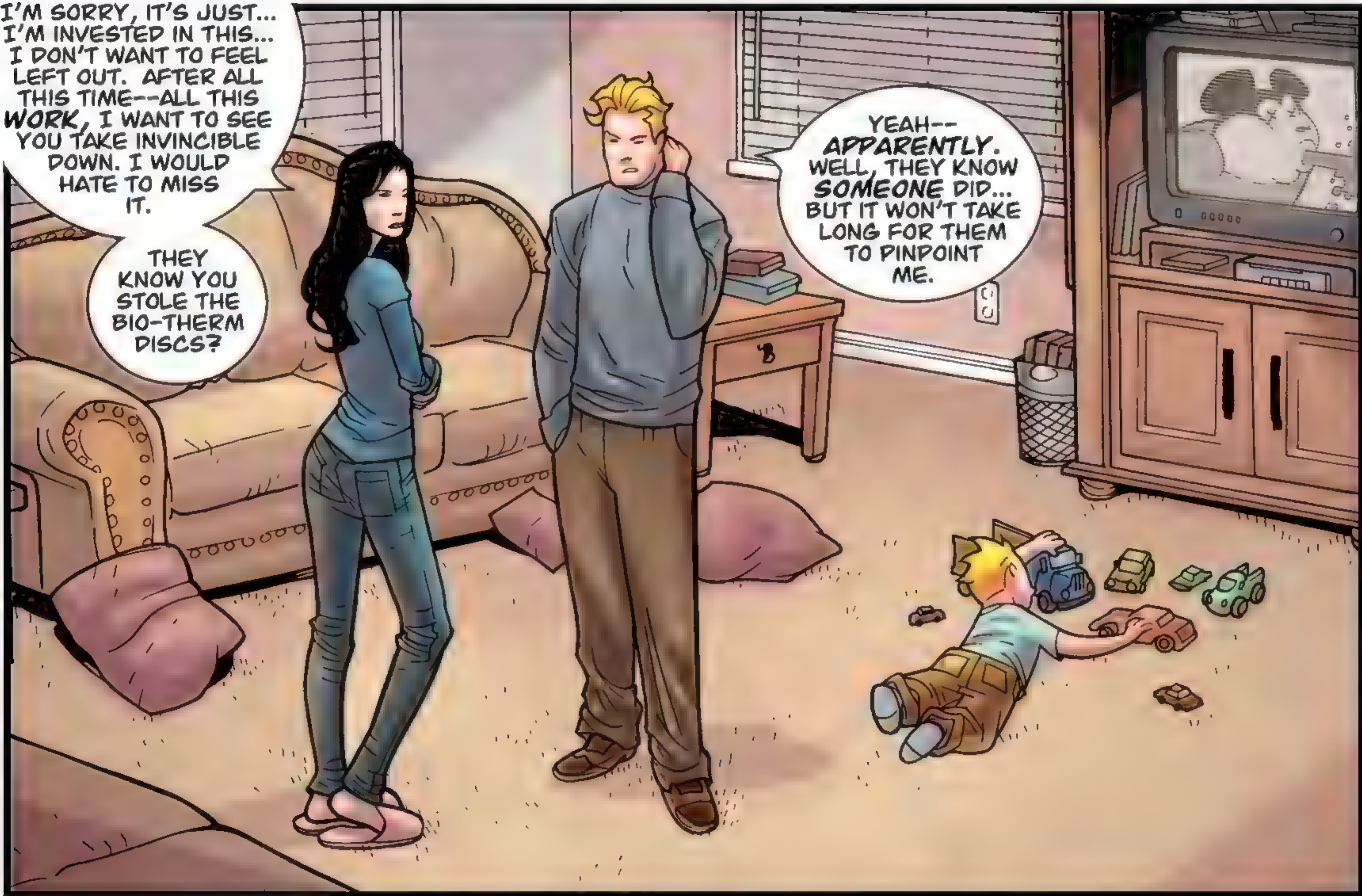
GO
GROCERY!

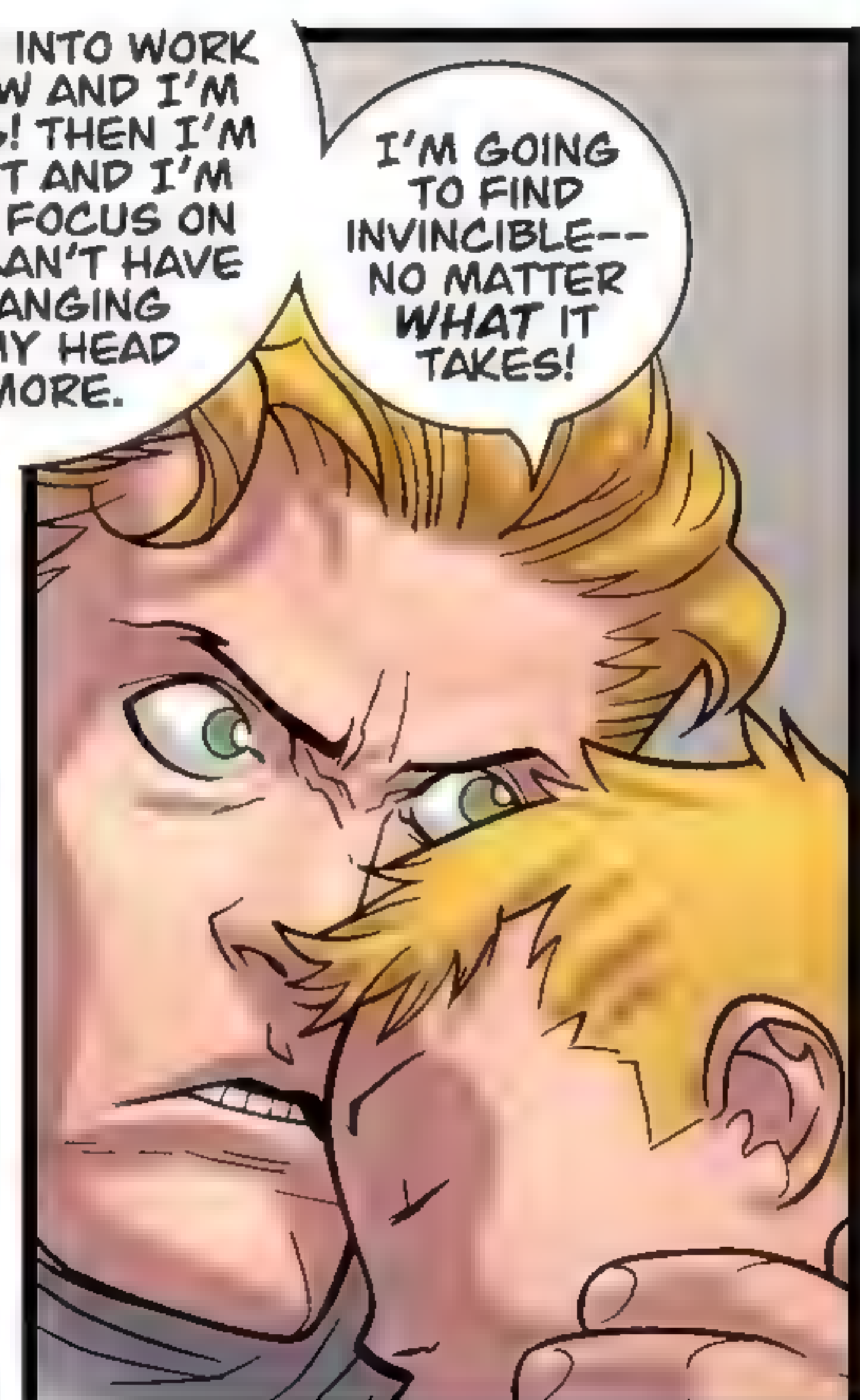
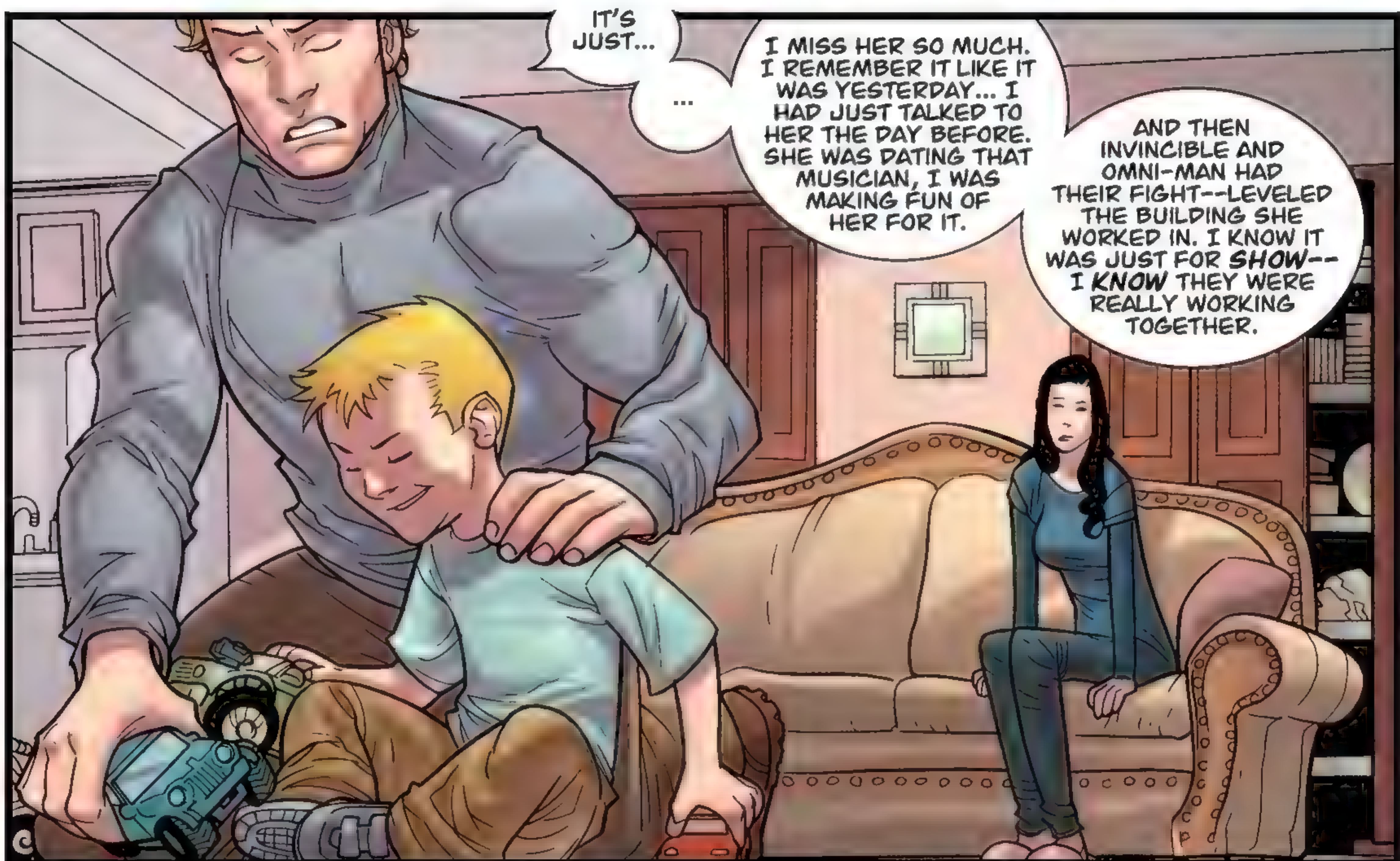
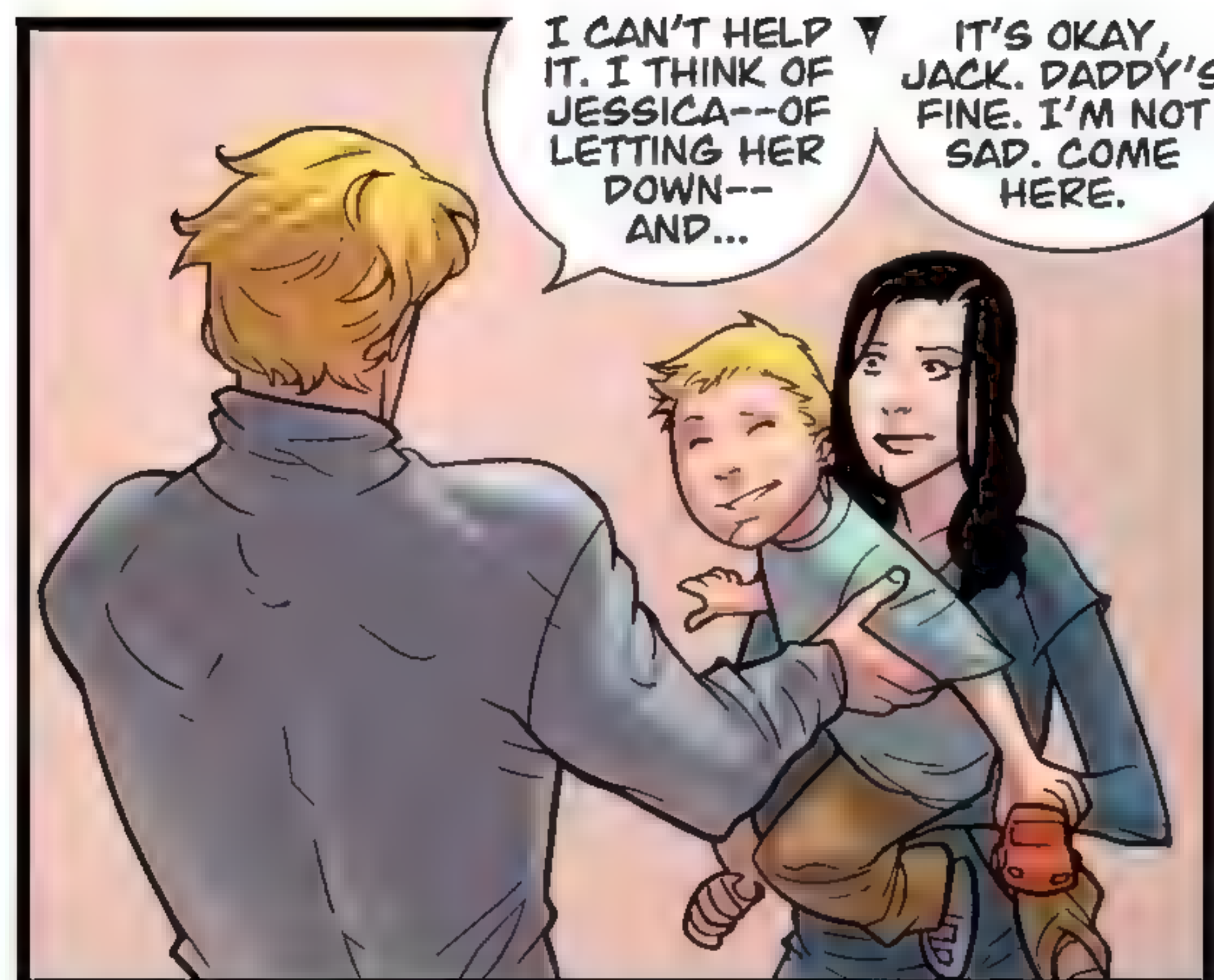
YEAH--
JUST LET ME
SHOWER.













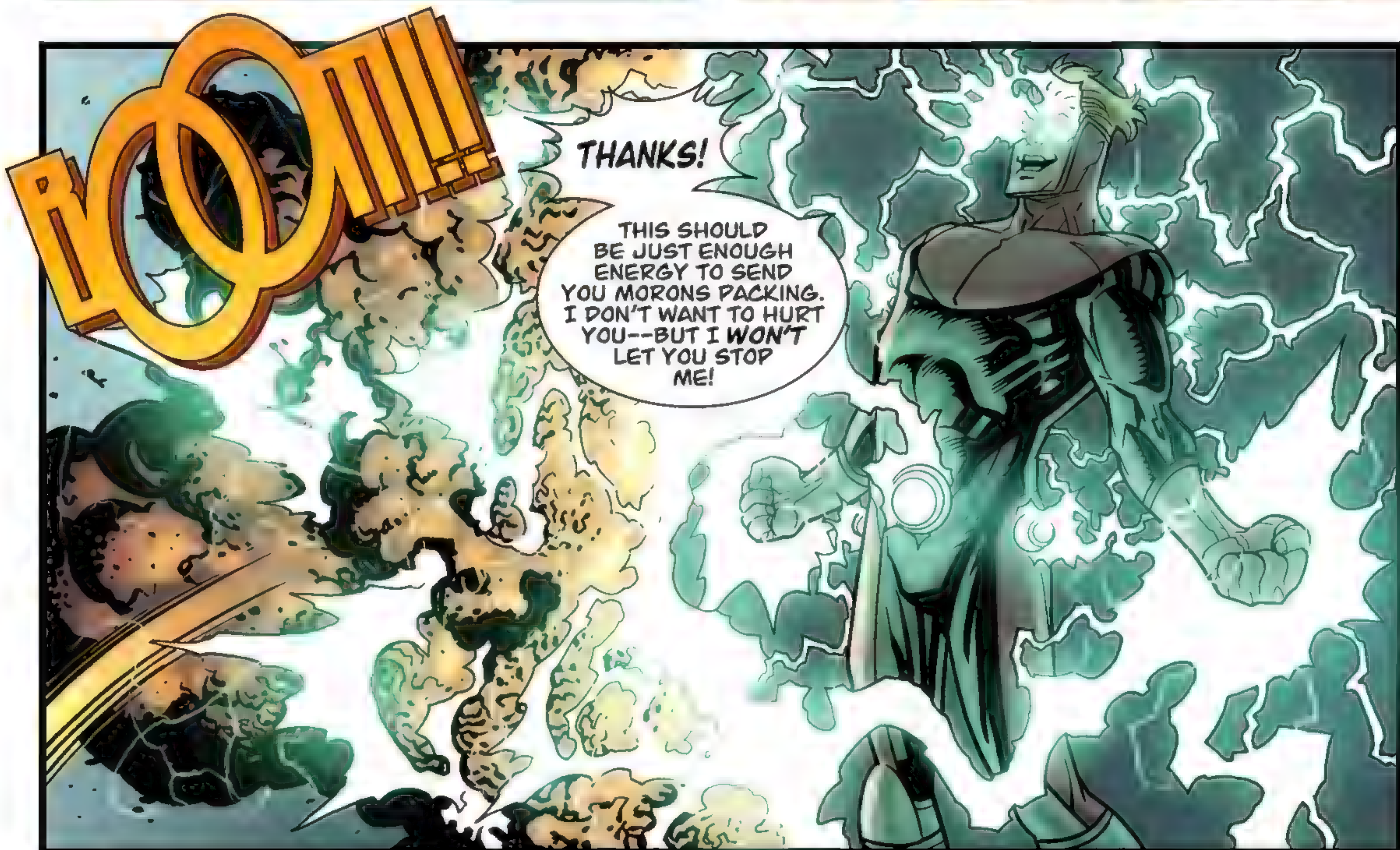
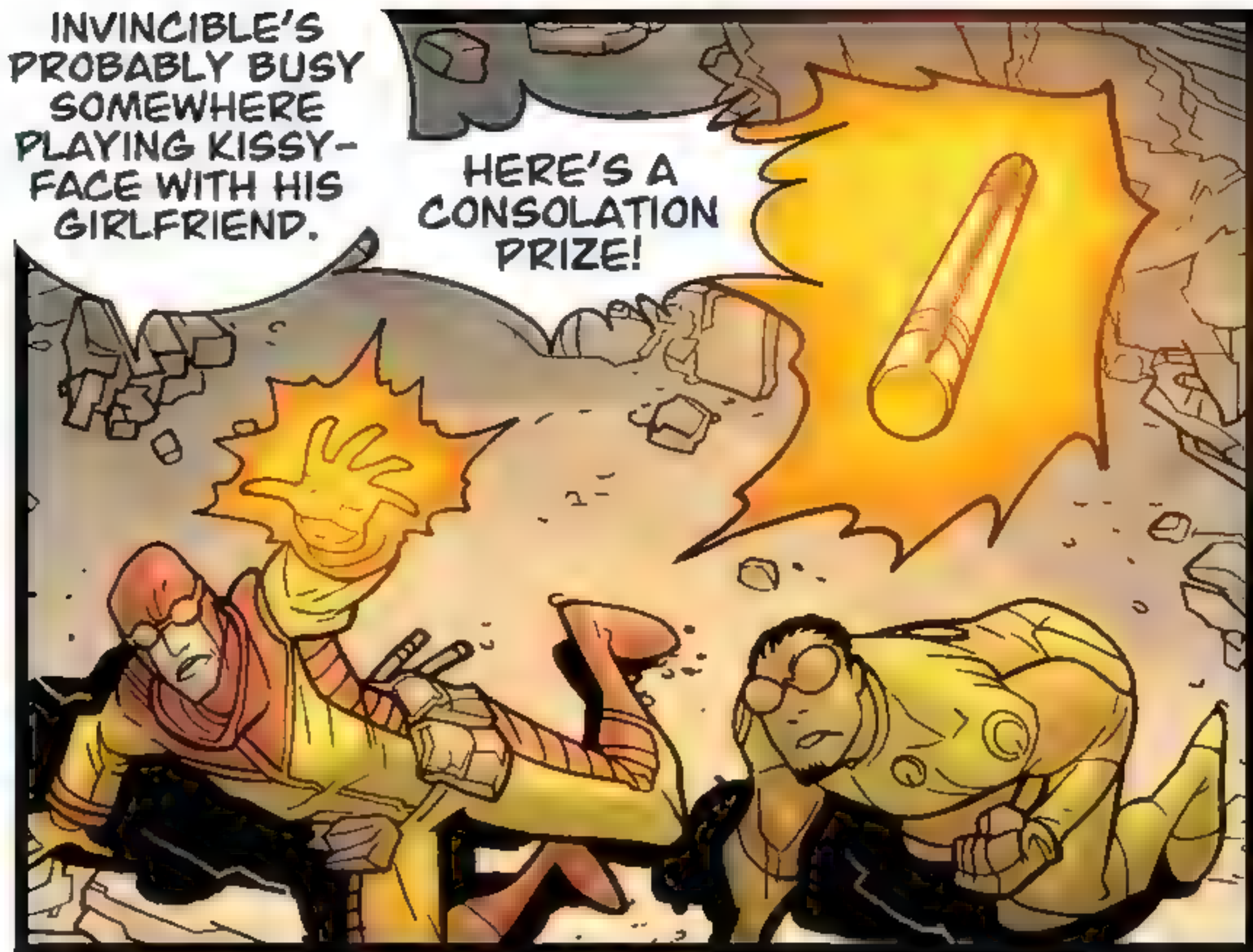
NO!

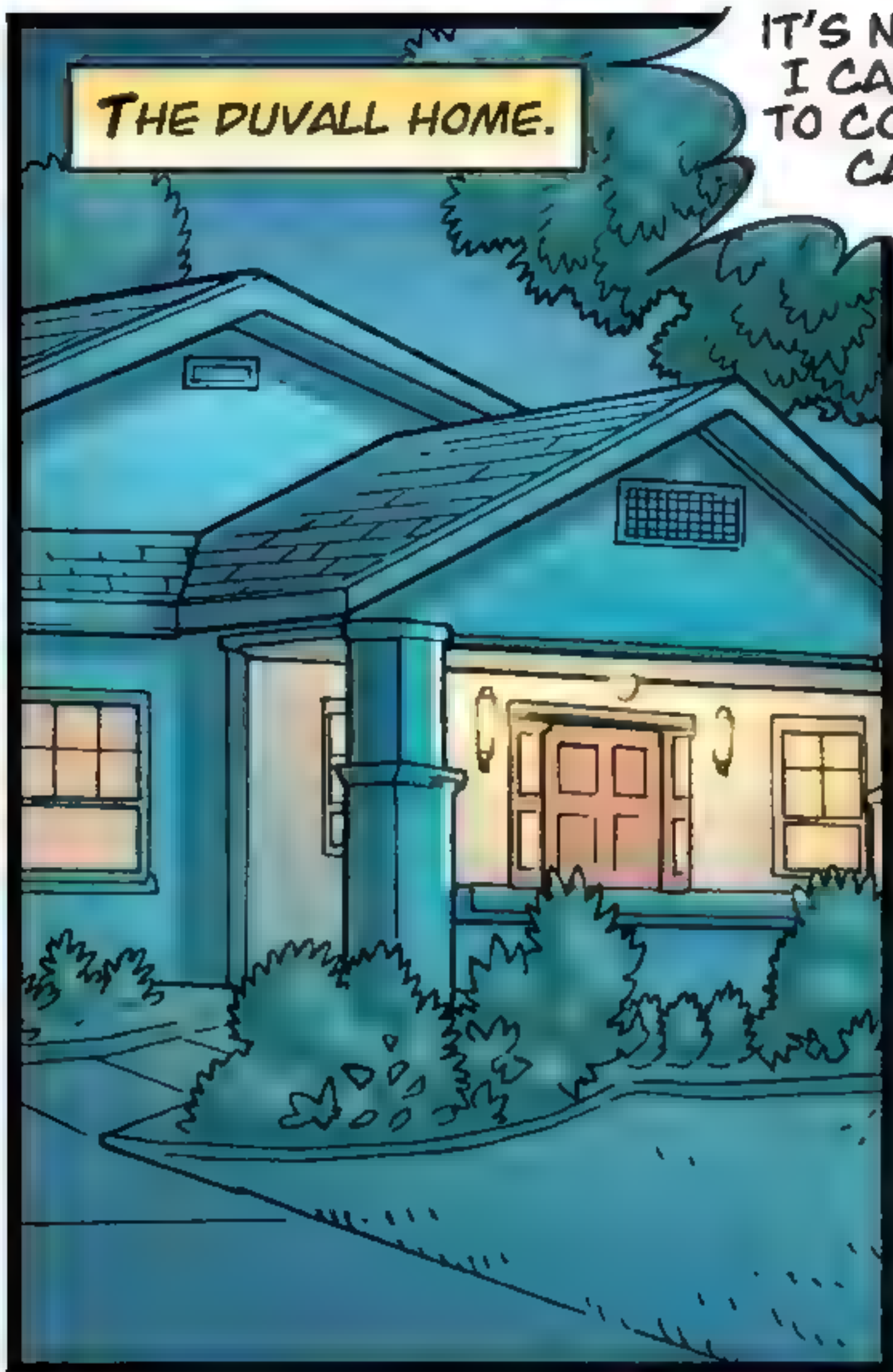
NO!

NO!

NO!

KROK-KA-KA-KA

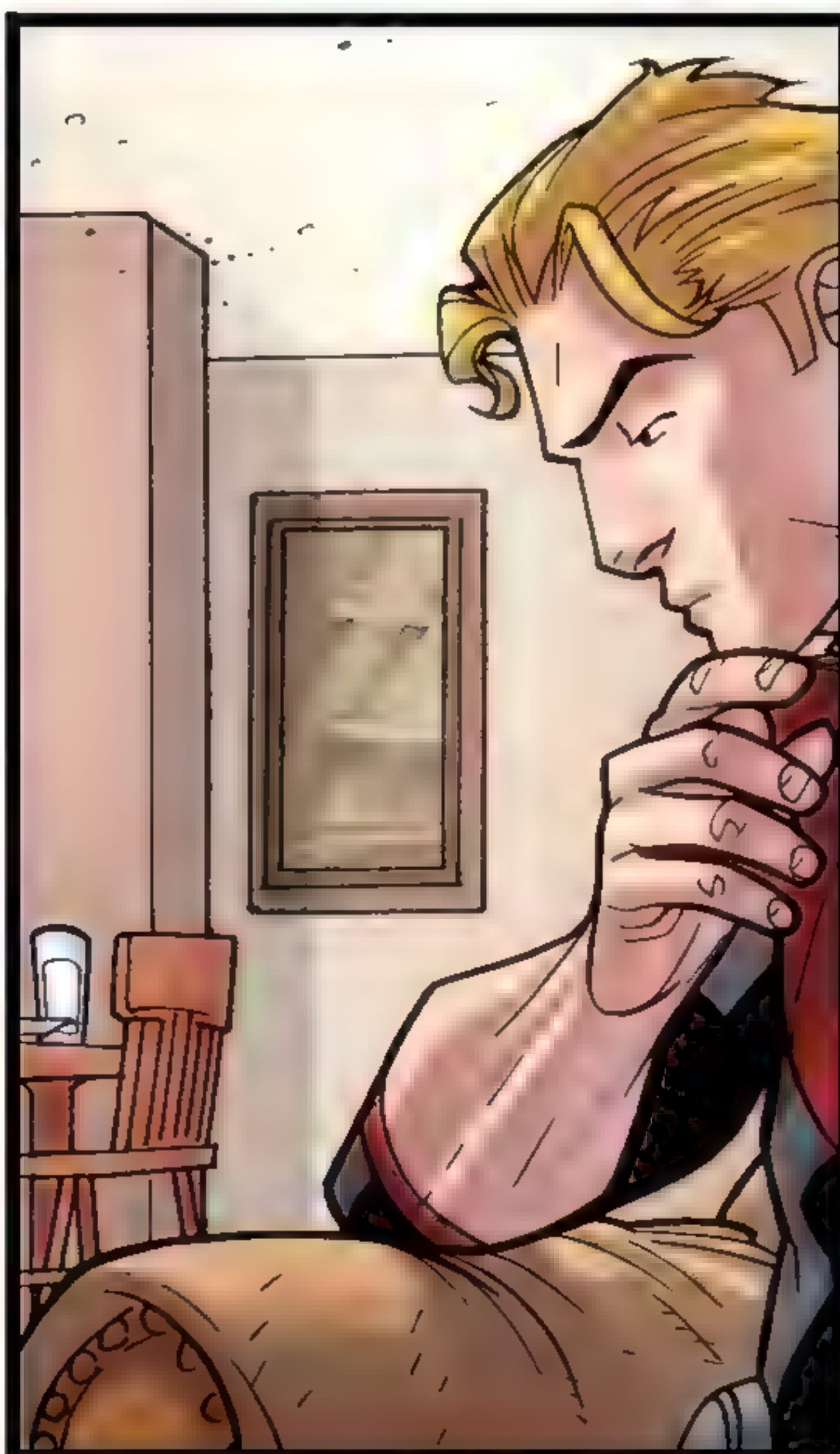
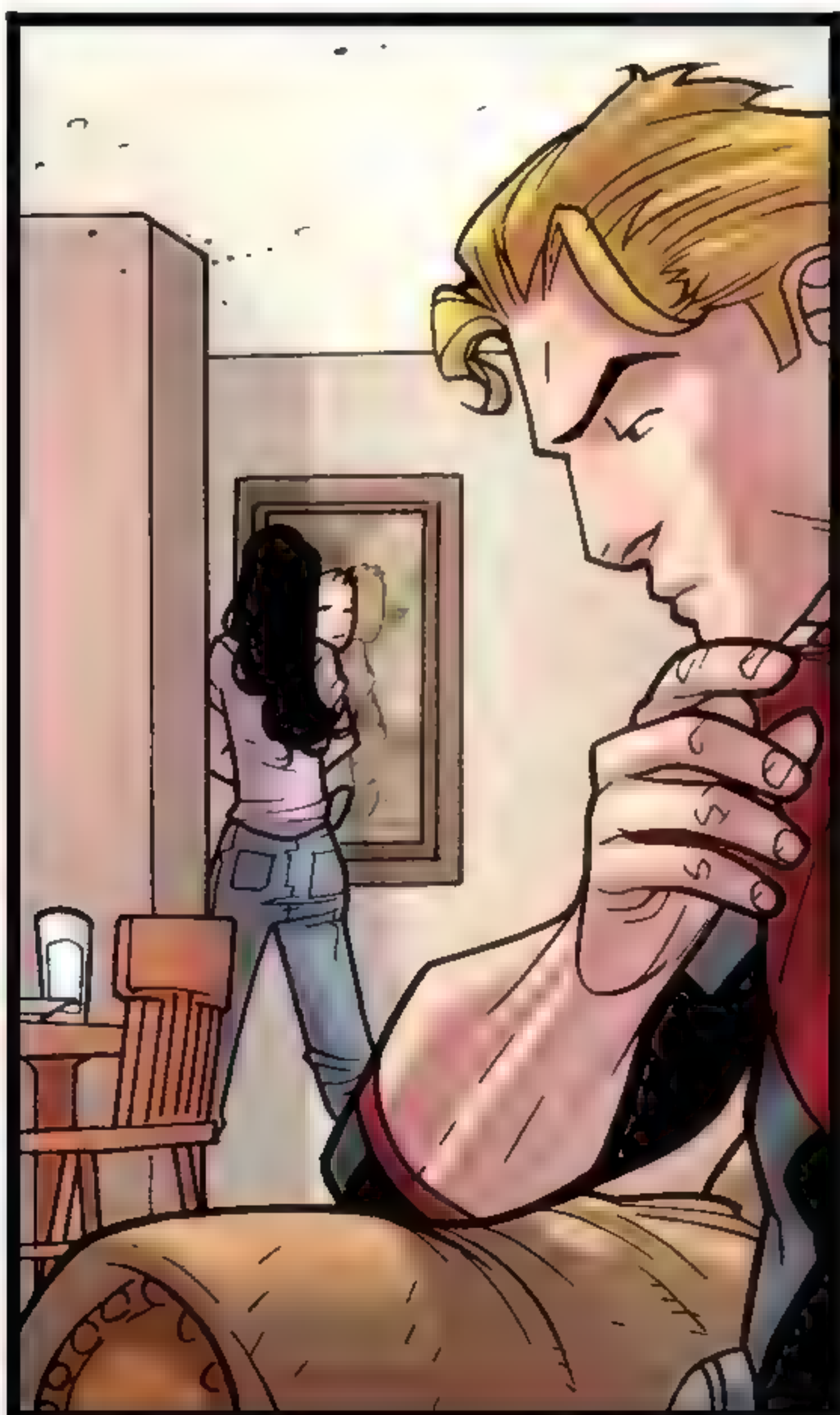
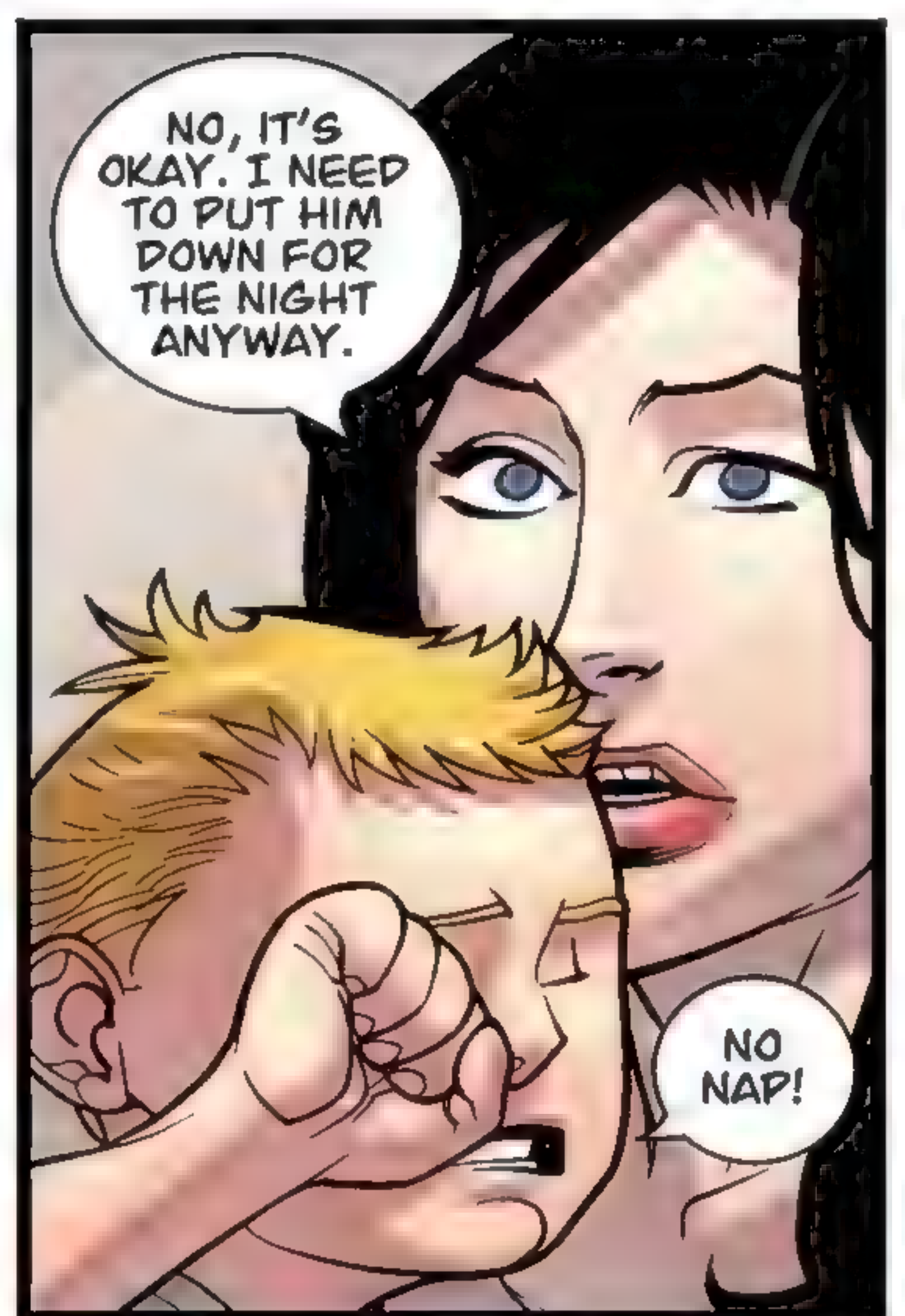


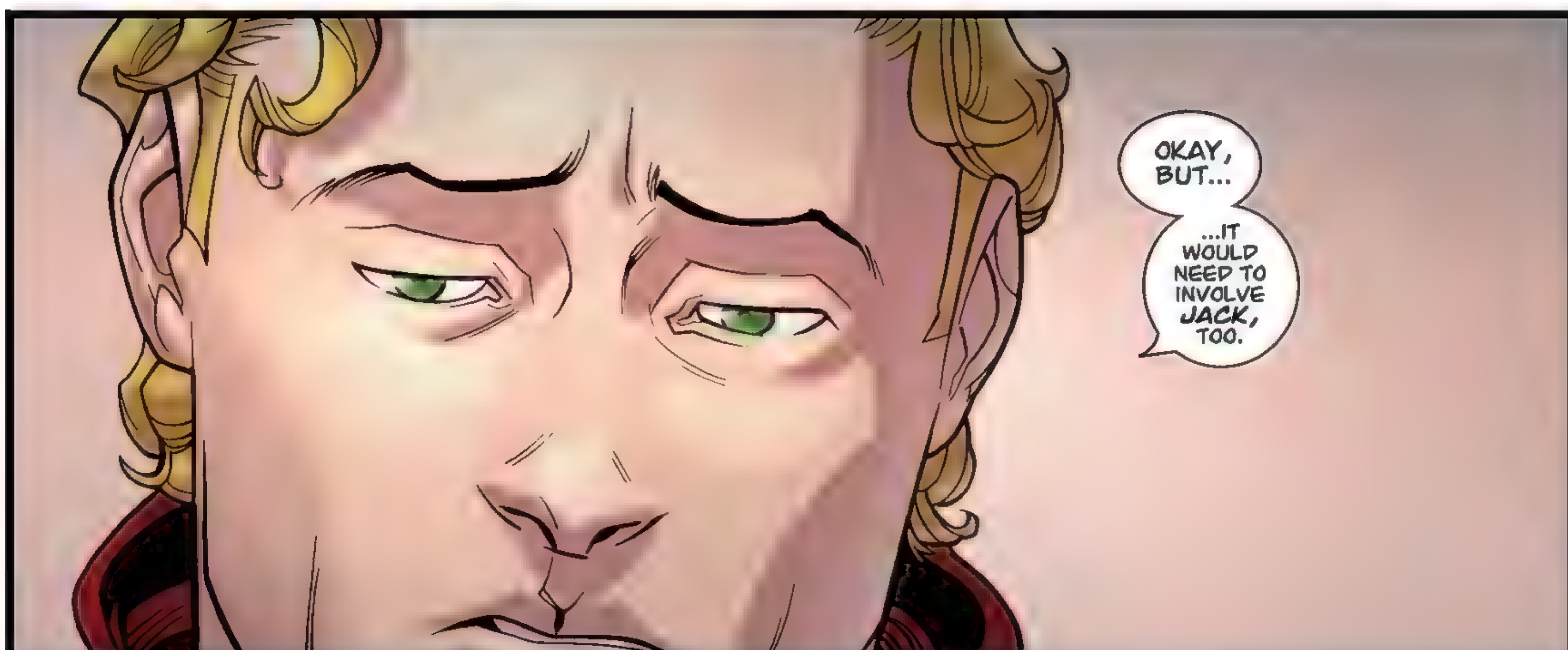


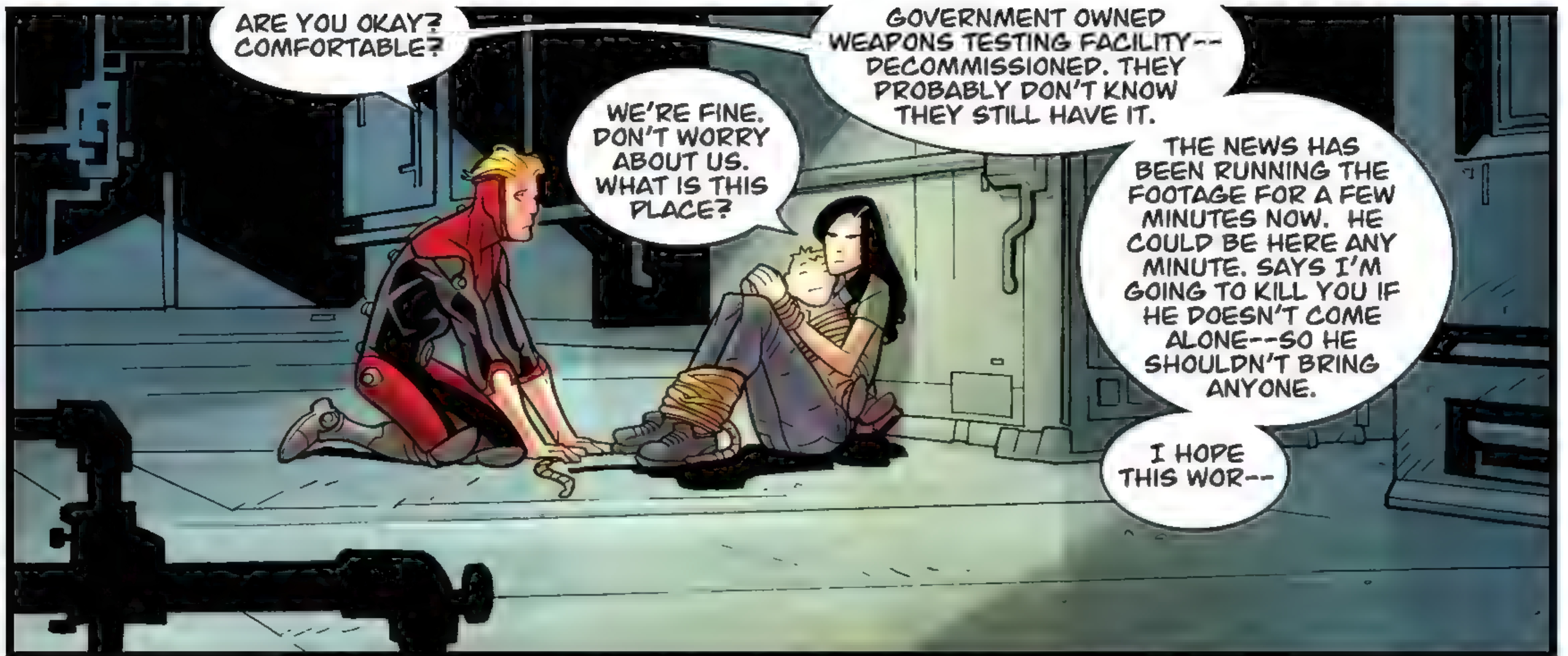
IT'S NOT WORKING!
I CAN'T GET HIM
TO COME TO ME! I
CAN'T FIND
HIM!

THERE ARE
TOO DAMN MANY
SUPERHEROES!
HOW DO I GET
INVINCIBLE TO
COME AFTER
ME?!

AARRRGH!







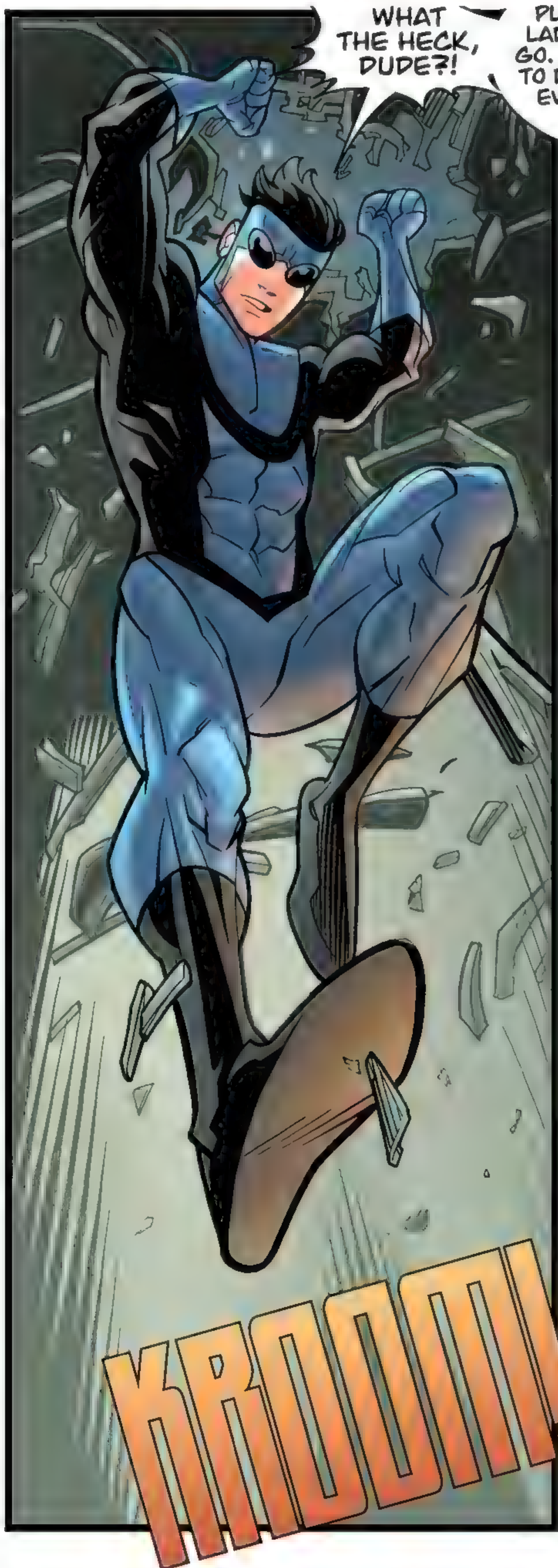
ARE YOU OKAY?
COMFORTABLE?

WE'RE FINE.
DON'T WORRY
ABOUT US.
WHAT IS THIS
PLACE?

GOVERNMENT OWNED
WEAPONS TESTING FACILITY--
DECOMMISSIONED. THEY
PROBABLY DON'T KNOW
THEY STILL HAVE IT.

THE NEWS HAS
BEEN RUNNING THE
FOOTAGE FOR A FEW
MINUTES NOW. HE
COULD BE HERE ANY
MINUTE. SAYS I'M
GOING TO KILL YOU IF
HE DOESN'T COME
ALONE--SO HE
SHOULDN'T BRING
ANYONE.

I HOPE
THIS WOR--



WHAT
THE HECK,
DUDE?!

PLEASE LET THIS
LADY AND HER KID
GO. YOU DON'T HAVE
TO DO THIS. I DON'T
EVEN KNOW WHO
YOU ARE!



DO YOU
KNOW WHO
JESSICA
DUVALL
IS?



NO. I
DON'T.

AGAIN,
MAN--
WHAT THE
HECK?

SHE WAS AN OFFICE
ASSISTANT AT AN
ADVERTISING AGENCY.
SHE WAS WORKING
THERE TO PAY HER
WAY THROUGH
COLLEGE.

YOU AND YOUR
FATHER TORE THROUGH
HER BUILDING--I'LL
NEVER KNOW HOW
TERRIFIED SHE WAS IN
THOSE FINAL MOMENTS
AS THE BUILDING
COLLAPSED ALL
AROUND HER!



A LOT...
A LOT OF
PEOPLE DIED IN
THAT FIGHT. I
DON'T KNOW
THE NAME OF
EVERY
ONE...

I'M
SORRY,
ALL I CAN
SAY IS I'M
SORRY.

YOU'RE NOT
SORRY--YOU
DON'T EVEN
CARE! BUT
YOU WILL!

I'LL
MAKE
SURE
OF IT!

YOU THINK
YOU ARE ABOVE
THE LAW--YOU
THINK YOUR
ACTIONS HOLD NO
CONSEQUENCE!

YOU ARE
WRONG!

YOU WILL
PAY--

NGG!

BRAMMMMM!

I'M SORRY FOR
YOUR LOSS--YOU
HAVE TO KNOW
THAT I DIDN'T
MEAN FOR ANY
OF THAT TO
HAPPEN.

--BUT I'M
NOT GOING
TO LET YOU
KILL ME!

STOP.

I'M POWERPLEX!
I DON'T NEED YOU
TO LET ME!

BOZACKK!!

WAIT A
MINUTE--I
KNOW WHO
YOU ARE!

WRAMMM!

YOU'RE THAT GUY--
YOU BEAT UP THE
TEEN TEAM--SAID
YOU WERE LOOKING
FOR ME!

WRAMMM!

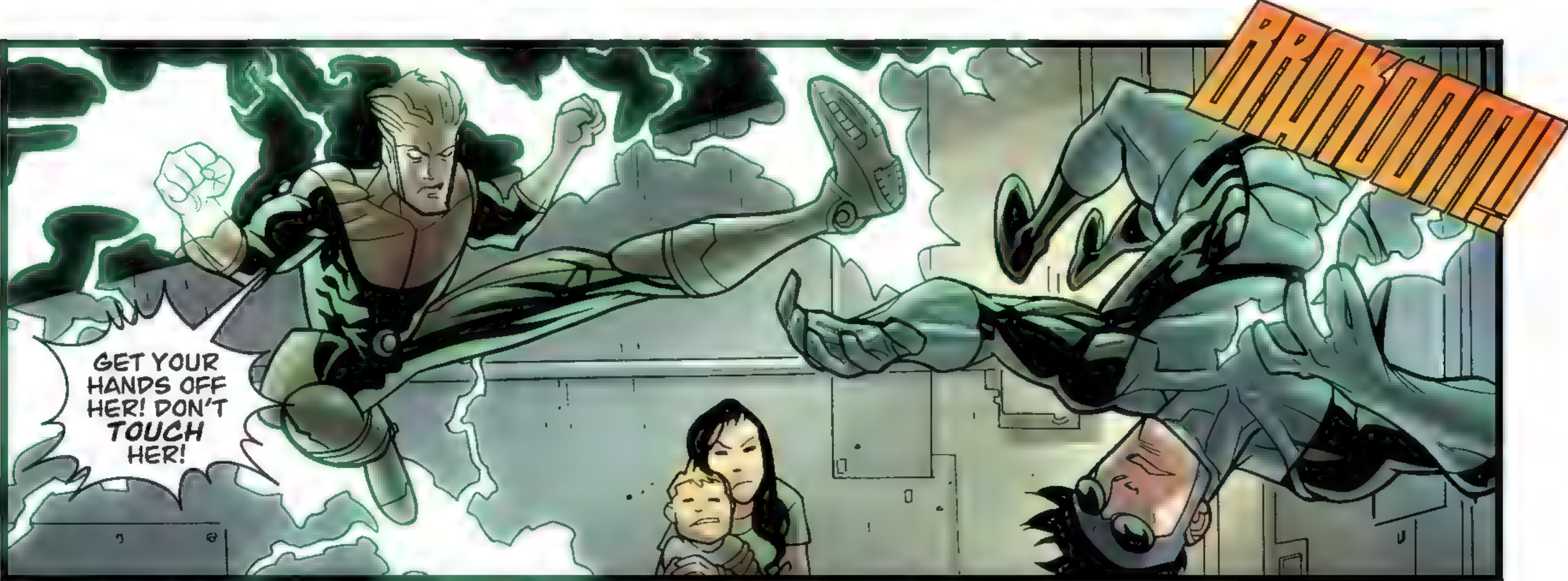
THEY
WARNED
ME ABOUT
YOU!

WRAMMM!

SAID YOU
ABSORB
ENERGY FROM
EXPLOSIONS...

WRAMMM!

HUH?



THE PEOPLE FEAR
YOU, Y'KNOW?! IT
MIGHT NOT BE
OBVIOUS--BUT
YOU SCARE
EVERYONE!

VZZZOKKI!

WE'RE ALL WAITING
FOR YOU TO REVEAL
YOUR TRUE INTENTIONS--
DREADING THE MOMENT
YOU TRY TO TAKE OVER--
TO KILL US ALL!

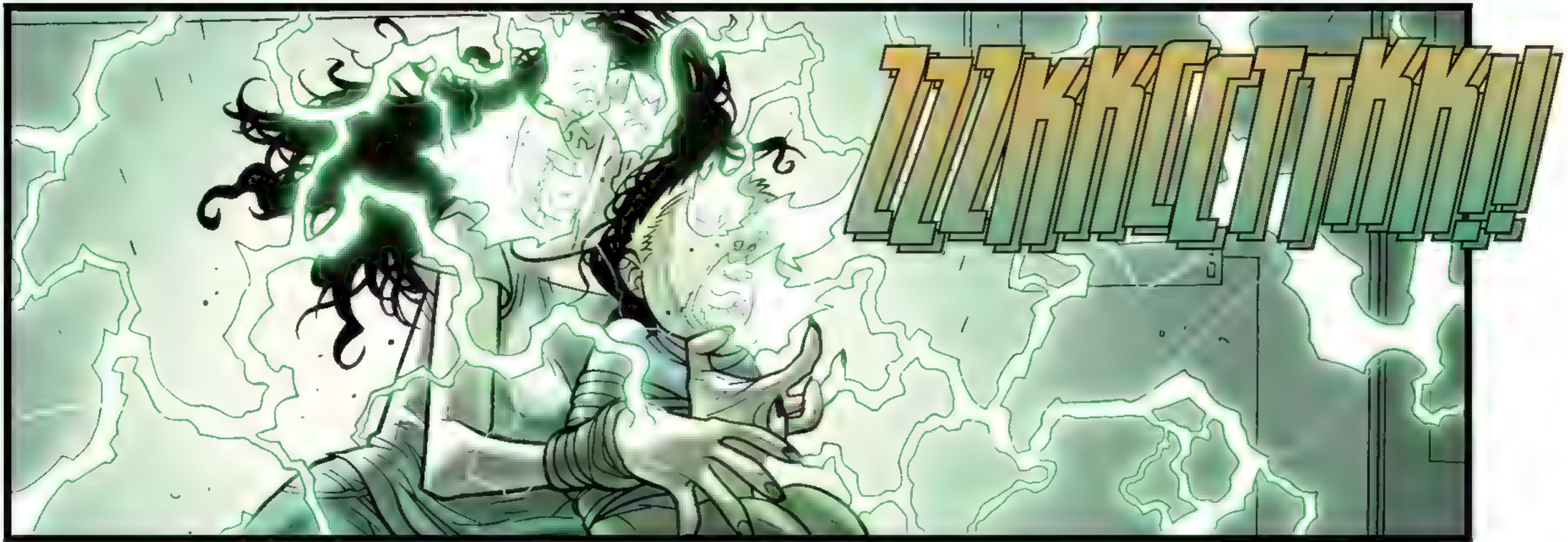
BUT THEY WON'T HAVE
TO WORRY ABOUT
THAT, I'LL PROTECT
THEM FROM YOU.
I'LL MAKE SURE YOU
NEVER HURT
ANYONE EVER
AGAIN.

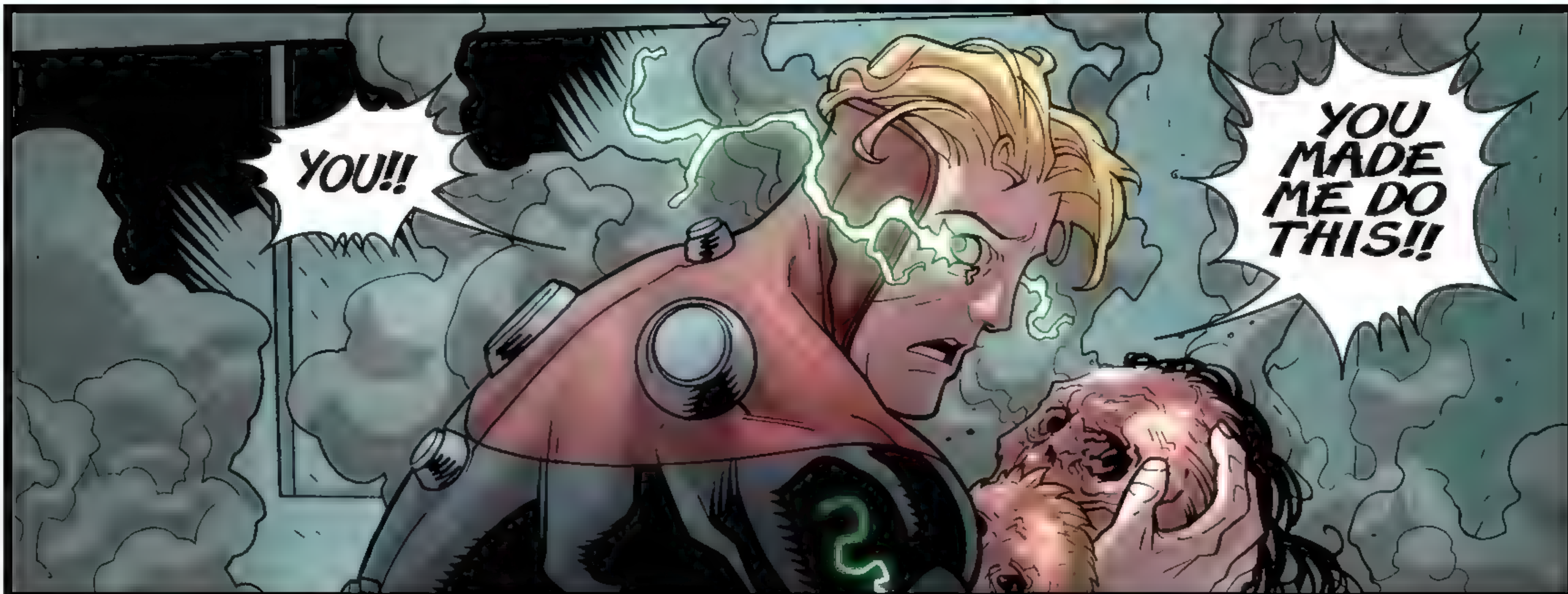
DIE,
INVINCIBLE!

FOR
EVERYTHING
YOU'VE DONE!
FOR ALL THE
PAIN YOU'VE
CAUSED!

DIE!

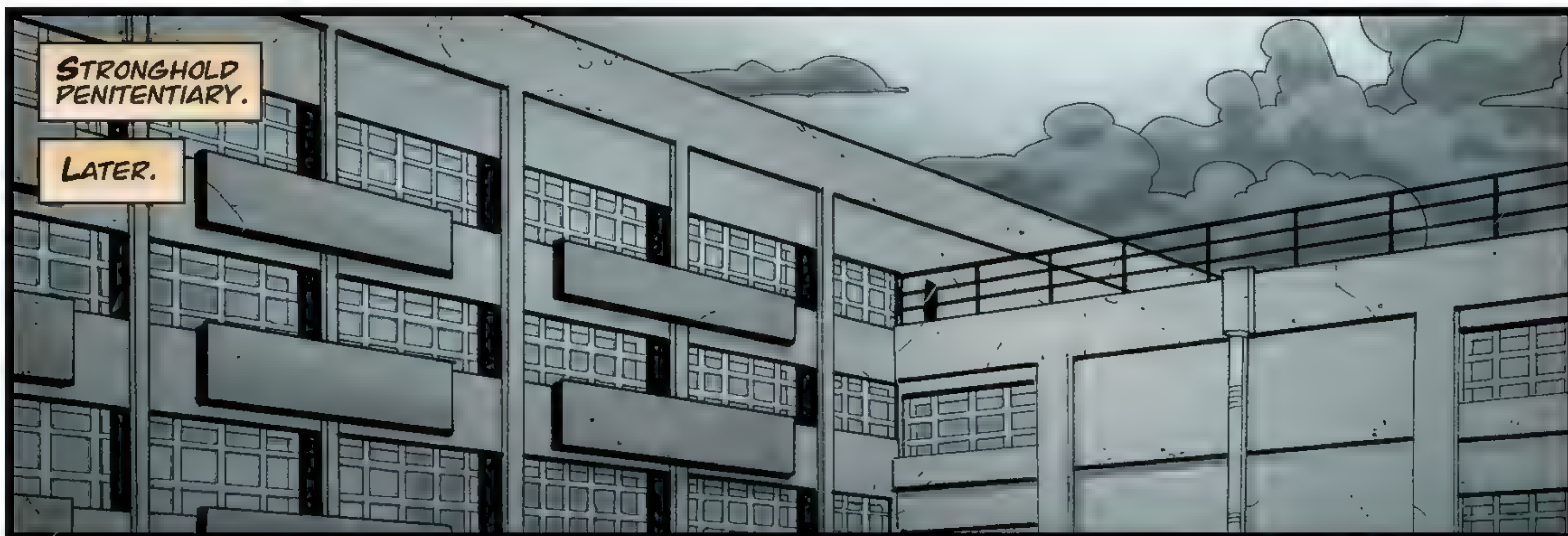
BZZZAOOKKT!





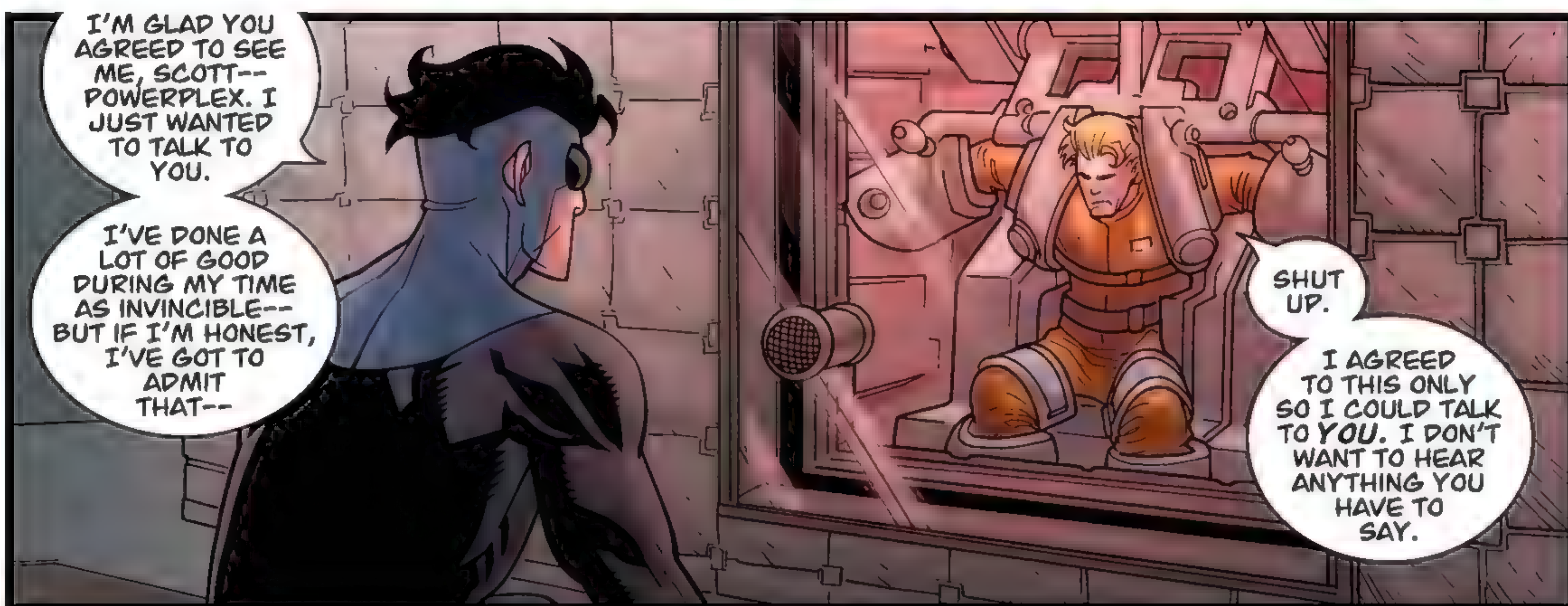






STRONGHOLD
PENITENTIARY.

LATER.



I'M GLAD YOU
AGREED TO SEE
ME, SCOTT--
POWERPLEX. I
JUST WANTED
TO TALK TO
YOU.

I'VE DONE A
LOT OF GOOD
DURING MY TIME
AS INVINCIBLE--
BUT IF I'M HONEST,
I'VE GOT TO
ADMIT
THAT--

SHUT
UP.

I AGREED
TO THIS ONLY
SO I COULD TALK
TO YOU. I DON'T
WANT TO HEAR
ANYTHING YOU
HAVE TO
SAY.

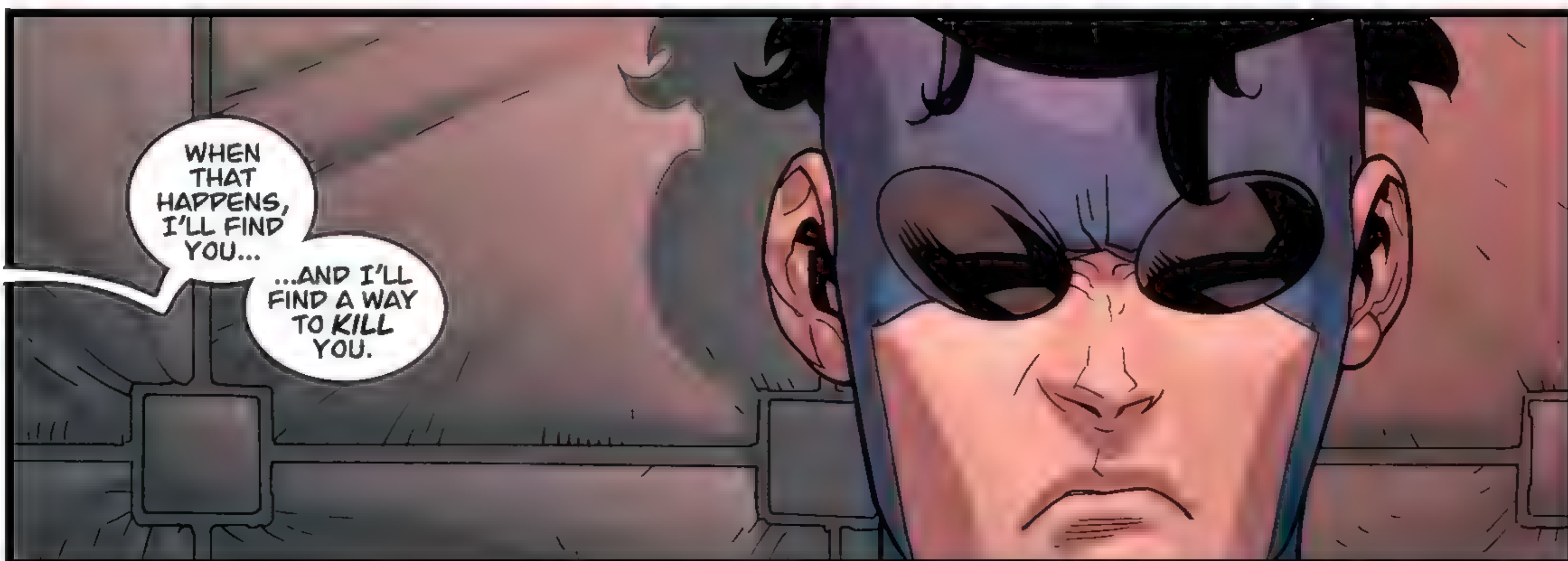


YOU THINK THIS IS IT FOR ME...
YOU THINK I'M NO LONGER A
THREAT TO YOU. I'M HERE TO
SAY THAT YOU'RE WRONG. I
WILL AVENGE ALL THE DEATHS
YOU'VE CAUSED--EACH
AND EVERY ONE
OF THEM.

I'VE GOT TIME
IN HERE--I'M
RESEARCHING, FINDING
EVERY SINGLE PERSON
WHO LOST THEIR LIFE
BECAUSE OF SOMETHING
YOU DID. I'M GOING
TO MAKE YOU PAY
FOR IT ALL.

I WON'T BE IN
HERE FOREVER. THEY'RE
KEEPING ME CONTAINED--
NO SOLAR ENERGY, NO
ELECTRICITY... THEY'VE
CUT ME OFF...

BUT SOONER OR
LATER, SOMEONE WILL
MESS UP. A GUARD WILL
GET CARELESS, HIT ME--
GIVE ME THE ENERGY
I NEED TO ESCAPE.



WHEN
THAT
HAPPENS,
I'LL FIND
YOU...

...AND I'LL
FIND A WAY
TO KILL
YOU.



CHAPTER 60



MONTHS AGO.

OH,
GOD.

OH,
GOD.

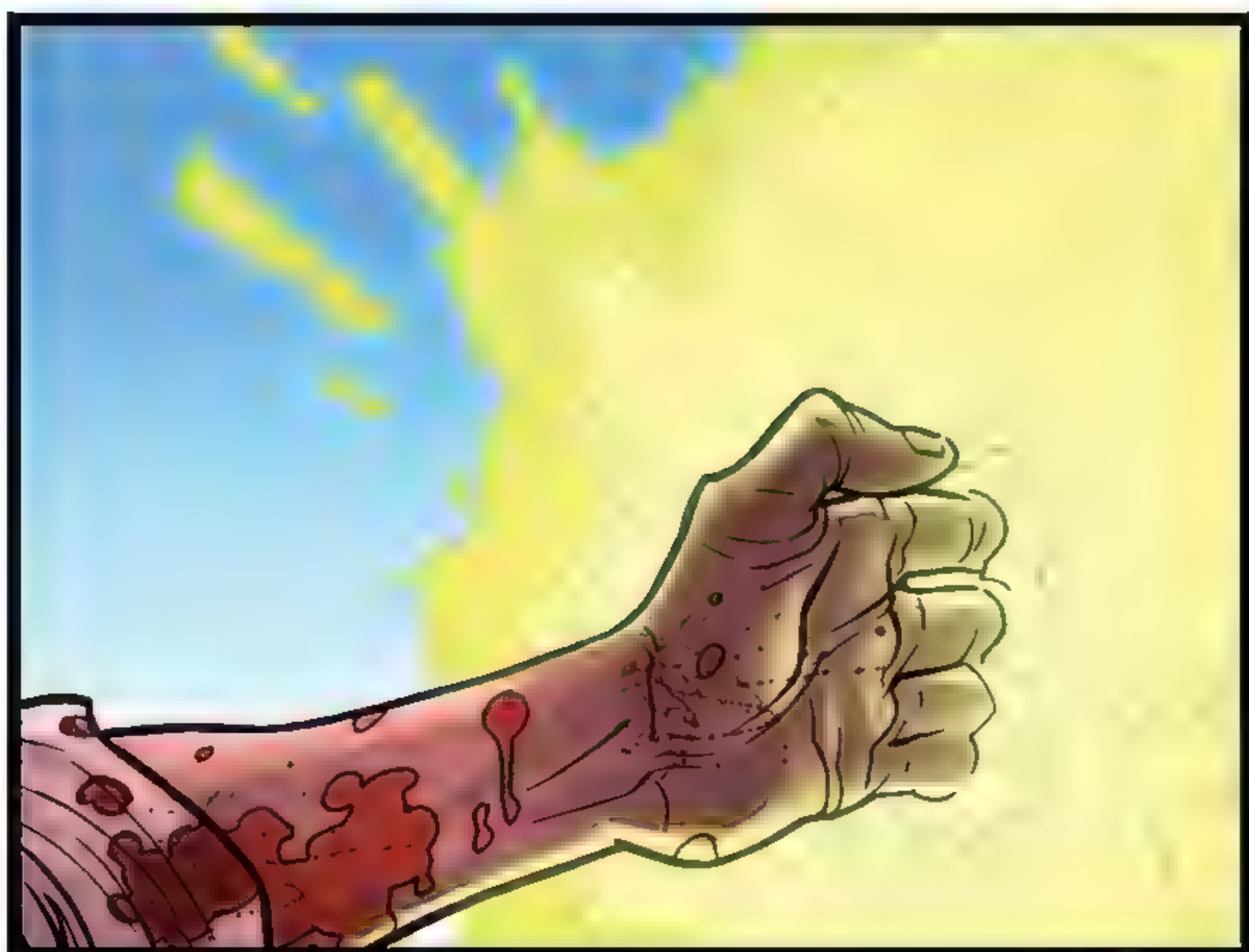
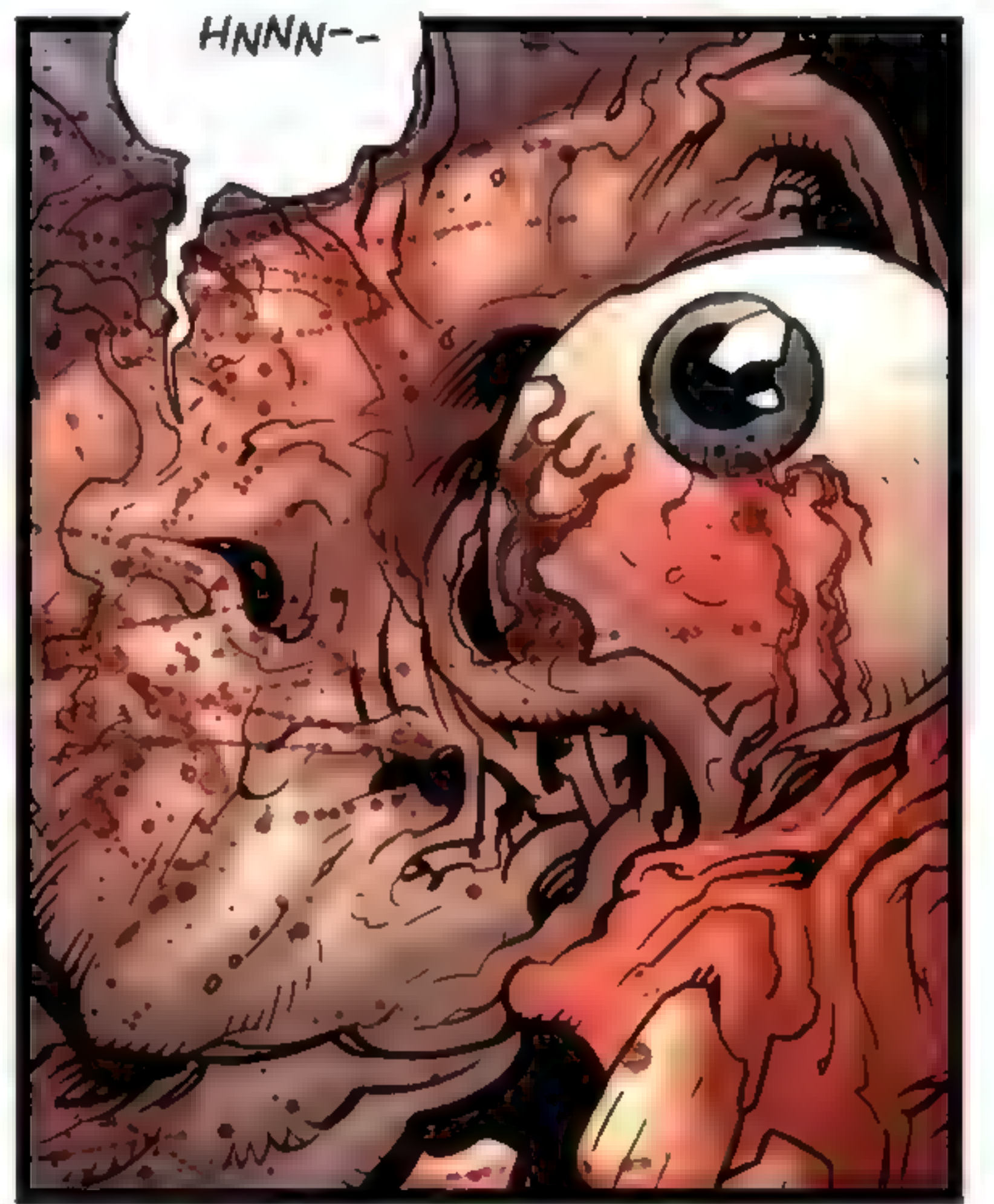
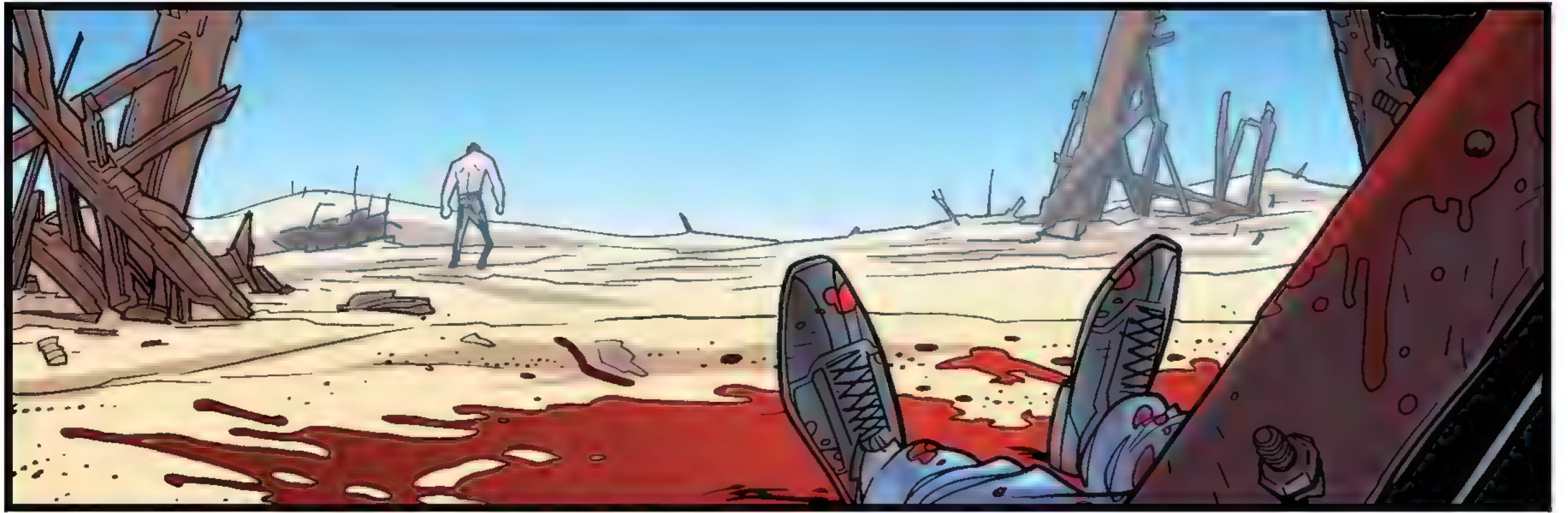
OH,
GOD.

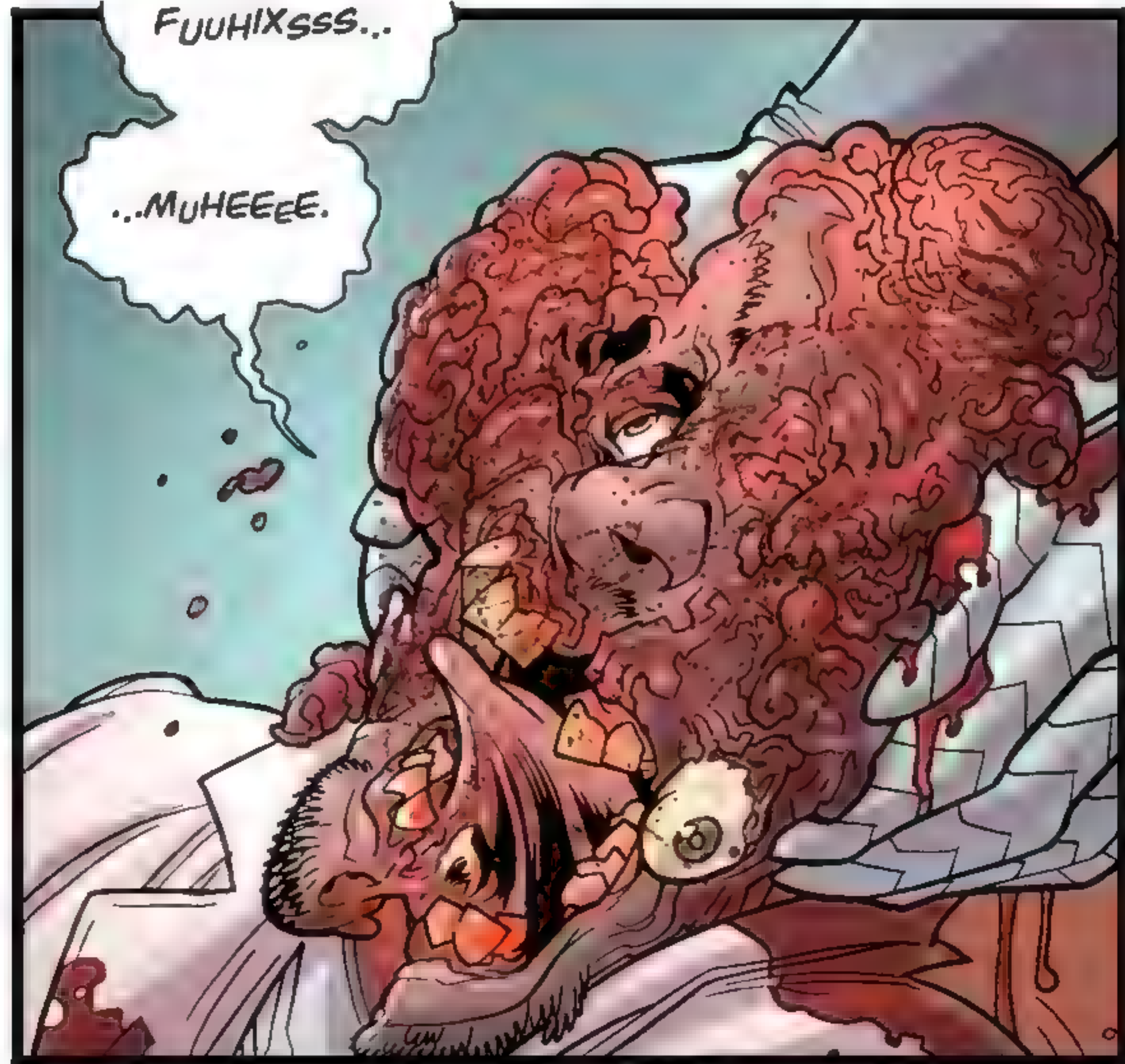
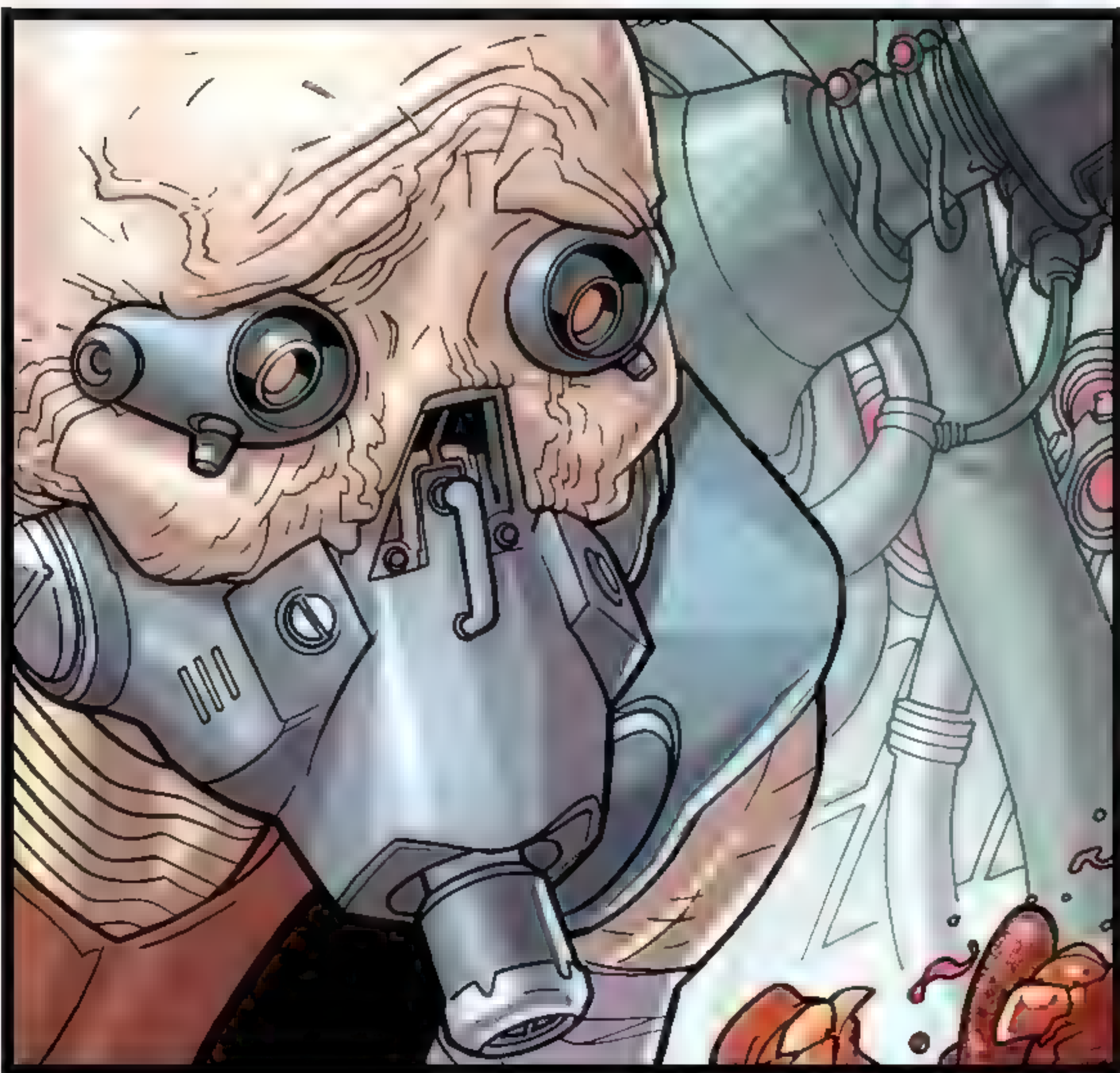
OH,
GOD.

OH,
GOD.

OH,
GOD.





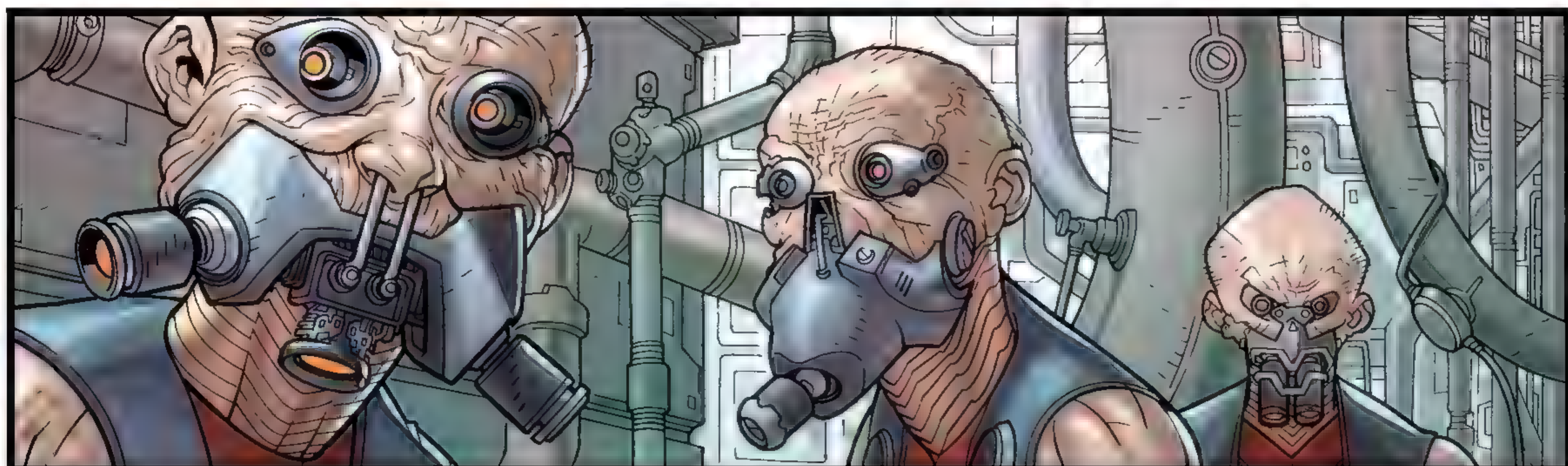


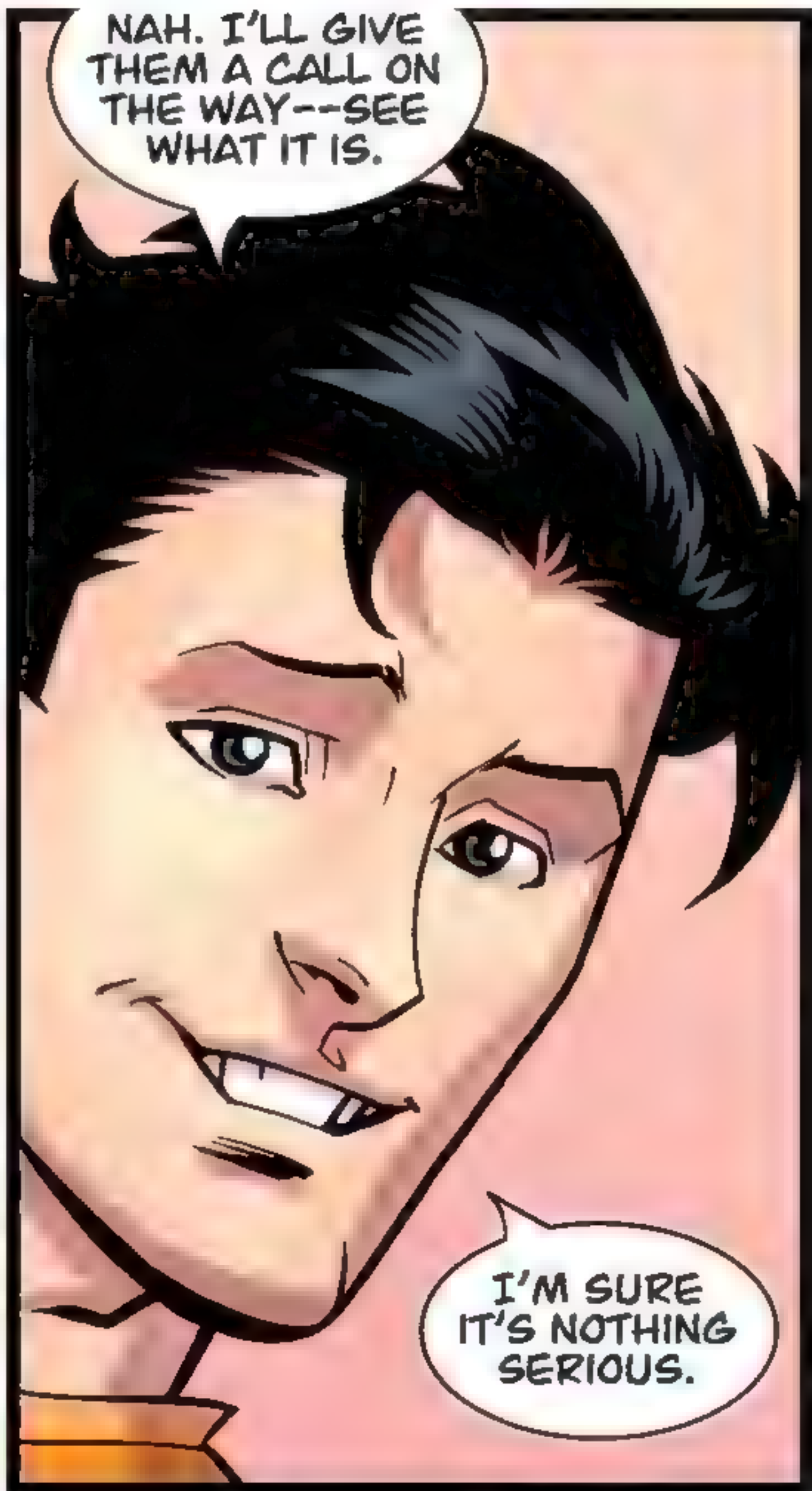
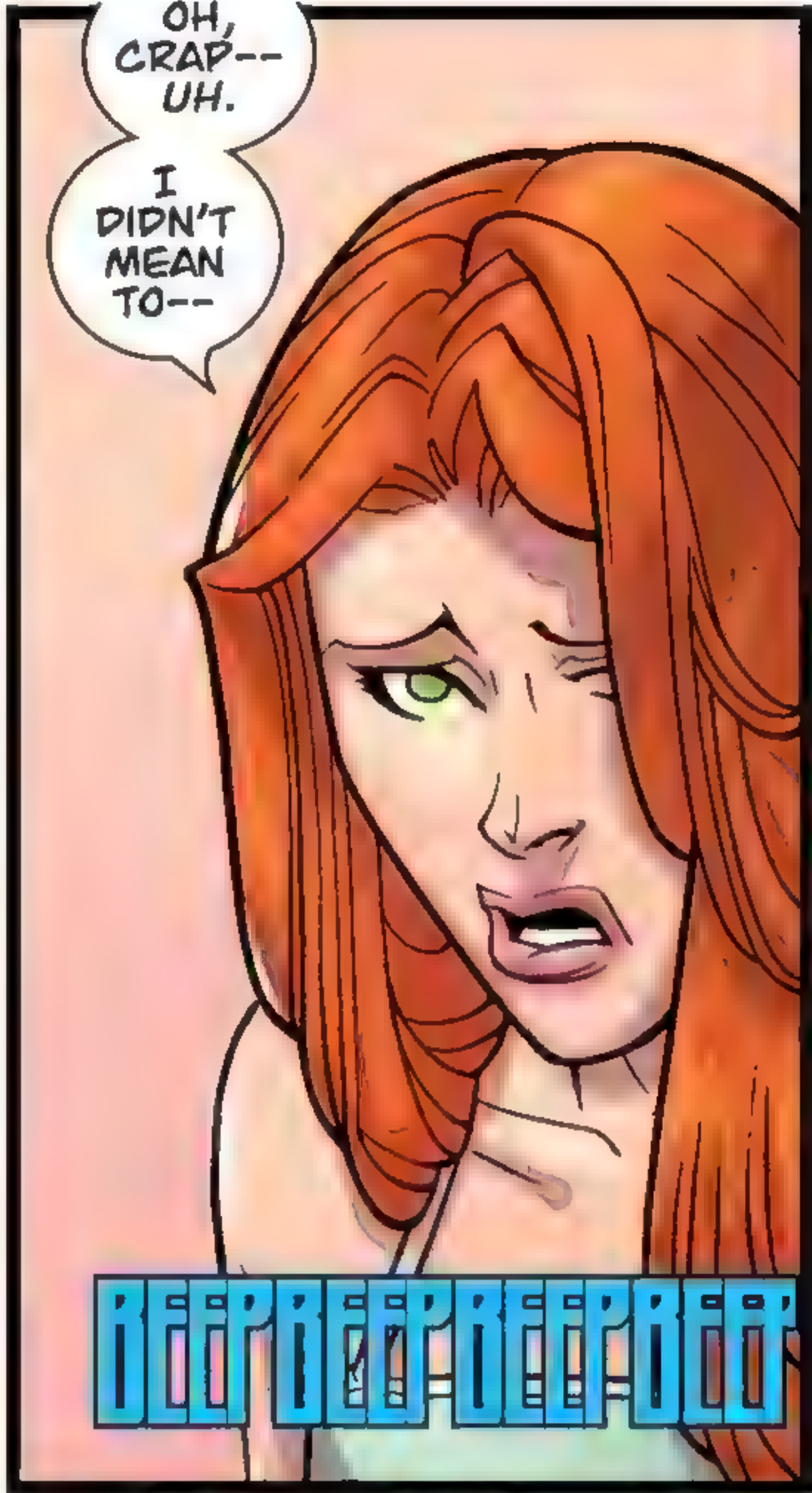
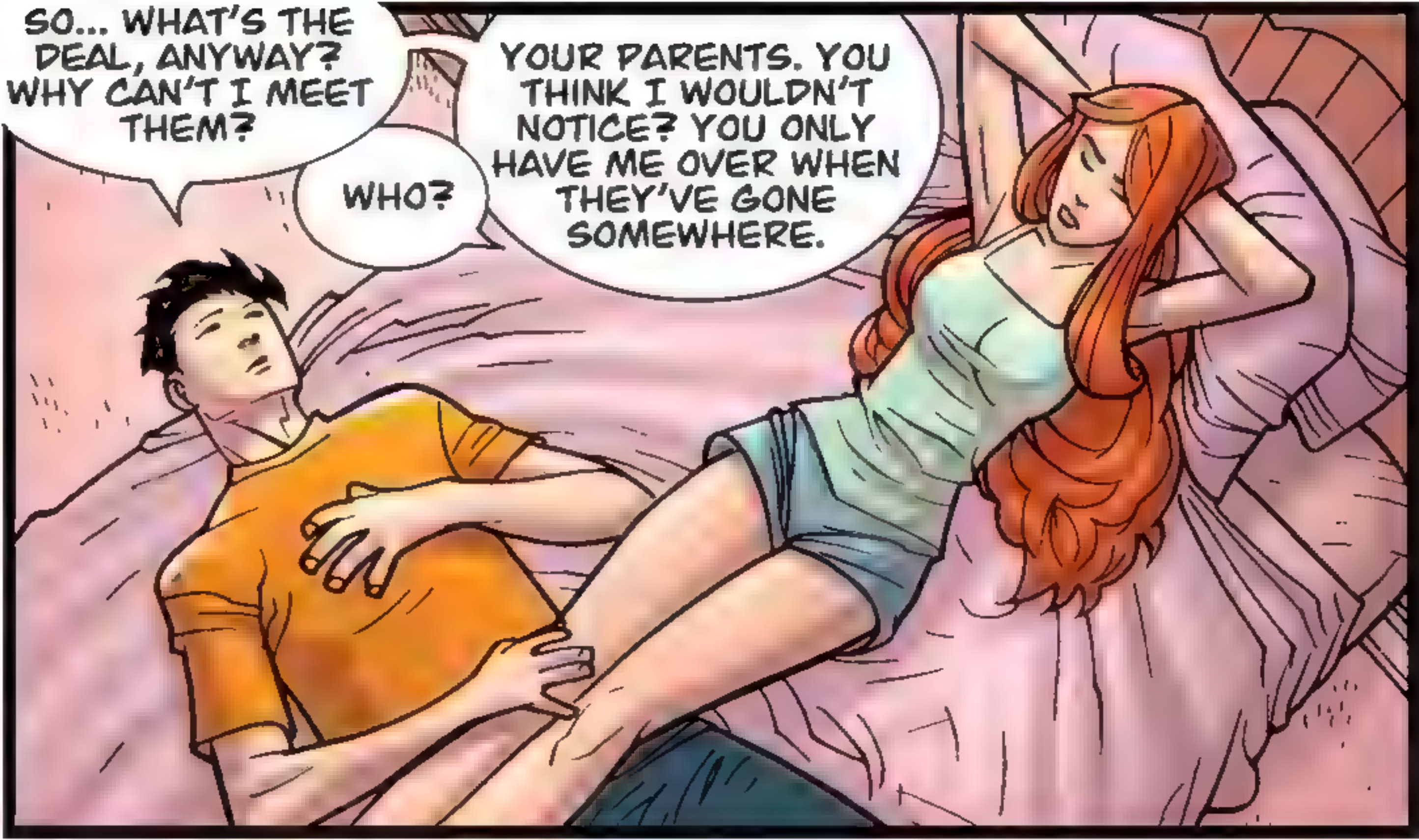
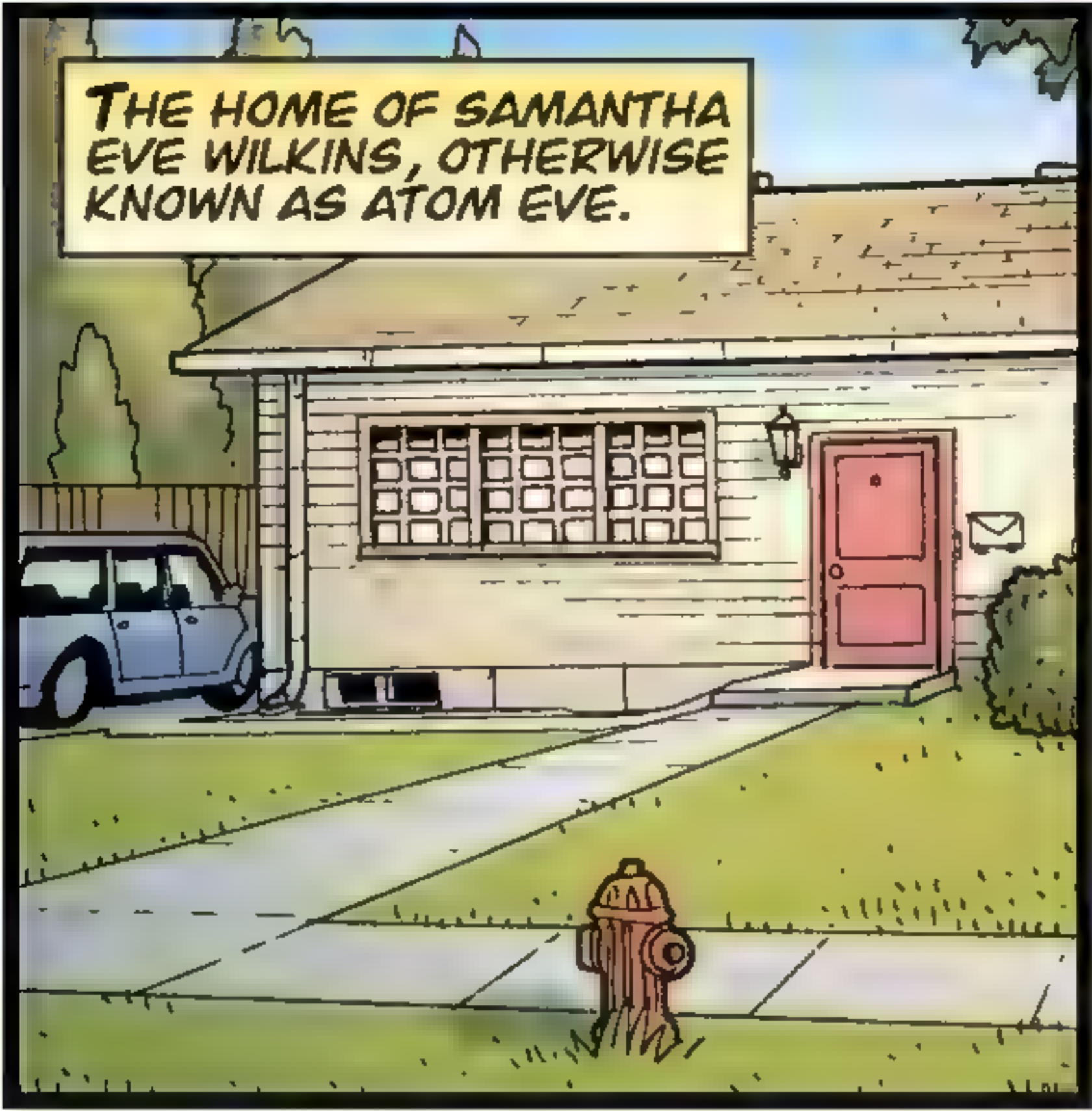
MONTHS LATER.



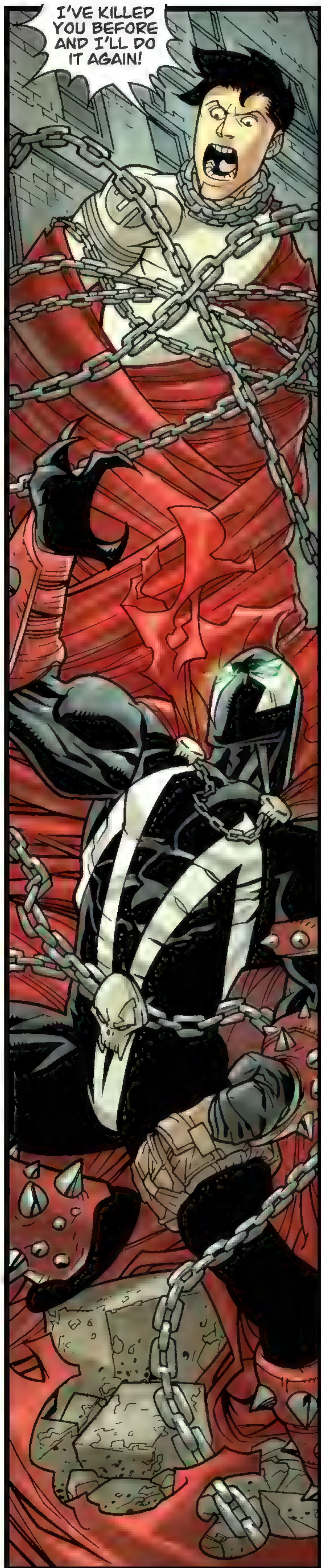
Now.

DAY ONE.









STOP THIS! WE'RE TOO
EVENLY MATCHED--
JUST STOP! THIS COULD
GO ON FOREVER!

STOP FIGHTING
AND TELL ME HOW
YOU GOT HERE--
WHO BROUGHT YOU
HERE?! HOW DID
YOU GET TO THIS
DIMENSION?!

KROOM!

YOU'LL GET NO ANSWERS
FROM ME! I WILL NEVER
YIELD TO YOU. IT SICKENS
ME TO EVEN LOOK
AT YOU.

A LESSER VERSION OF ME--
A PALE REFLECTION. I'LL SEE
YOUR BRAINS SMEARED
ACROSS MY KNUCKLES
BEFORE I BOW
BEFORE YOU.

I'LL--

WROKK!

**SHUT
UP!**

KROOM!

WHAT
THE HELL
IS--

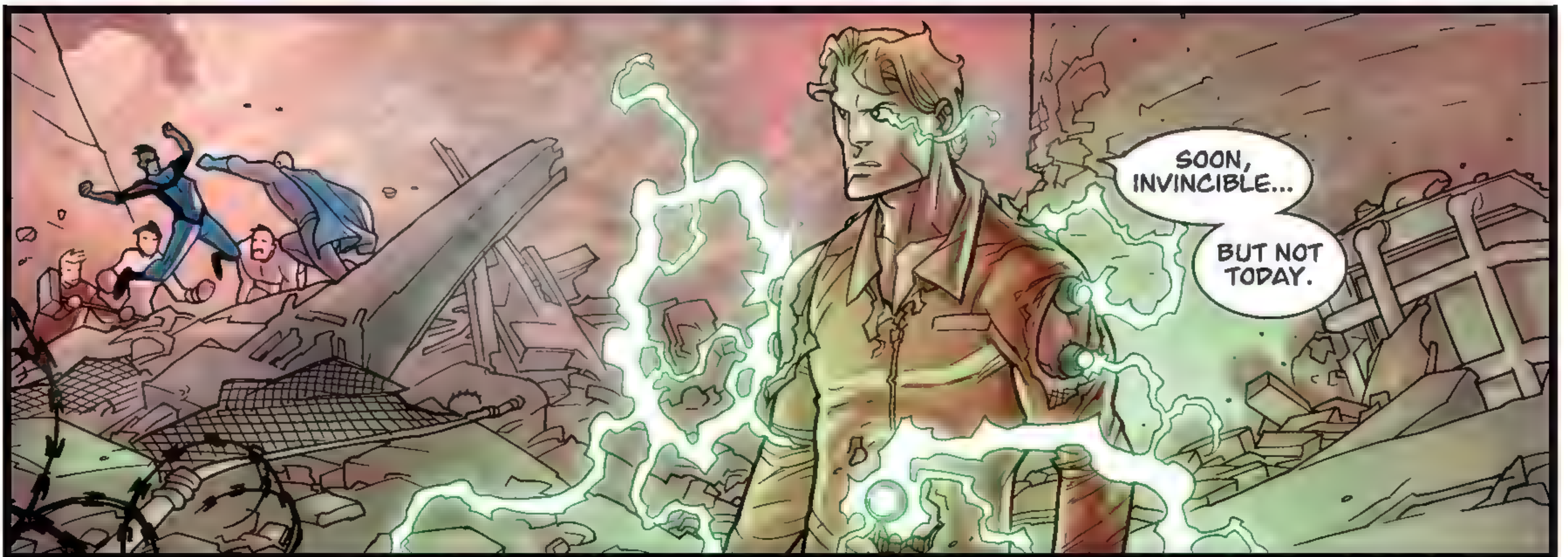
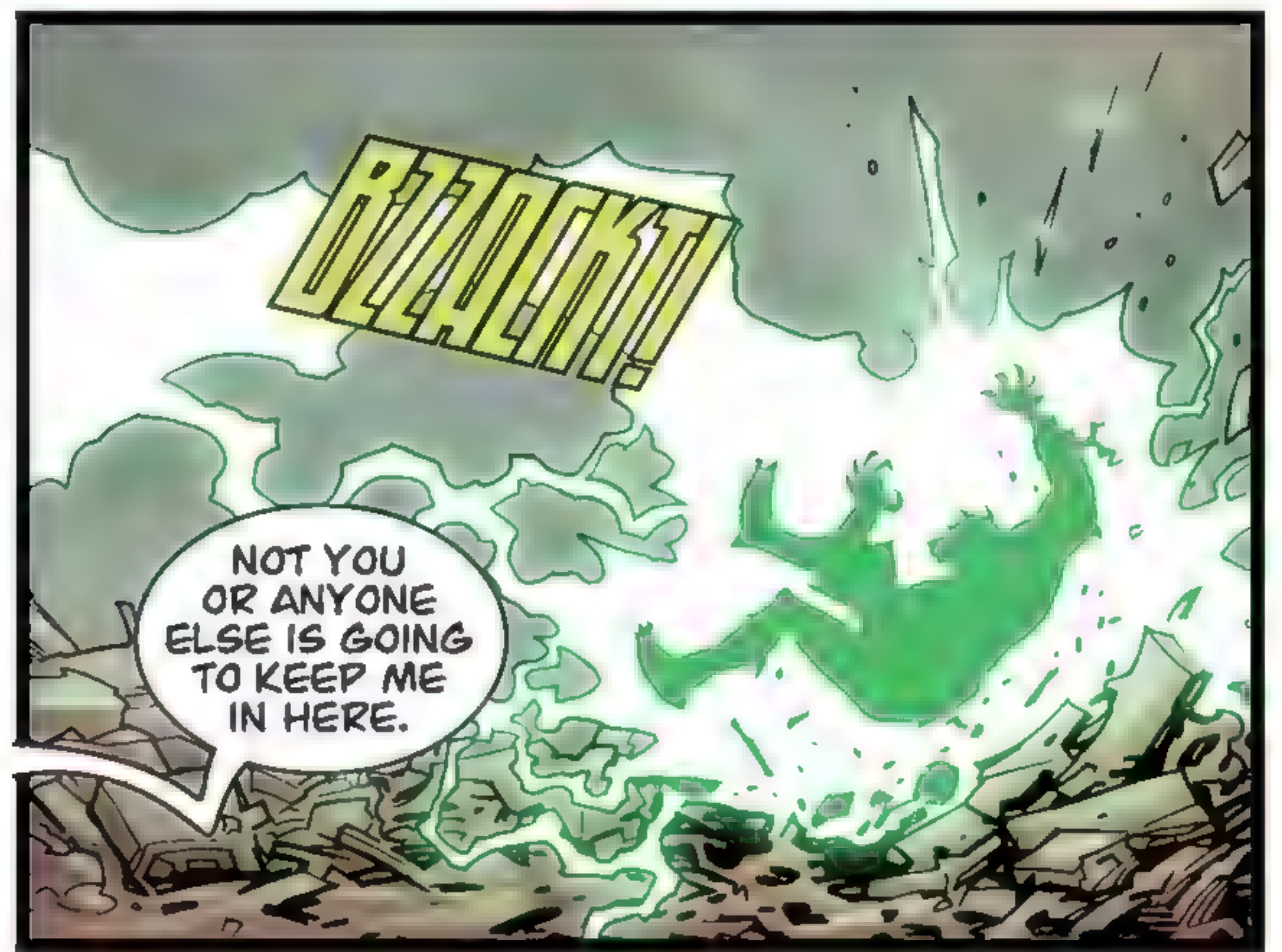
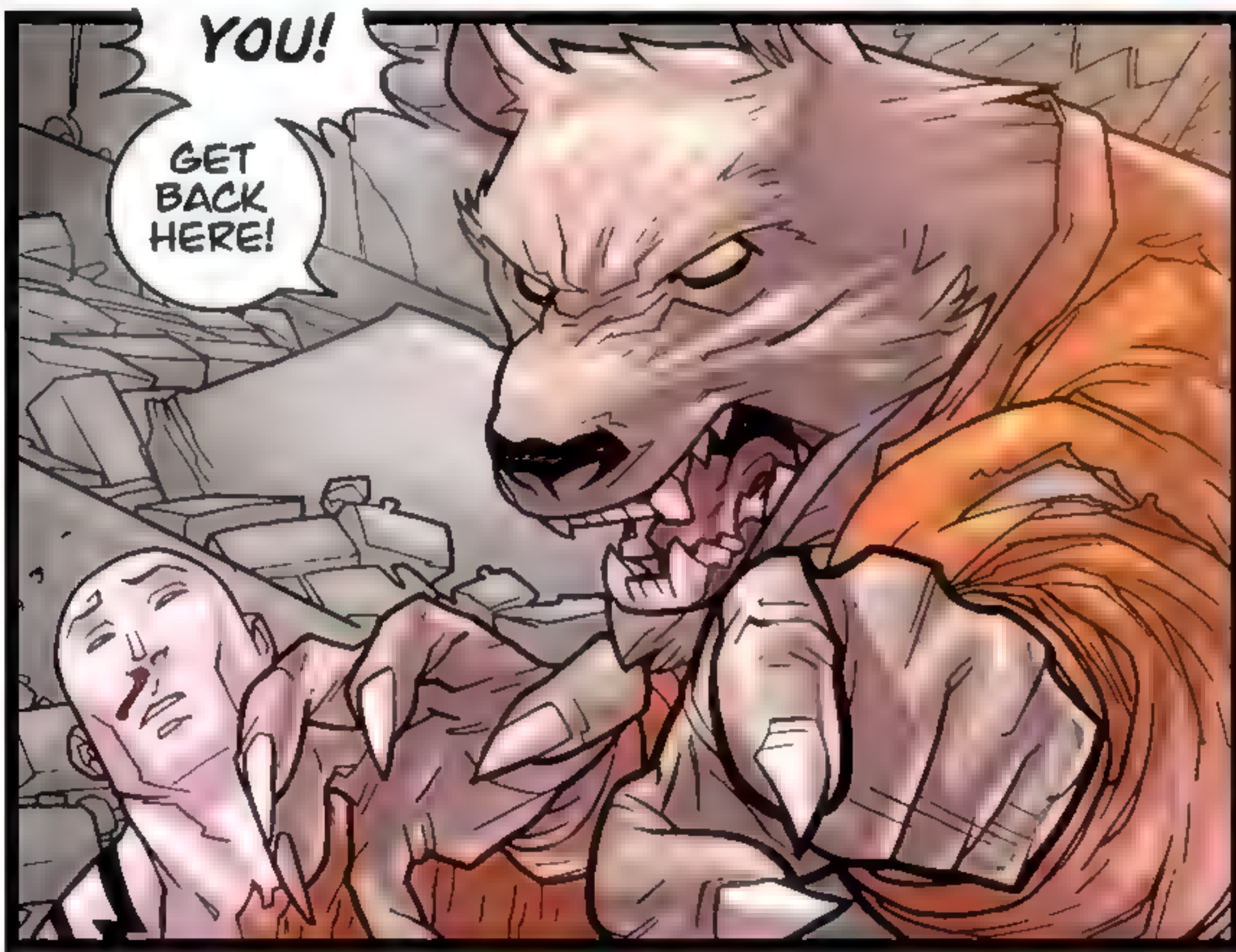
HEY!

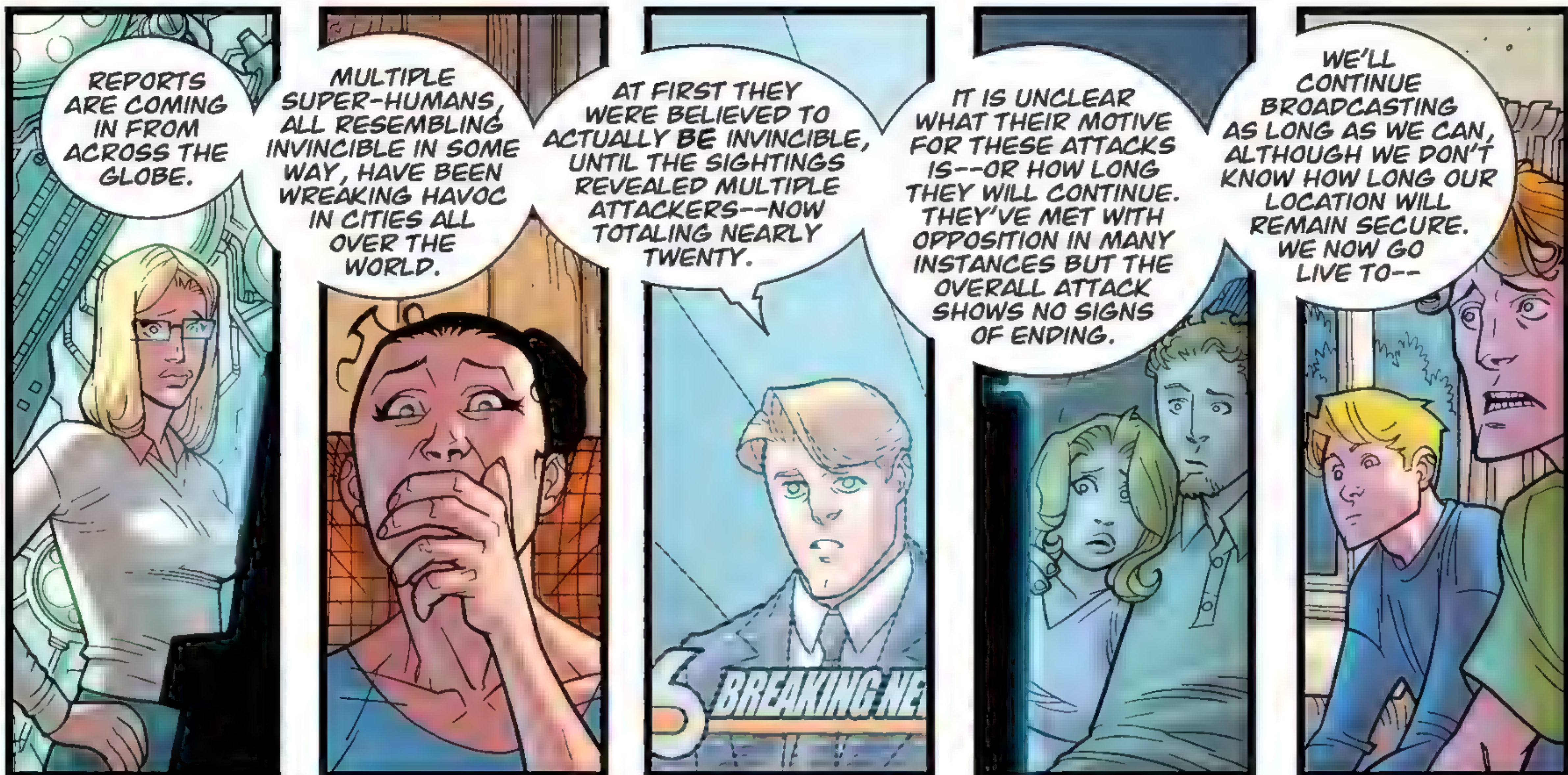
THERE'S ANOTHER
ONE--GET HIM! WE'VE
GOT TO STOP THESE
BASTARDS BEFORE
IT'S TOO LATE!

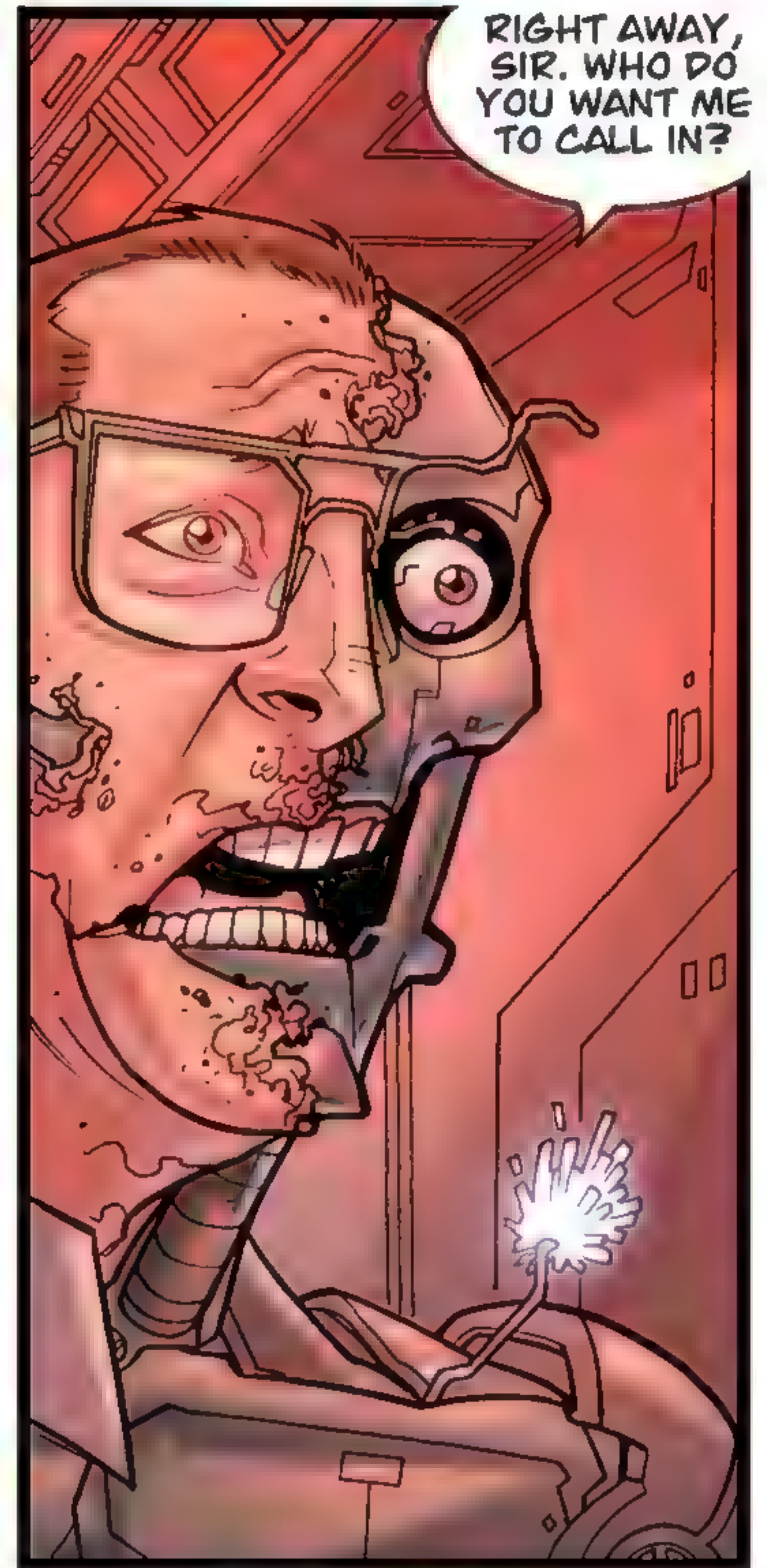
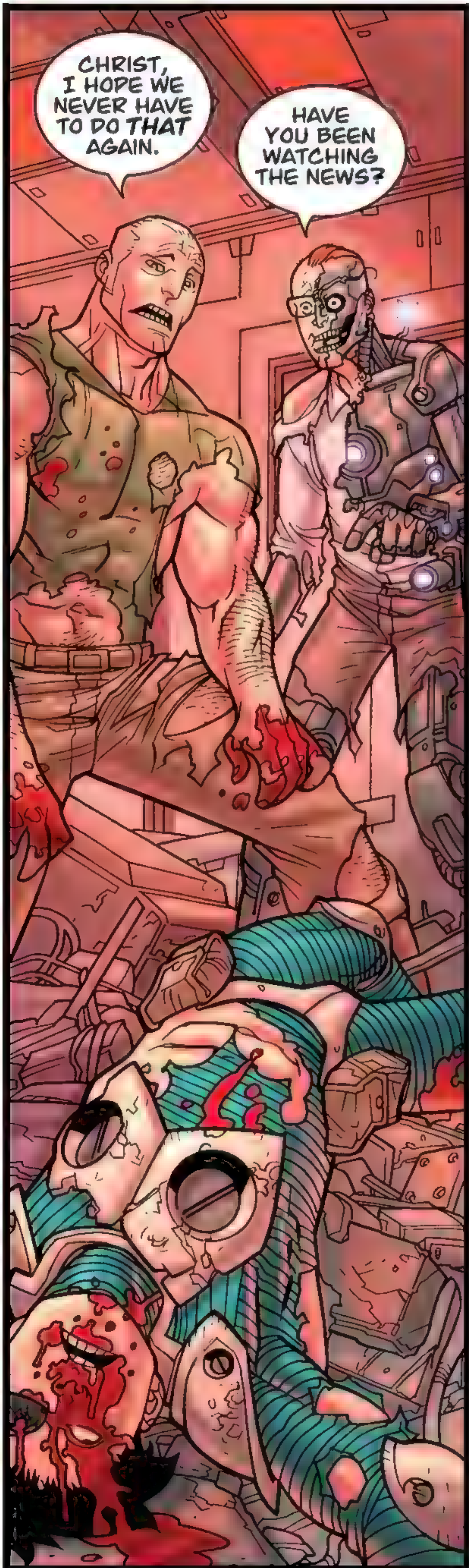
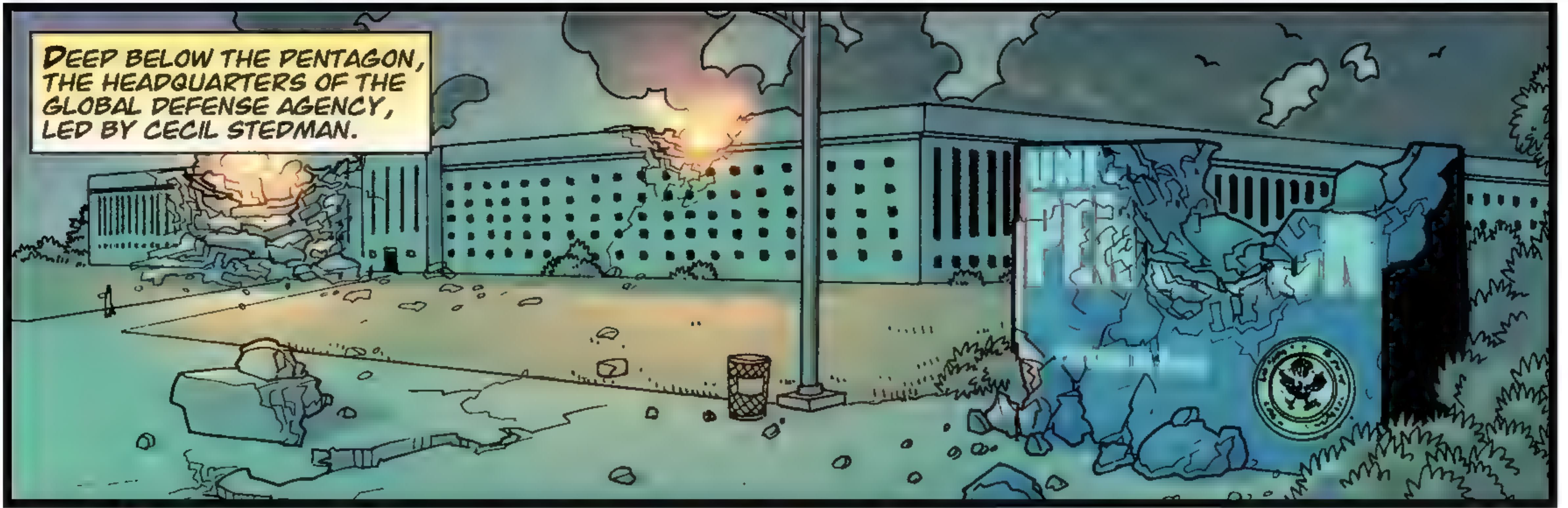
WHAT?!

GUYS--
IT'S ME!

IT'S--!







DAY TWO.

SPREAD OUT AND ENTER THE TRANSPORT WINDOWS, DOUBLE TIME! BE READY FOR WHATEVER FACES YOU WHEN YOU EMERGE, DROP POINTS ARE BEING CHOSEN AT RANDOM-- WE'VE GOT NO TIME FOR SPECIFIC MATCH-UPS.

WE'VE GOT MULTIPLE THREATS, MULTIPLE LOCATIONS-- THIS SITUATION IS DIRE, I WANT CONTINUAL UPDATES ON THE COMLINKS, IF YOU'RE DOWN WE NEED TO KNOW IMMEDIATELY SO REPLACEMENTS CAN BE DISPATCHED.

LET'S SAVE THE WORLD, PEOPLE!

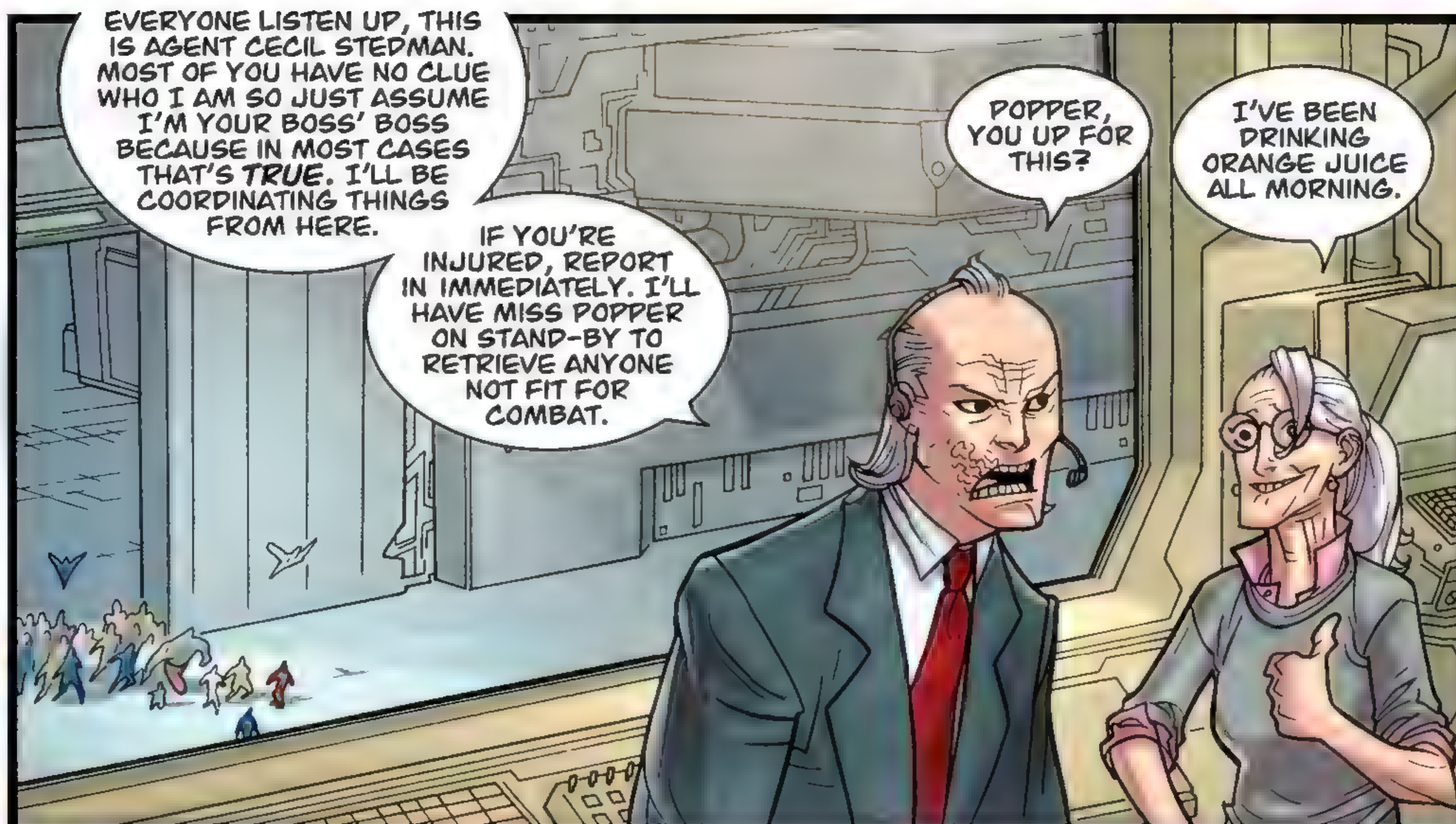


EVERYONE LISTEN UP, THIS IS AGENT CECIL STEPMAN. MOST OF YOU HAVE NO CLUE WHO I AM SO JUST ASSUME I'M YOUR BOSS' BOSS BECAUSE IN MOST CASES THAT'S TRUE. I'LL BE COORDINATING THINGS FROM HERE.

IF YOU'RE INJURED, REPORT IN IMMEDIATELY. I'LL HAVE MISS POPPER ON STAND-BY TO RETRIEVE ANYONE NOT FIT FOR COMBAT.

POPPER, YOU UP FOR THIS?

I'VE BEEN DRINKING ORANGE JUICE ALL MORNING.



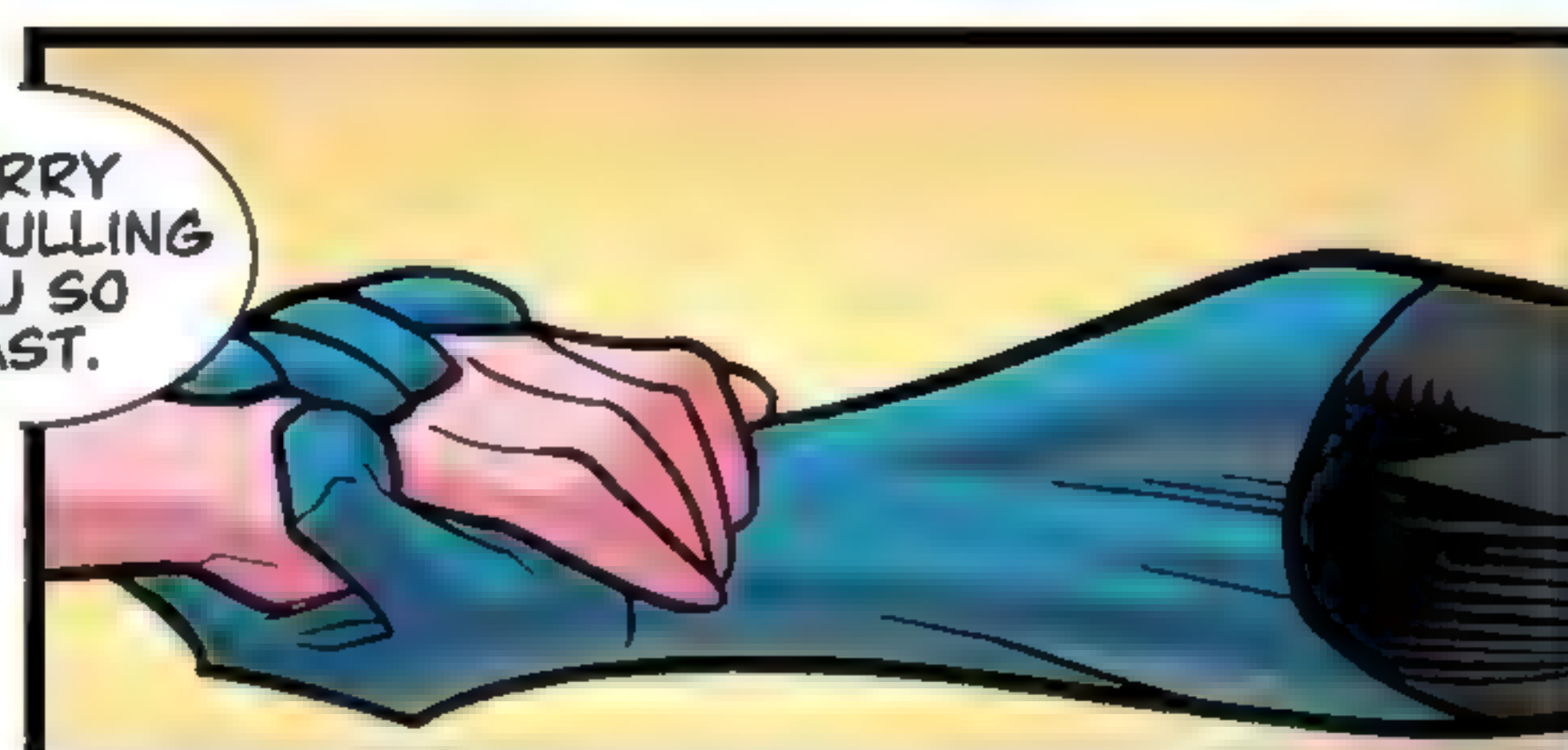
THEY'RE JUST UP AHEAD, WON'T BE LONG NOW.

SORRY I'M PULLING YOU SO FAST.



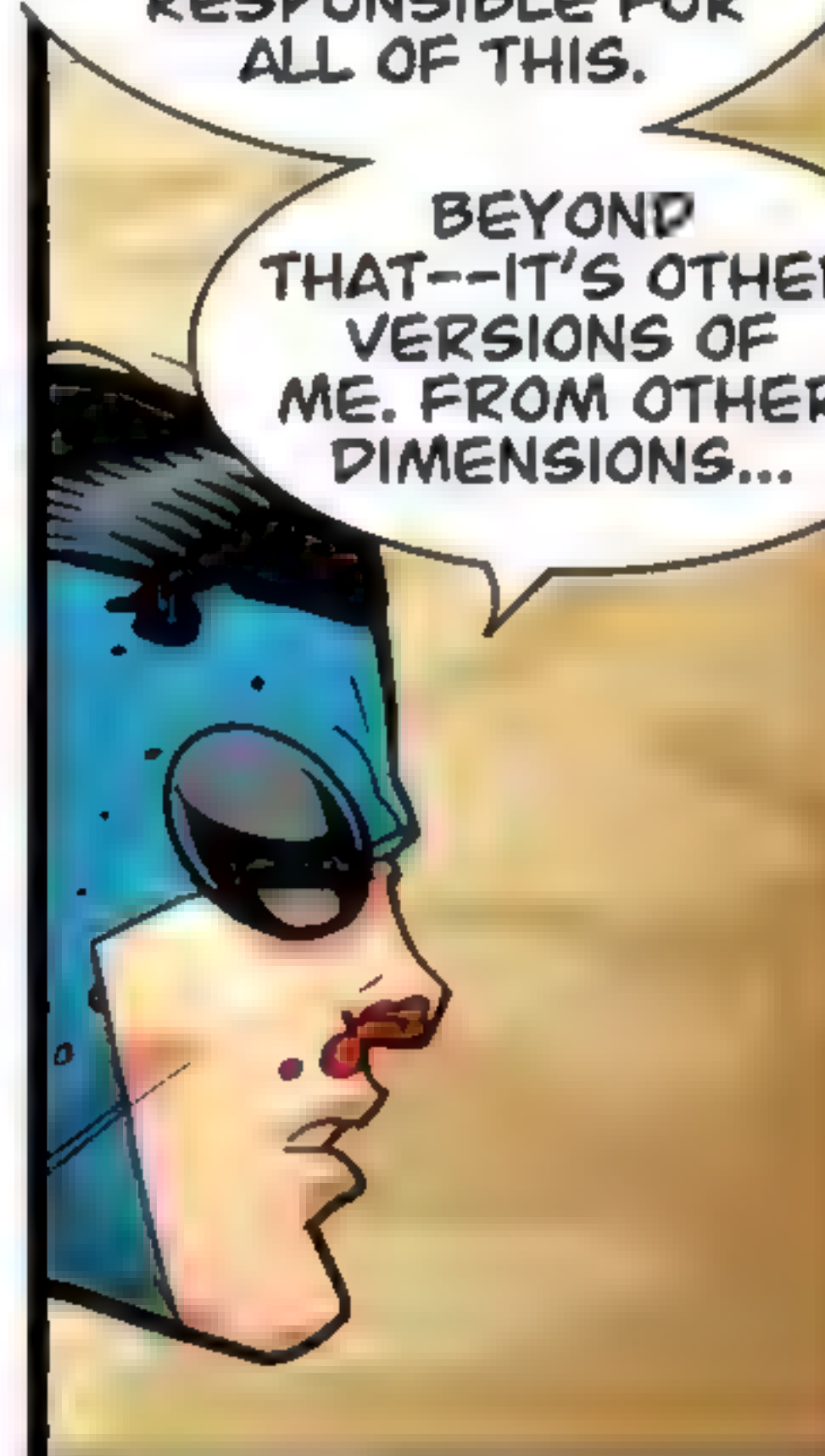
IT'S OKAY, WE'VE GOTTA BE AS FAST AS POSSIBLE. ARE YOU OKAY?

NO. I'M NOT.



THEY'RE ALL ME. I'M NOT DOING THIS--BUT I CAN'T HELP BUT--I LOOKED IN HIS EYES AND I SAW MYSELF. I FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF THIS.

BEYOND THAT--IT'S OTHER VERSIONS OF ME. FROM OTHER DIMENSIONS...

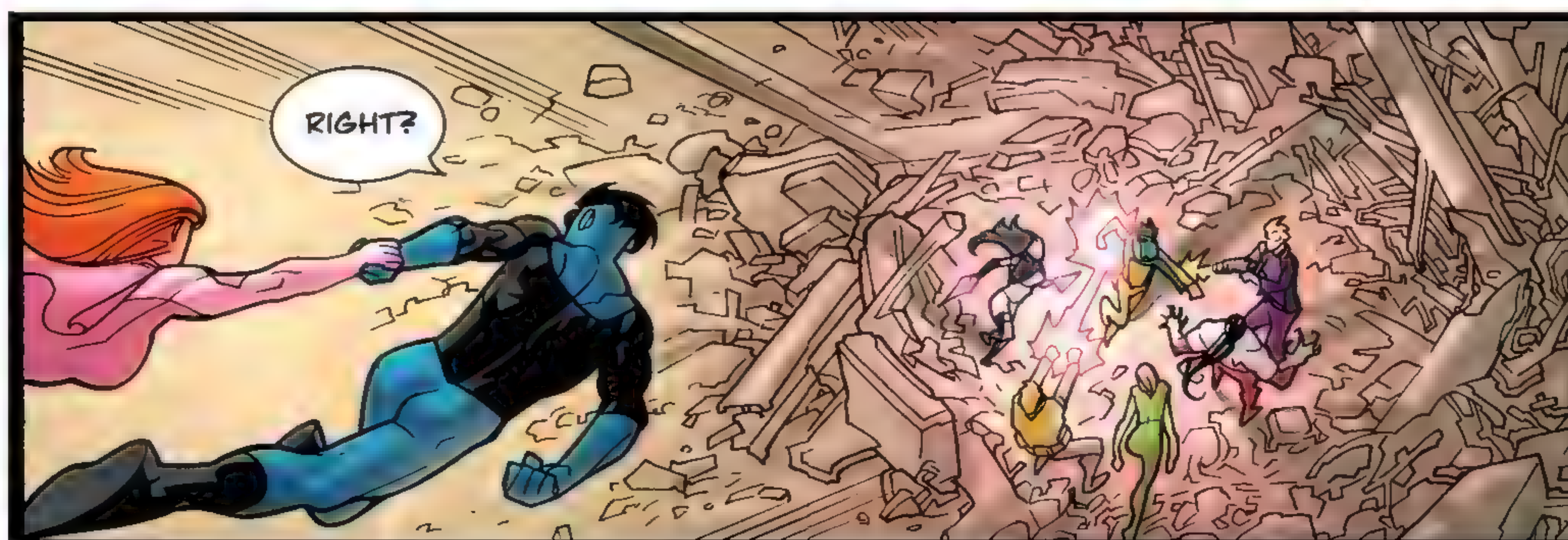


I ONLY KNOW OF ONE MAN WHO HAS THE POWER TO ACCESS OTHER DIMENSIONS AND HATES ME ENOUGH TO DO THIS.

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...



RIGHT?



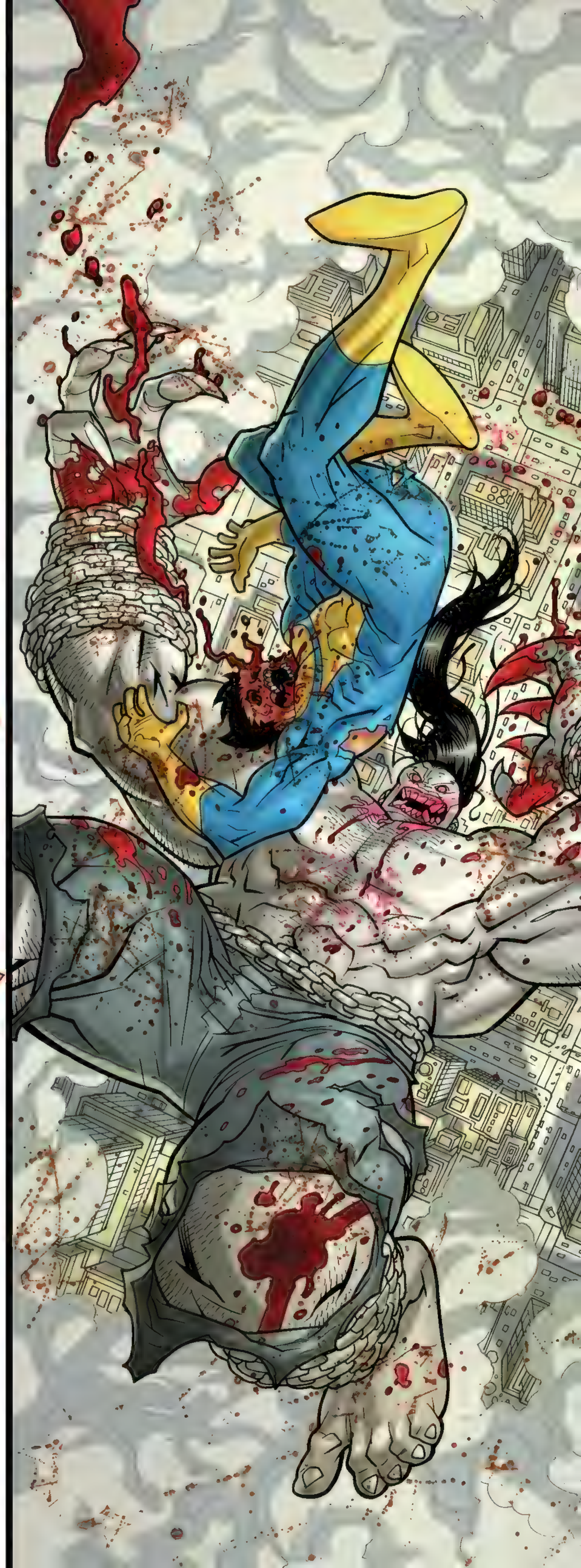
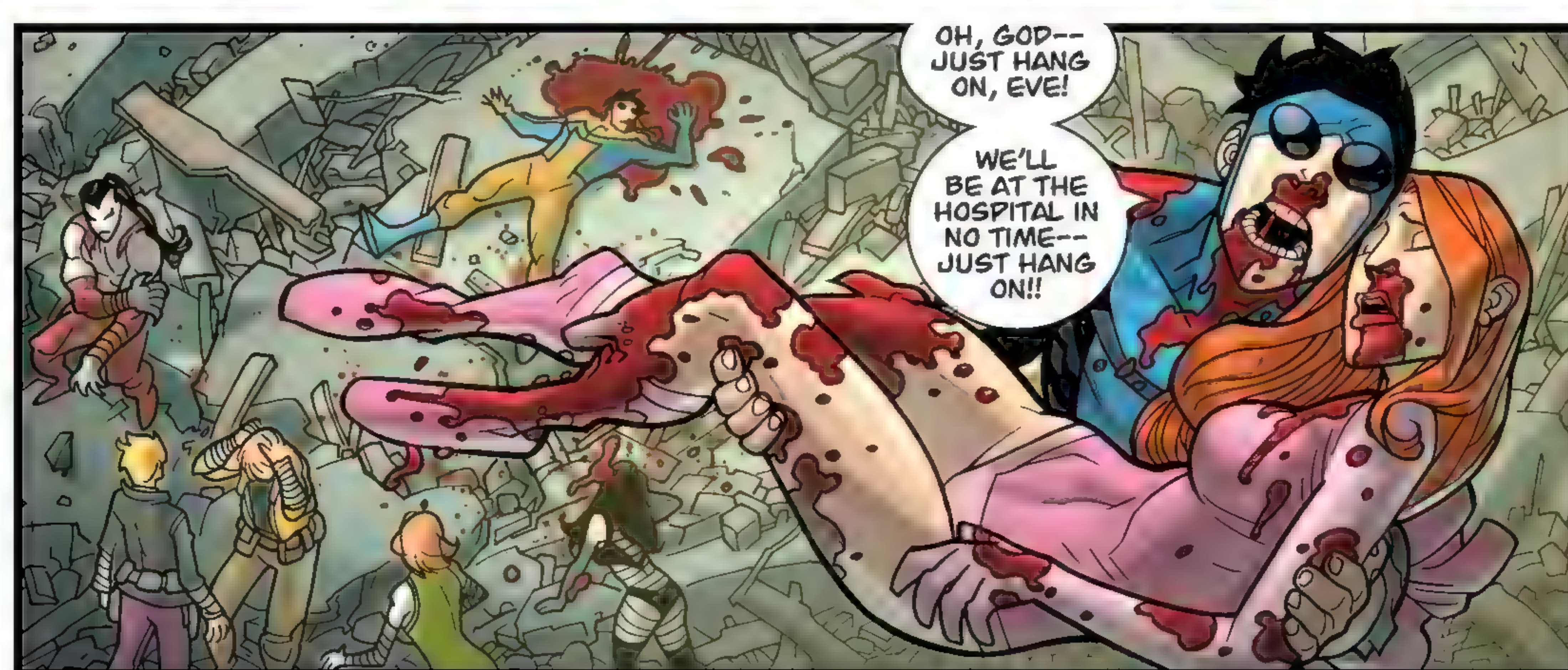
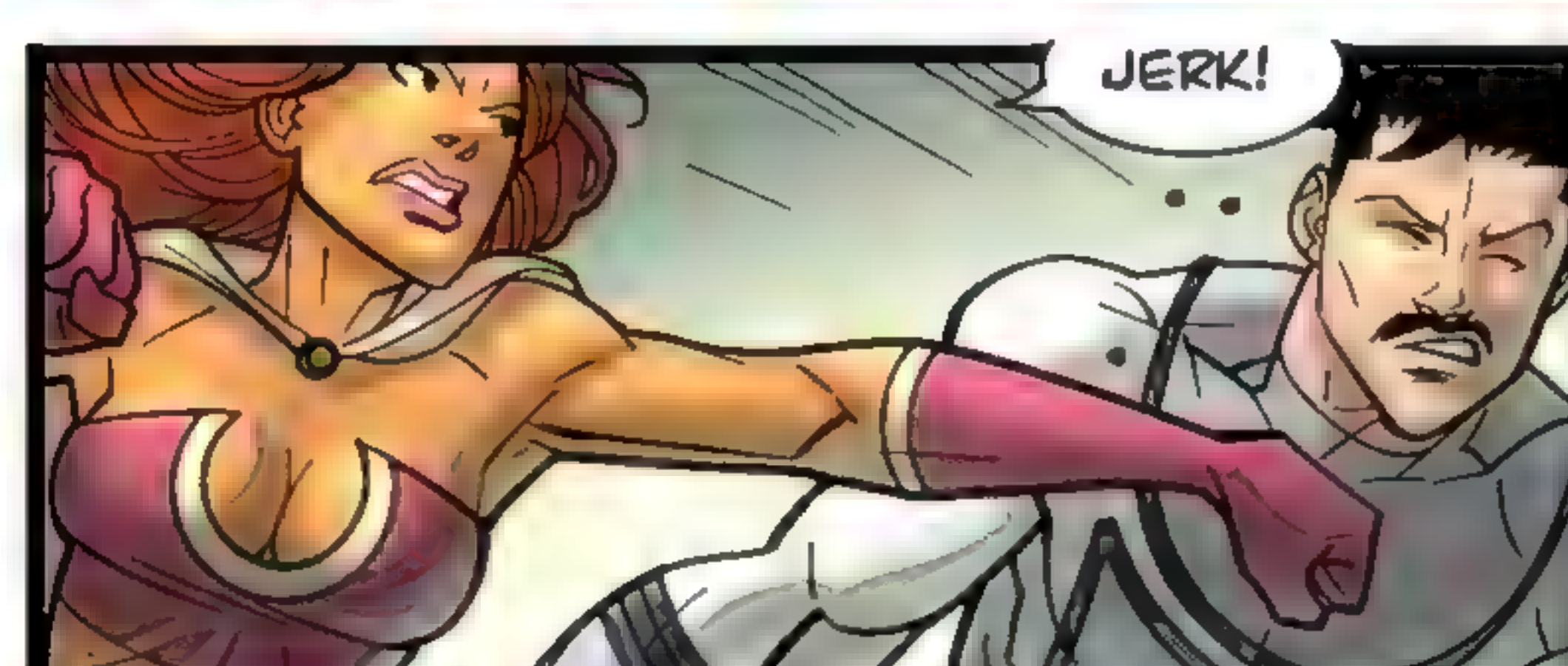
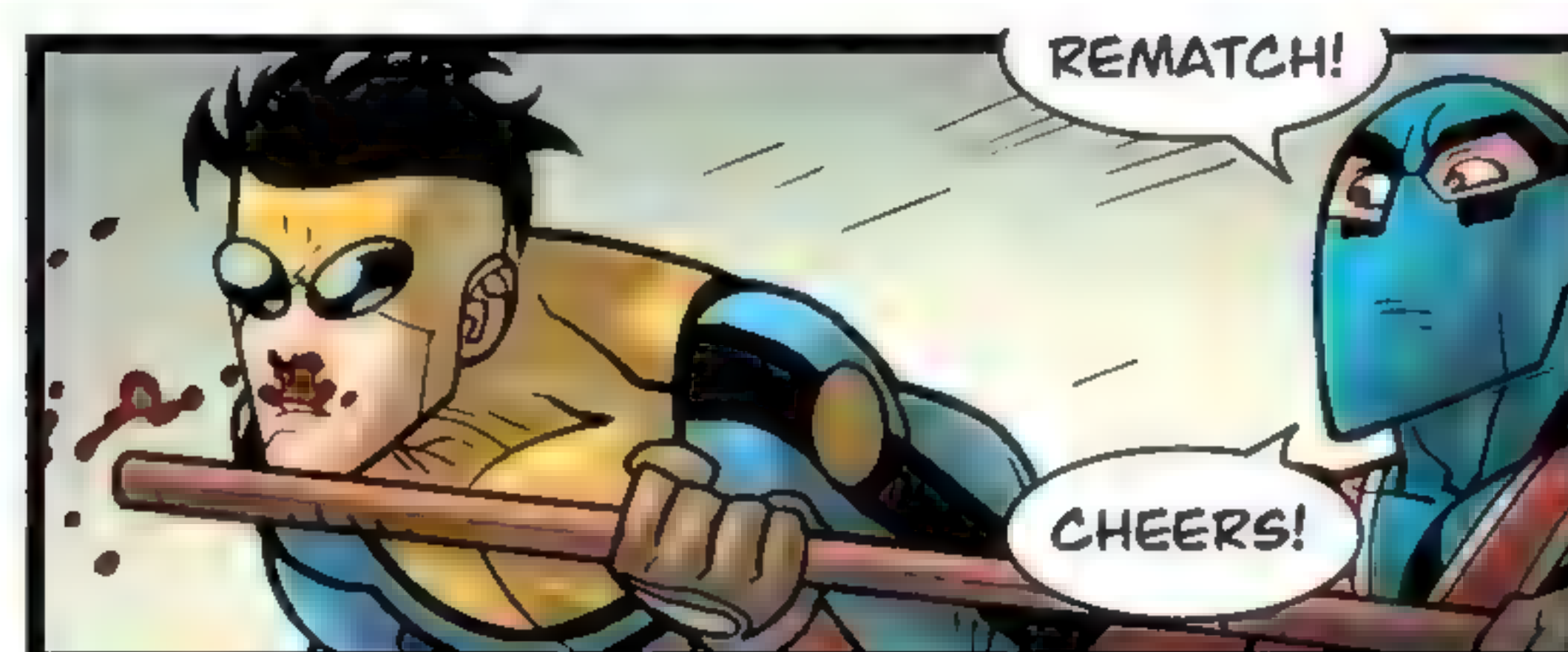
THIS WON'T BE ENOUGH! NOT NEARLY ENOUGH! CYBLADE, RIPCLAW, HEATWAVE, VELOCITY, BALLISTIC--IT'S AMUSING TO SEE YOU ALL WORKING TOGETHER AGAIN-- CYBERFORCE, WAS IT?

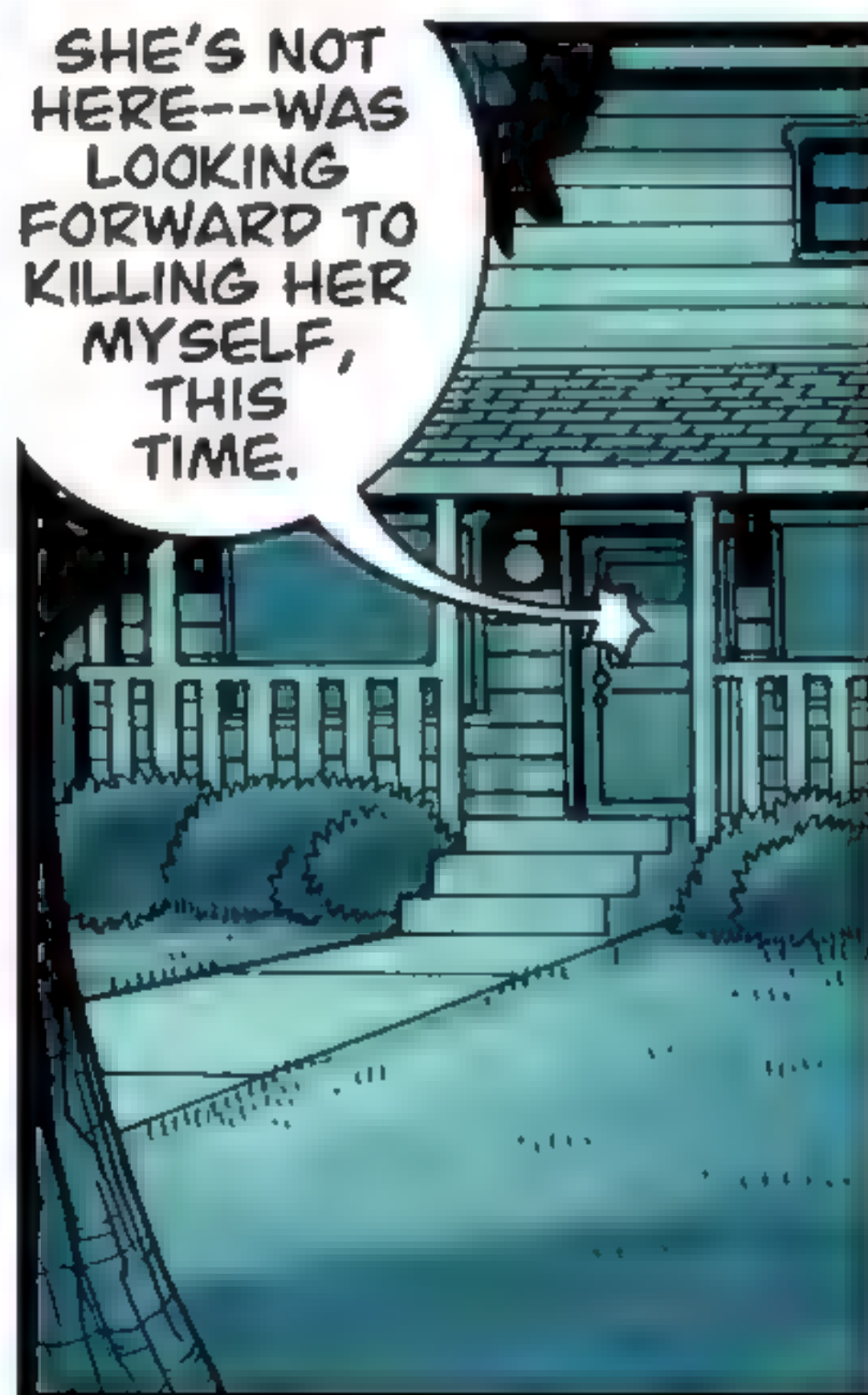
IT DOESN'T MATTER, I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU AND YOU CAN'T HOPE TO WIN THIS FIGHT!

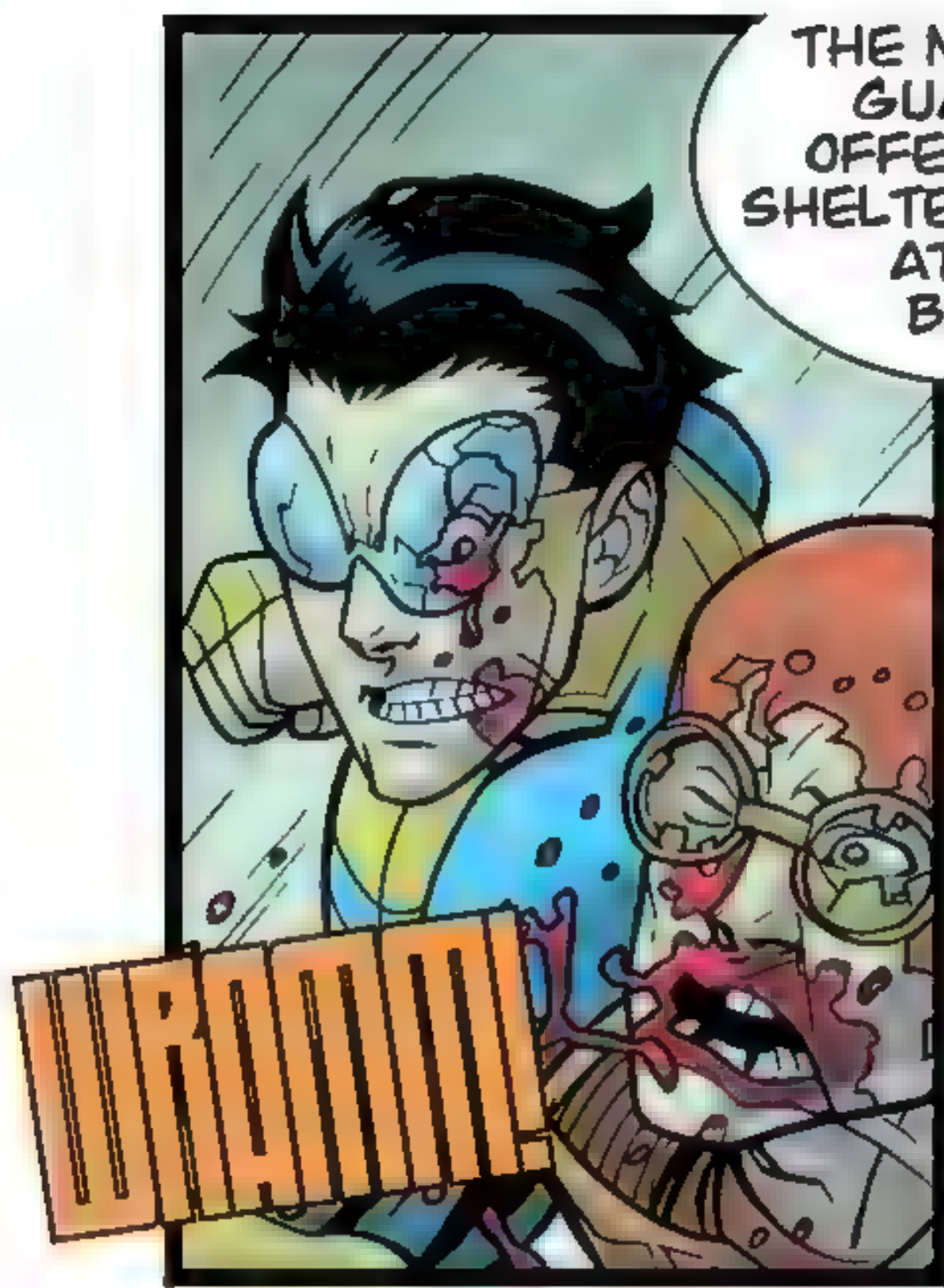
THIS IS YOUR FINAL BATTLE-- ENJOY IT WHILE IT LASTS!



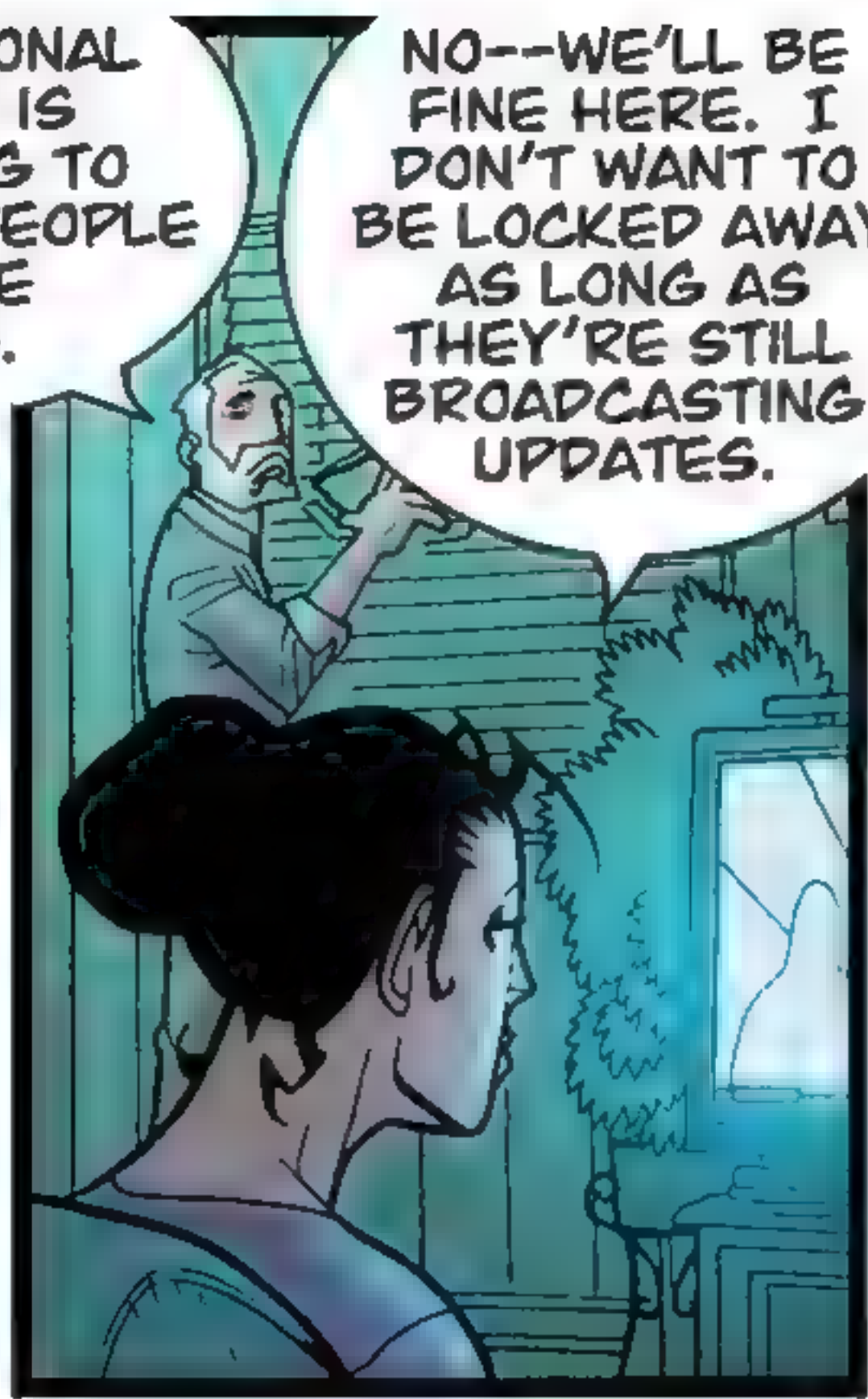
OKAY, GUYS--CAN WE PLEASE SHUT HIM UP?







THE NATIONAL GUARD IS OFFERING TO SHELTER PEOPLE AT THE BASE.



NO--WE'LL BE FINE HERE. I DON'T WANT TO BE LOCKED AWAY AS LONG AS THEY'RE STILL BROADCASTING UPDATES.



WAKE UP, AMANDA-- PLEASE BE OKAY--

MONSTER GIRL!



CHOOOM!



WHERE'S DARKWING?

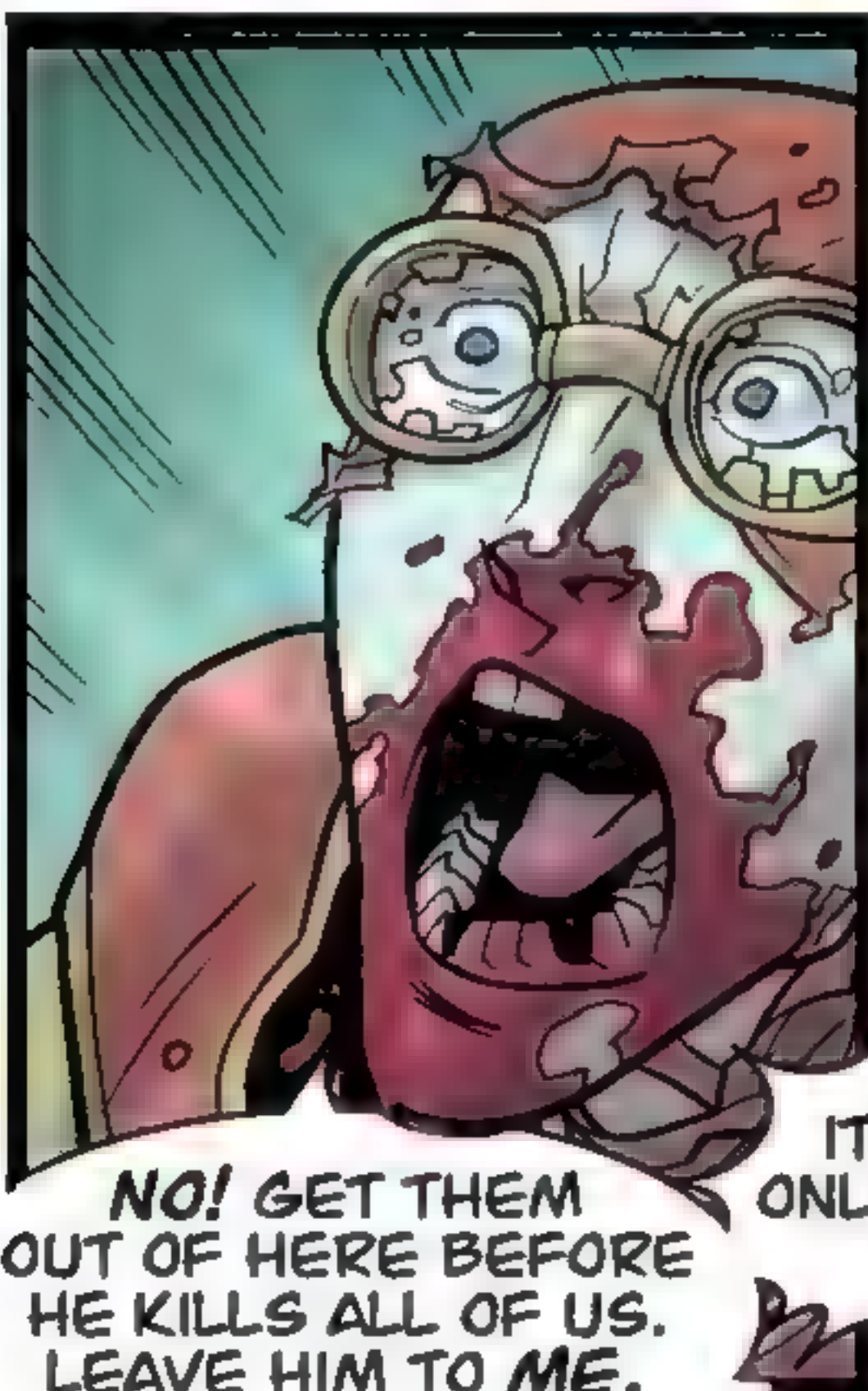
HE'S NOT HERE--THAT MADMAN MUST HAVE KILLED HIM, TRAPPING HIMSELF IN THE SHADOWVERSE... HE SAVED US.

DARKWING SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO SAVE US.



JUST FIX HER! PLEASE!

FIX HER!



NO! GET THEM OUT OF HERE BEFORE HE KILLS ALL OF US. LEAVE HIM TO ME.

IT'S THE ONLY WAY-- GO!



NO! GO BACK!

WE CAN'T LEAVE HIM!!

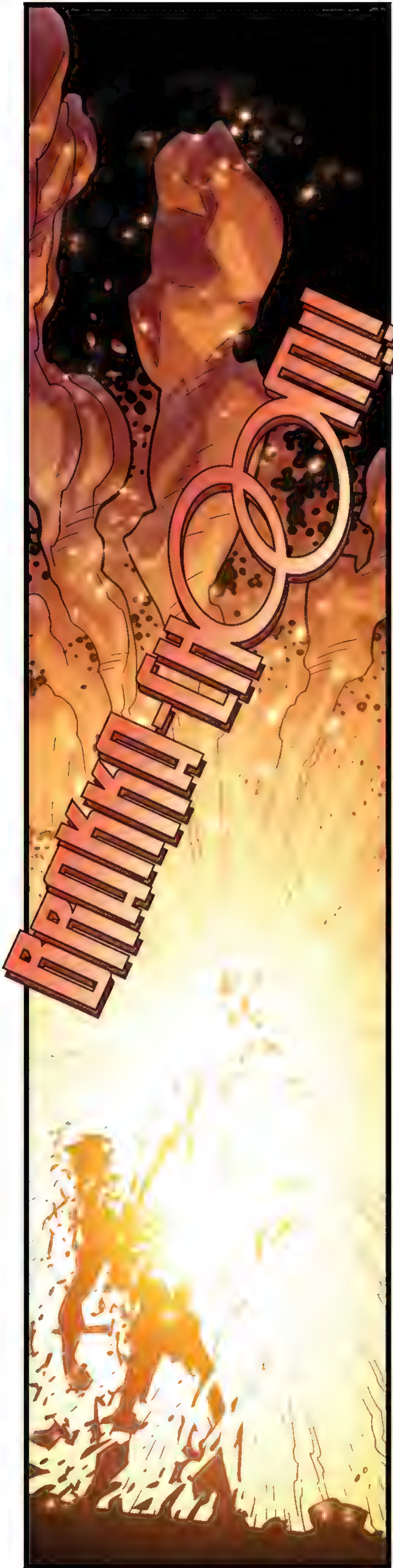


THAT WAS A FUTILE GESTURE, REX. I'M GOING TO POP YOUR HEAD OFF AND THEN FLY OFF TO MURDER ALL THREE OF THEM.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH AGAINST ME? YOU'RE OUT OF BATONS AND GOLF BALLS AND WHATEVER YOU KEPT IN YOUR POCKETS--YOUR WRIST LAUNCHER IS SPENT--YOU'VE GOT NOTHING. NO WAY OF ATTACKING ME.

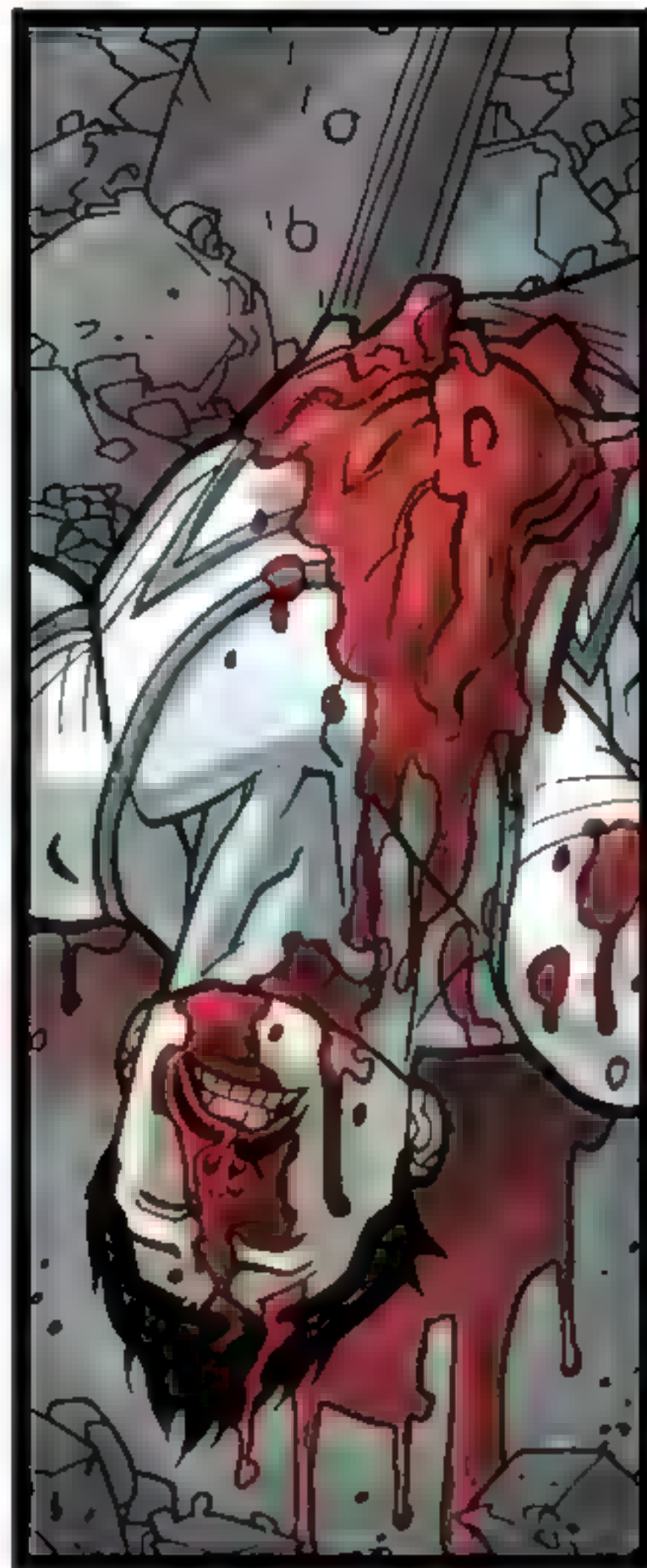
SO TELL ME--HOW ARE YOU GOING TO KILL ME? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO CHARGE AND EXPLODE?

MY SKELETON.



REX!

No!



YOU
CAN'T BE
HERE.



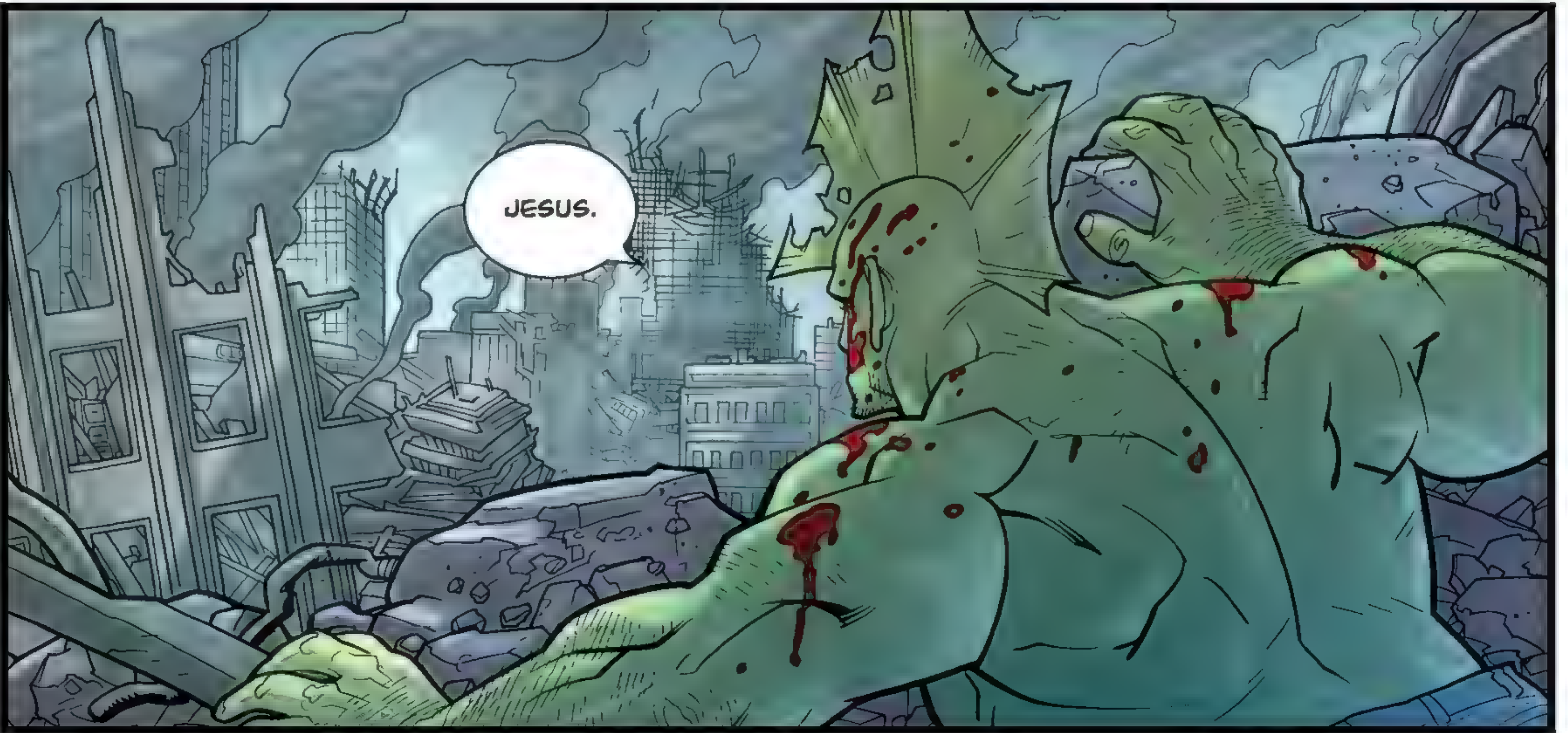
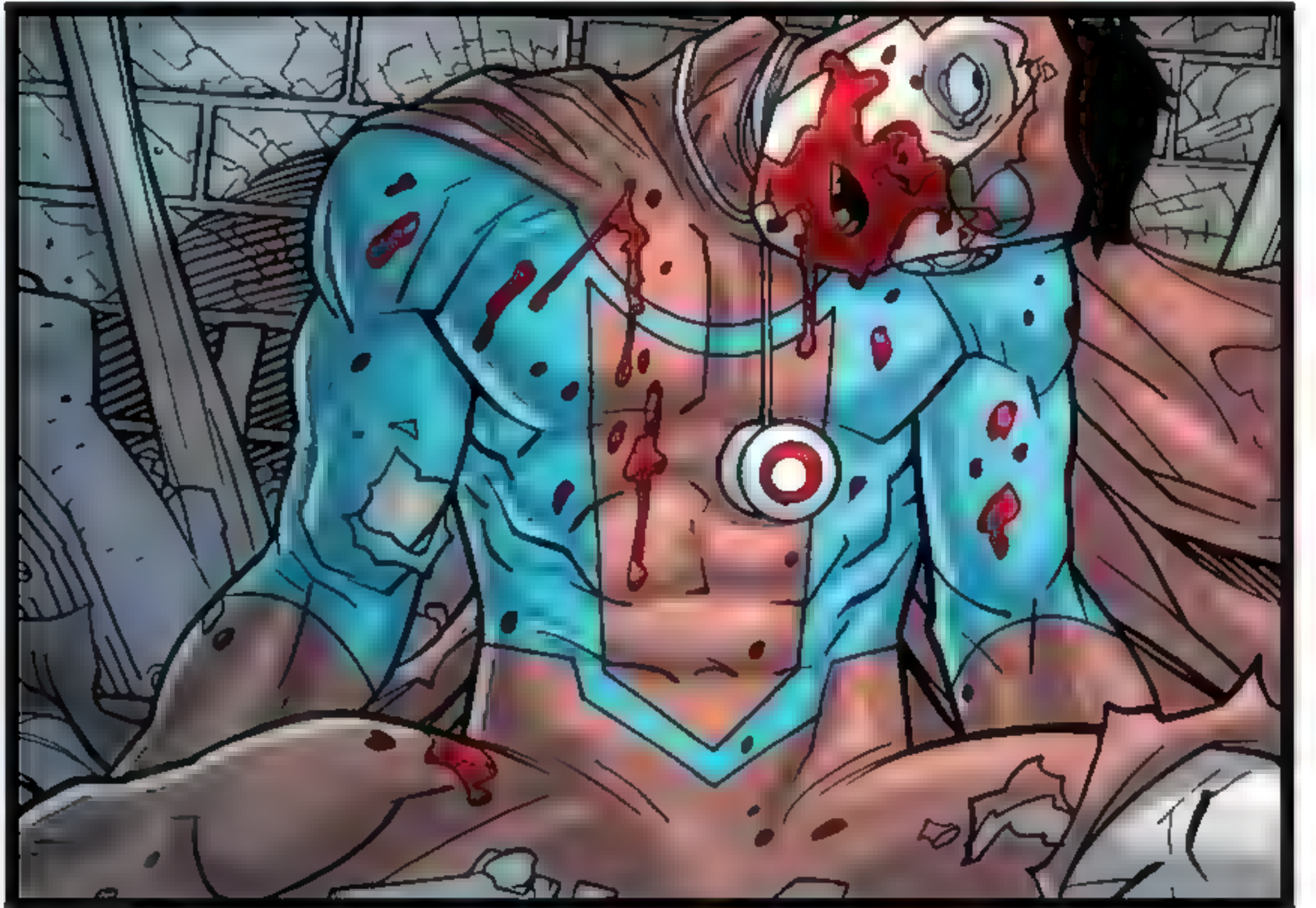
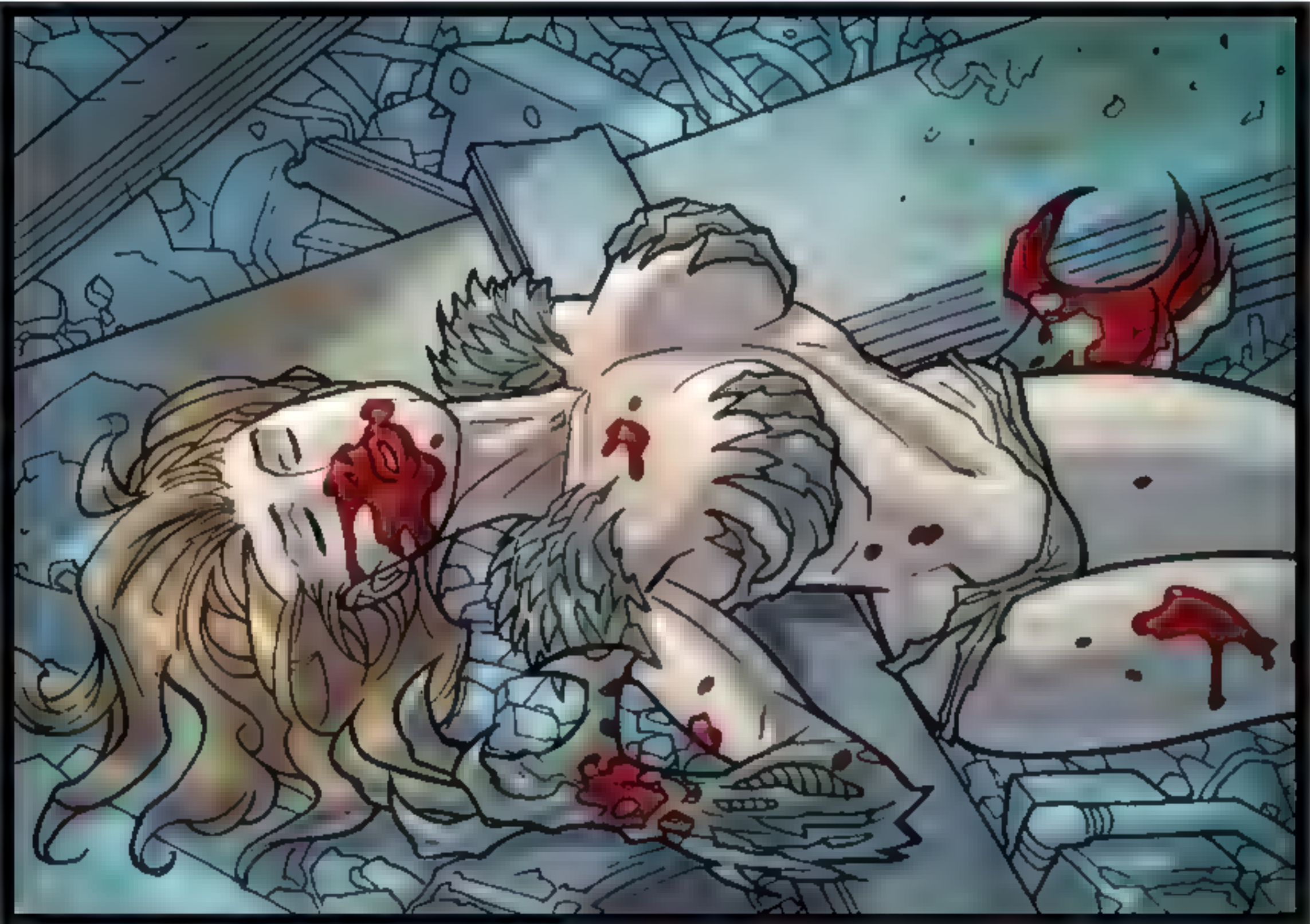
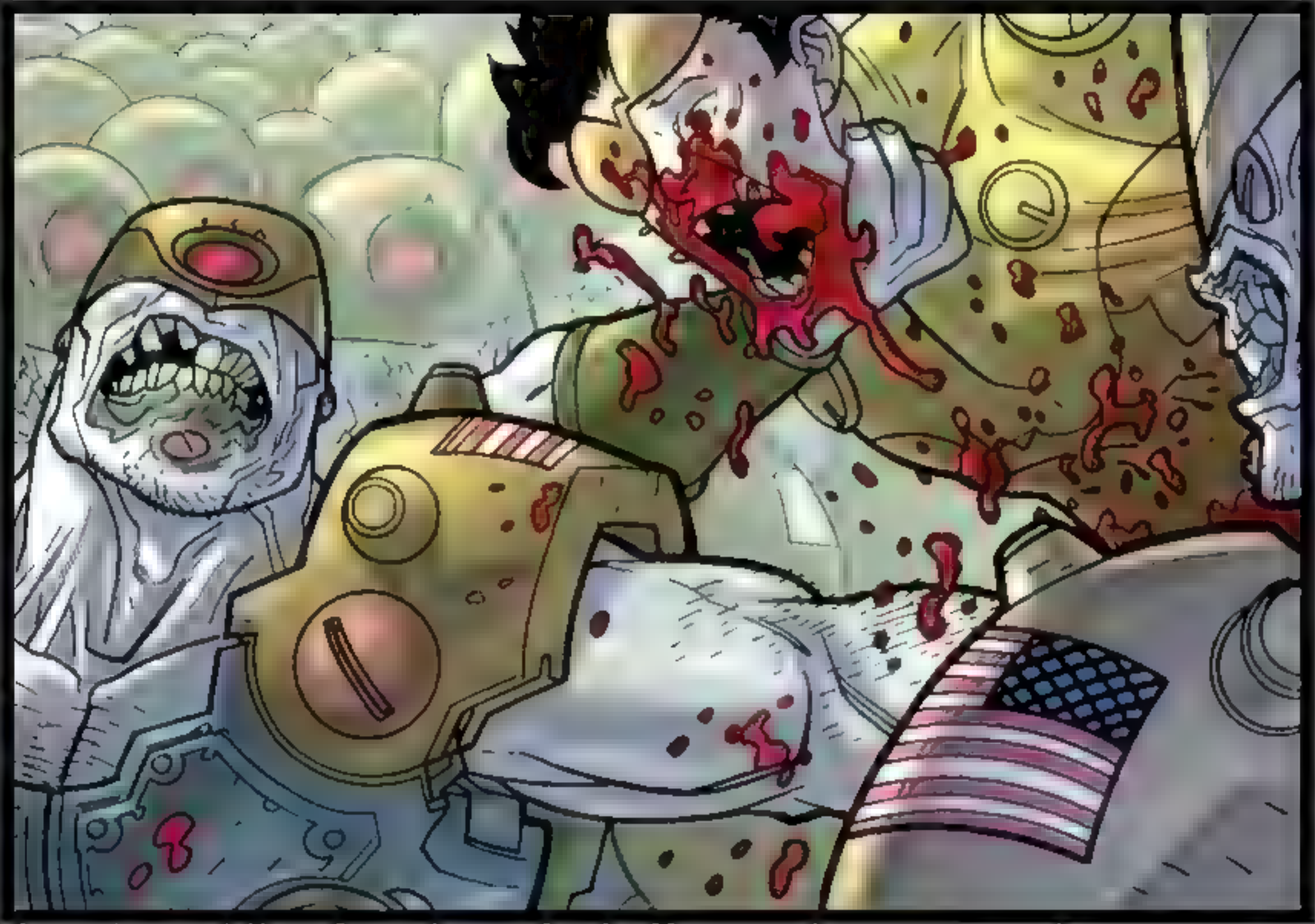
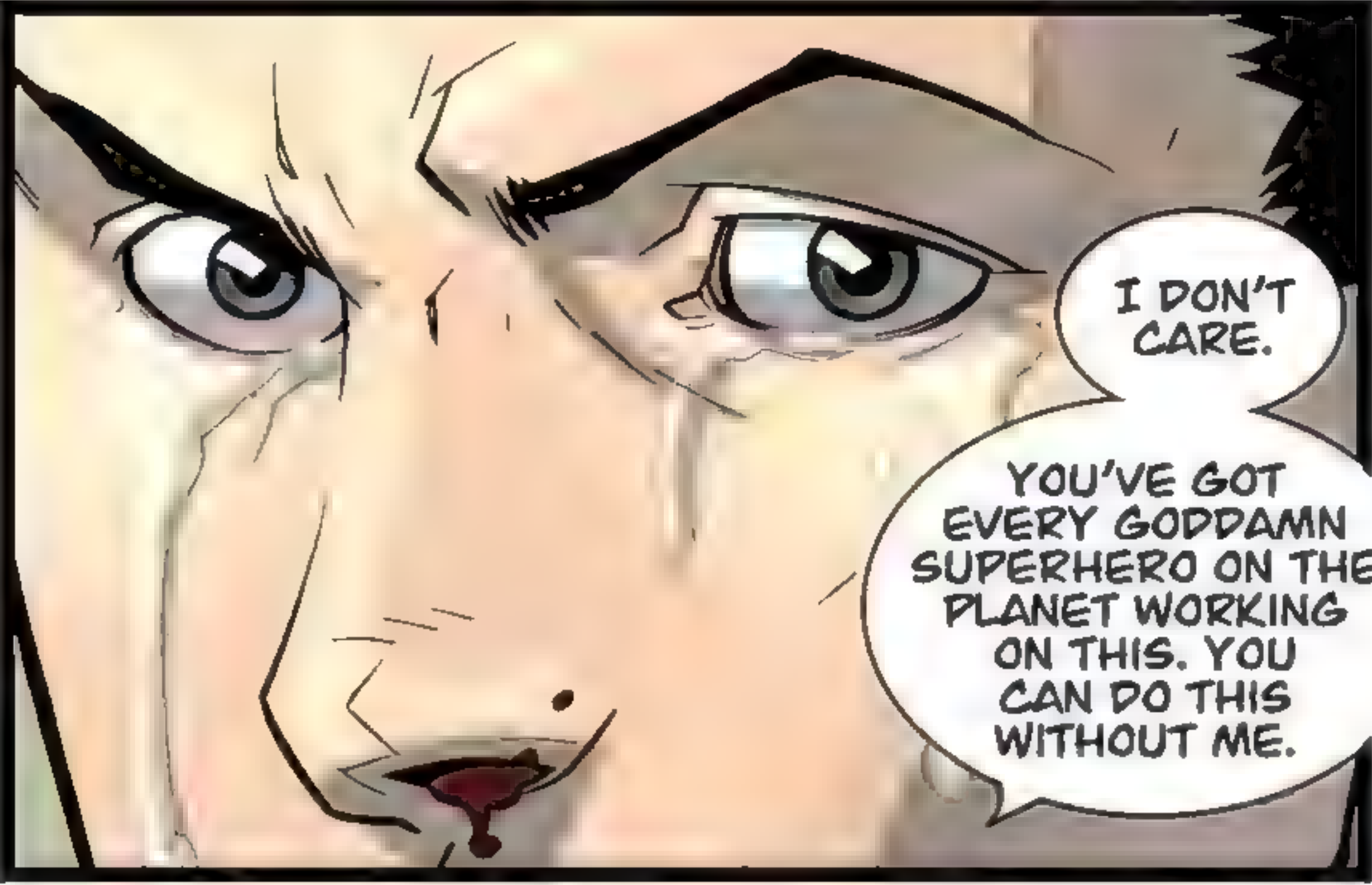
I CAN'T
LEAVE. I
NEED TO BE
HERE FOR
HER.

SHE
NEEDS
ME.

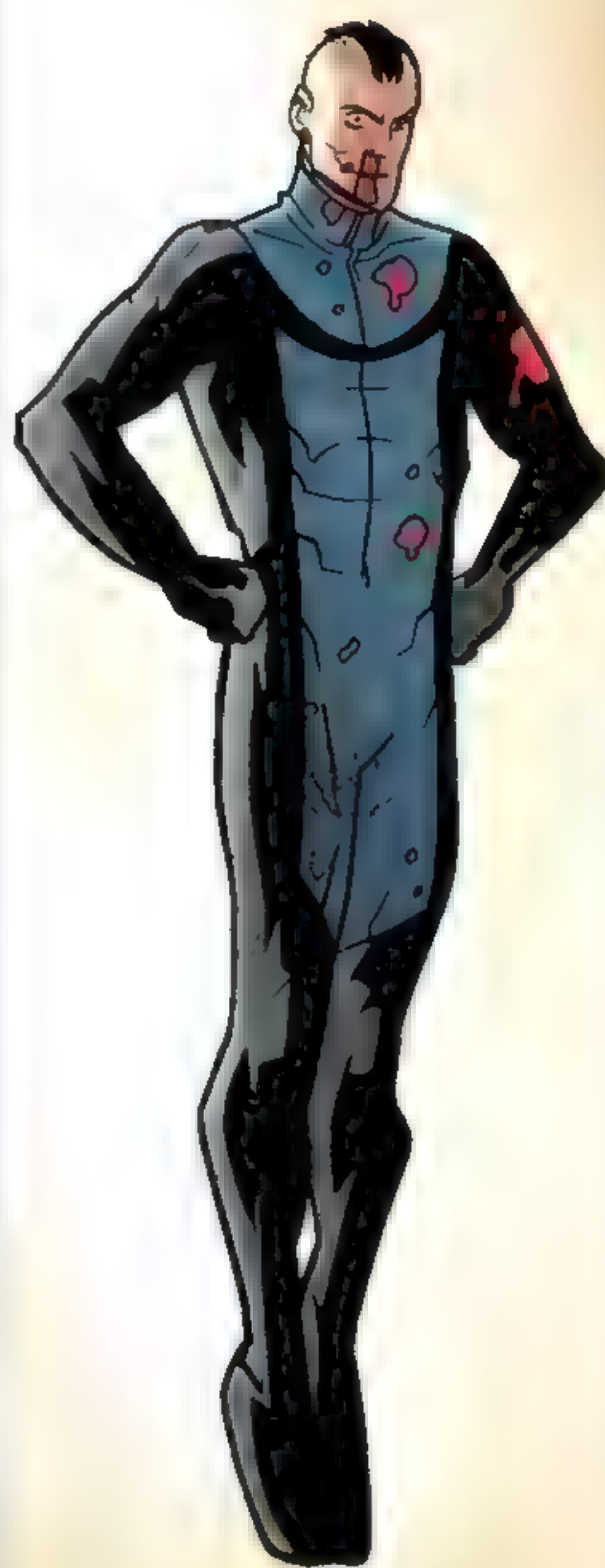
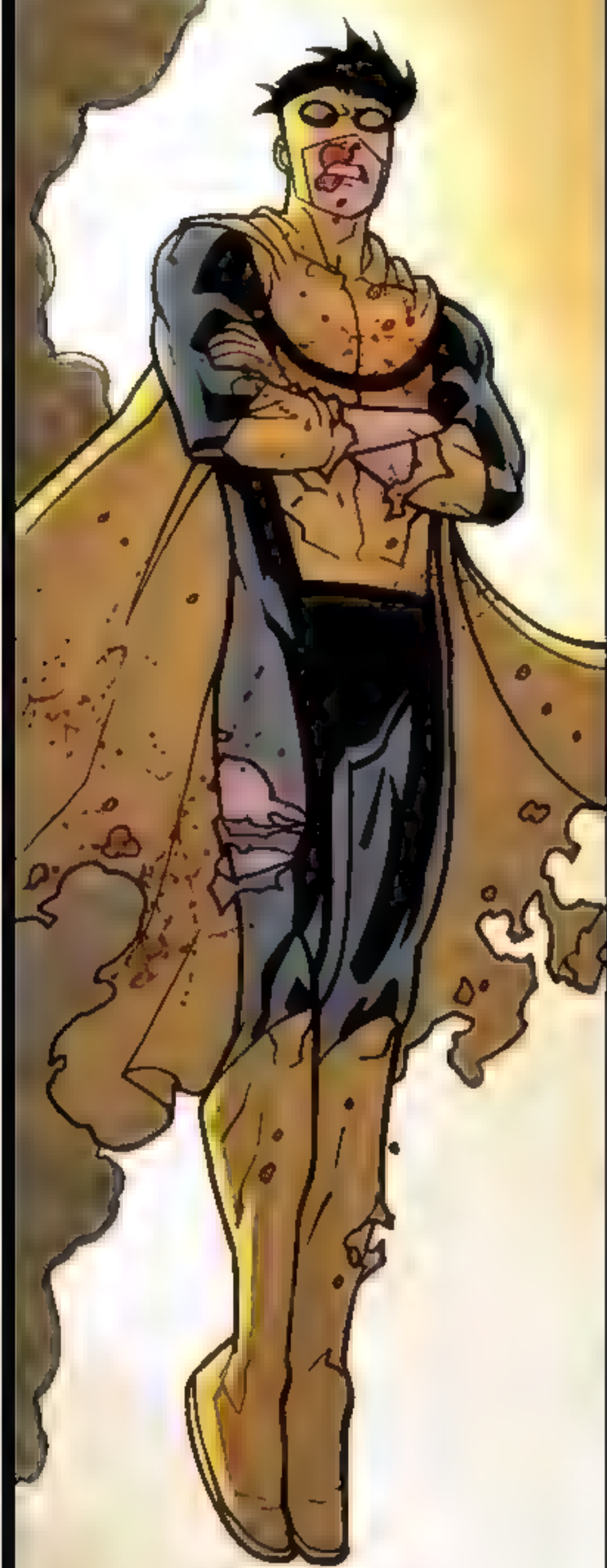


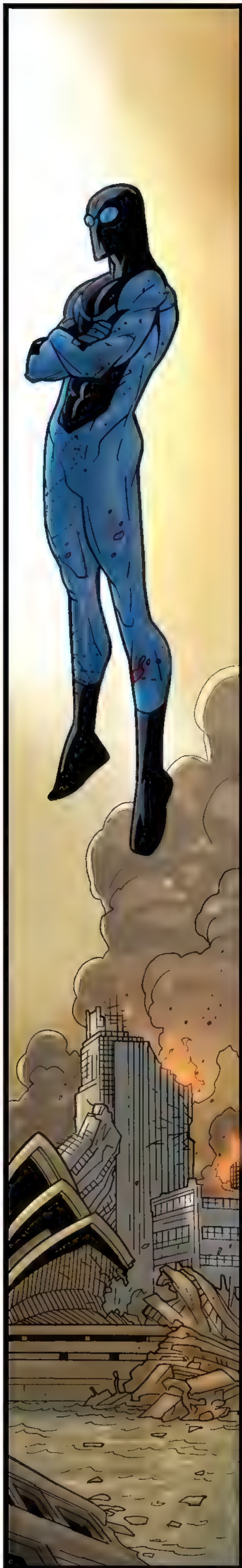
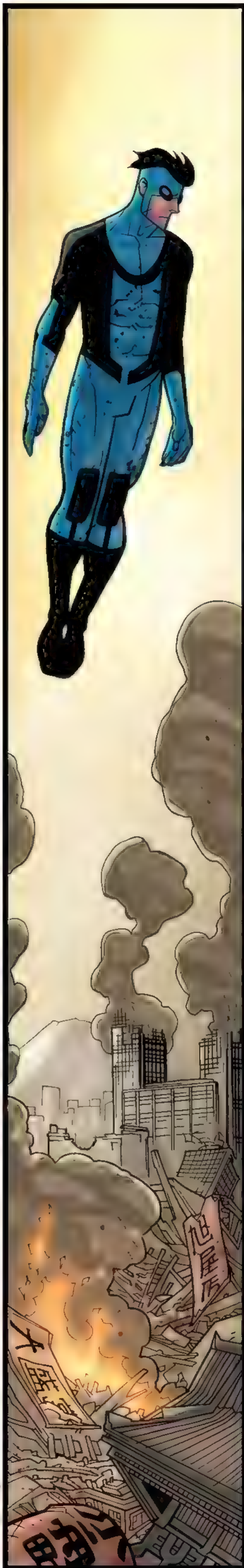
WE'RE
LOSING
THIS,
KID.

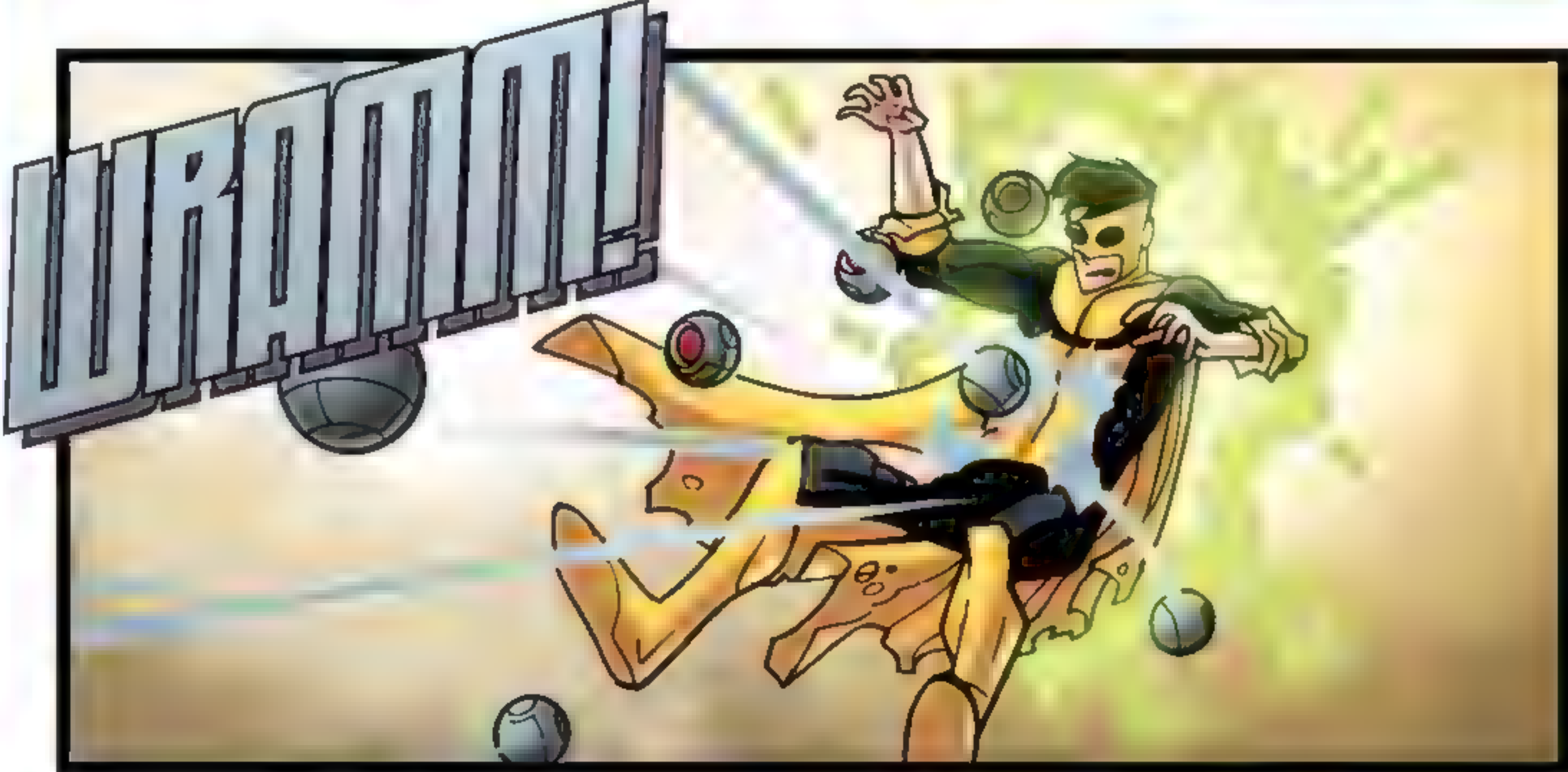
THE
WORLD
NEEDS
YOU.



DAY THREE.

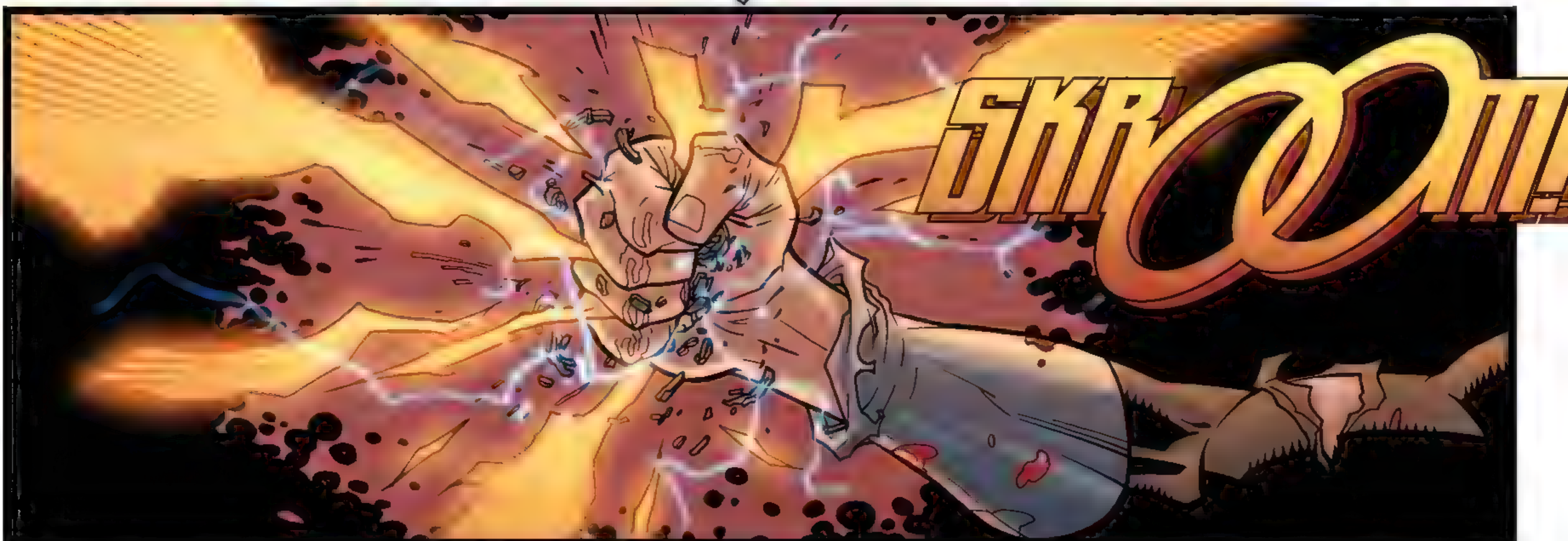
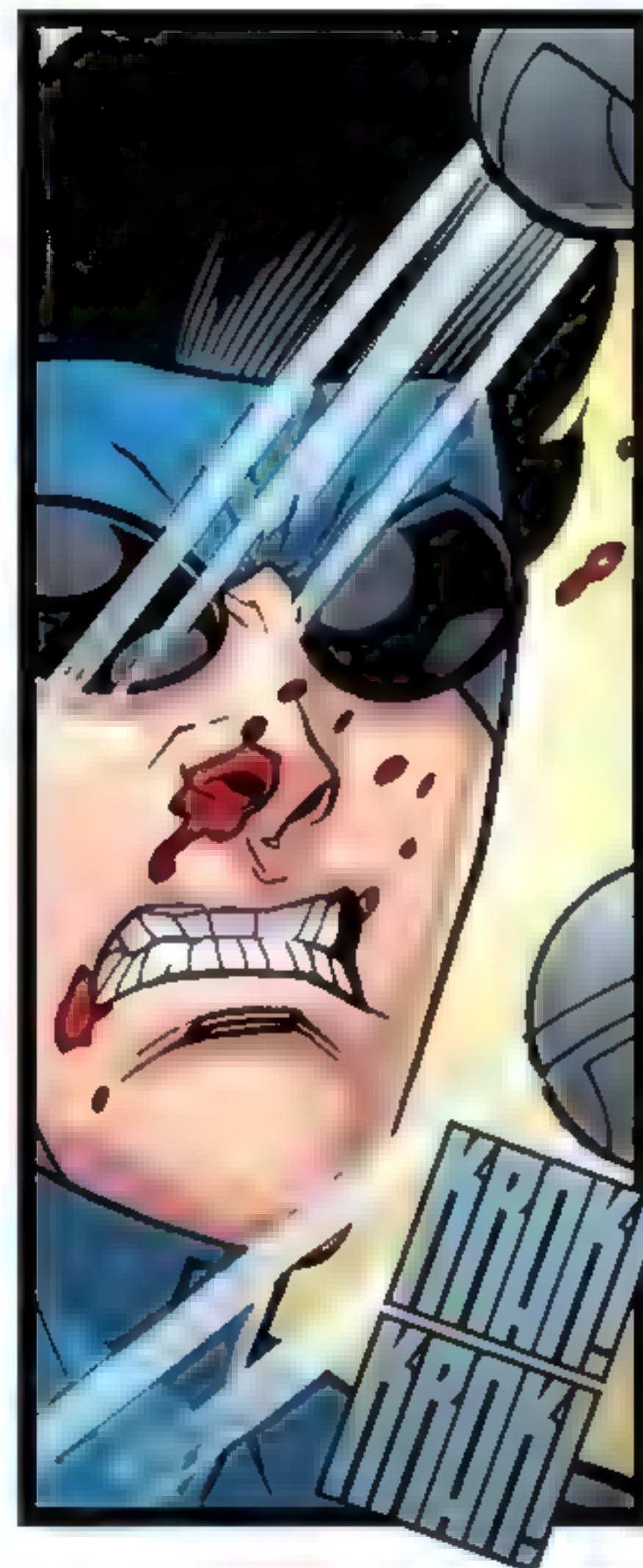
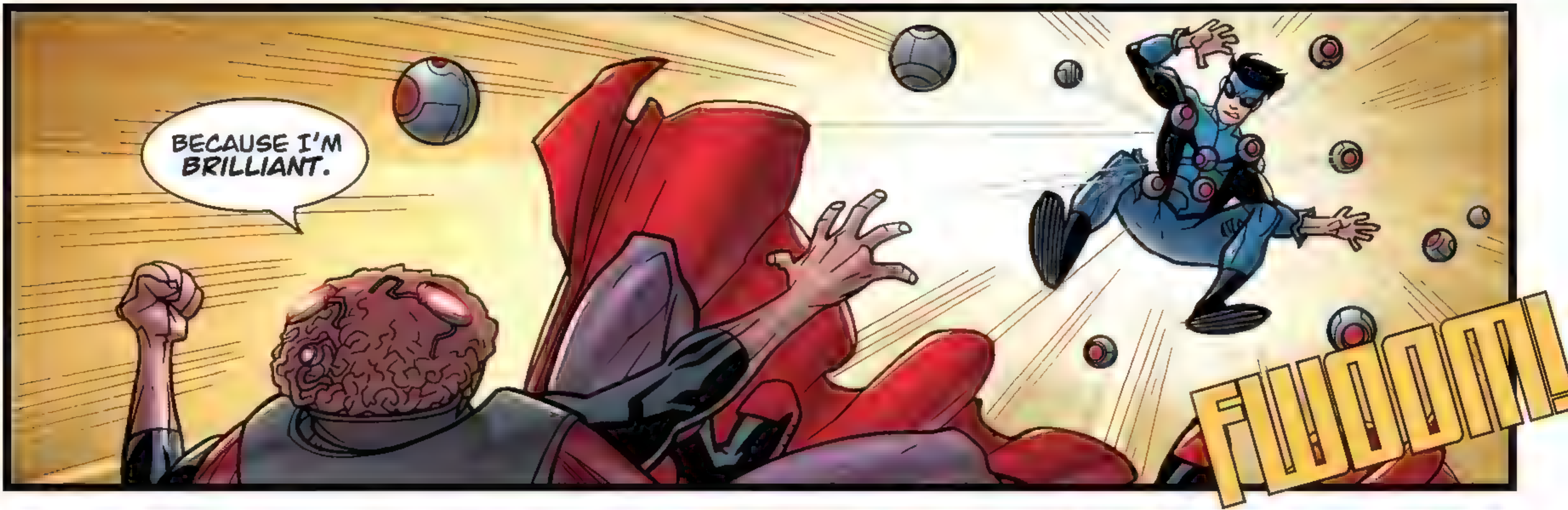


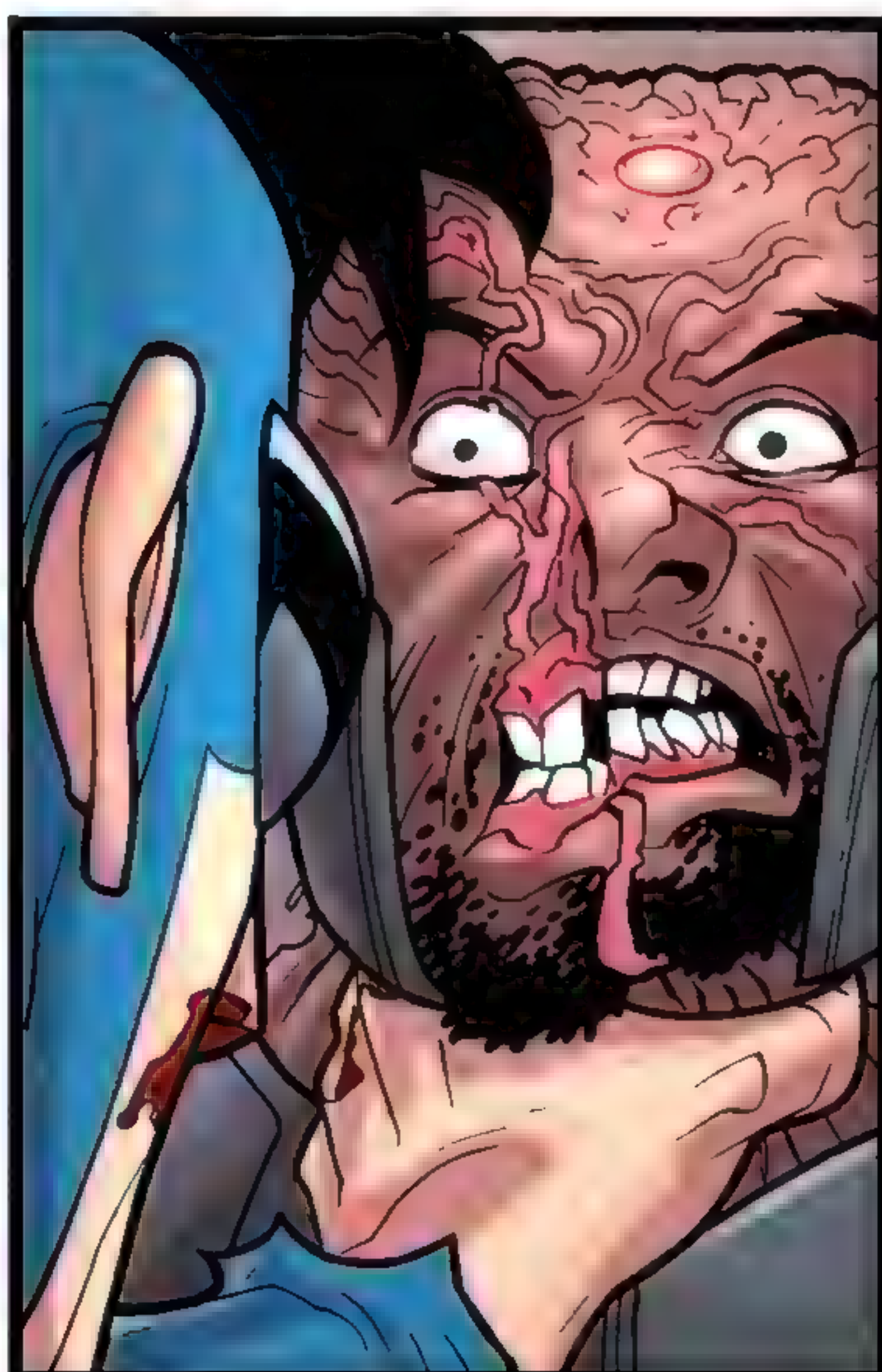
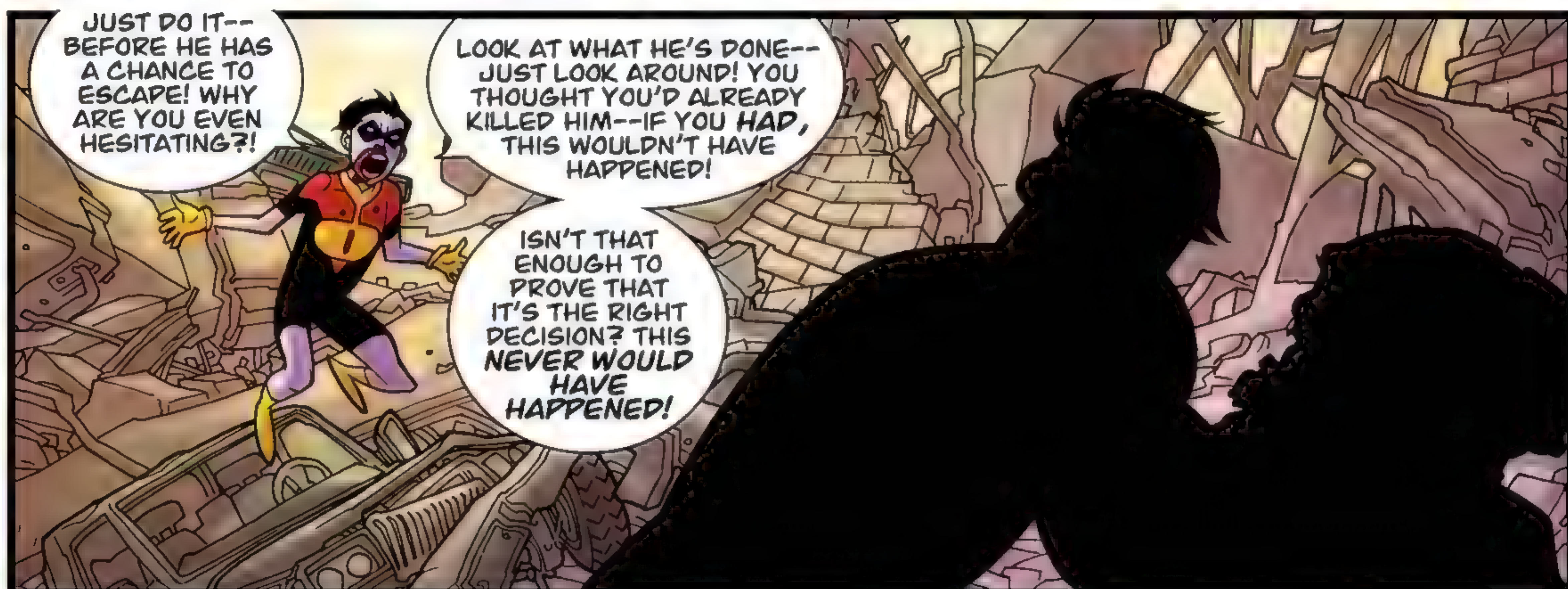
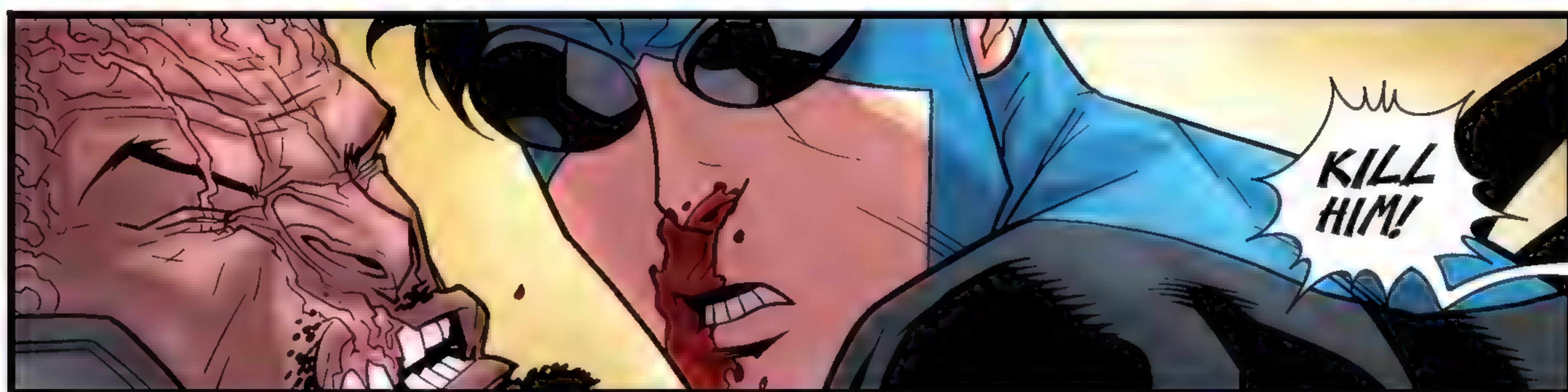
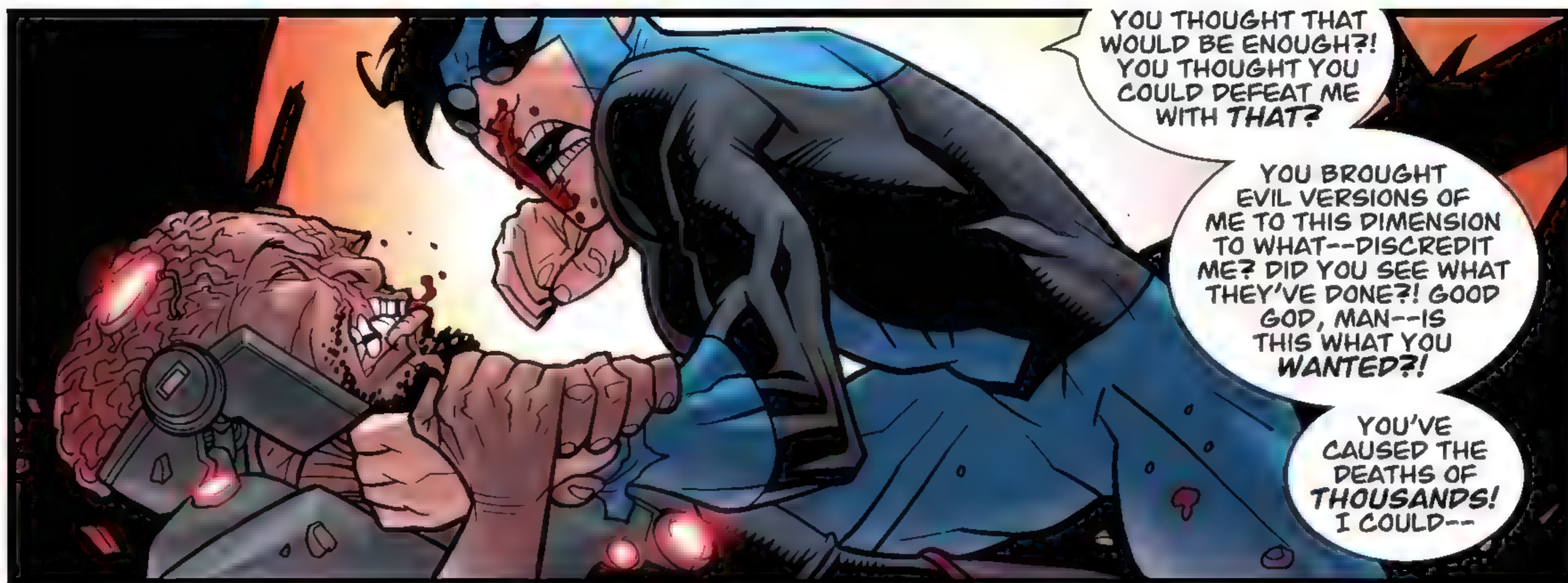




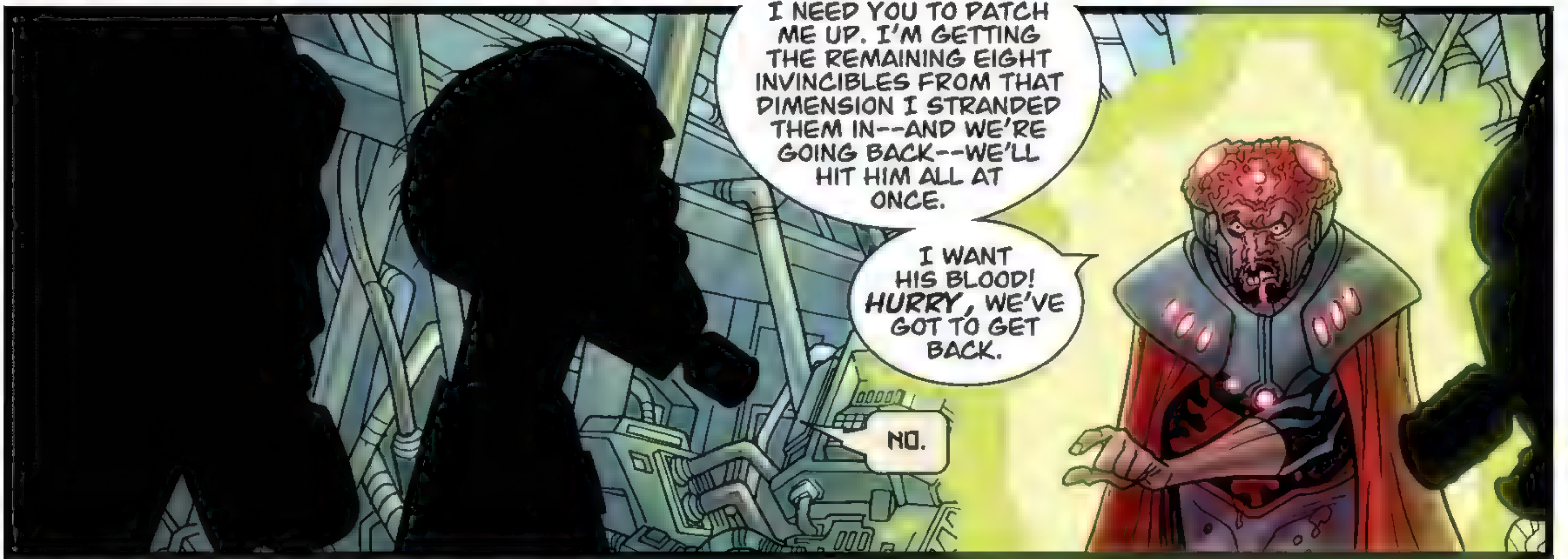


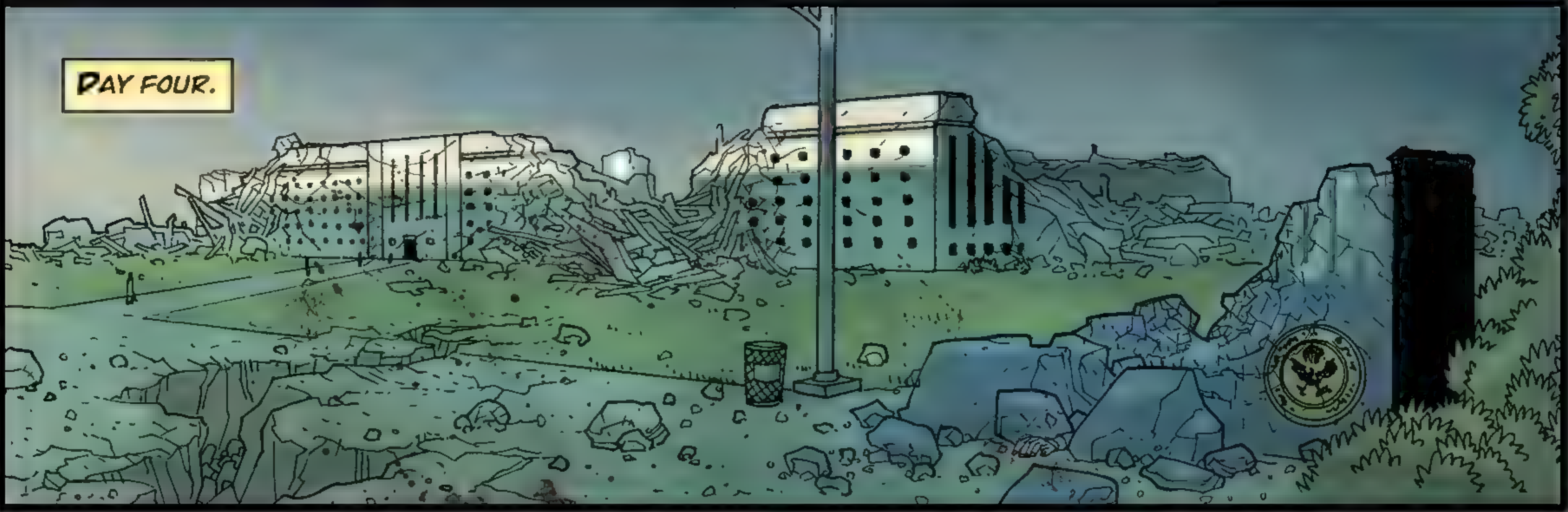












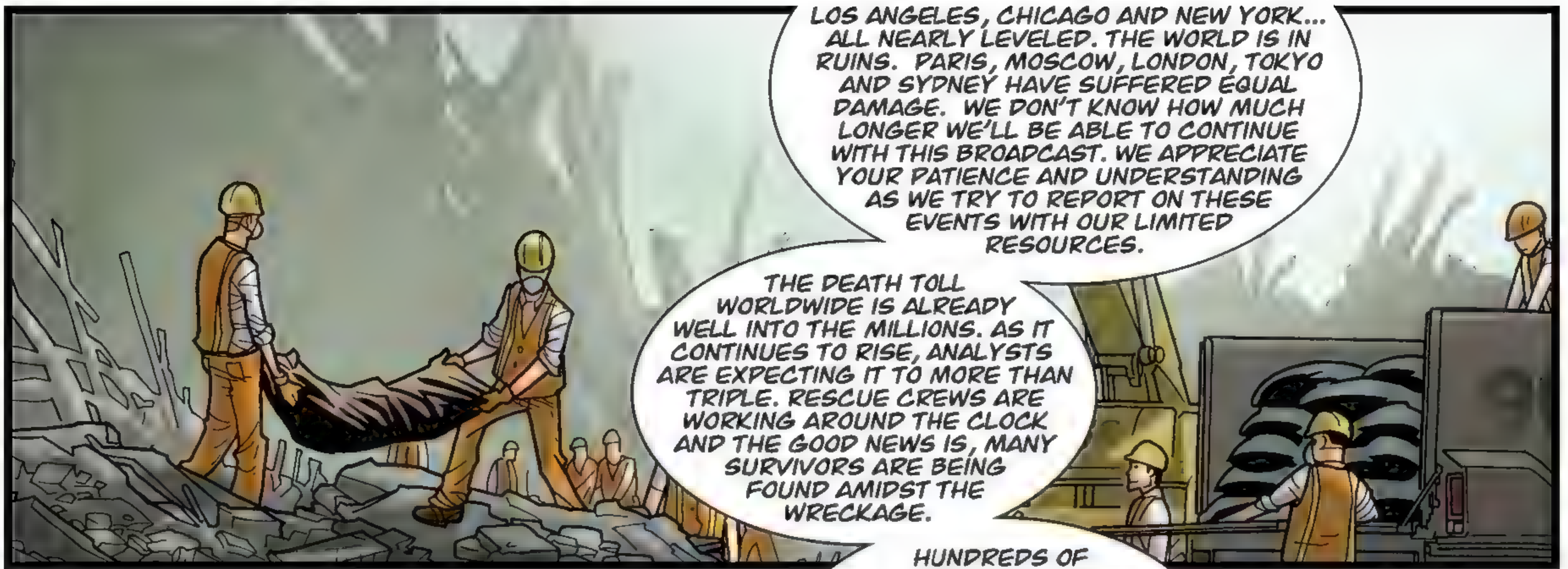


MY
GOD...



CHAPTER 61





LOS ANGELES, CHICAGO AND NEW YORK... ALL NEARLY LEVELED. THE WORLD IS IN RUINS. PARIS, MOSCOW, LONDON, TOKYO AND SYDNEY HAVE SUFFERED EQUAL DAMAGE. WE DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER WE'LL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE WITH THIS BROADCAST. WE APPRECIATE YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING AS WE TRY TO REPORT ON THESE EVENTS WITH OUR LIMITED RESOURCES.

THE DEATH TOLL WORLDWIDE IS ALREADY WELL INTO THE MILLIONS. AS IT CONTINUES TO RISE, ANALYSTS ARE EXPECTING IT TO MORE THAN TRIPLE. RESCUE CREWS ARE WORKING AROUND THE CLOCK AND THE GOOD NEWS IS, MANY SURVIVORS ARE BEING FOUND AMIDST THE WRECKAGE.

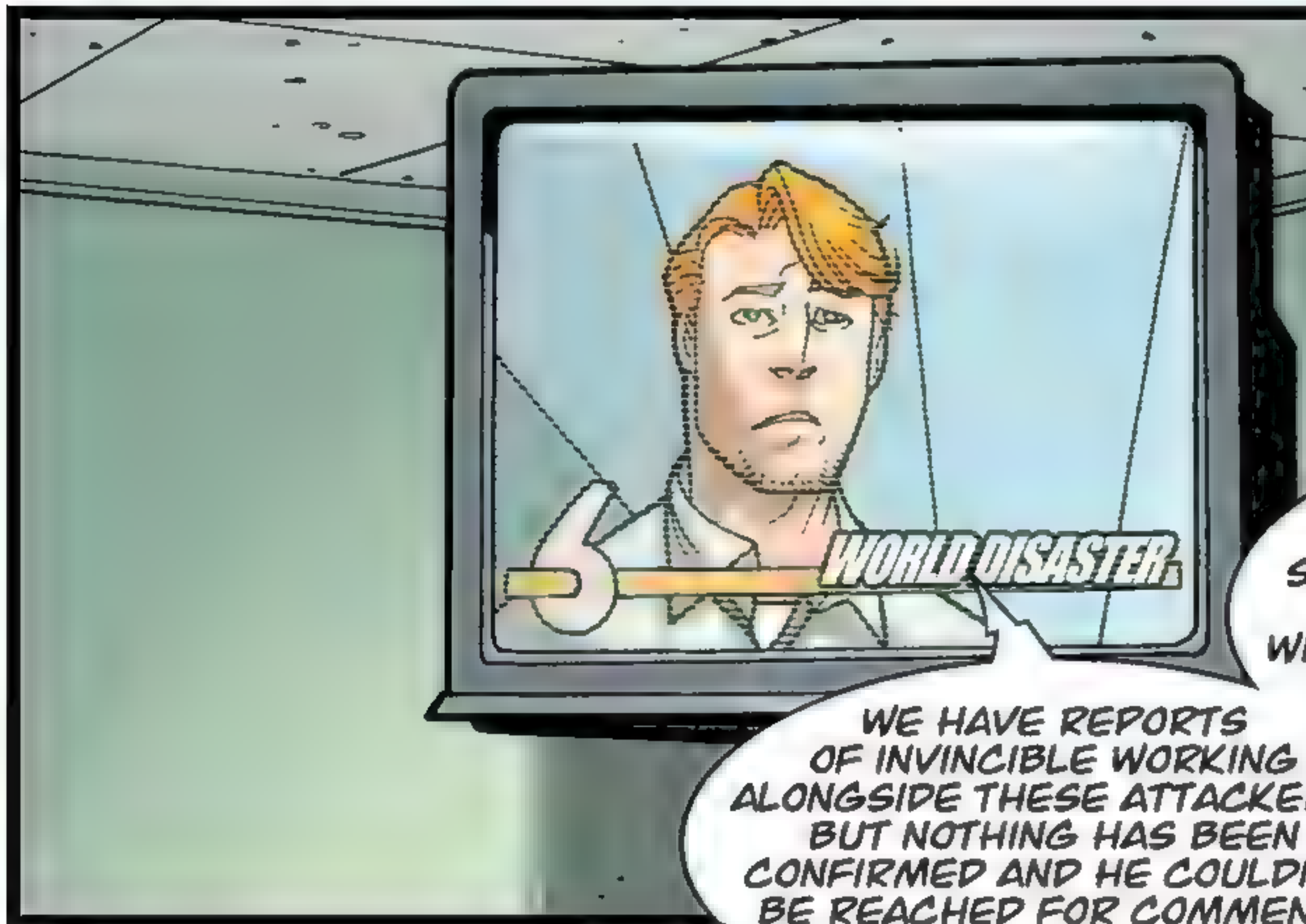
HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES HAVE BEEN DISPLACED BY THE EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS. MAKESHIFT REFUGEE CAMPS LIKE THIS ONE JUST OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK CITY ARE SPRINGING UP ALL OVER THE WORLD.



THE RED CROSS IS REPORTING THAT THIS DISASTER FAR EXCEEDS THEIR CAPABILITIES, AND THEY'RE ASKING FOR EVERY CITIZEN IN A POSITION TO HELP TO DO SO.

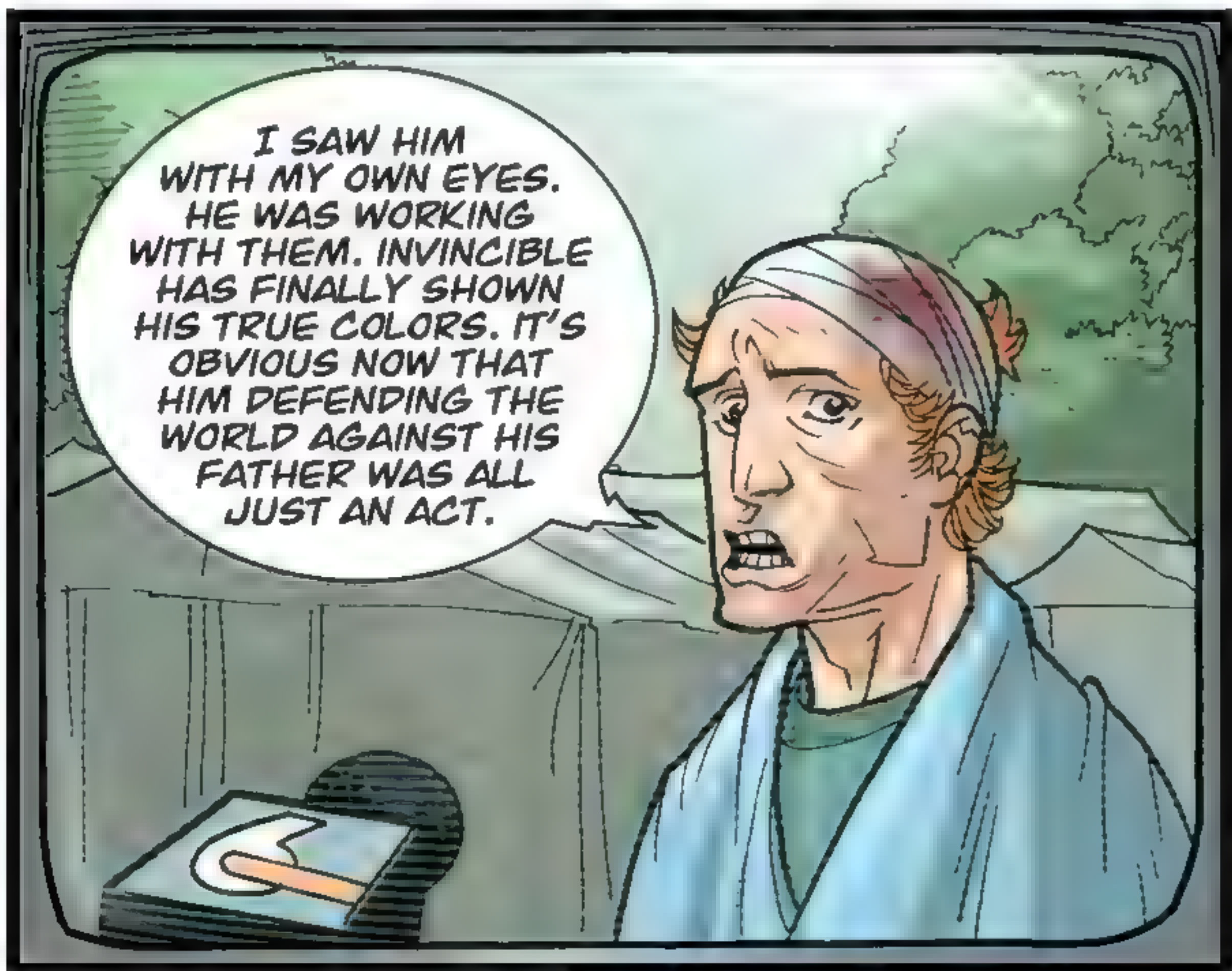
ALL OF THIS STILL LEAVES US WITH THE QUESTION-- WHY? WHY HAS THIS HAPPENED? WHILE THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION MAY NEVER COME, THE ATTACKERS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS MULTIPLE VERSIONS OF THE SUPERHERO KNOWN AS INVINCIBLE.

INVINCIBLE, AS EVERYONE WILL REMEMBER, WAS THE SON OF OMNI-MAN--THE SUPERHERO TURNED SUPER-VILLAIN WHO TRIED TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD UNTIL HE WAS THWARTED BY HIS SON AND THEN DISAPPEARED, NEVER TO BE SEEN AGAIN.



SUSPICIONS HAVE ALWAYS RUN WILD WITH SOME BELIEVING INVINCIBLE WAS ACTUALLY WORKING WITH OMNI-MAN--WITH PLANS TO CONQUER THE WORLD AT A LATTER TIME.

WE HAVE REPORTS OF INVINCIBLE WORKING ALONGSIDE THESE ATTACKERS, BUT NOTHING HAS BEEN CONFIRMED AND HE COULDN'T BE REACHED FOR COMMENT.

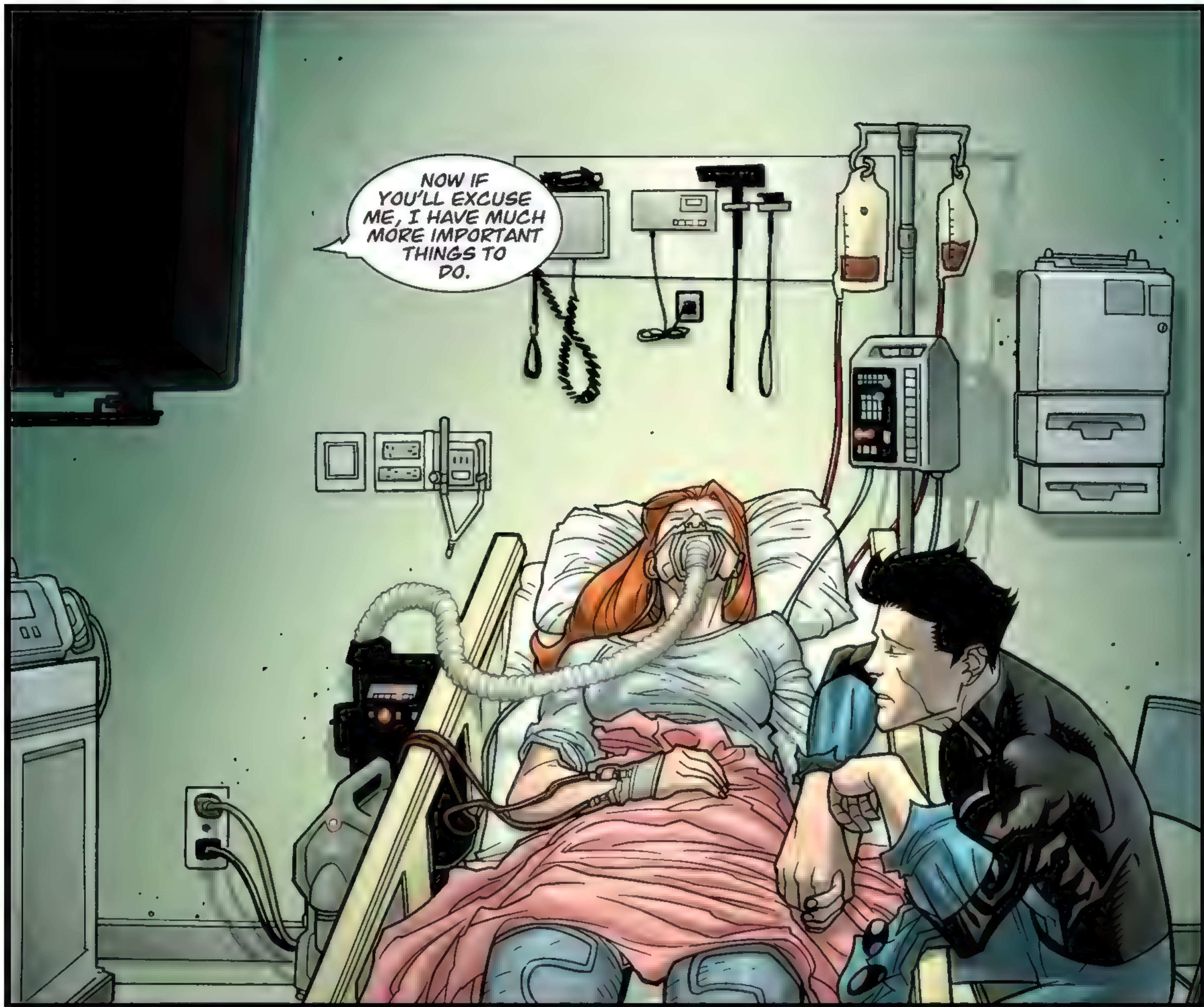


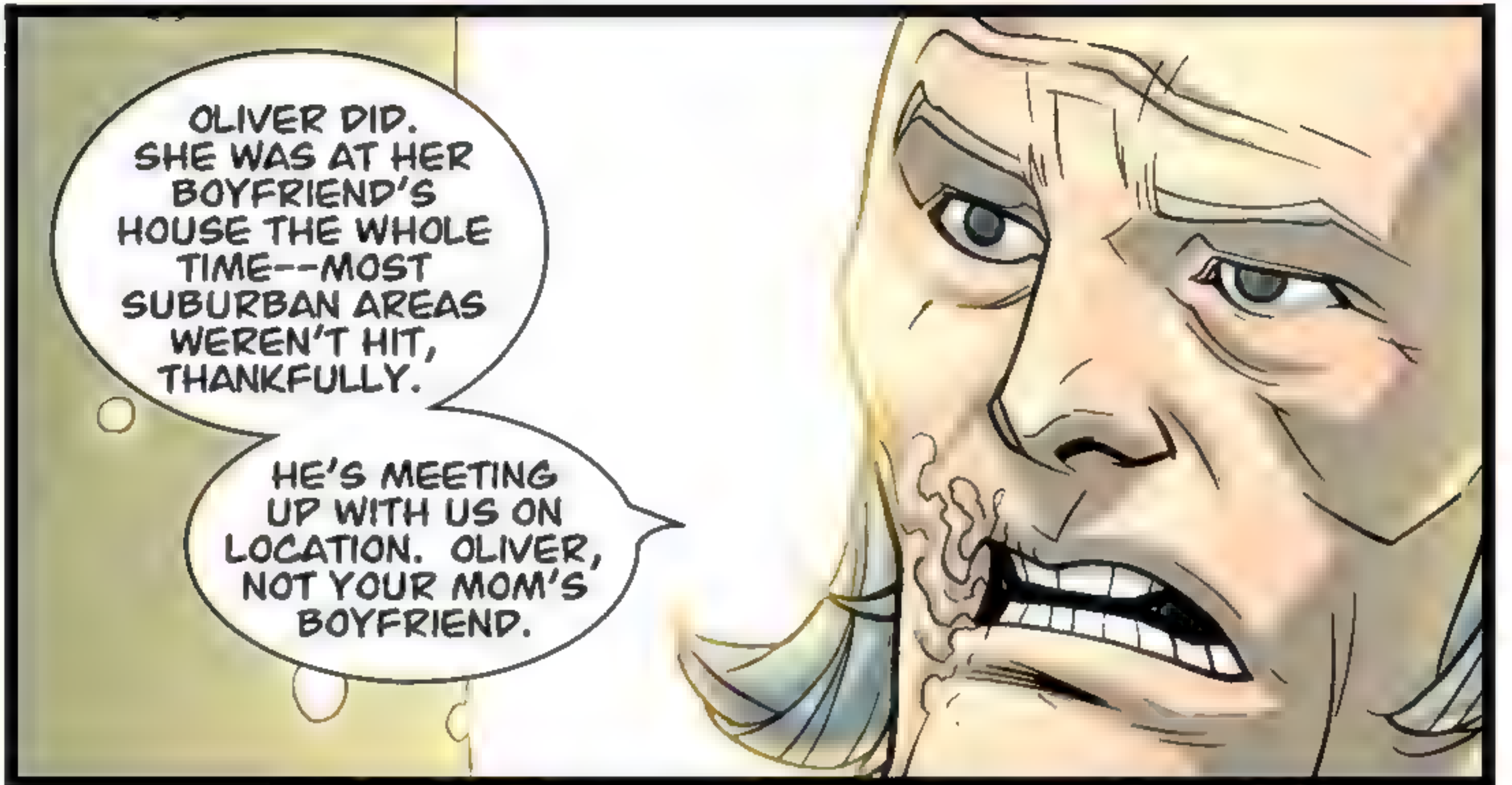
I SAW HIM WITH MY OWN EYES. HE WAS WORKING WITH THEM. INVINCIBLE HAS FINALLY SHOWN HIS TRUE COLORS. IT'S OBVIOUS NOW THAT HIM DEFENDING THE WORLD AGAINST HIS FATHER WAS ALL JUST AN ACT.



THIS IS ABSURD. THESE THINGS WERE DOPPELGANGERS--EVIL TWINS. I KNOW INVINCIBLE AND HE WASN'T WORKING WITH THEM.

THIS IS SLOPPY REPORTING. IF YOU REVIEWED FOOTAGE FOR TEN MINUTES I'M SURE YOU'D FIND INVINCIBLE, ON CAMERA, FIGHTING AGAINST THESE MONSTERS.



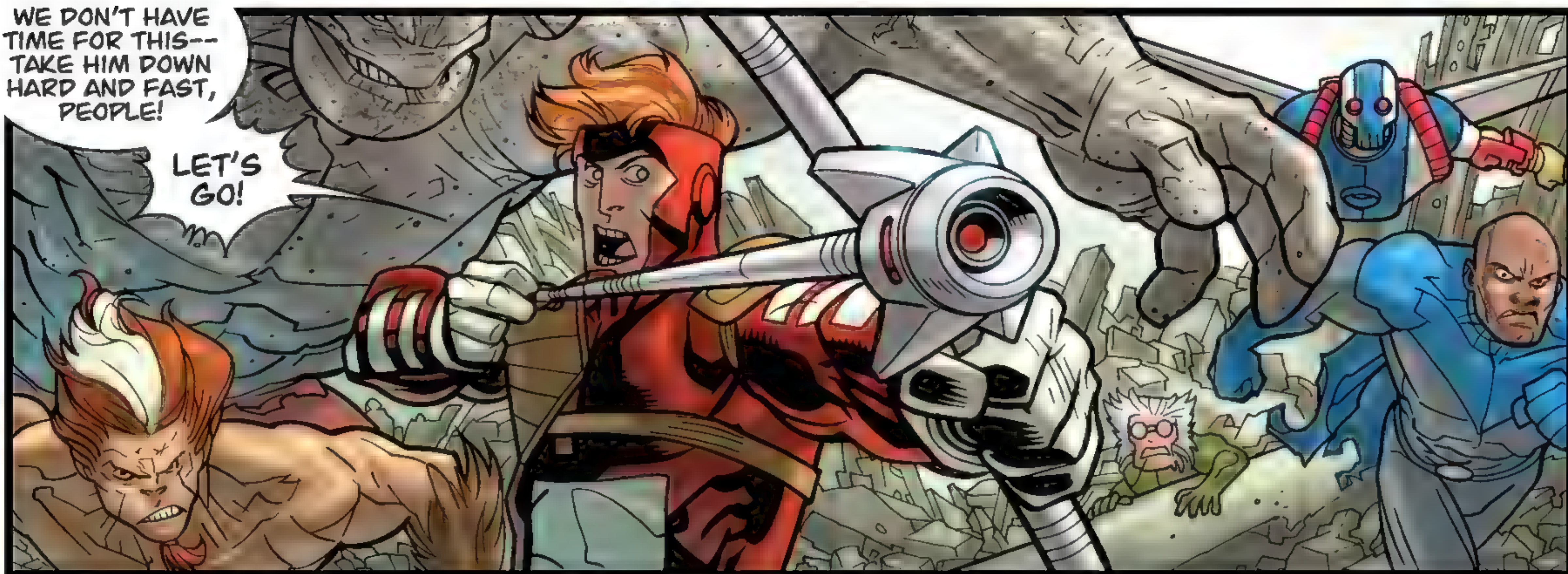




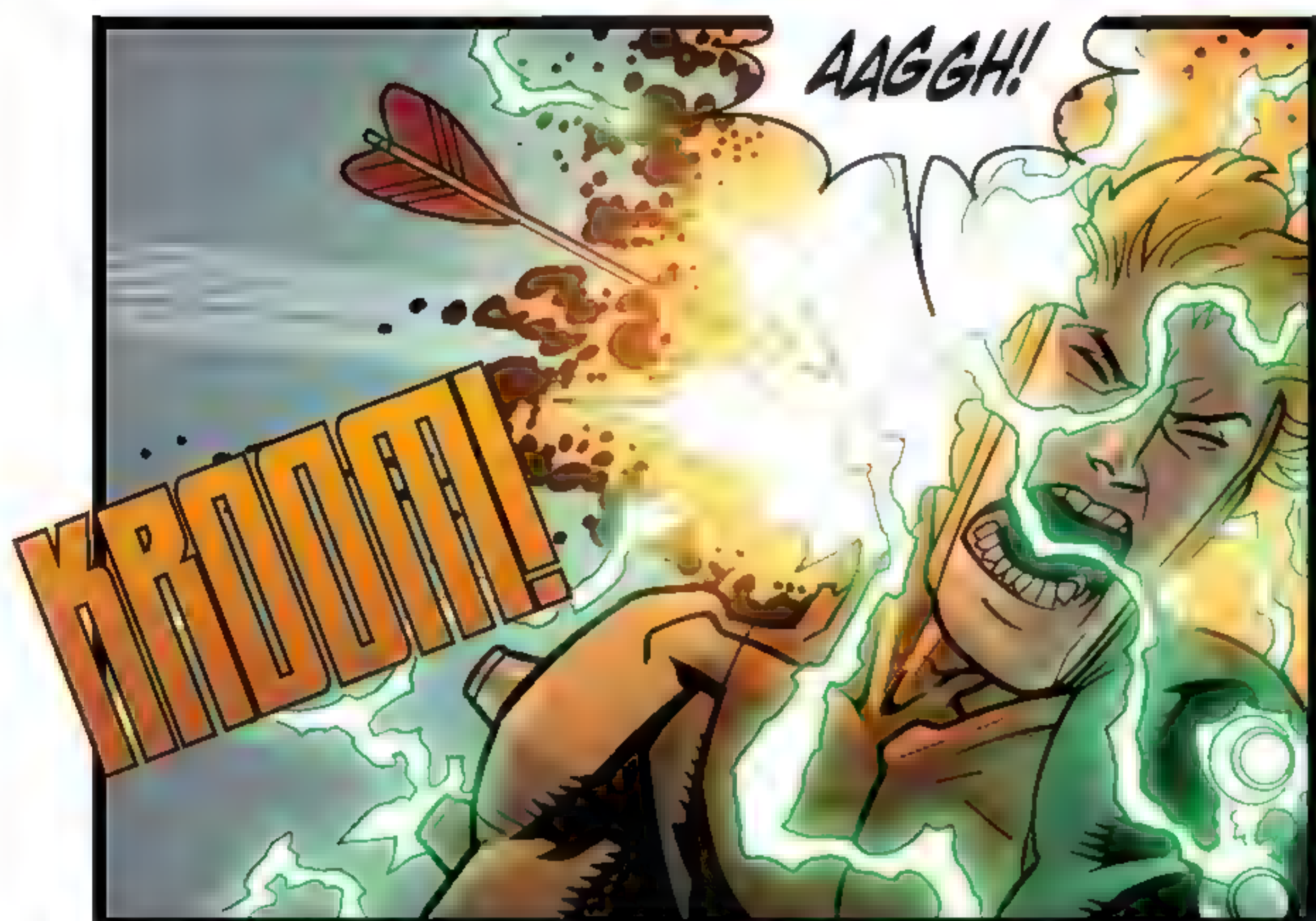


WE DON'T HAVE
TIME FOR THIS--
TAKE HIM DOWN
HARD AND FAST,
PEOPLE!

LET'S
GO!



AAGGH!



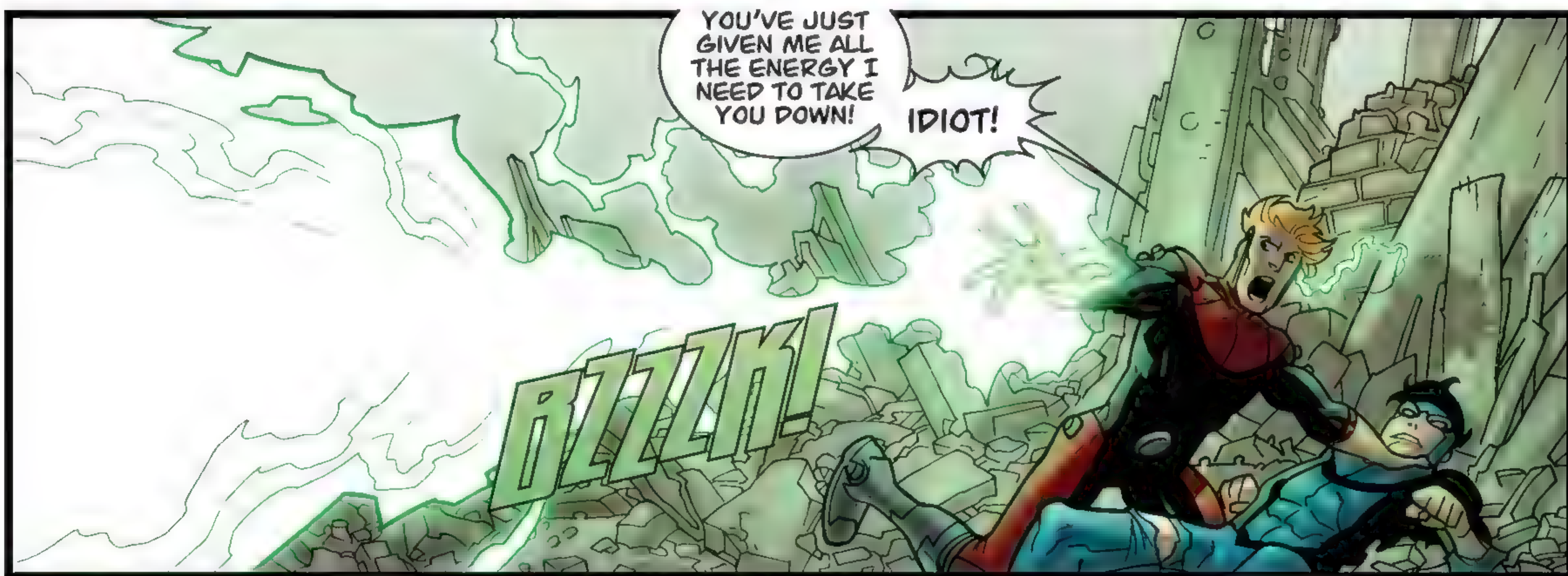
THINK THEY'VE
GOT THIS ONE
COVERED, KID
THOR.

C'MON,
THERE'S
WORK TO
BE DONE,
LIVES TO
SAVE.



YOU'VE JUST
GIVEN ME ALL
THE ENERGY I
NEED TO TAKE
YOU DOWN!

IDIOT!



BZZZZK!

POW!

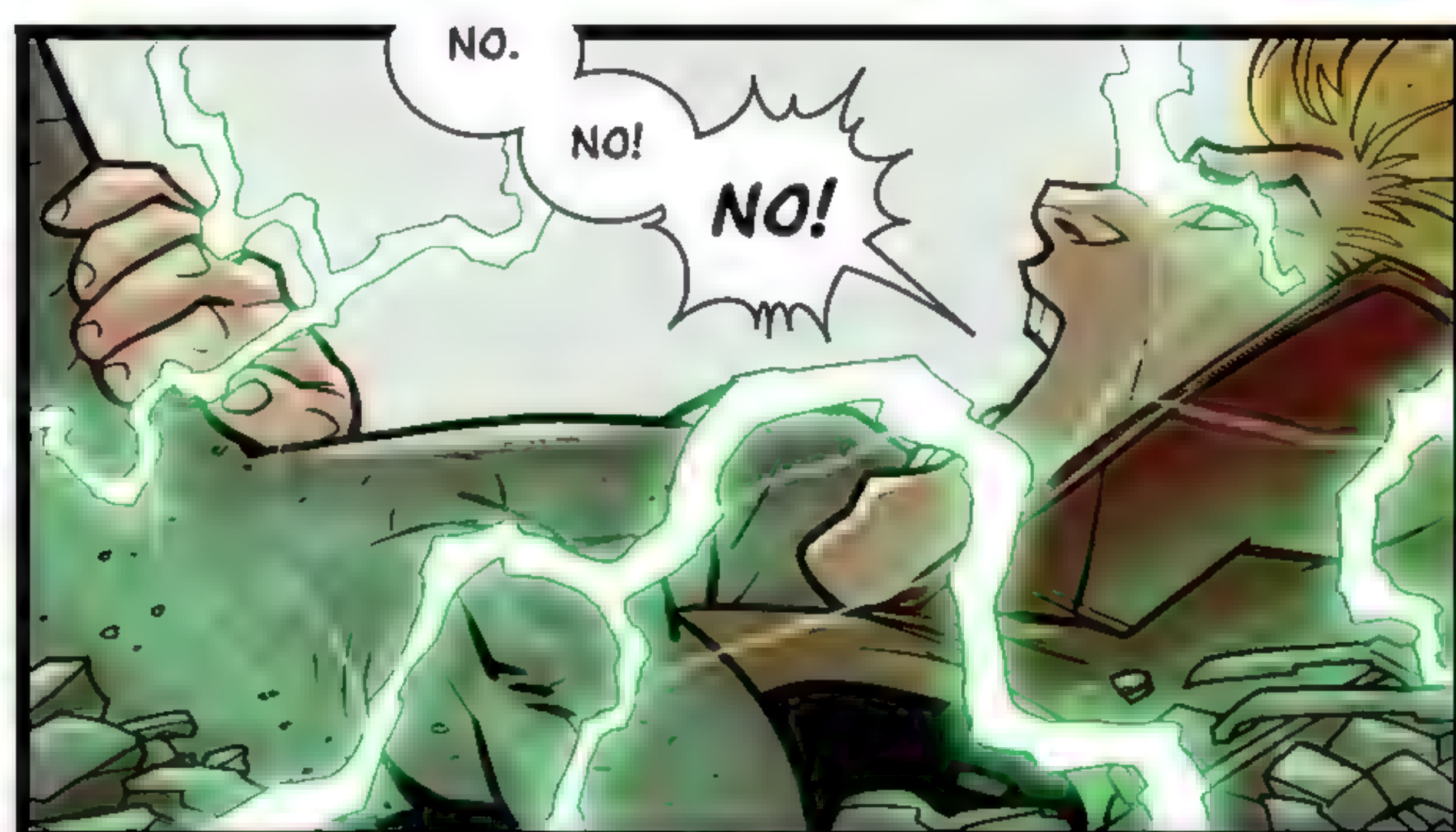
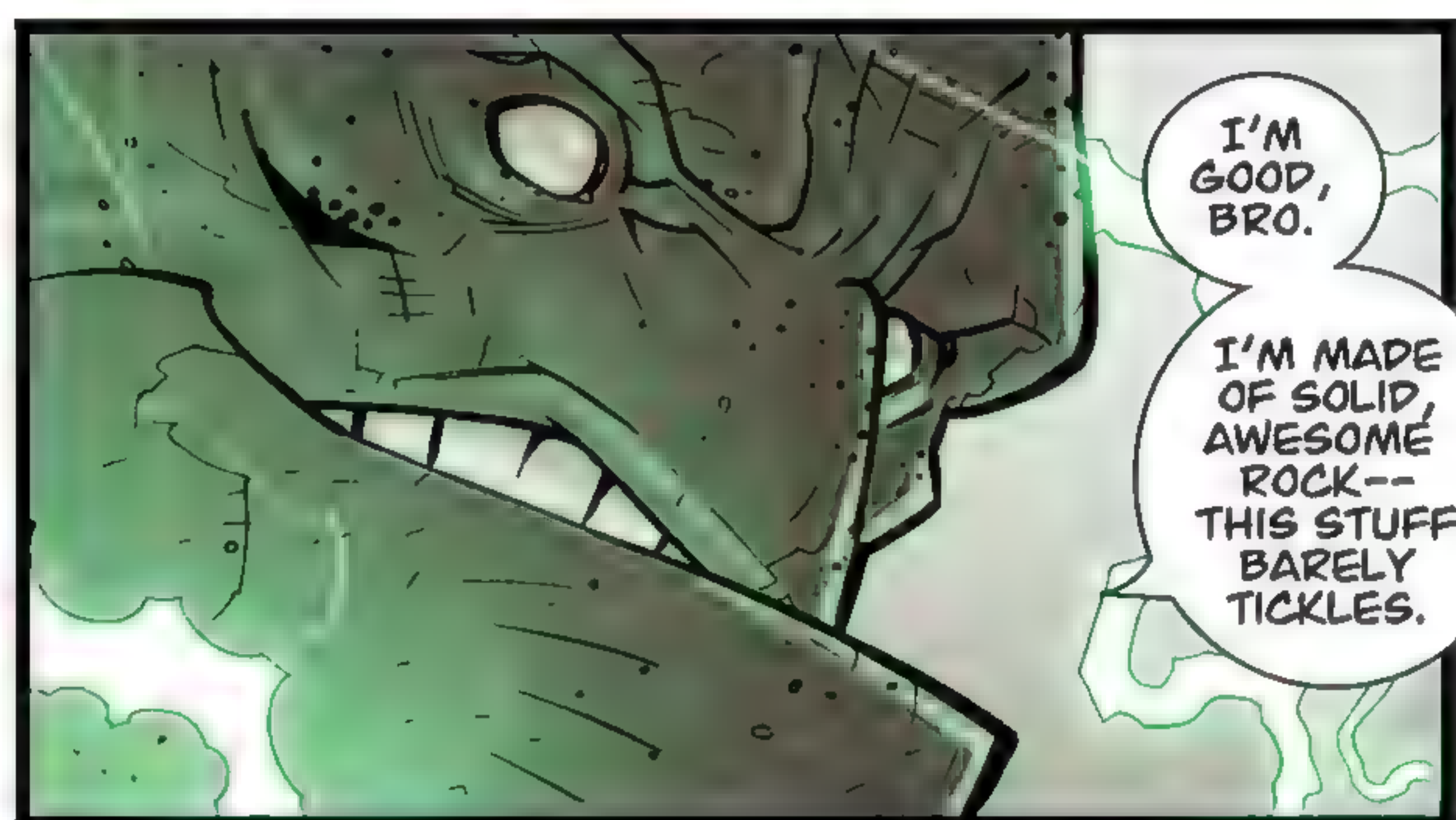
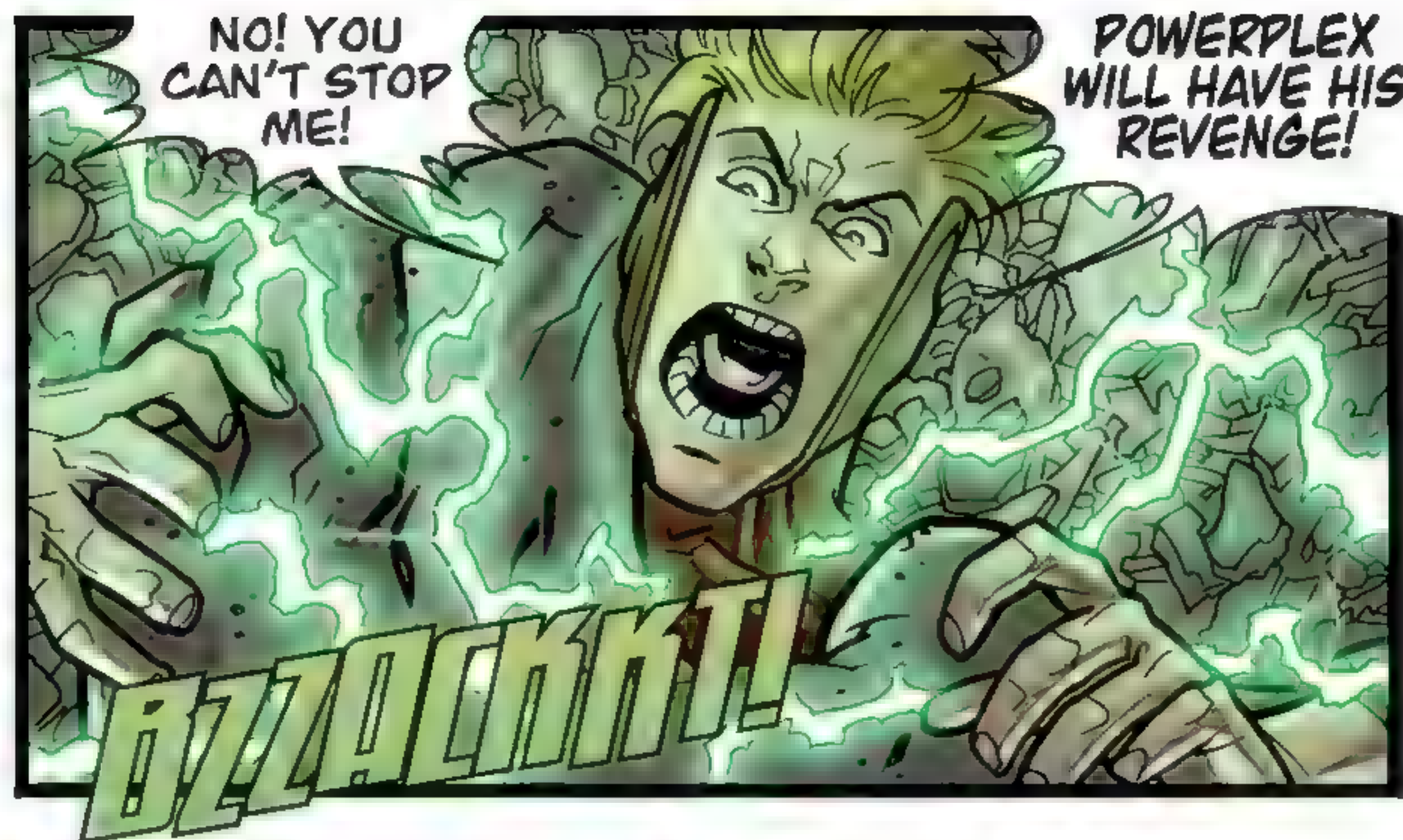
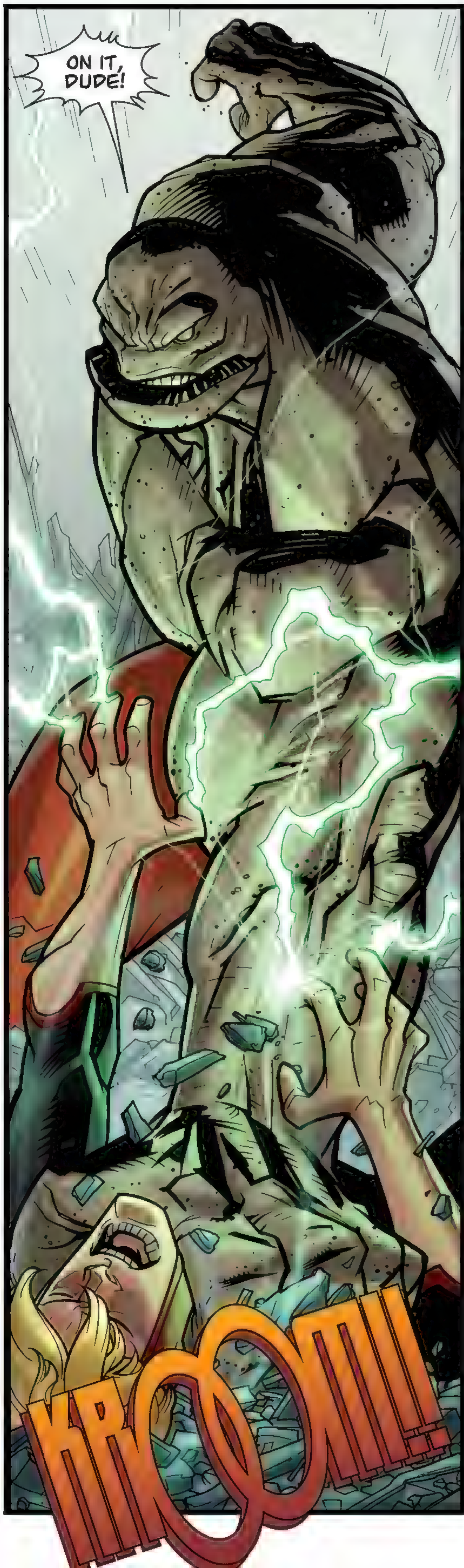
HERE'S
MORE,
JERK!

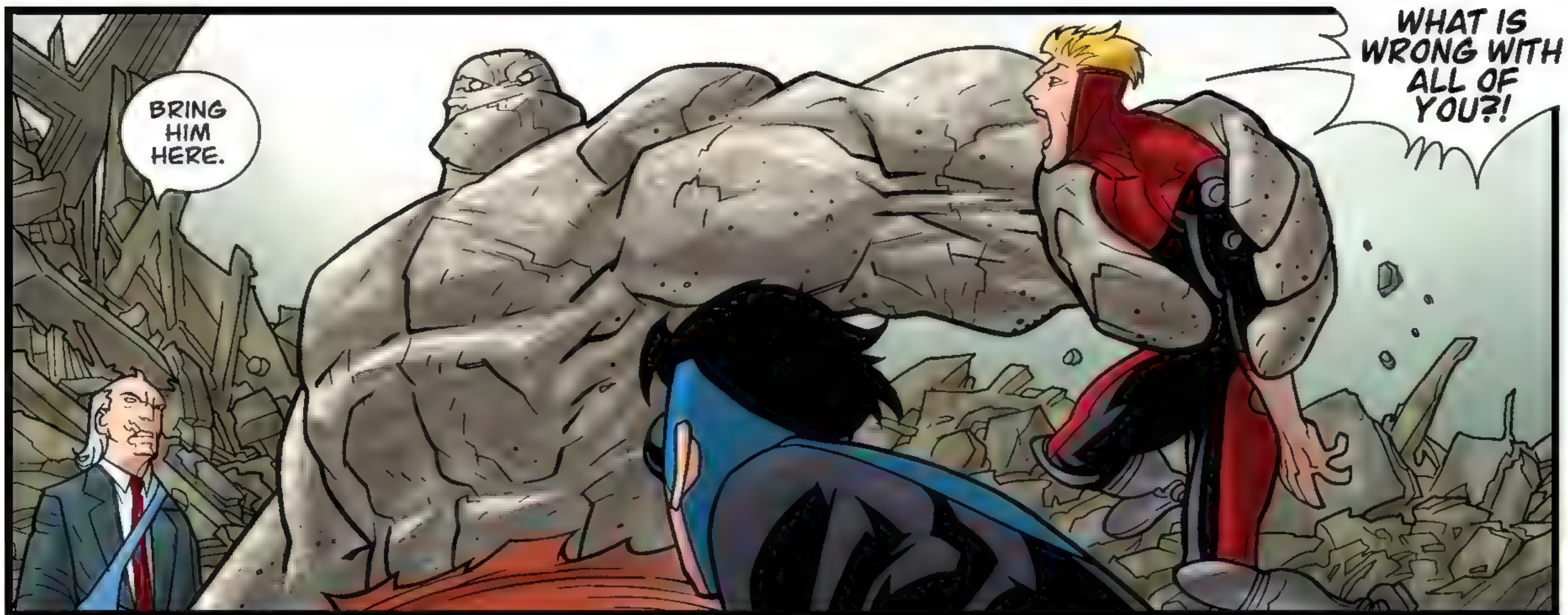


QUICK--
SOMEONE
PIN HIM
DOWN!

DON'T
LET HIM
MOVE!









THE CLEAN-UP IS GOING WELL. WE'VE ALMOST GOT ALL OF MANHATTAN CLEARED AWAY AND READY FOR RECONSTRUCTION. I SEE WHAT THE SUPERHERO COMMUNITY IS CAPABLE OF WHEN WE ALL WORK TOGETHER AND... IT'S INSPIRING.

BUT...

I DON'T HAVE ANYONE ELSE I CAN TALK TO ABOUT THIS... I HOPE YOU WAKE UP SOON. I REALLY--OH, GOD, EVE... I MISS YOU SO MUCH.



I SEE THE DESTRUCTION, THE LIVES LOST... I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK... POWERPLEX IS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO... ANGSTROM LEVY, POWERPLEX... THESE GUYS ARE OUT THERE BECAUSE OF ME. THERE'S NO DISPUTING THAT. THEIR ACTIONS ARE A DIRECT RESULT OF THINGS I'VE DONE, WHETHER I WAS TRYING TO DO GOOD OR NOT IS IRRELEVANT.

I CAN'T IGNORE THIS GUILT ANYMORE. I CAN'T ESCAPE IT.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO...

UM... EXCUSE US-- WE DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE--



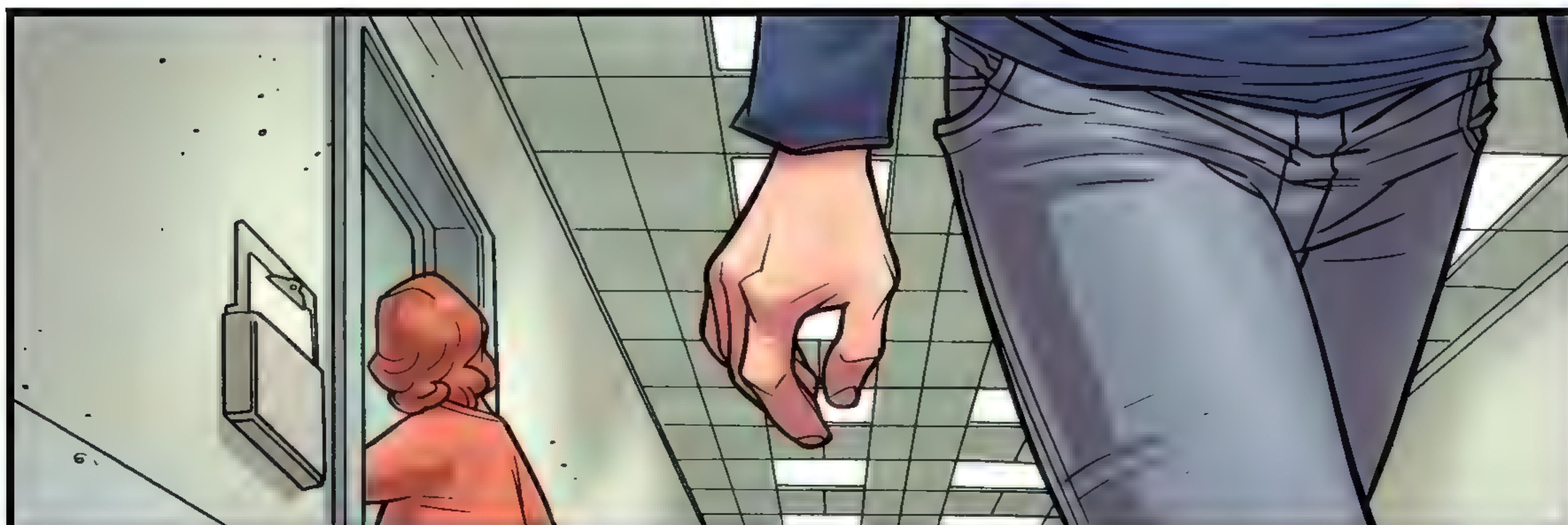
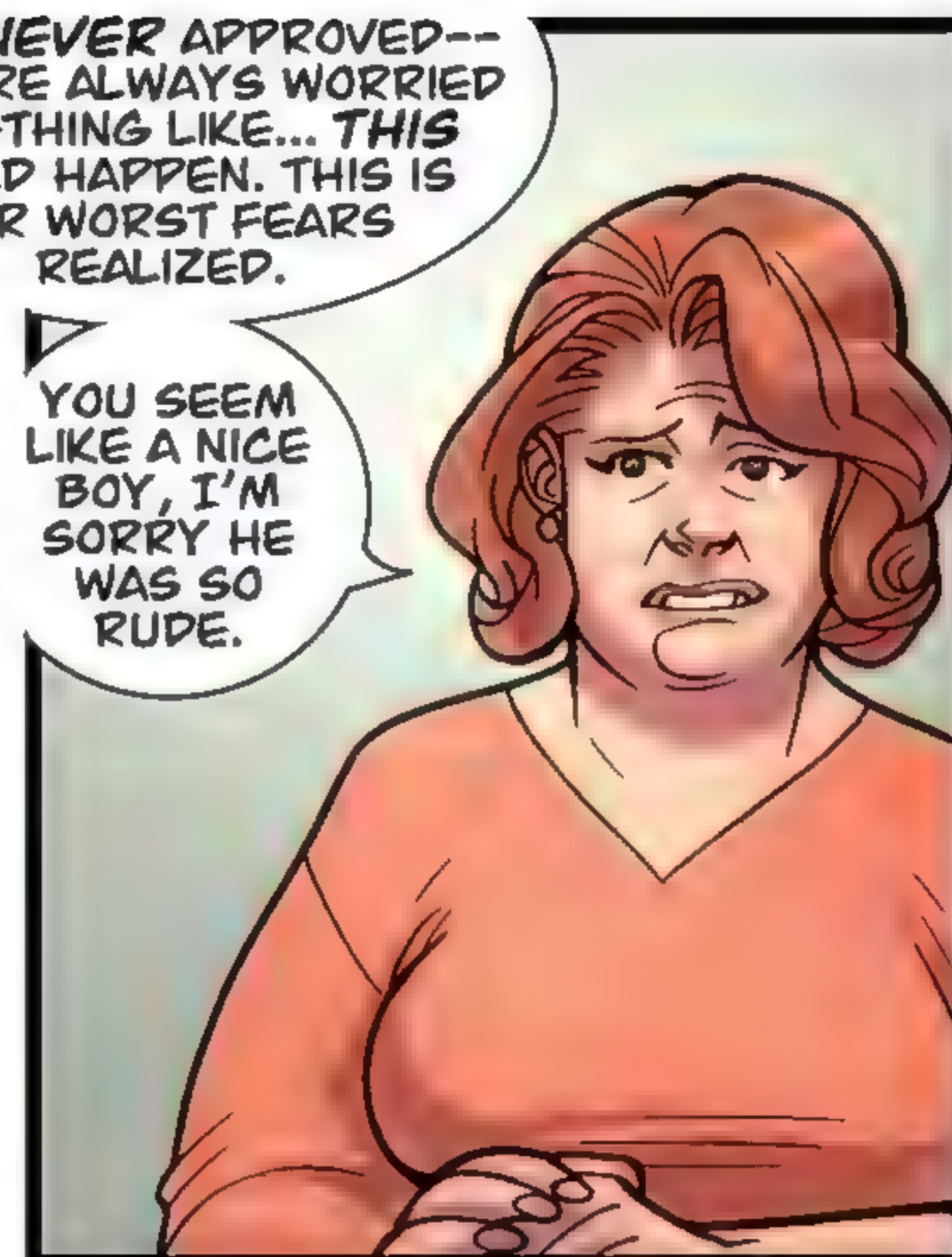
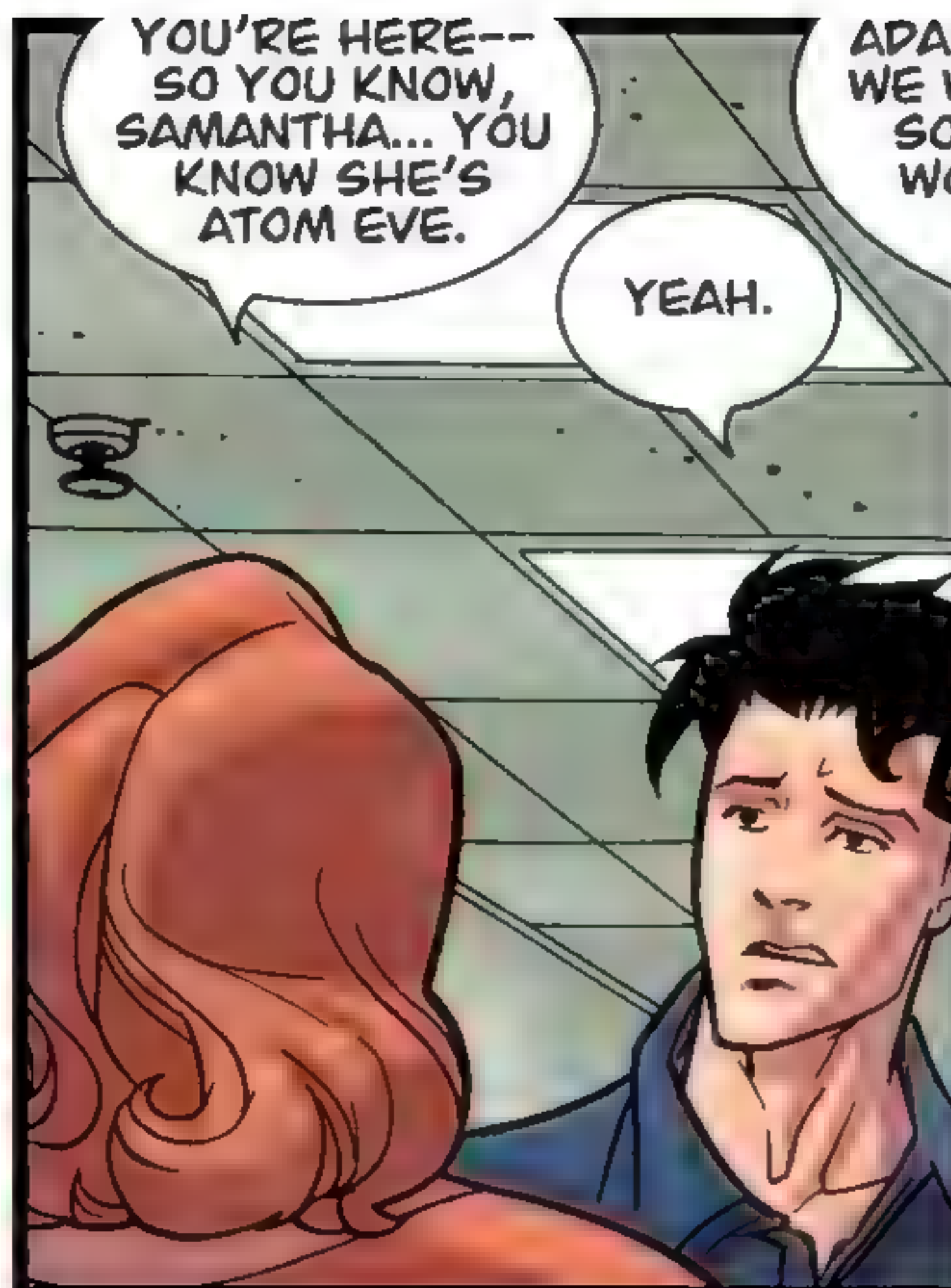
NONSENSE, SHE'S OUR DAUGHTER. EXCUSE ME.

I WAS-- JUST LEAVING ANYWAY.



UM... MARK-- RIGHT? I REMEMBER YOU COMING TO SEE SAMANTHA AT THE HOUSE.

YEAH, SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO JUST WALK AWAY IN THERE.





YEAH-- I THINK THAT'S IT.



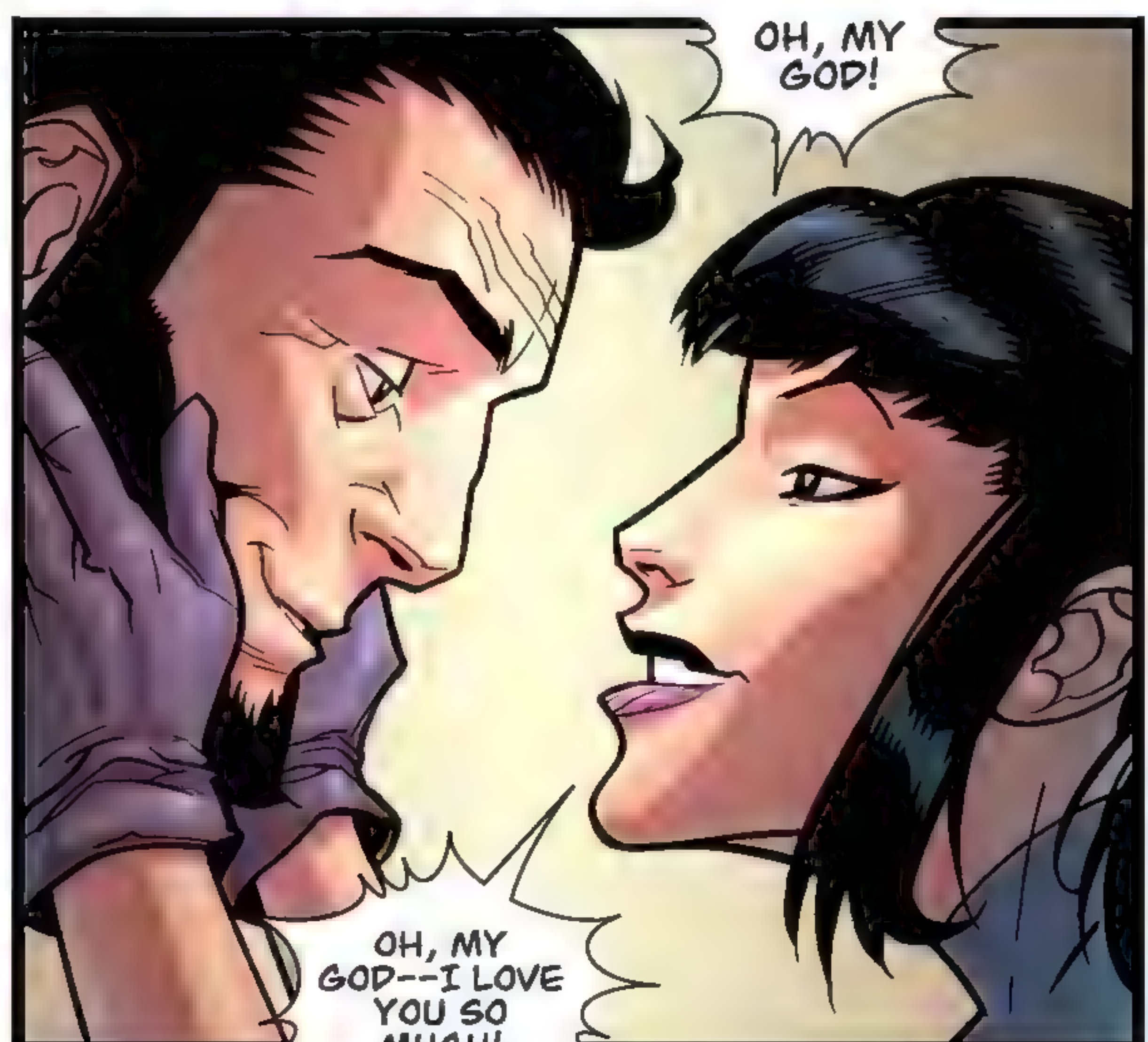
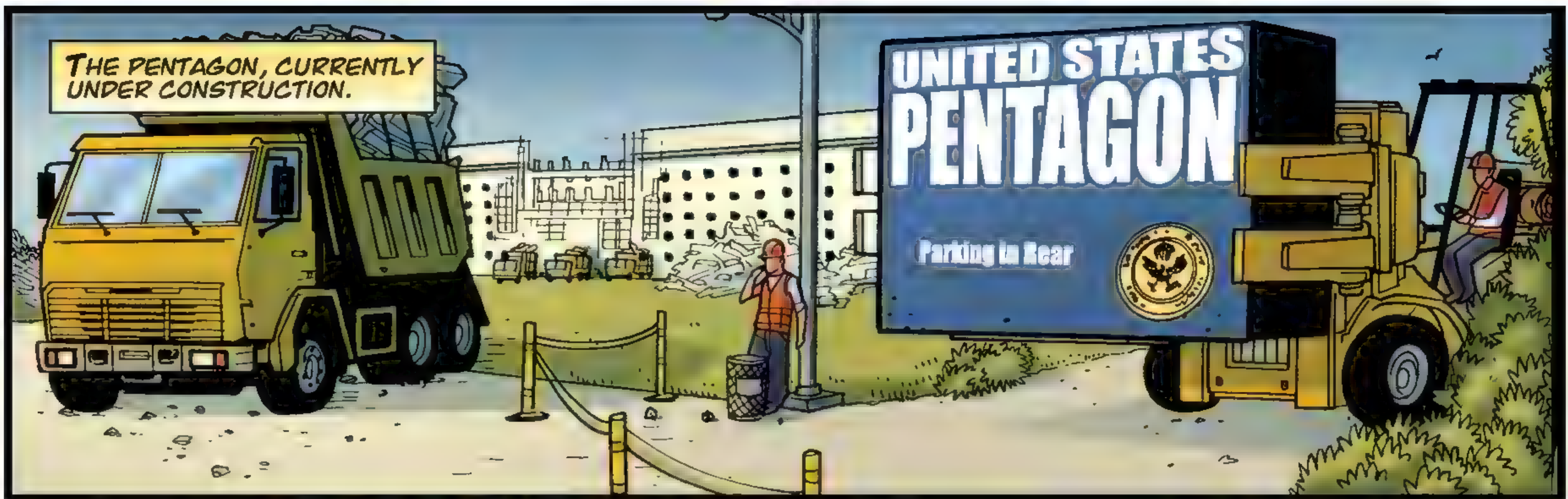
YEAH! WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT THING?!

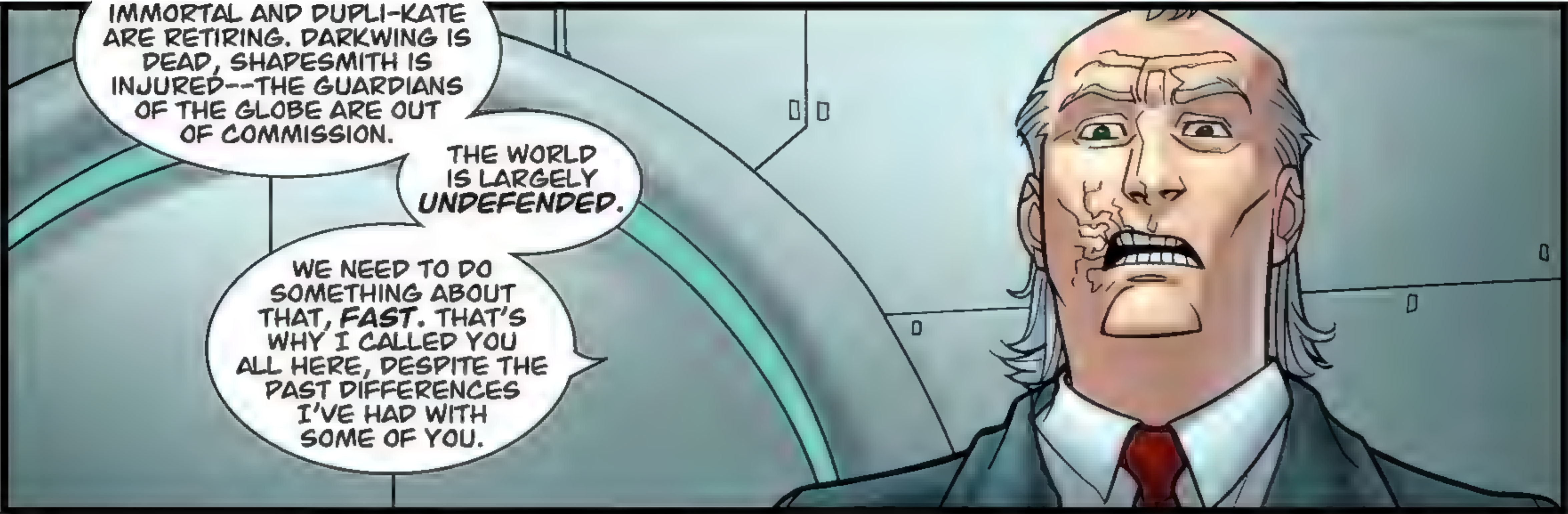


YEEAAGH!!

YOU WILL HELP ME FIND IT.

GRAAAGH!





IMMORTAL AND DUPLI-KATE ARE RETIRING. DARKWING IS DEAD, SHAPESMITH IS INJURED--THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE ARE OUT OF COMMISSION.

THE WORLD IS LARGELY UNDEFENDED.

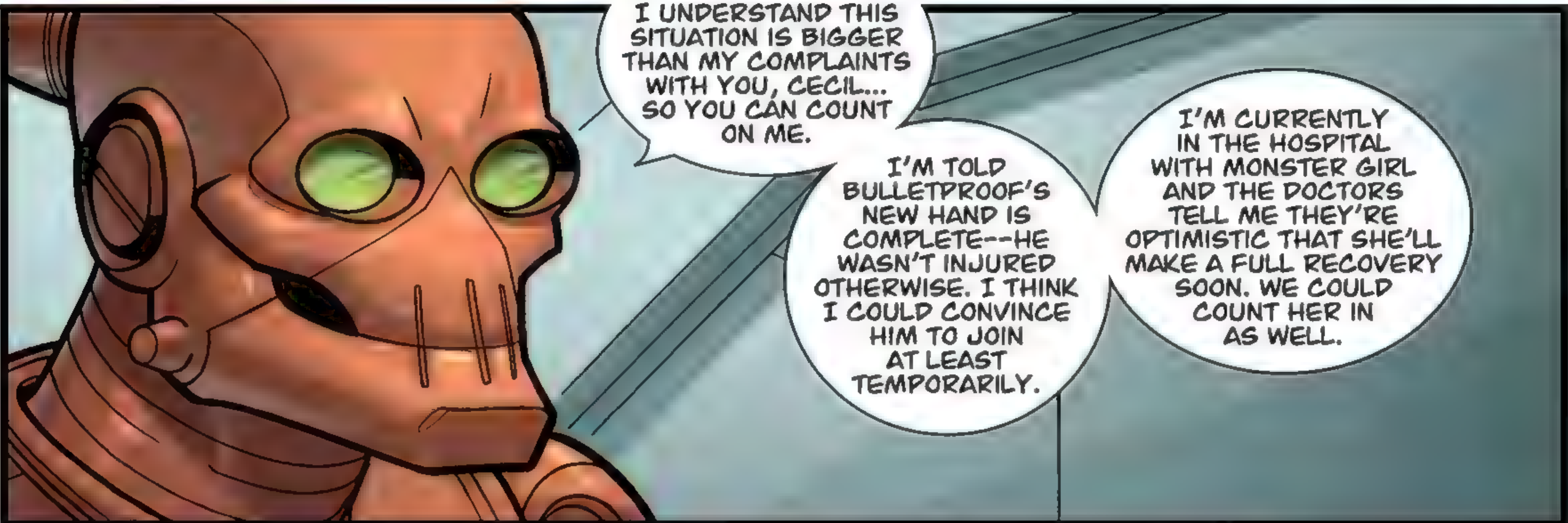
WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT, FAST. THAT'S WHY I CALLED YOU ALL HERE, DESPITE THE PAST DIFFERENCES I'VE HAD WITH SOME OF YOU.



SHAPESMITH SHOULD BE BACK UP TO SPEED SOON, HE HAS SOMETHING HE CALLS A "CORE" AND AS LONG AS THAT'S NOT DAMAGED HE SAYS HE'LL BE FINE. SO HE WAS LUCKY.

MORE LIKE WE WERE LUCKY. IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT FORMING A NEW TEAM, WE HAVE VERY FEW OPTIONS RIGHT NOW.

THAT'S THE MAIN ISSUE-- WE NEED A NEW TEAM RIGHT NOW. I DON'T THINK THE ENEMIES OF THE WORLD WILL BE KIND ENOUGH TO TAKE A BREAK WHILE WE REBUILD.



I UNDERSTAND THIS SITUATION IS BIGGER THAN MY COMPLAINTS WITH YOU, CECIL... SO YOU CAN COUNT ON ME.

I'M TOLD BULLETPROOF'S NEW HAND IS COMPLETE--HE WASN'T INJURED OTHERWISE. I THINK I COULD CONVINCE HIM TO JOIN AT LEAST TEMPORARILY.

I'M CURRENTLY IN THE HOSPITAL WITH MONSTER GIRL AND THE DOCTORS TELL ME THEY'RE OPTIMISTIC THAT SHE'LL MAKE A FULL RECOVERY SOON. WE COULD COUNT HER IN AS WELL.



WHAT ABOUT REX SPLODE?



REX IS DEAD.



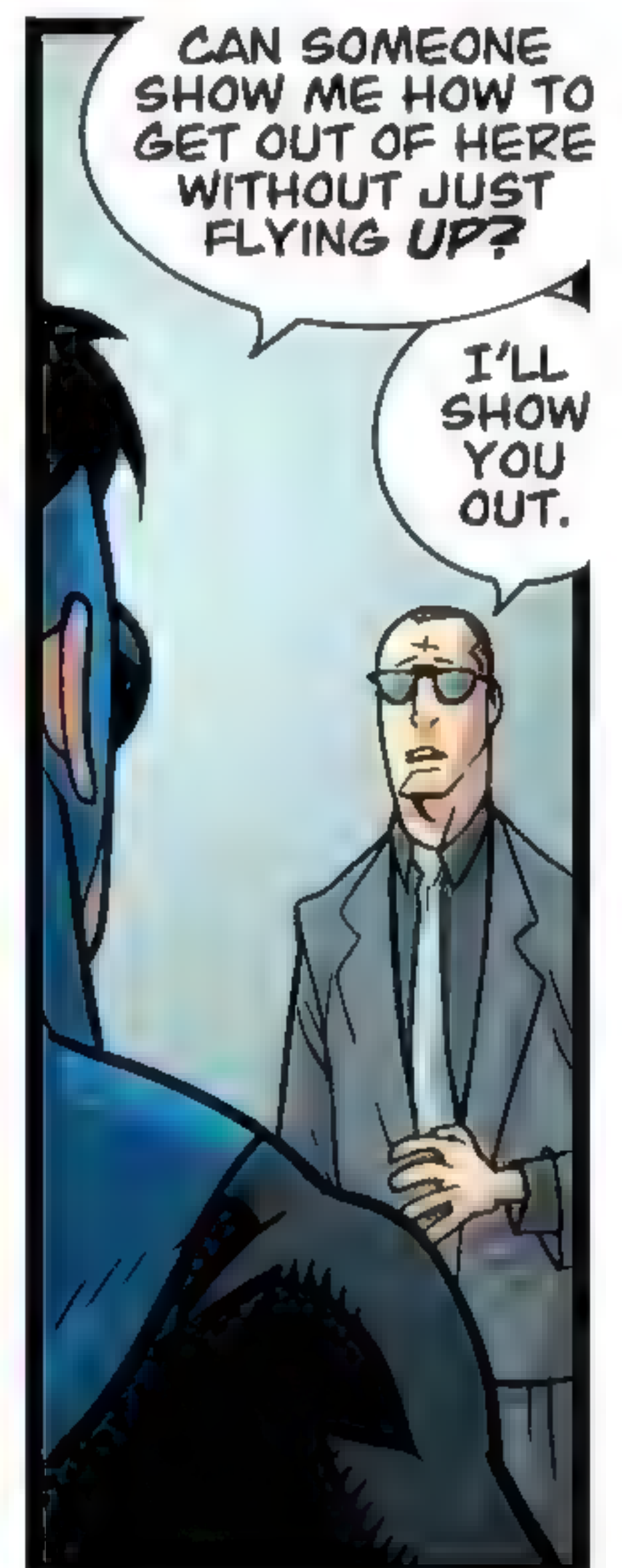
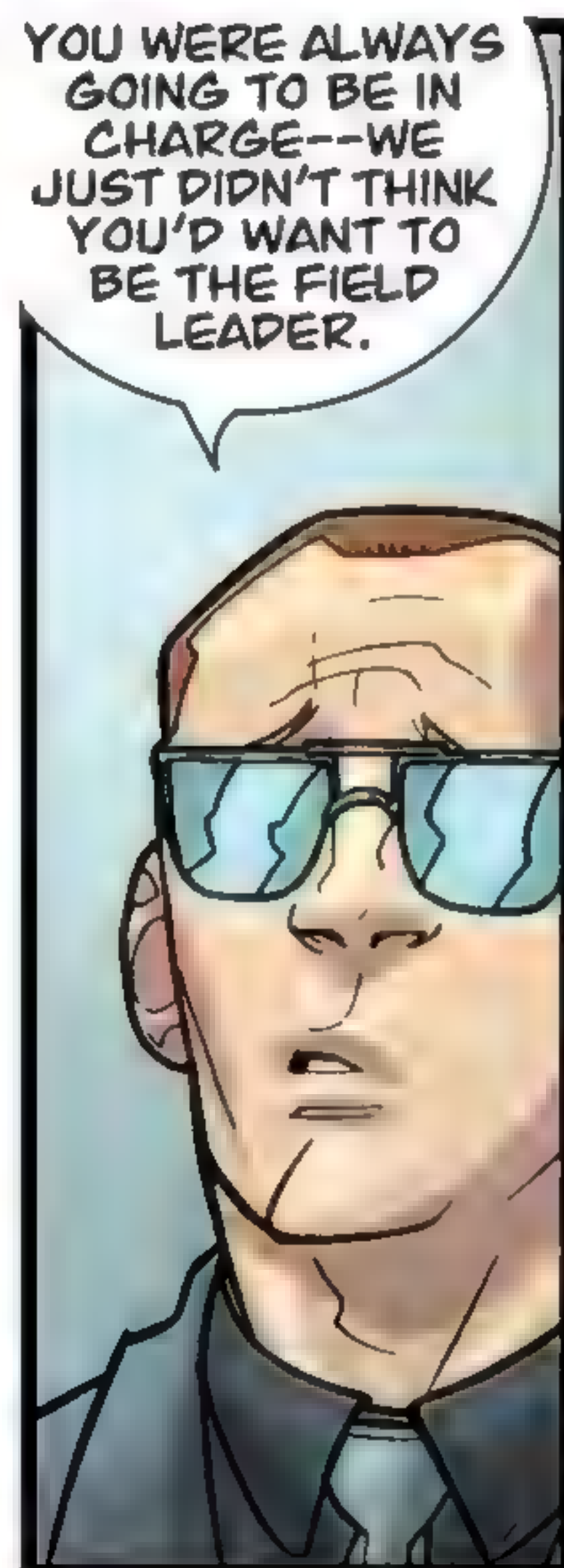
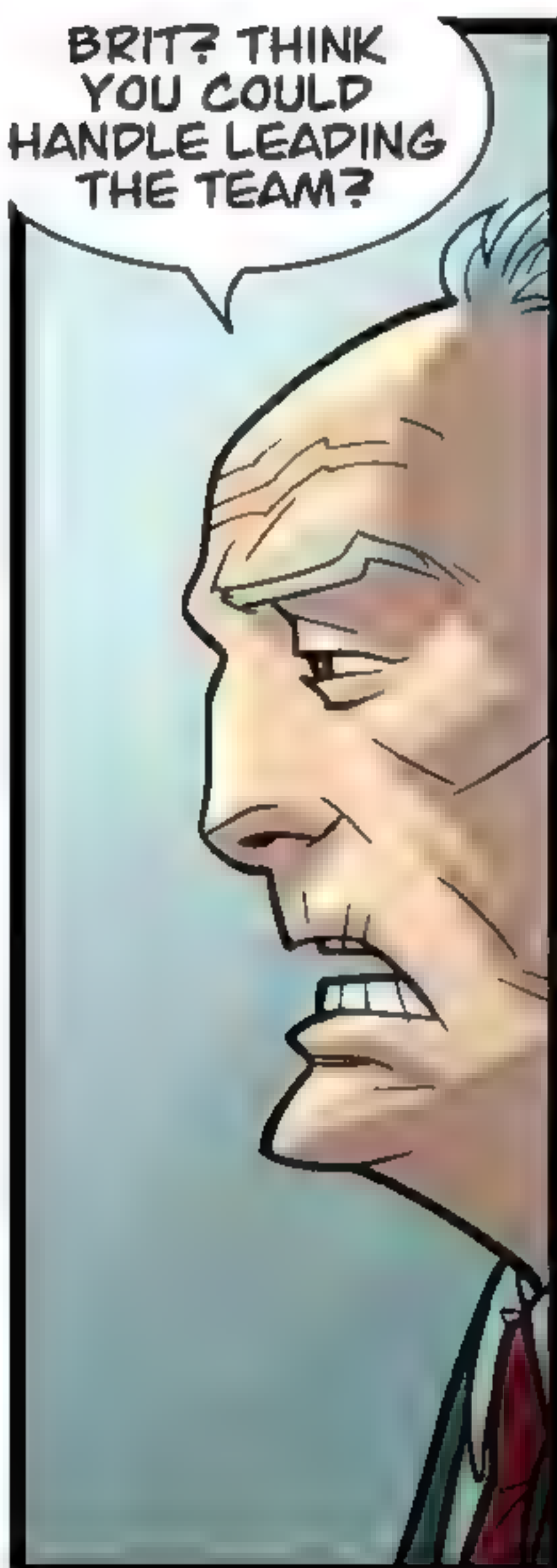
THERE'S NO TIME FOR THAT NOW.

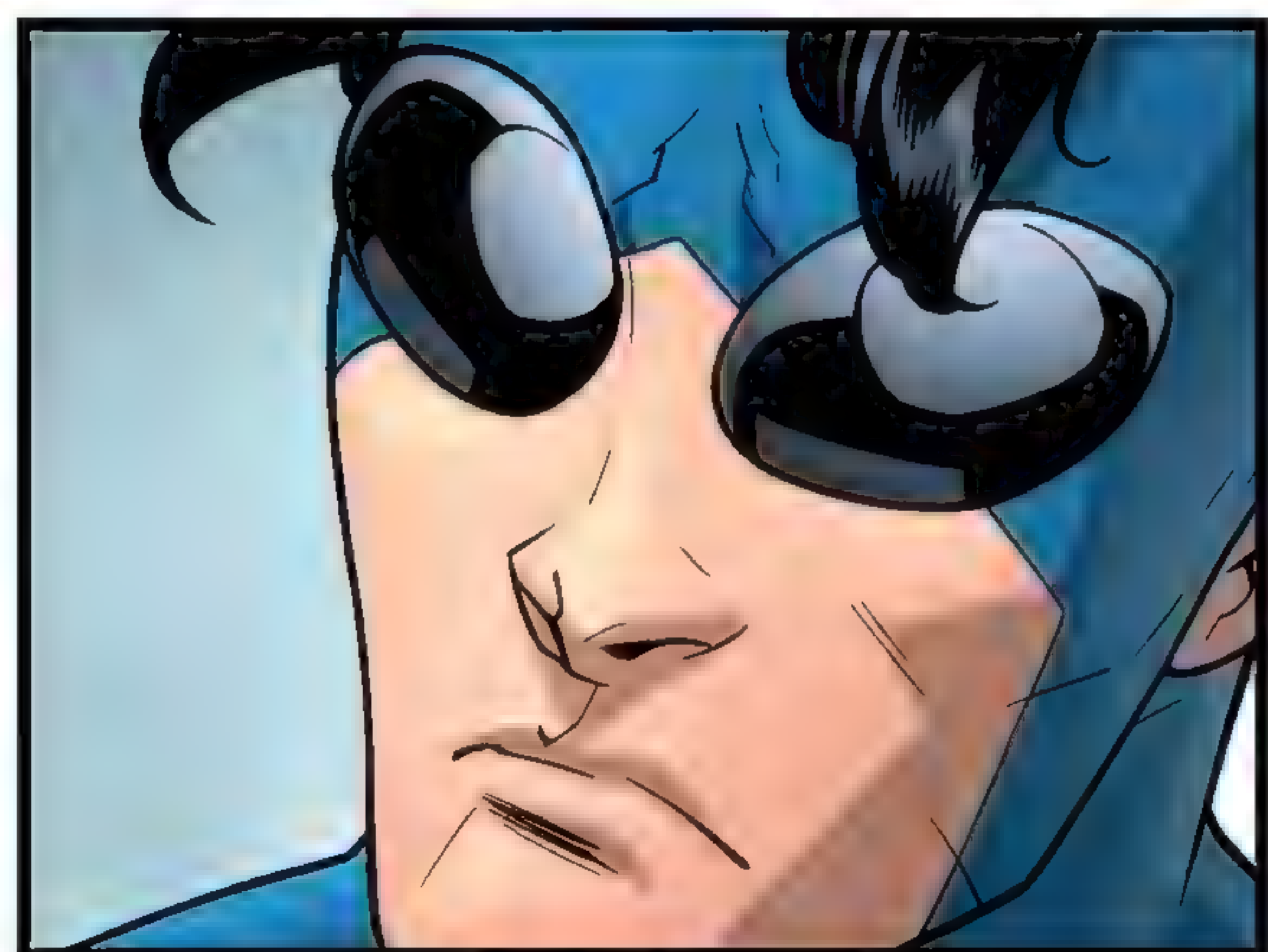
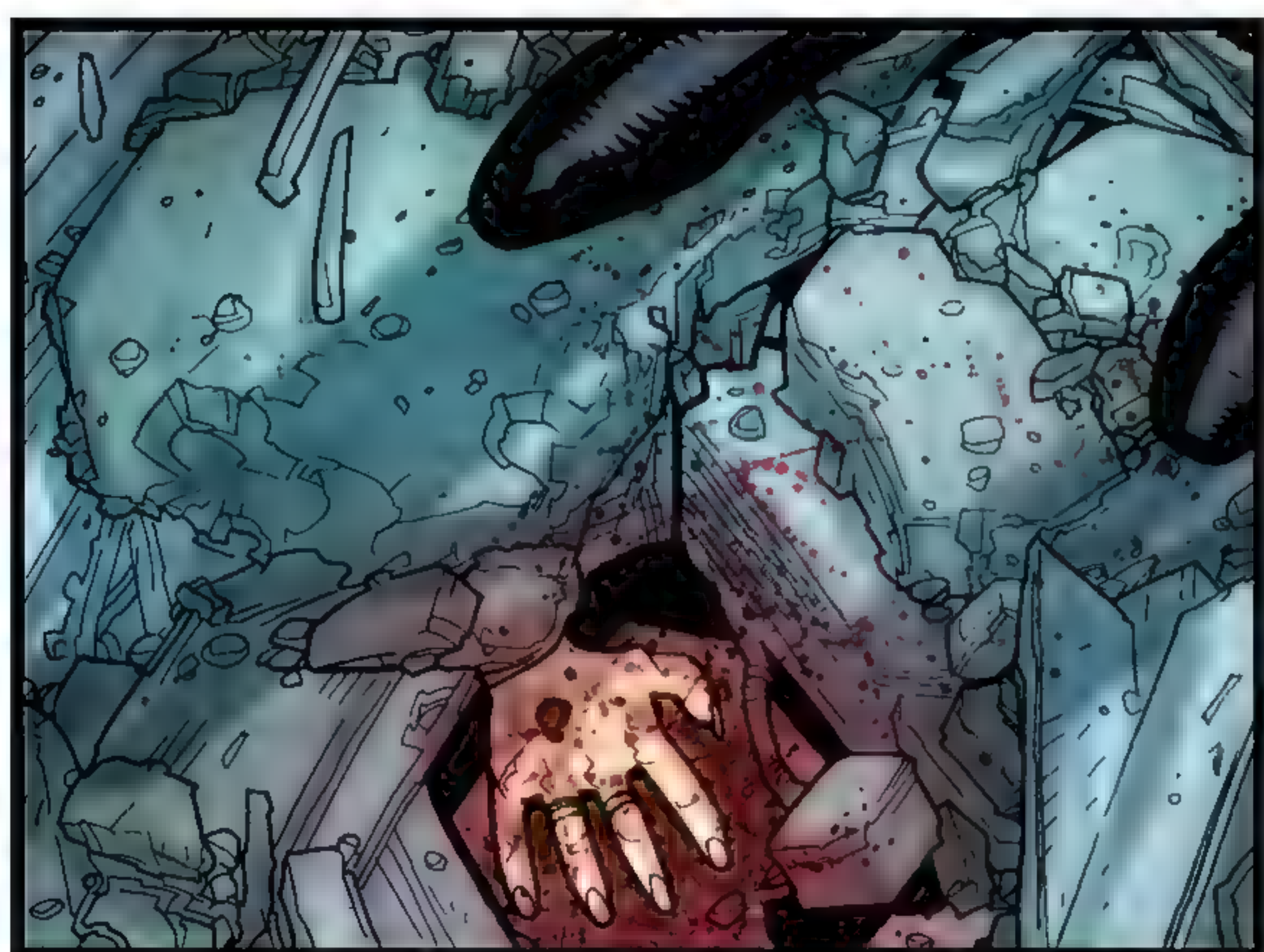
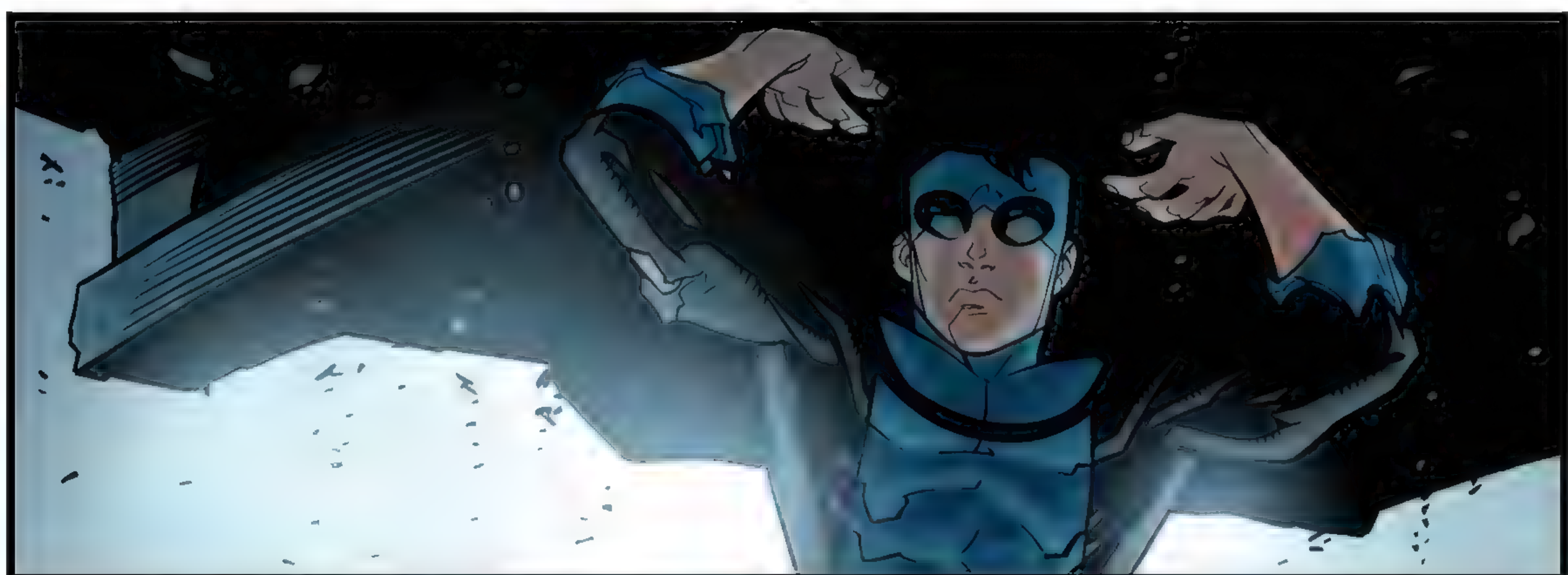
WE NEED TO GET THIS TEAM UP AND RUNNING BEFORE ANYONE REALIZES HOW VULNERABLE WE ARE.

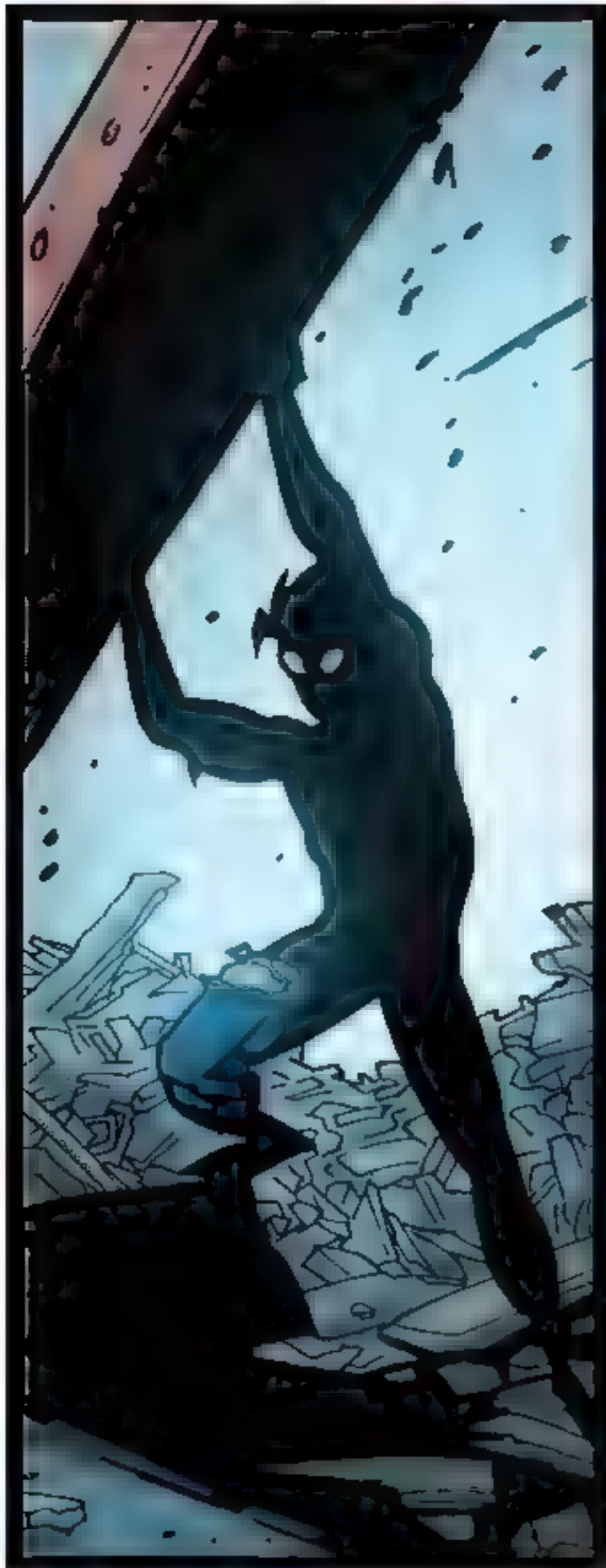


I DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE WORKING FOR YOU UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

WHY AM I HERE?





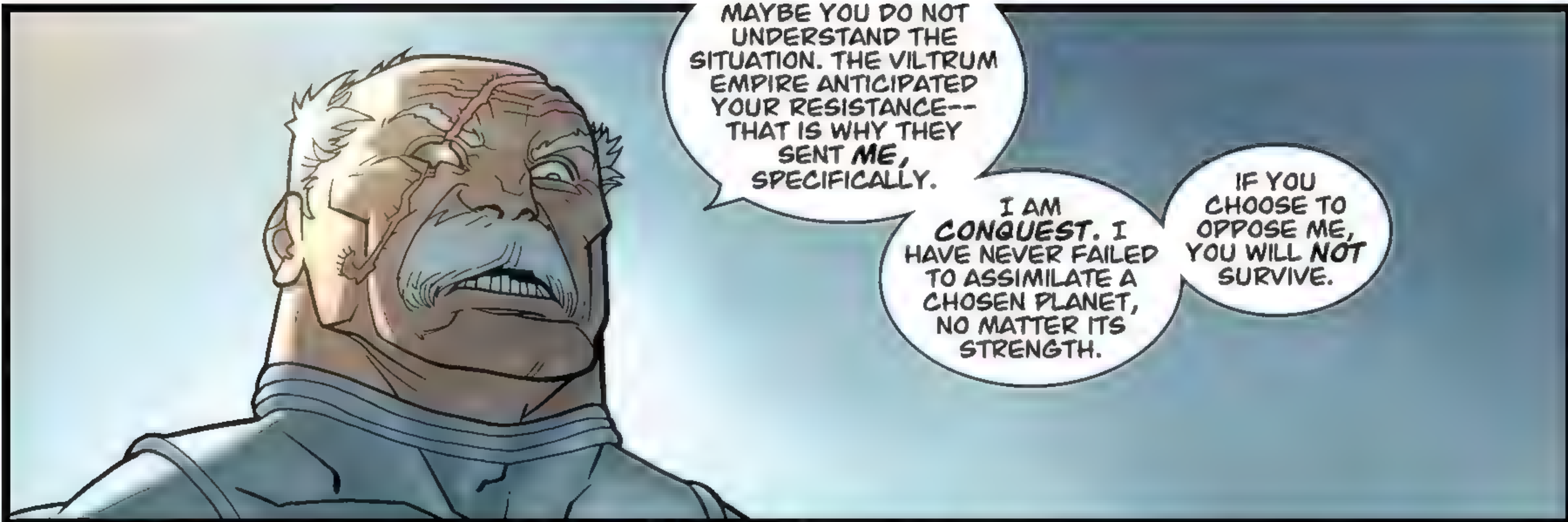




YOU HAVE
BEEN APPOINTED
THE VILTRUMITE
AGENT OF THIS
PLANET, CHARGED
WITH PREPARING IT
FOR EVENTUAL
TAKEOVER BY
OUR EMPIRE.

I AM HERE
TO CONFIRM YOUR
PROGRESS MADE
TOWARD THAT TASK...
IF THERE IS NONE,
I WILL ASSUME
YOUR DUTIES AND
TAKE OVER.

IF YOU
OPPOSE ME.
I WILL KILL
YOU.







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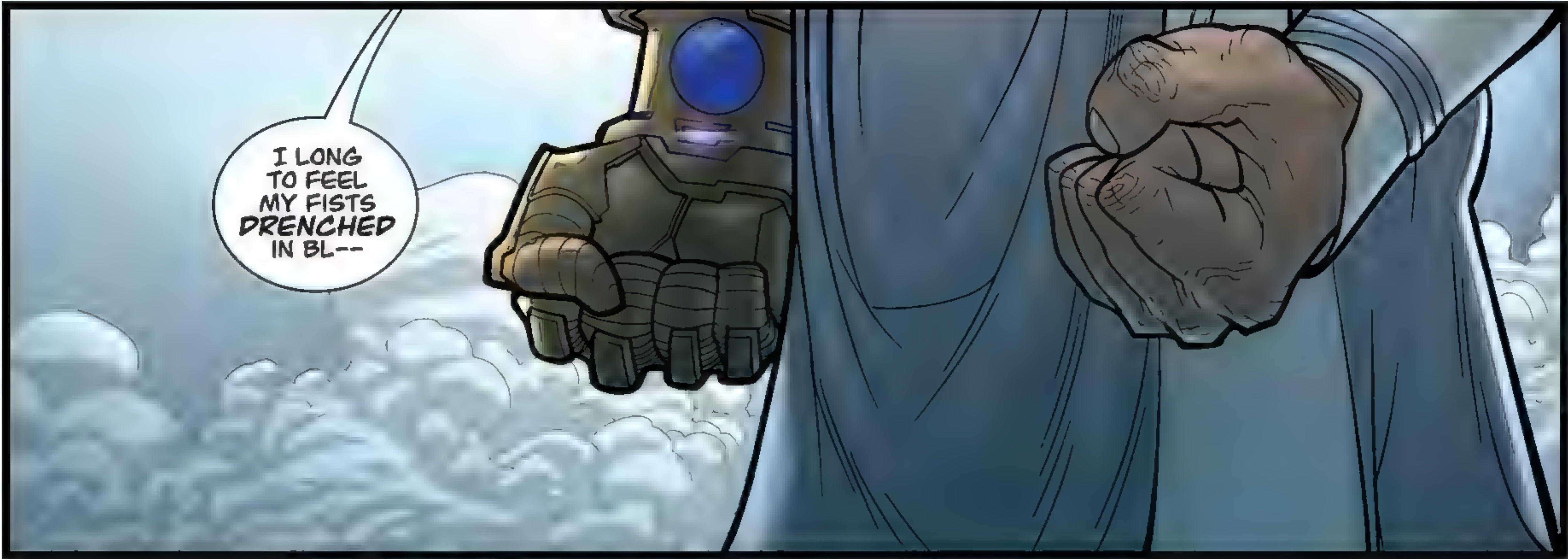


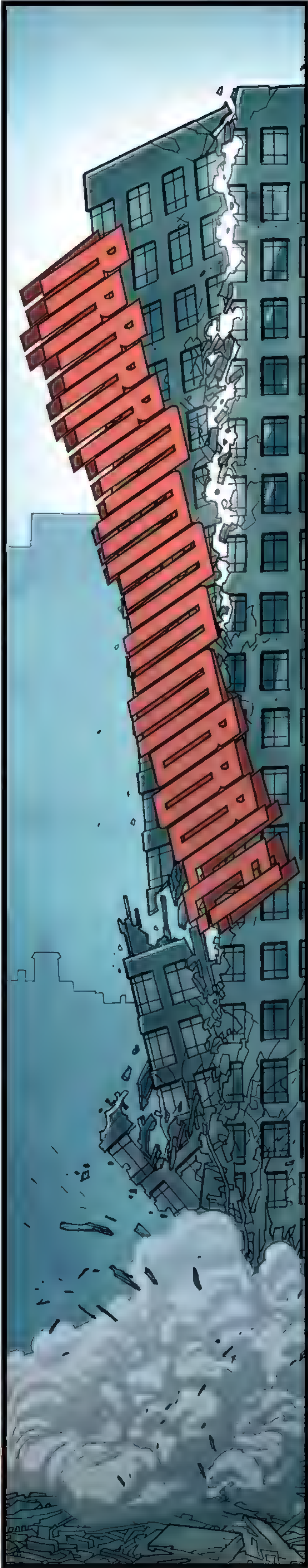
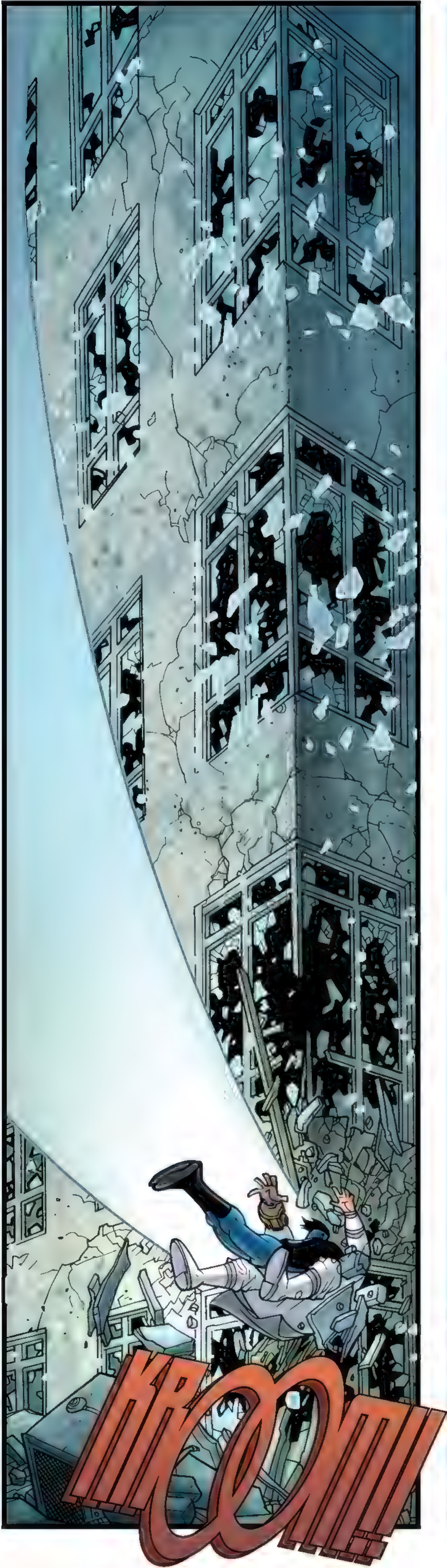
RIGHT NOW, ANISSA WOULD BE TELLING YOU ABOUT HOW THE VILTRUM EMPIRE WOULD TURN THIS PLANET INTO A UTOPIA. SHE'D TELL YOU YOU'RE A FOOL TO TRY AND PREVENT THIS--THAT WE WOULD BE HELPING THE PEOPLE YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE PROTECTING FROM US.

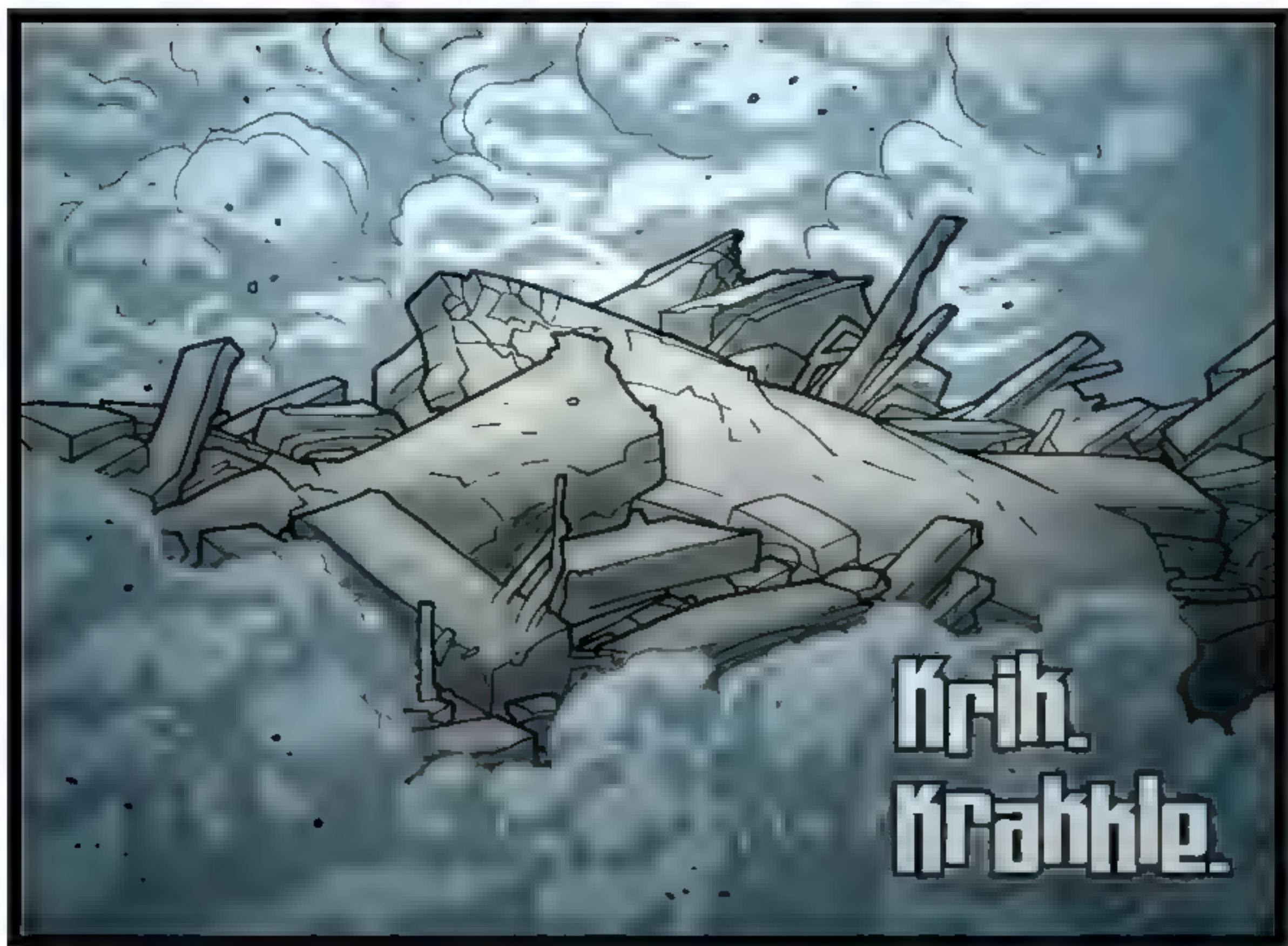
I WILL NOT TELL YOU ANY SUCH THING.

THE TRUTH IS, I WANT YOU TO RESIST. I'M NOT HERE BECAUSE I WANT TO SPREAD THE VILTRUM EMPIRE. I'M NOT HERE BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN ONE CAUSE OR THE OTHER, OR THAT I'M FULFILLING SOME KIND OF HONORABLE DUTY.

I'M HERE BECAUSE I ENJOY THIS.

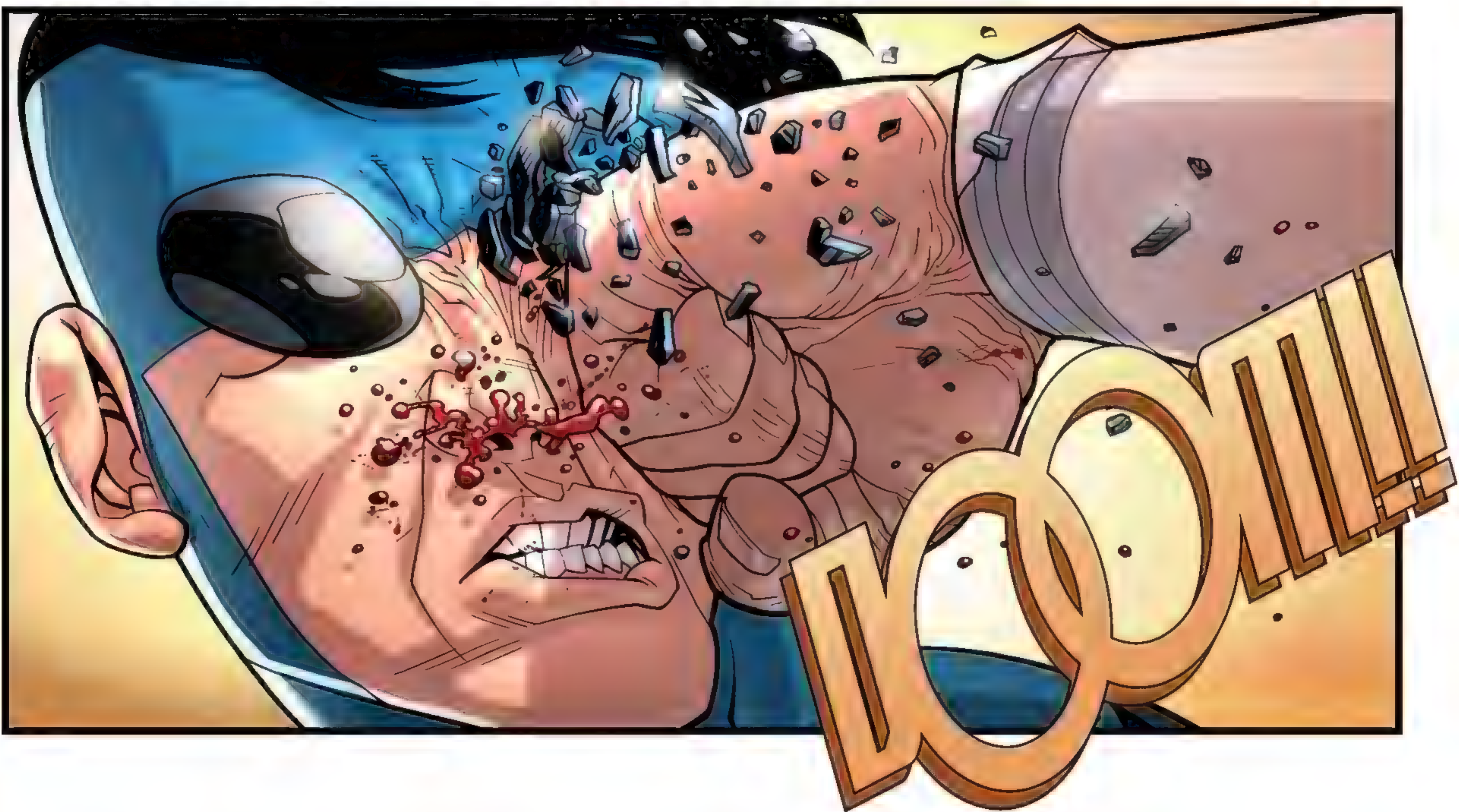
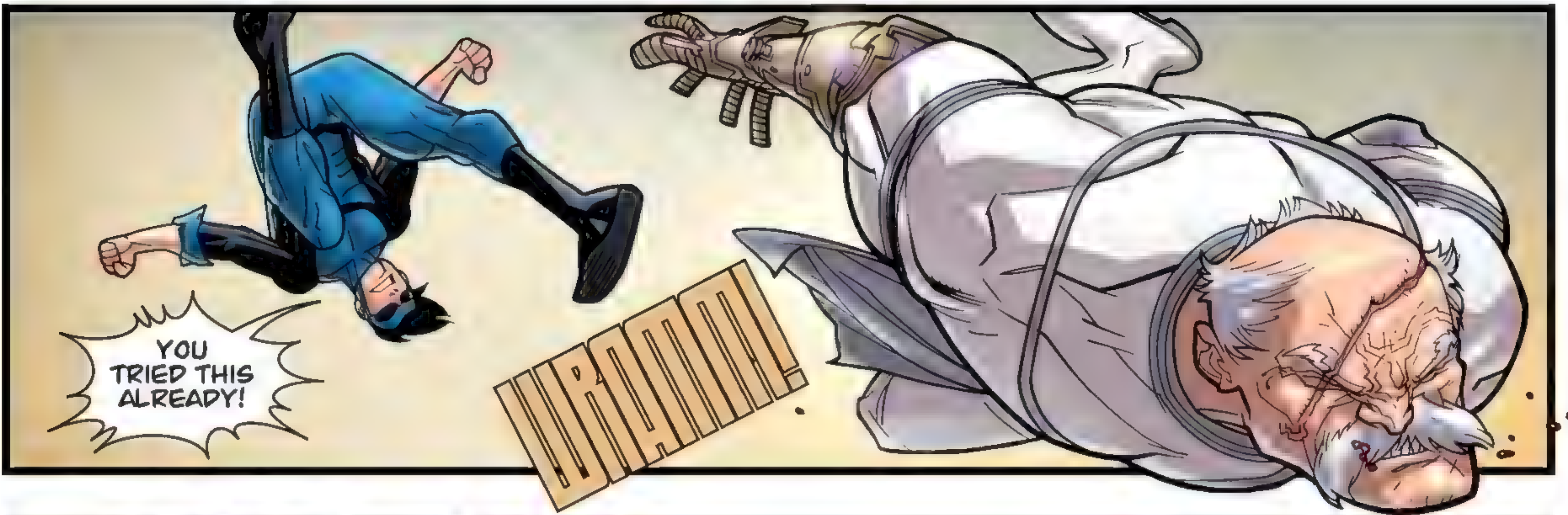


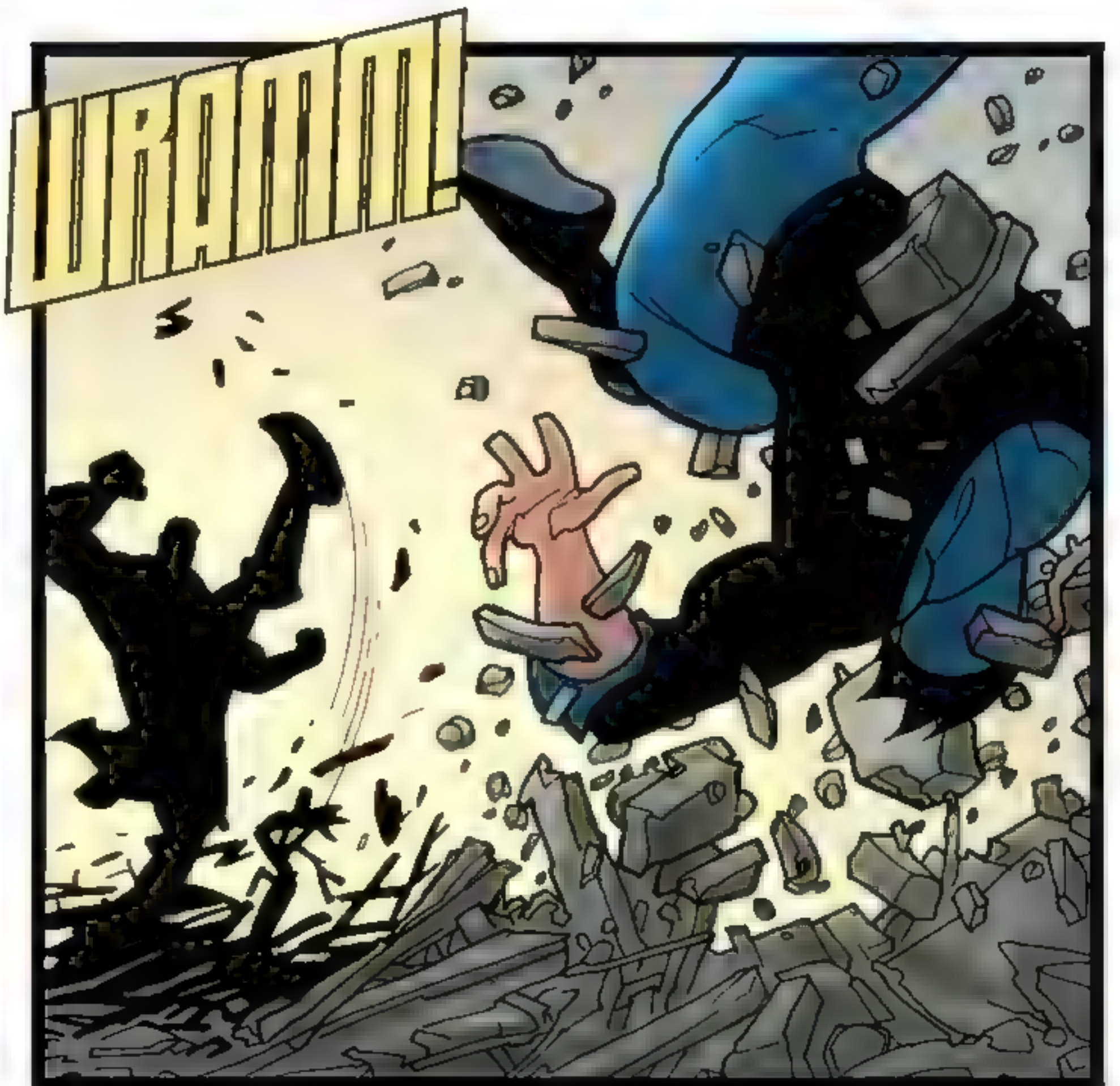
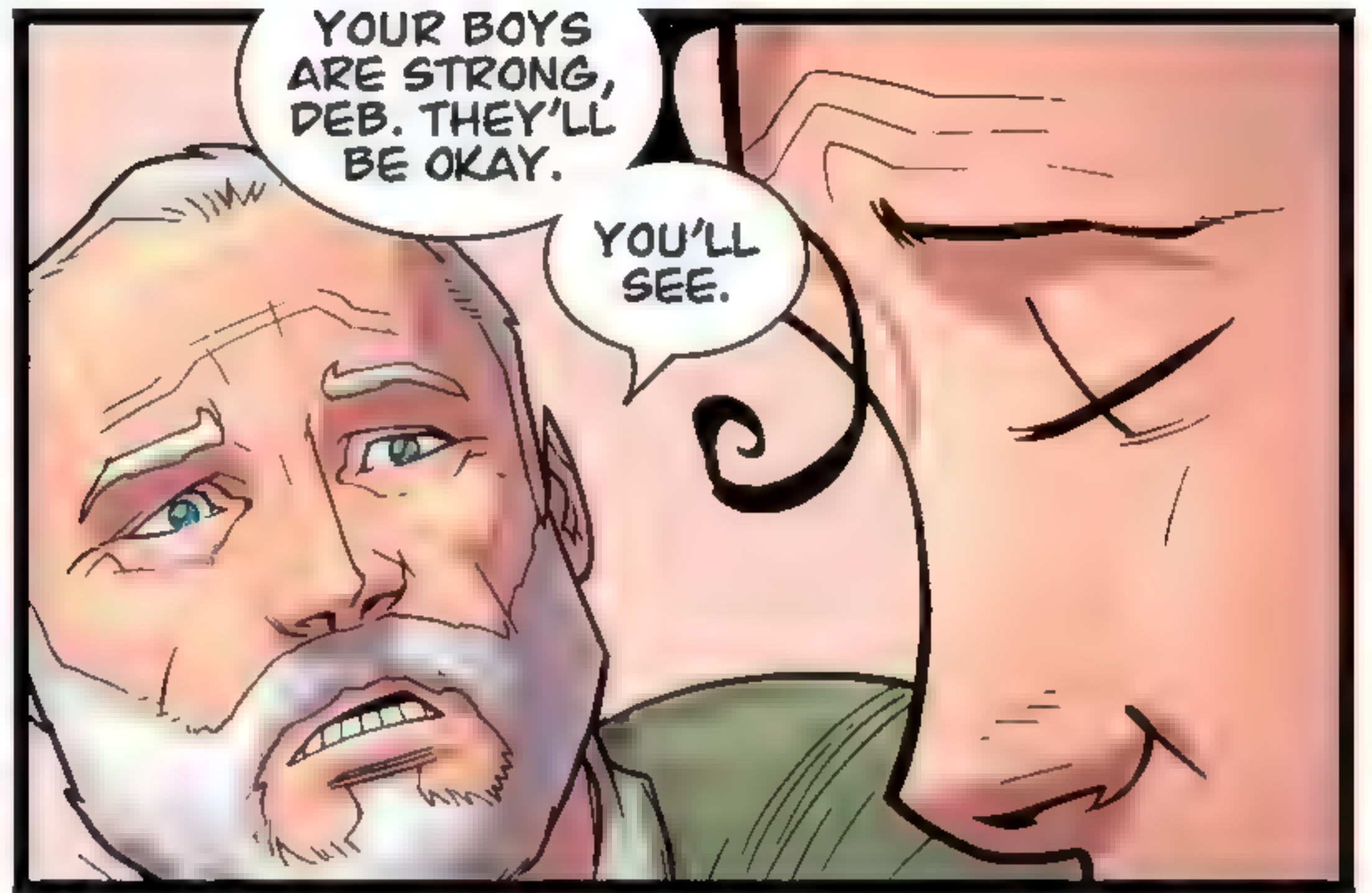


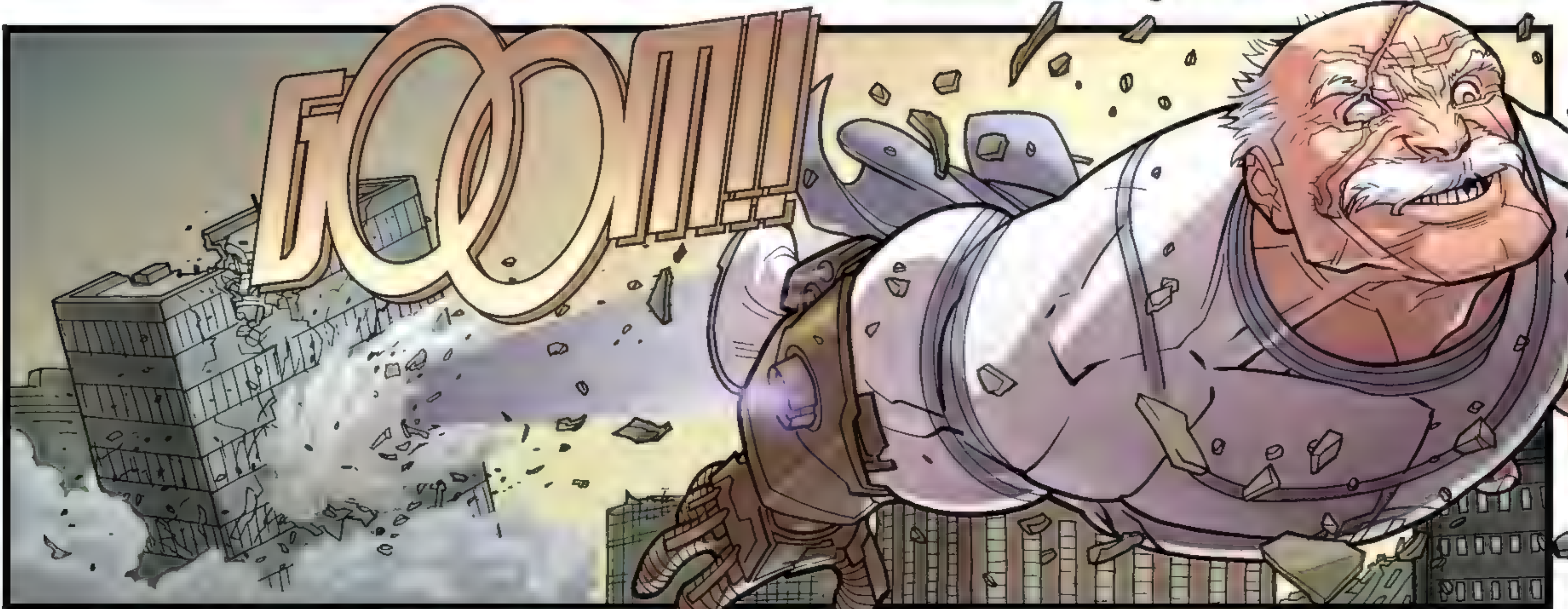
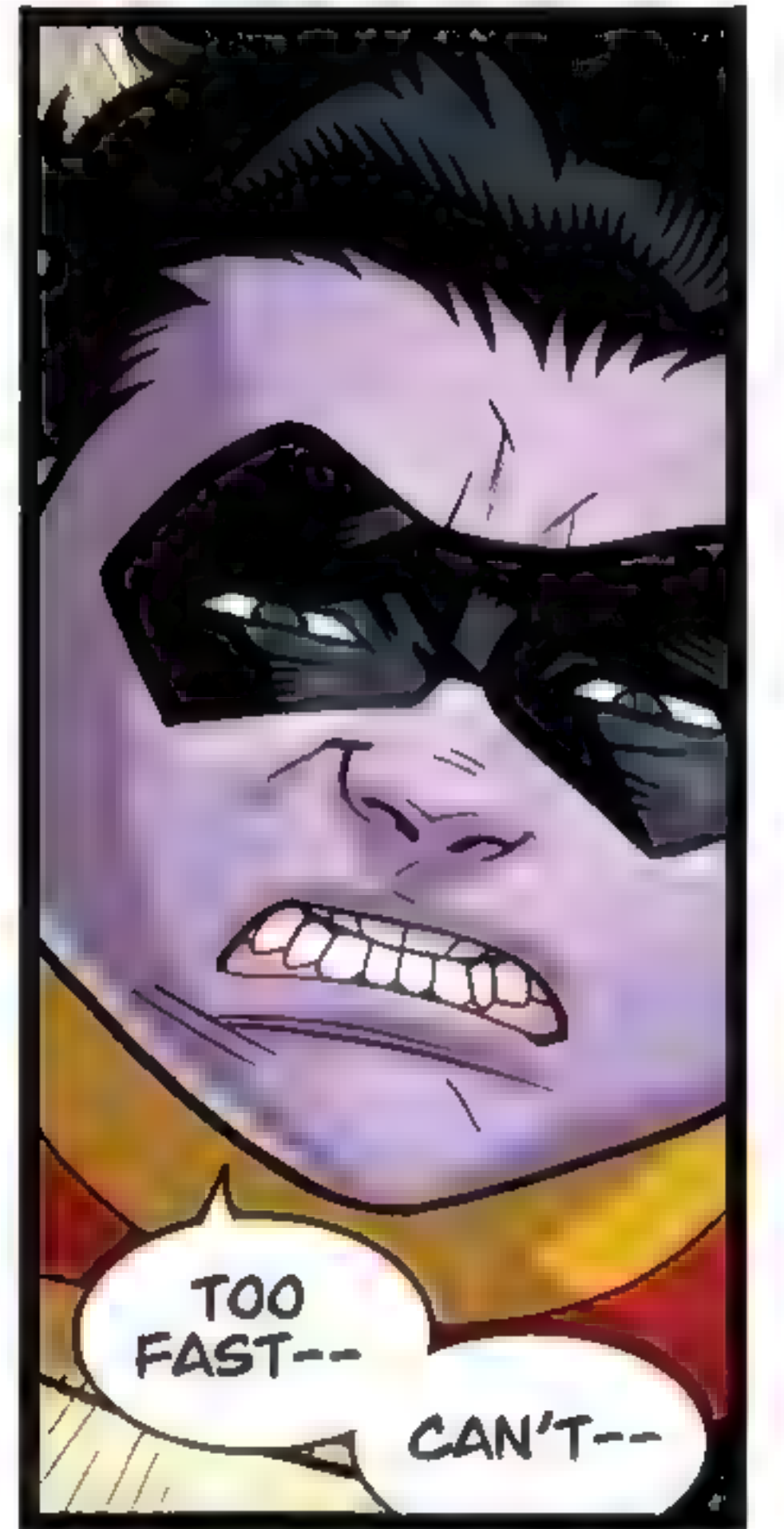


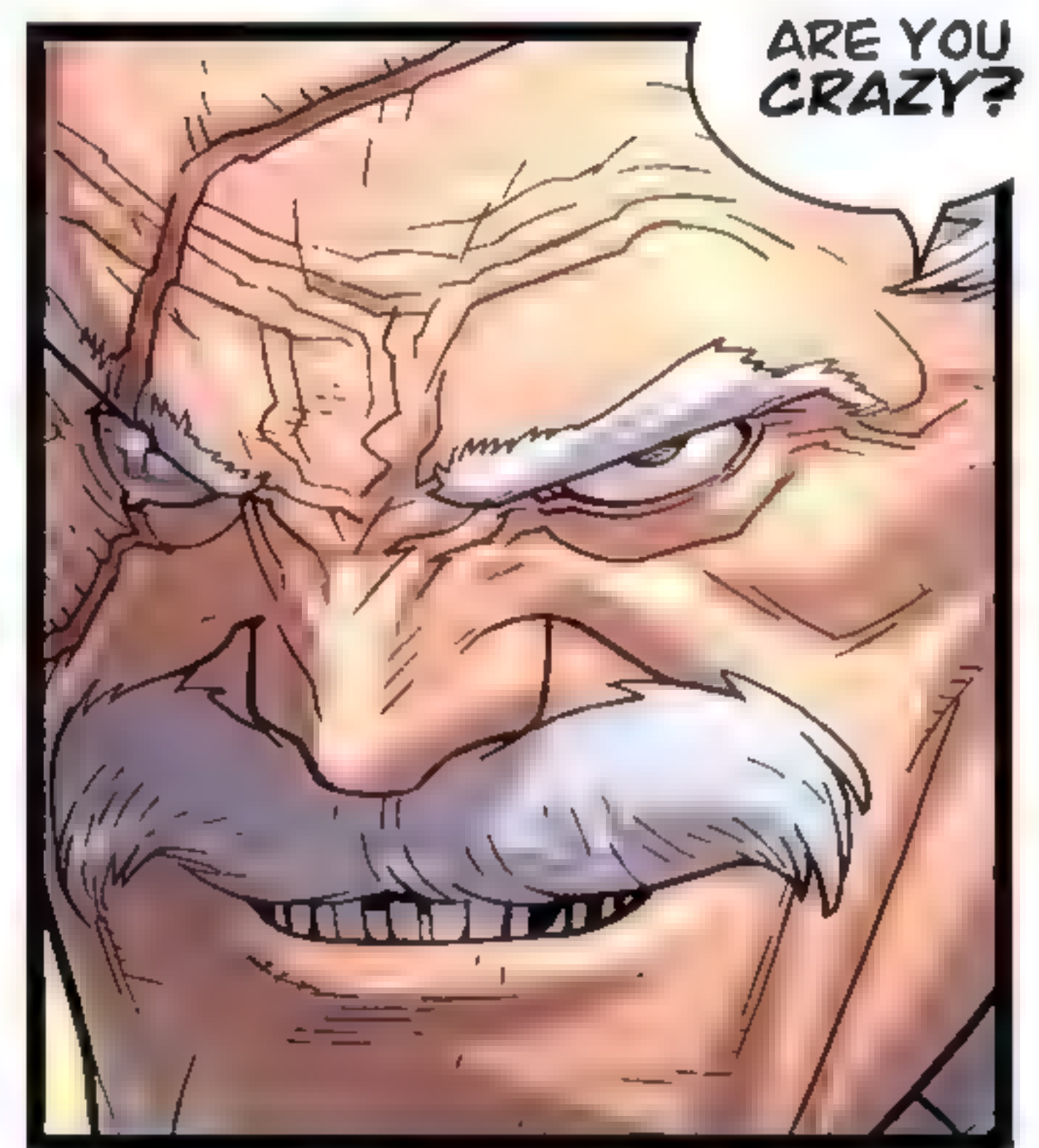
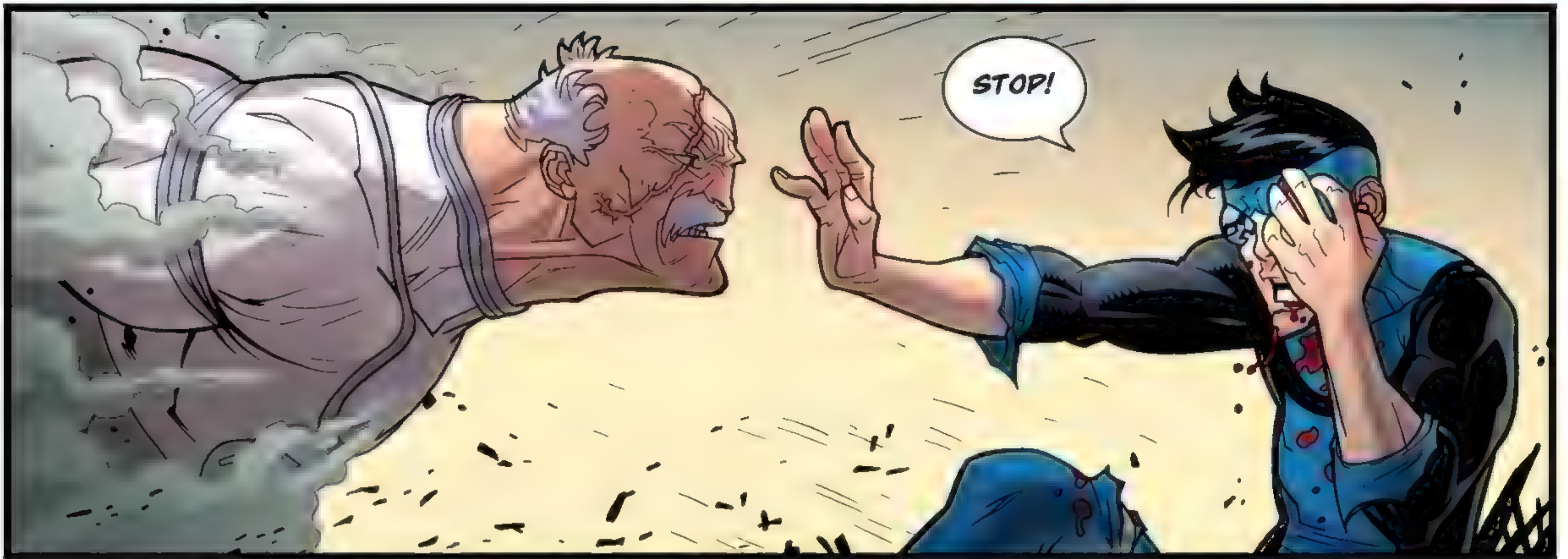


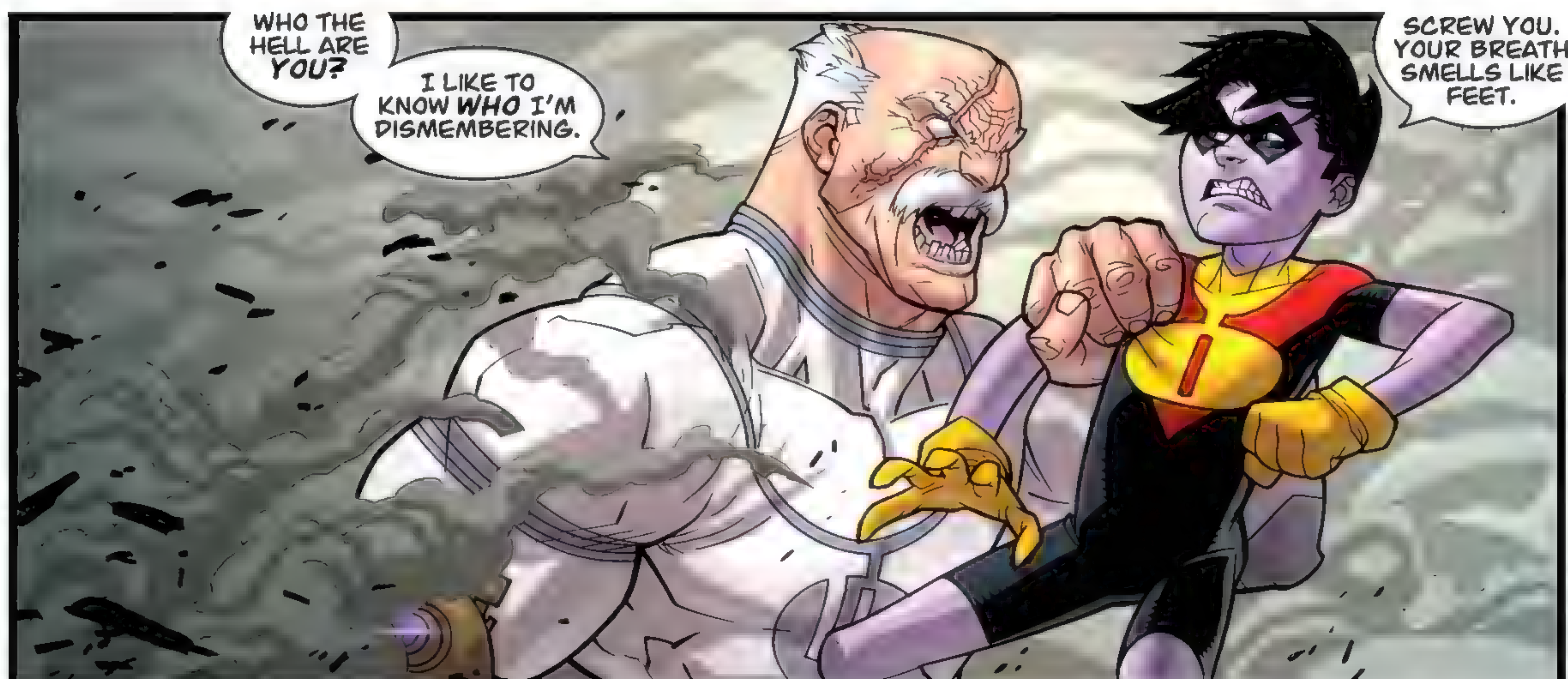


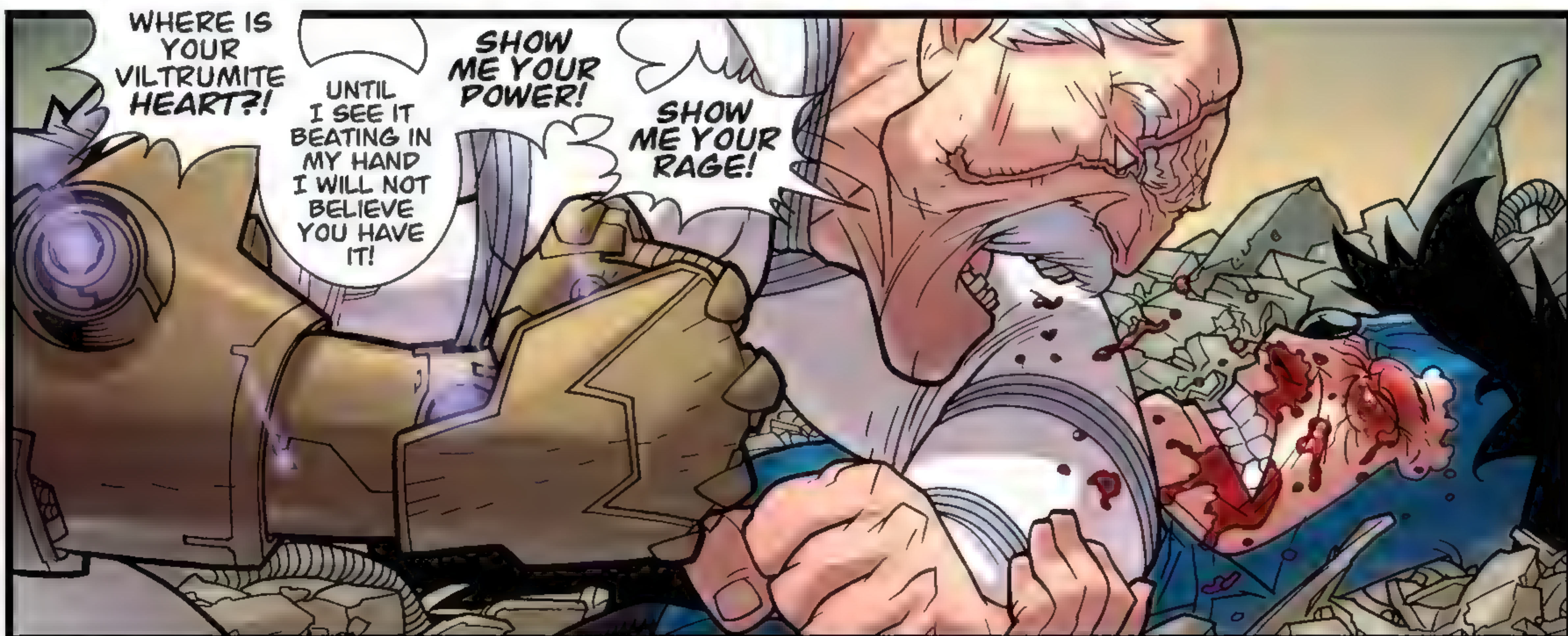
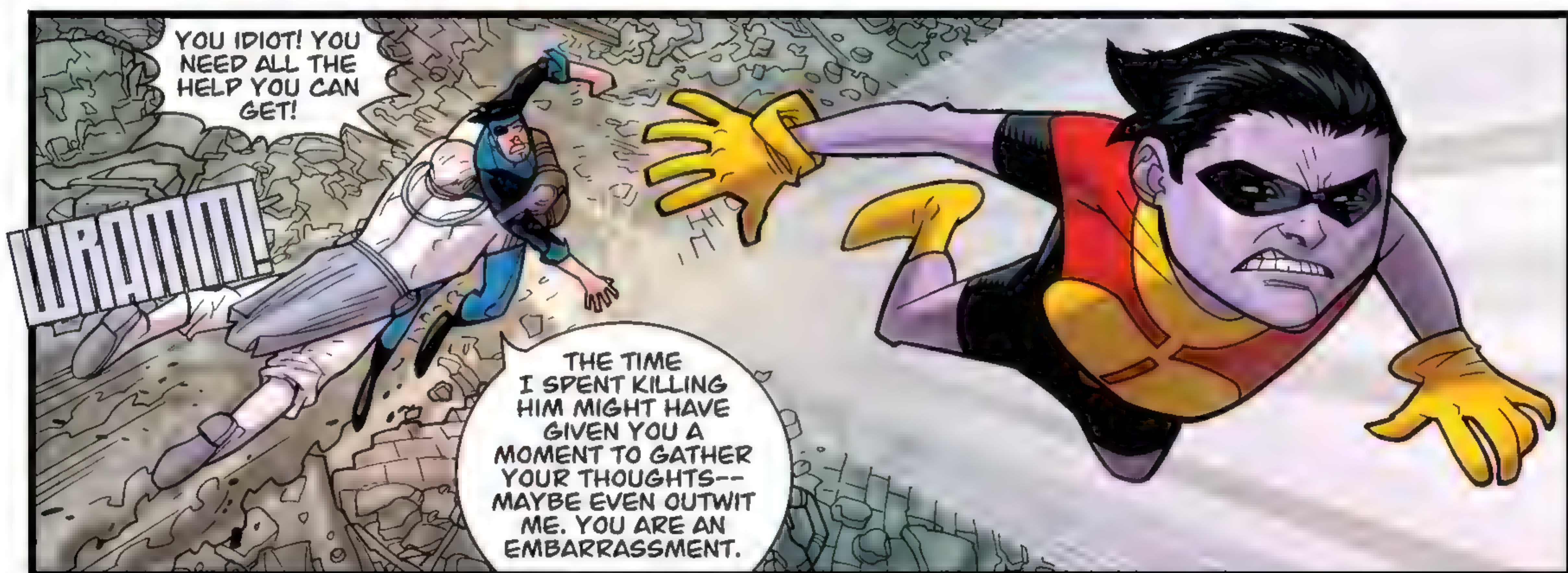


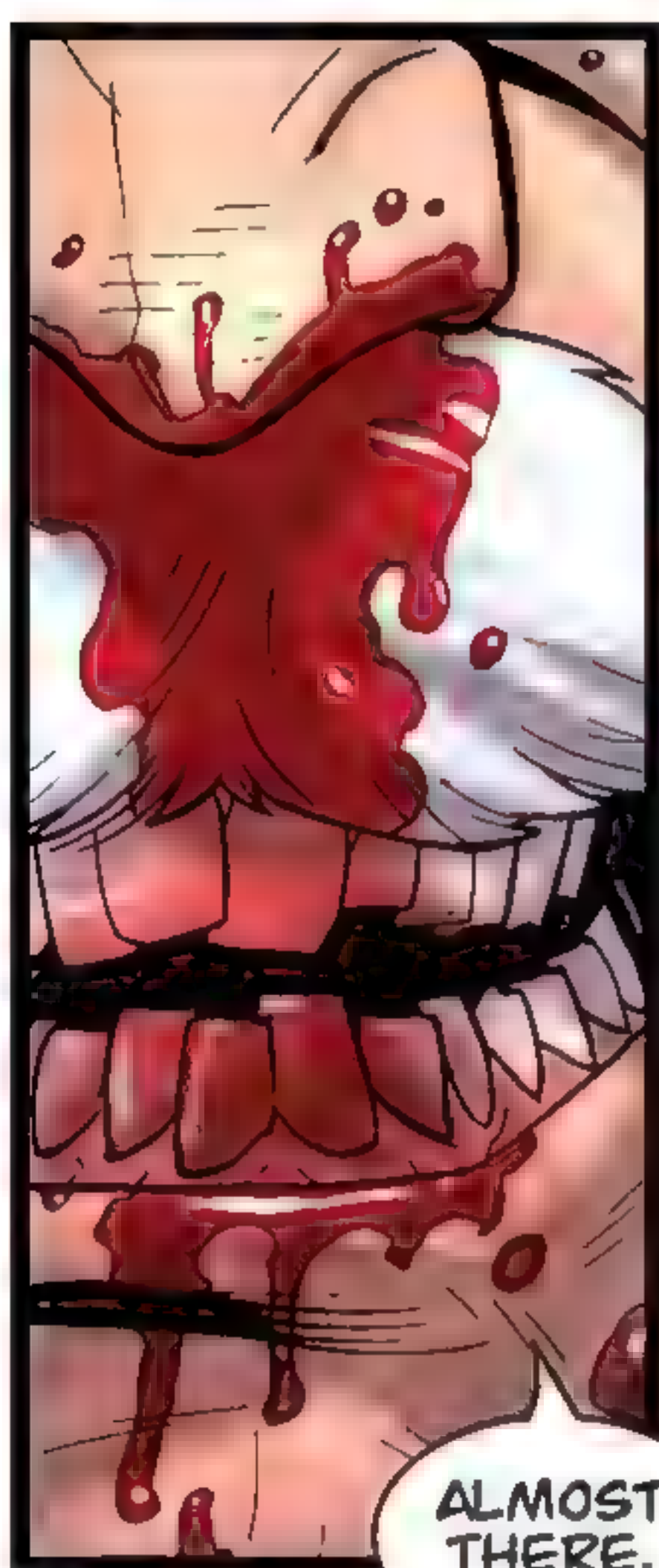
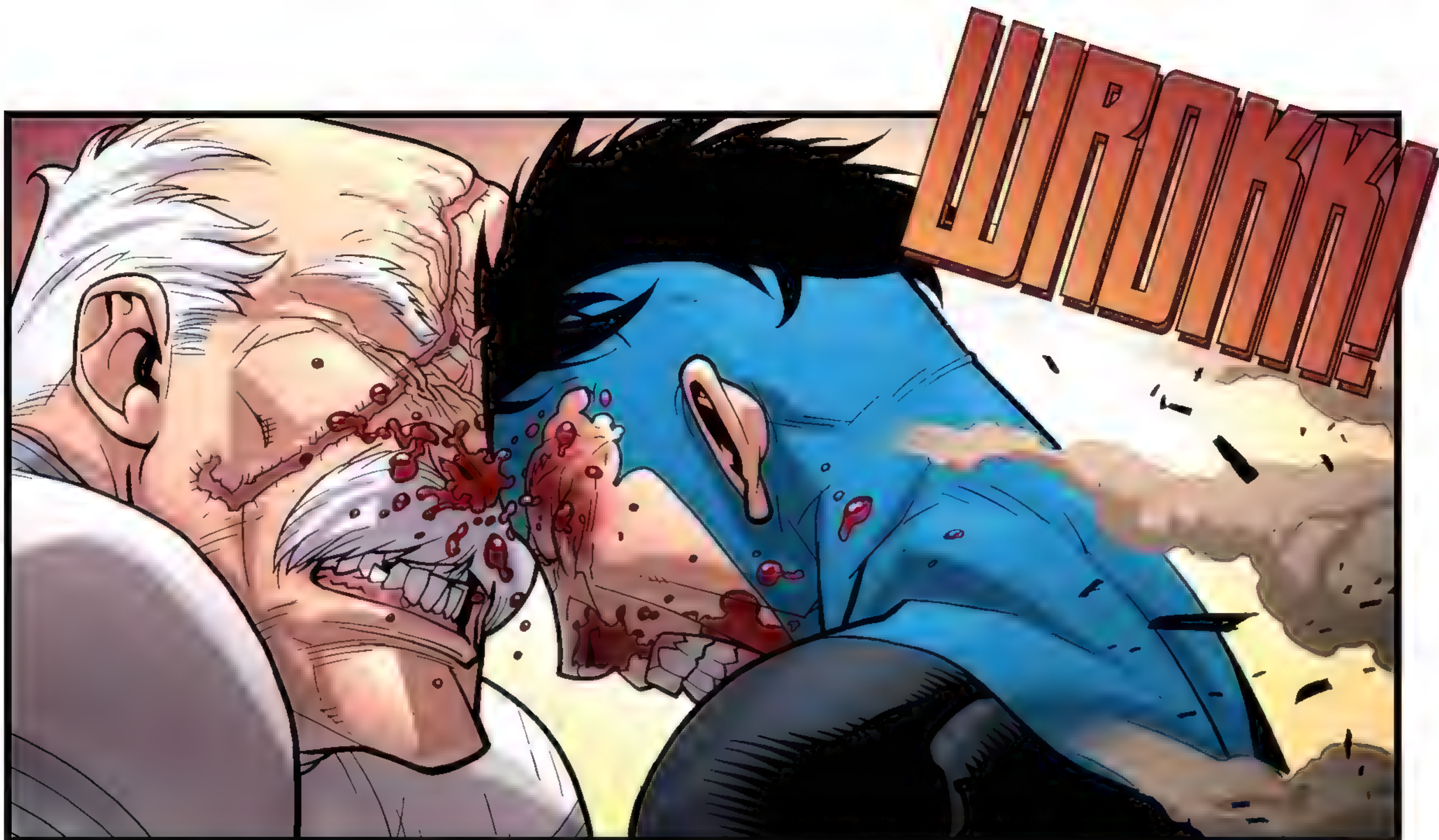




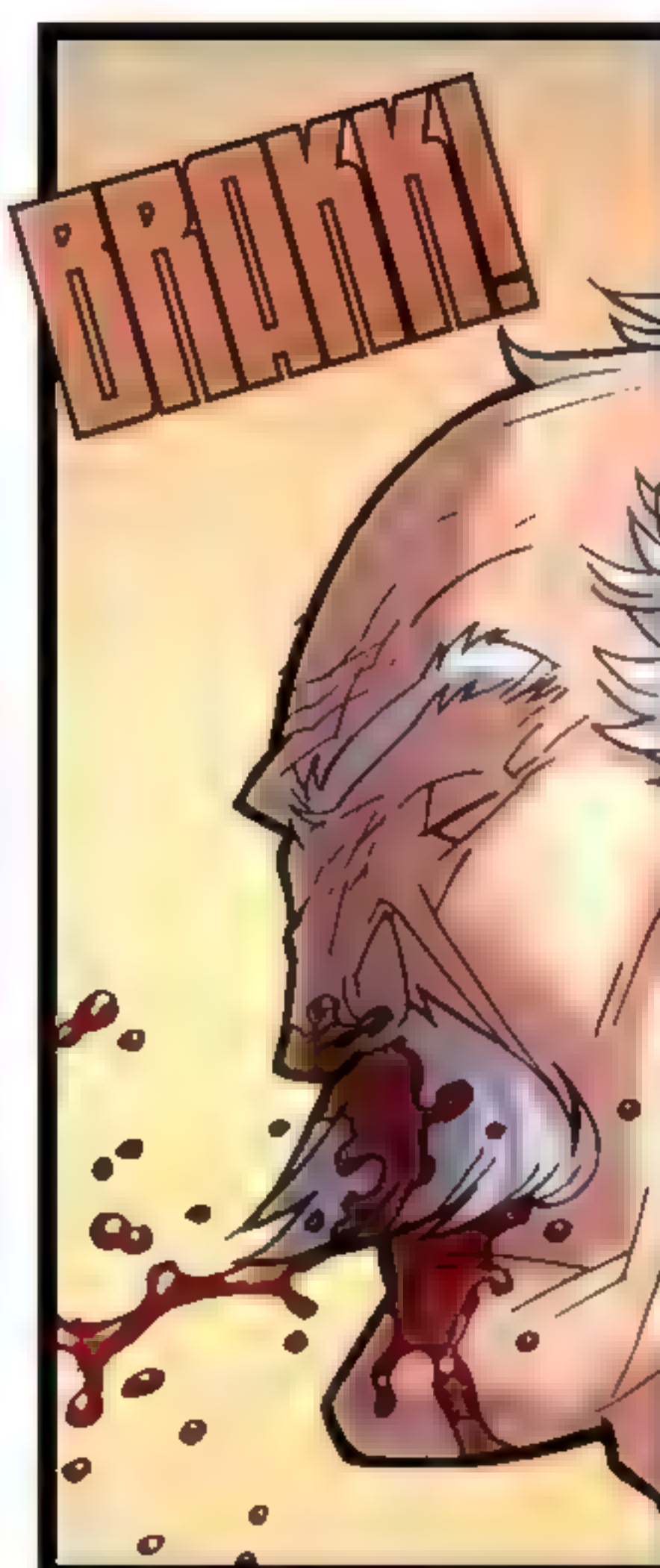
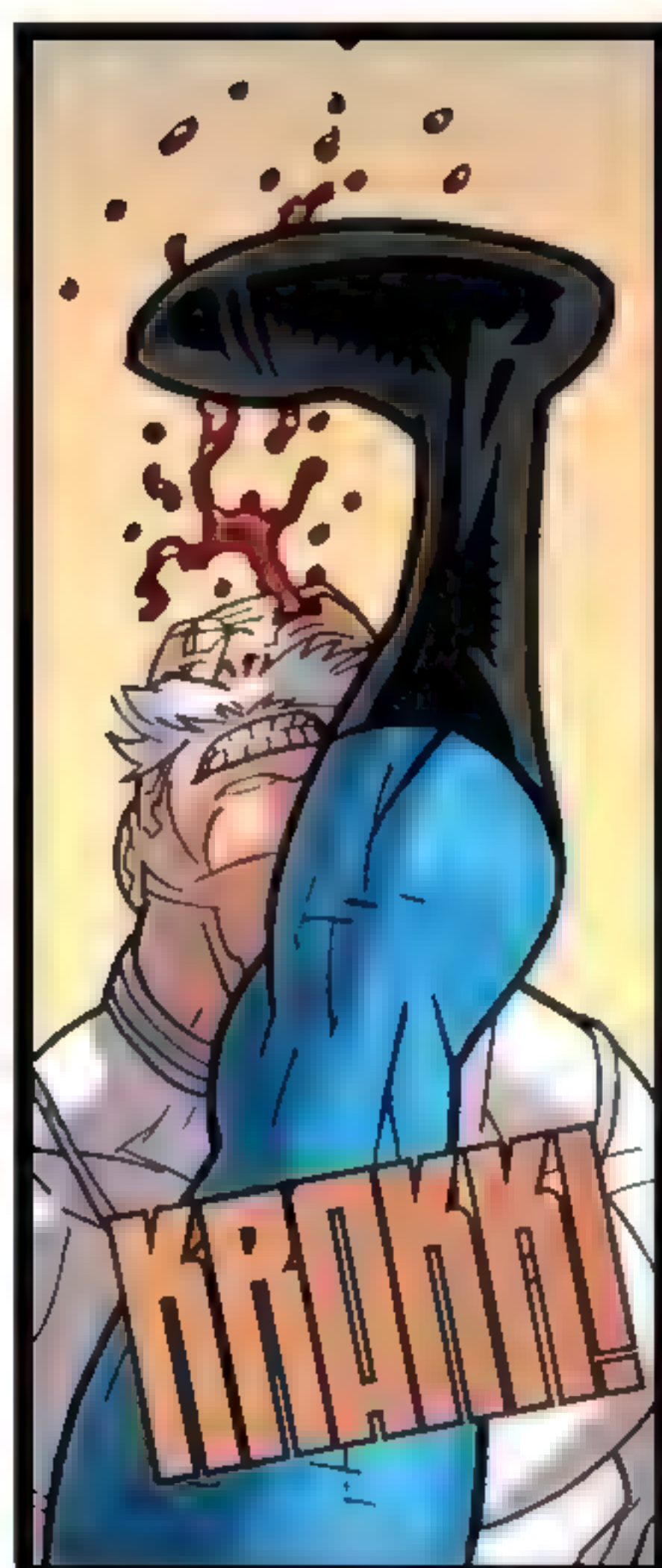


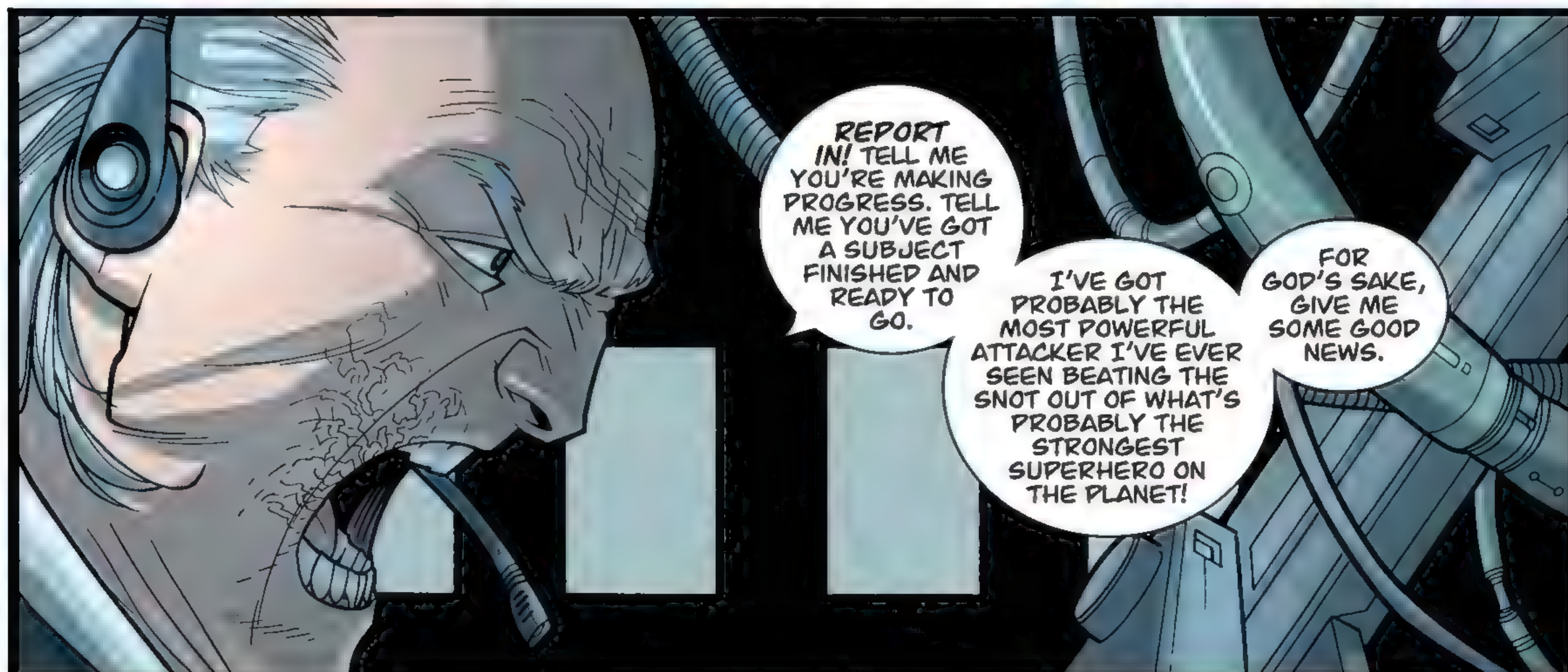
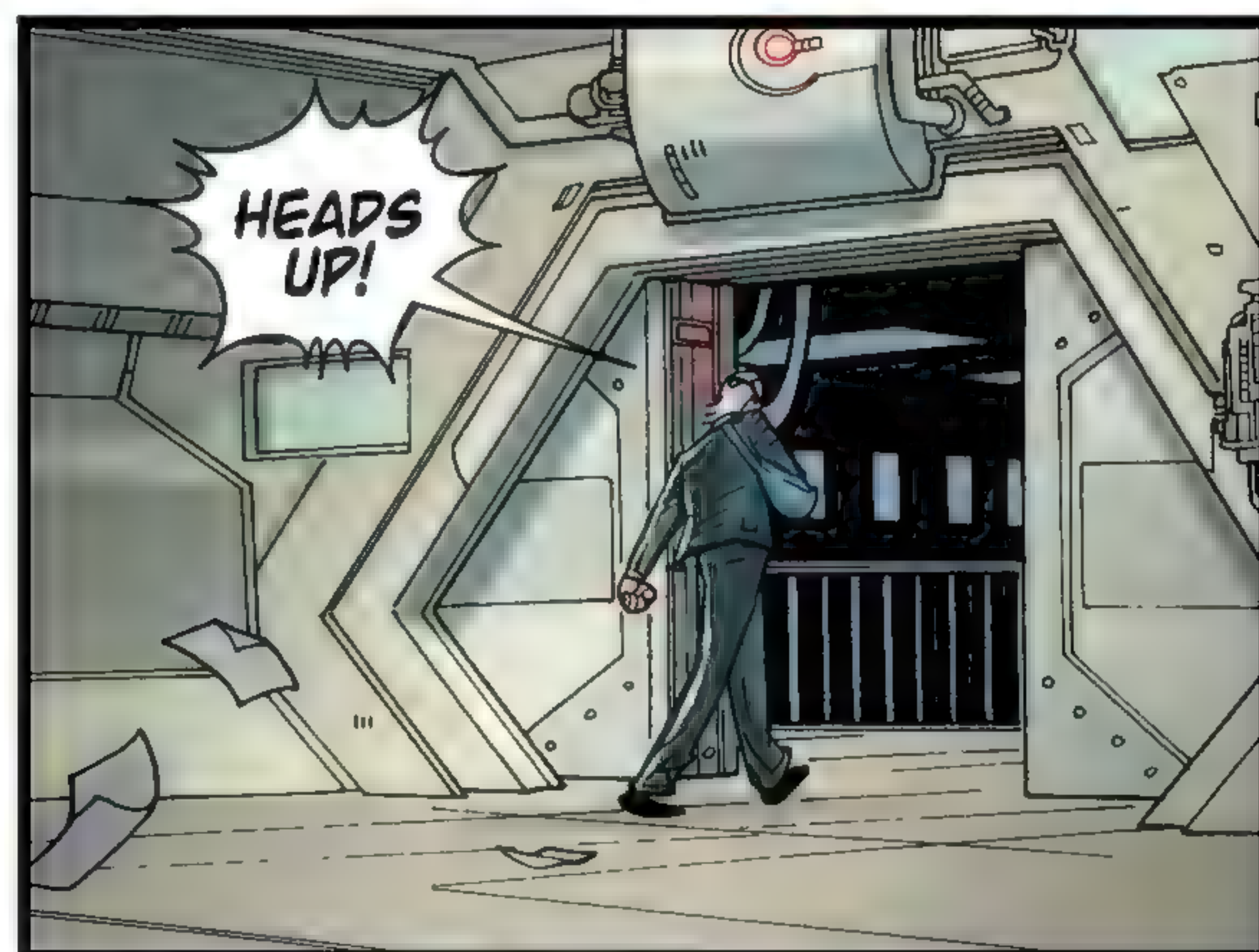
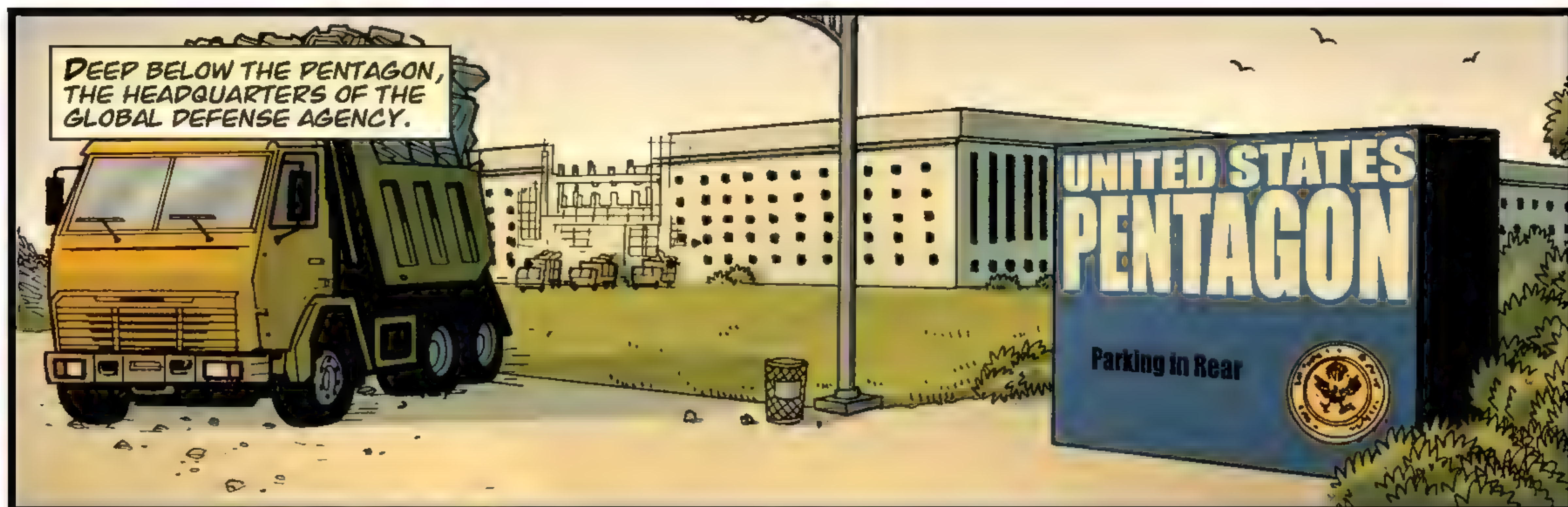






ALMOST THERE.



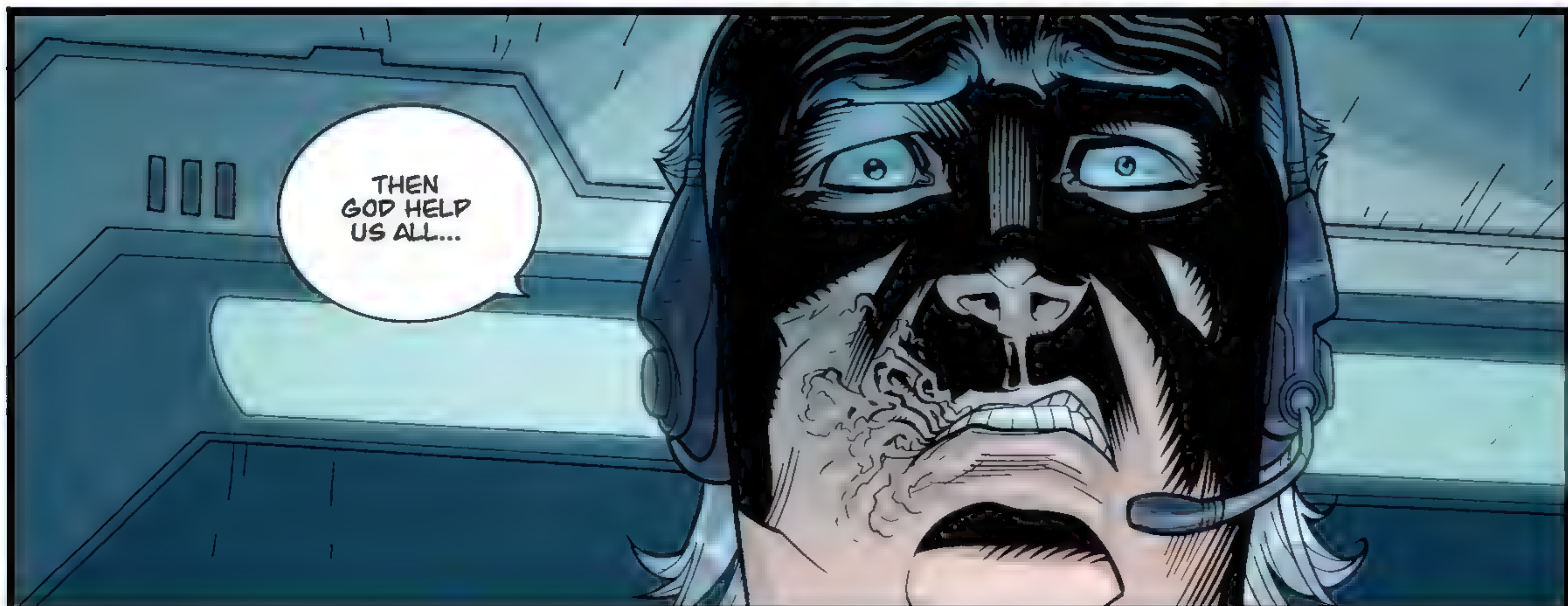




I'M AFRAID I CAN'T HELP YOU THERE. IT WOULD TAKE MY TEAM AND I TWO WEEKS OF NON-STOP WORK JUST TO GET SO MUCH AS ONE OF THESE ALTERNATE DIMENSION INVINCIBLES UP AND RUNNING.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW DENSE THEIR MUSCLE TISSUE IS--IT'S LIKE CUTTING THROUGH ROCK.

THERE'S SIMPLY NOTHING I CAN DO TO SPEED THINGS ALONG.

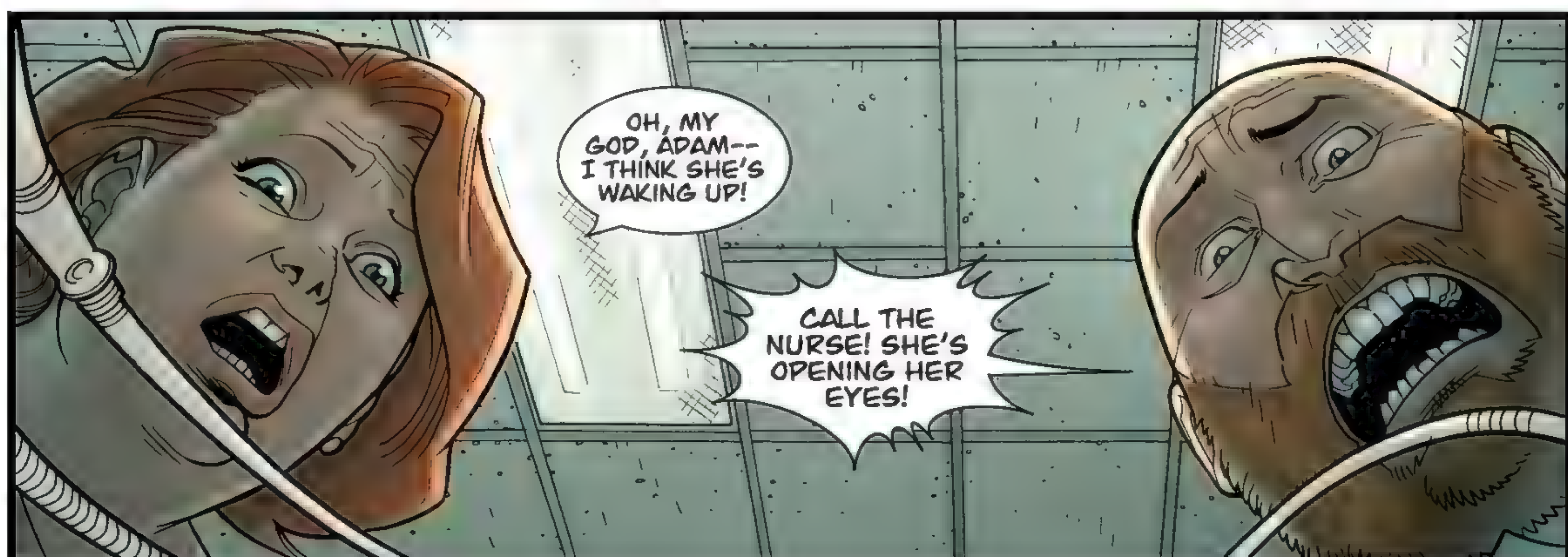
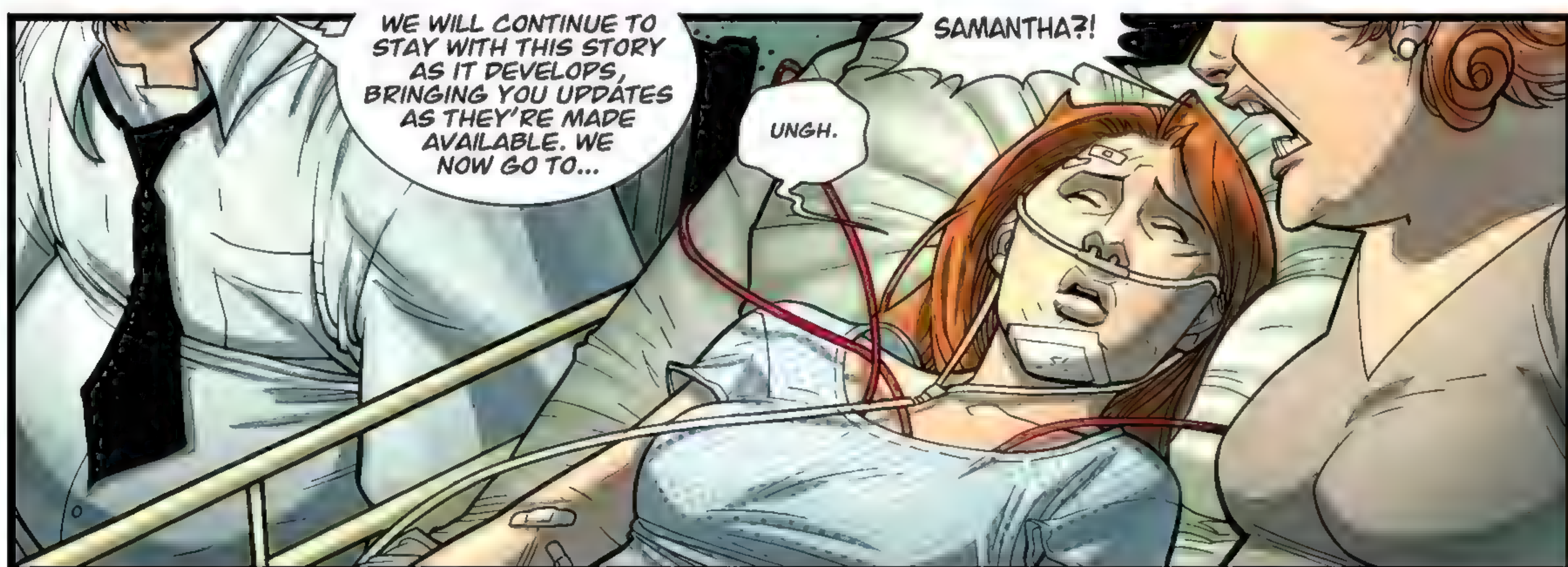
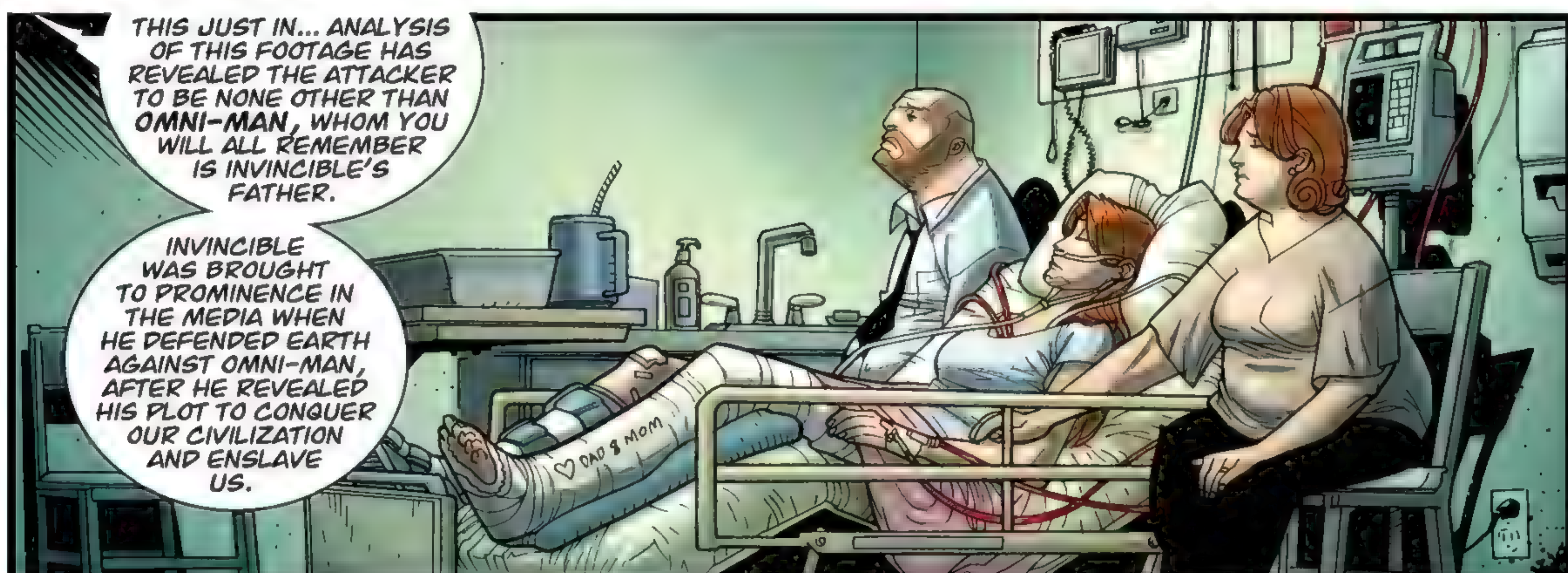
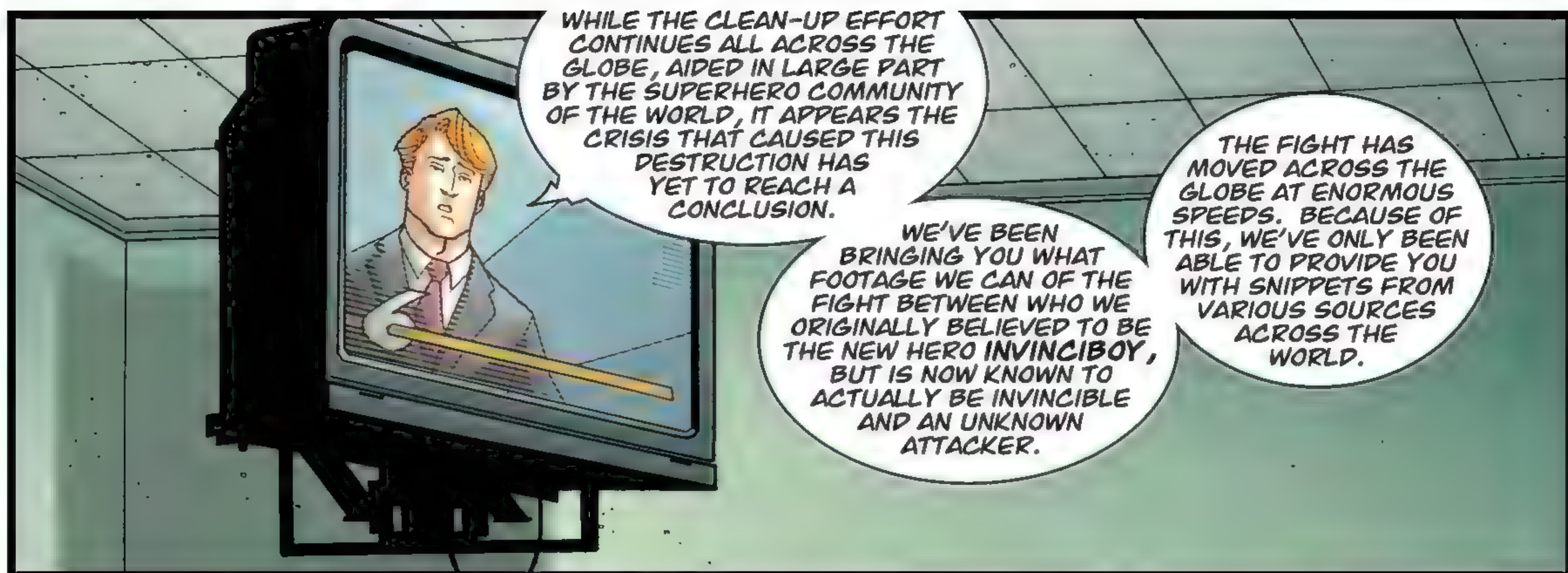


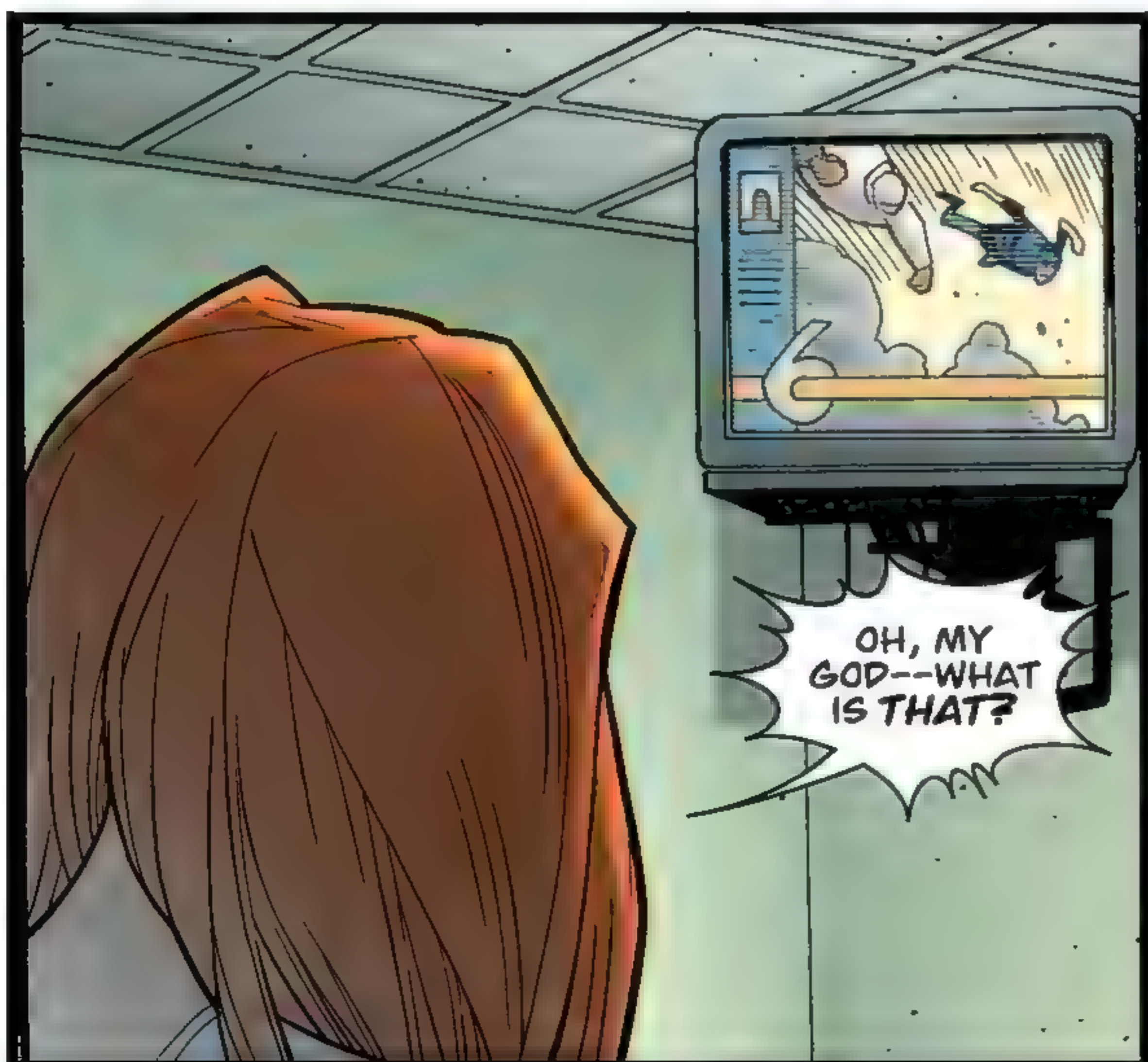
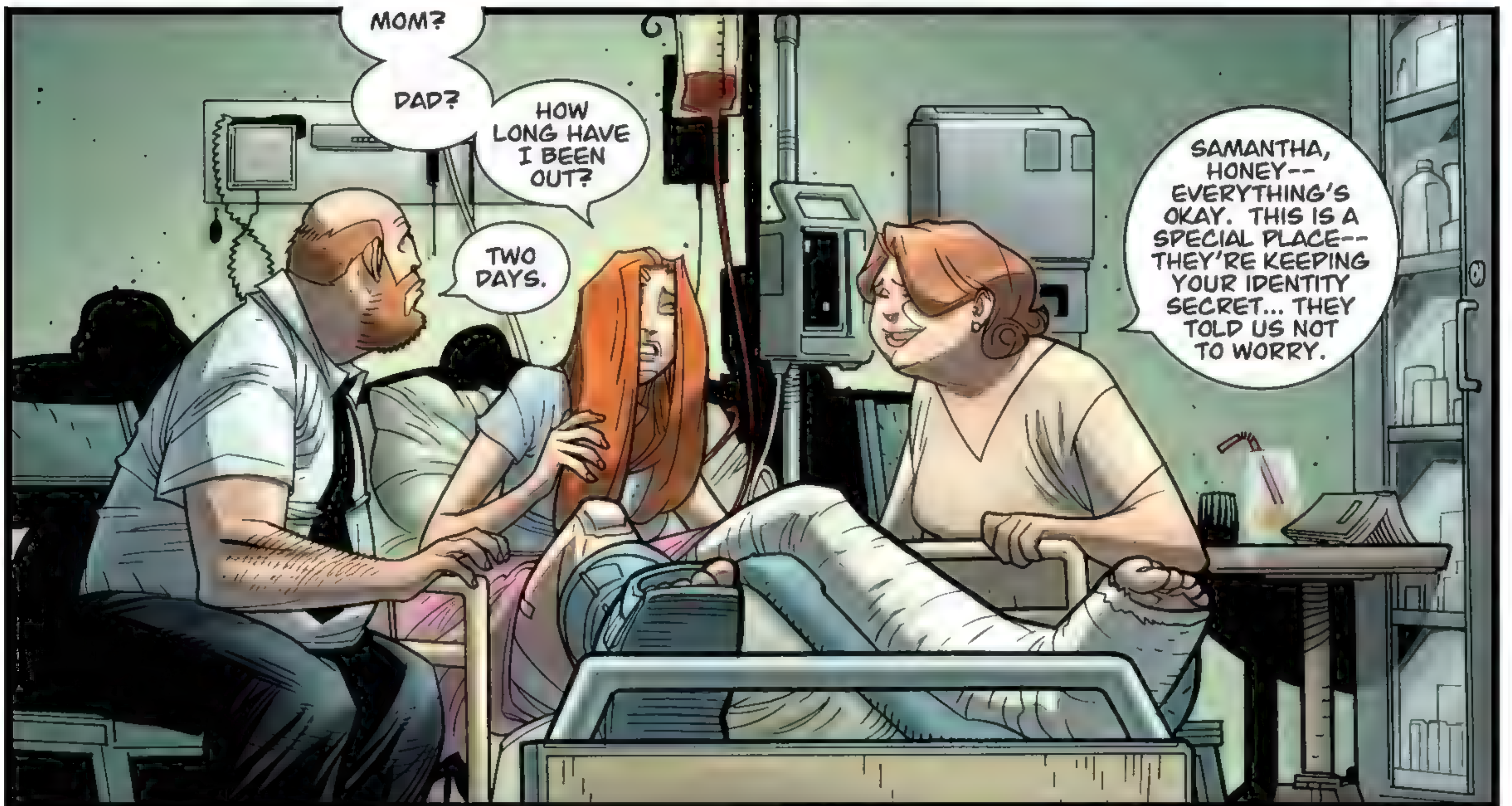
THEN GOD HELP US ALL....

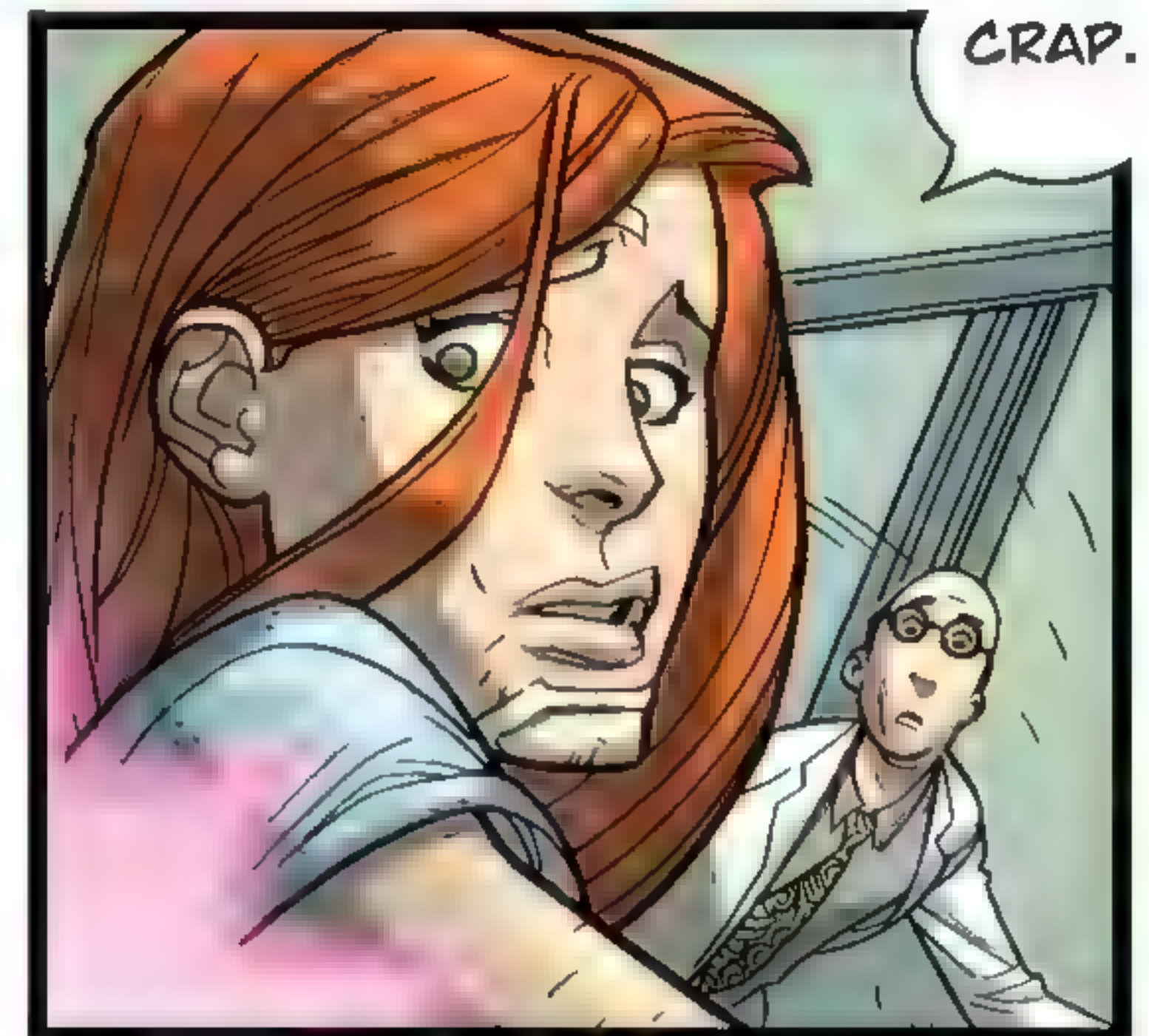


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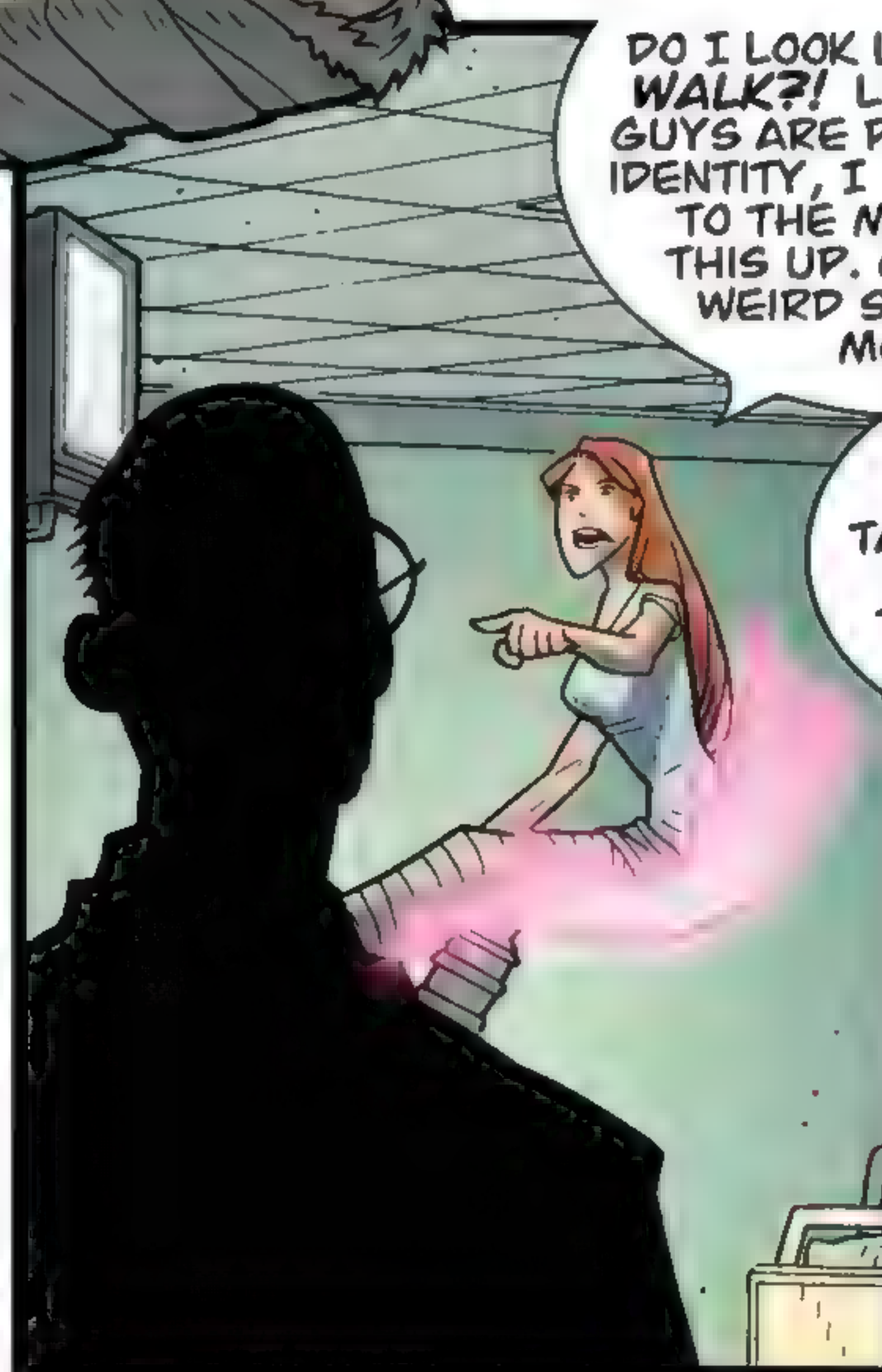








YOU CAN'T BE DOING THIS--
YOUR INJURIES, YOU COULD
MAKE THEM WORSE. THERE
ARE TESTS--YOU CAN'T
EVEN WALK!



DO I LOOK LIKE I NEED TO
WALK?! LISTEN--IF YOU
GUYS ARE PROTECTING MY
IDENTITY, I NEED TO SPEAK
TO THE MAN WHO SET
THIS UP. GRAY HAIR--
WEIRD SCAR ON HIS
MOUTH.

YOU KNOW
WHO I'M
TALKING ABOUT.
GET HIM ON
THE PHONE--
NOW!



I'LL--

I'LL
SEE WHAT
I CAN
DO.

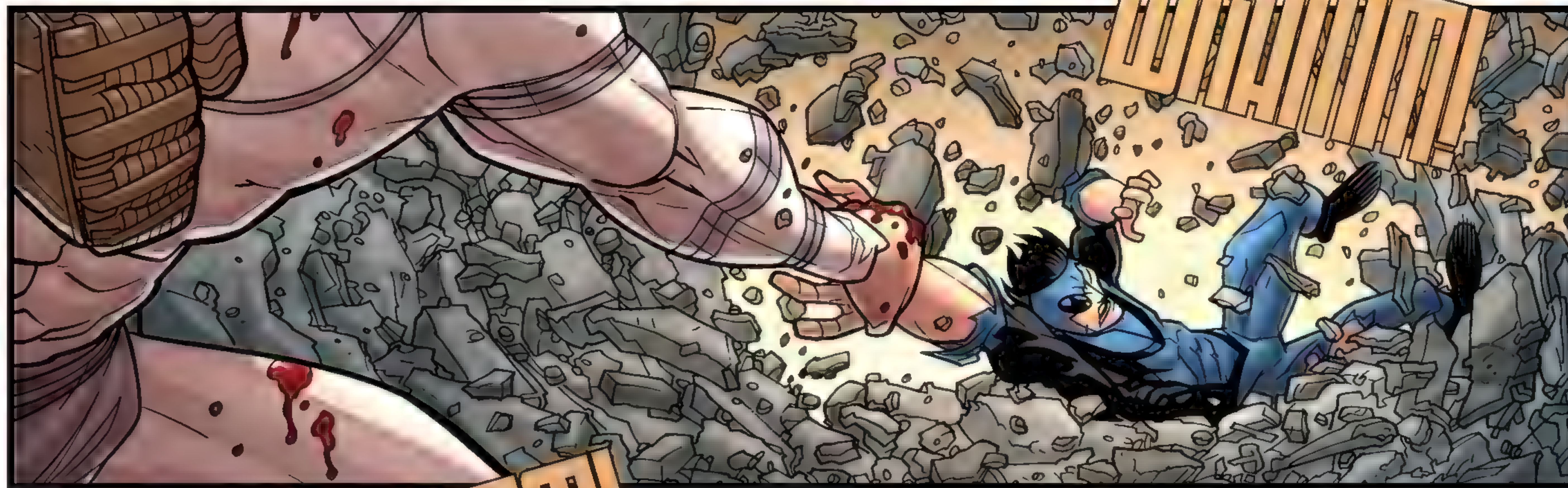


I'M
COMING,
MARK.



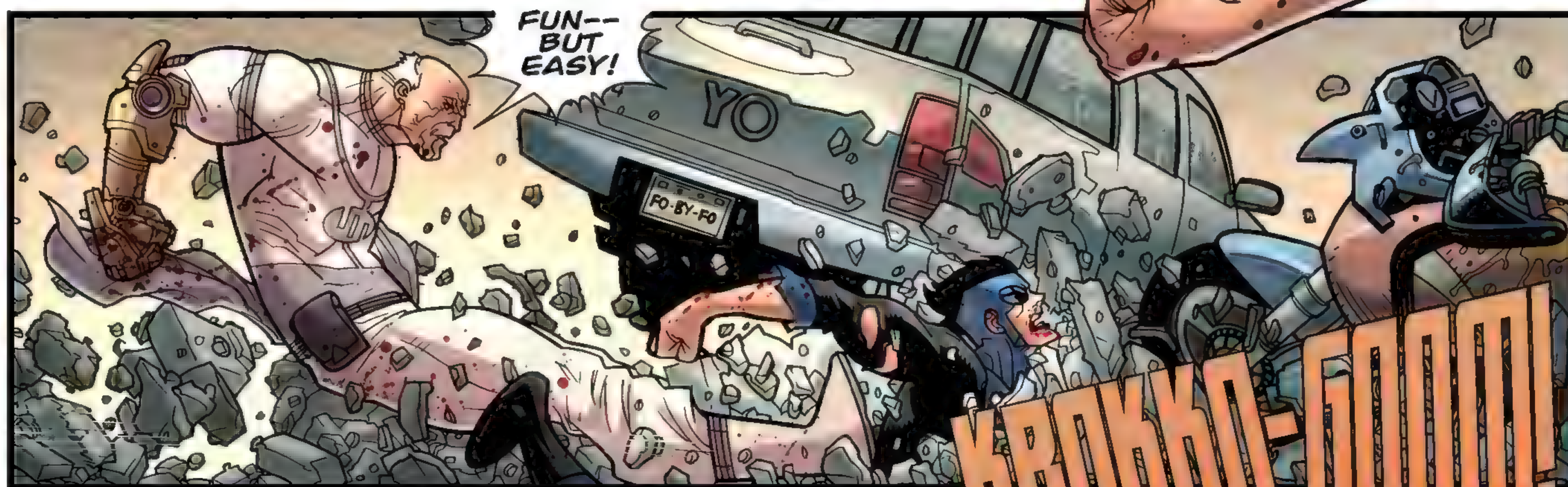
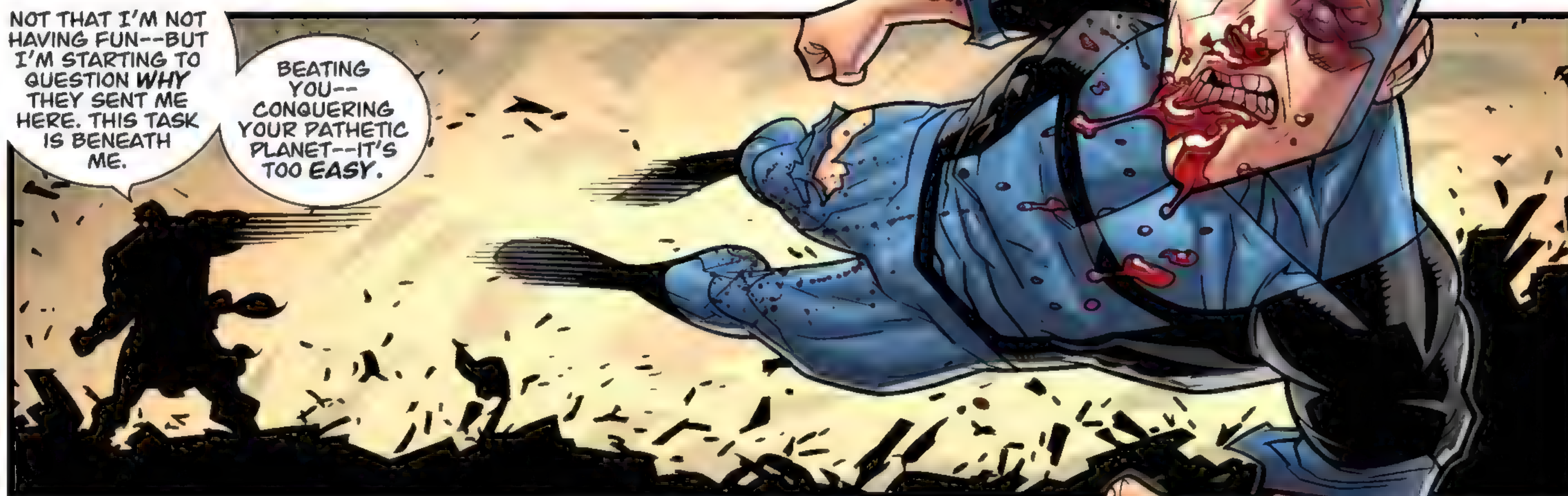
UP UNTIL NOW, I'VE BEEN PLAYING WITH YOU-- GETTING TO KNOW THE NEW TOY.

I TIRE OF THAT GAME.



NOT THAT I'M NOT HAVING FUN--BUT I'M STARTING TO QUESTION WHY THEY SENT ME HERE. THIS TASK IS BENEATH ME.

BEATING YOU-- CONQUERING YOUR PATHETIC PLANET--IT'S TOO EASY.



FUN-- BUT EASY!



I'VE MET YOUR FATHER, YOU KNOW. NEVER SPENT MUCH TIME WITH HIM--BUT I KNEW HIM WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER. HE SHOWED SO MUCH PROMISE.

NOW HE'S DEAD. HEARD HIS EXECUTION WAS FINALLY ORDERED JUST BEFORE I WAS SENT HERE.

SAD REALLY-- I'D LOVE TO SEE THE LOOK ON HIS FACE AFTER I TOLD HIM I'VE KILLED YOU.

MY... FATHER...?



EAT ONE,
YOU OLD
SACK OF
TURDS!

WIRROKKKI!



C'MON--
HURRY!

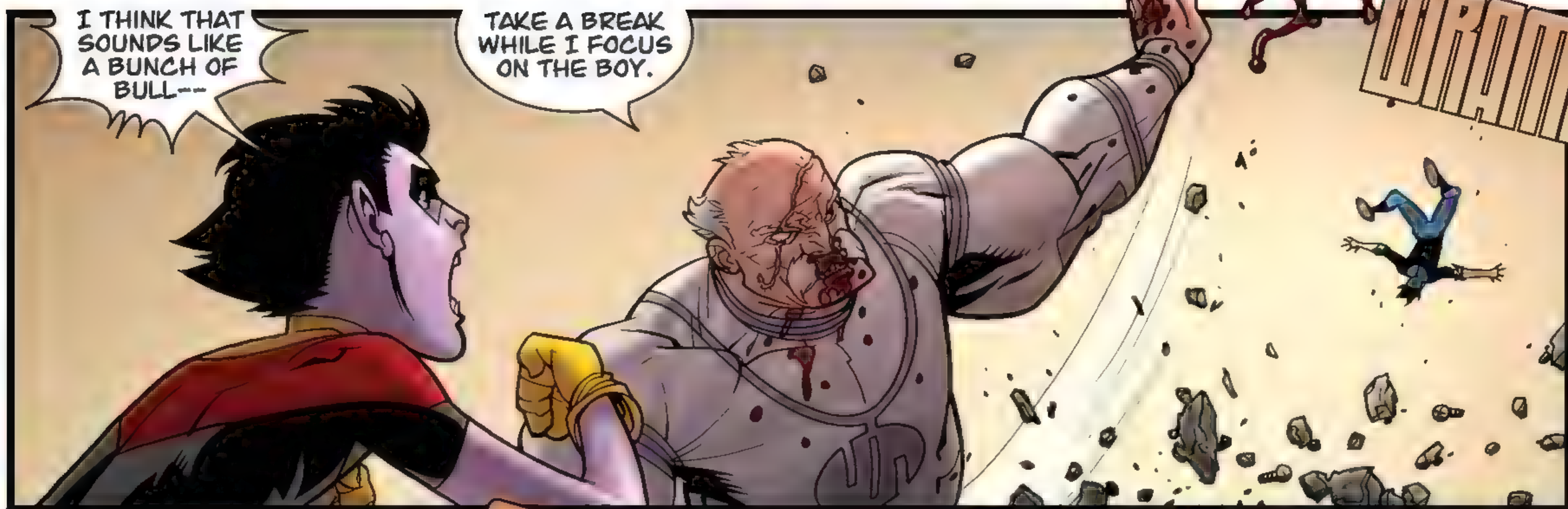
WHY DID
YOU COME BACK?
HE'LL KILL YOU,
OLIVER. PLEASE,
JUST RUN!

YOU CAN'T
FIGHT HIM
ALONE--HE'S
OLD AS DIRT--
WE CAN TAKE
HIM DOWN
TOGETHER.

TRUST ME,
YOU CAN'T.
I'M OLD--
NOT WEAK.

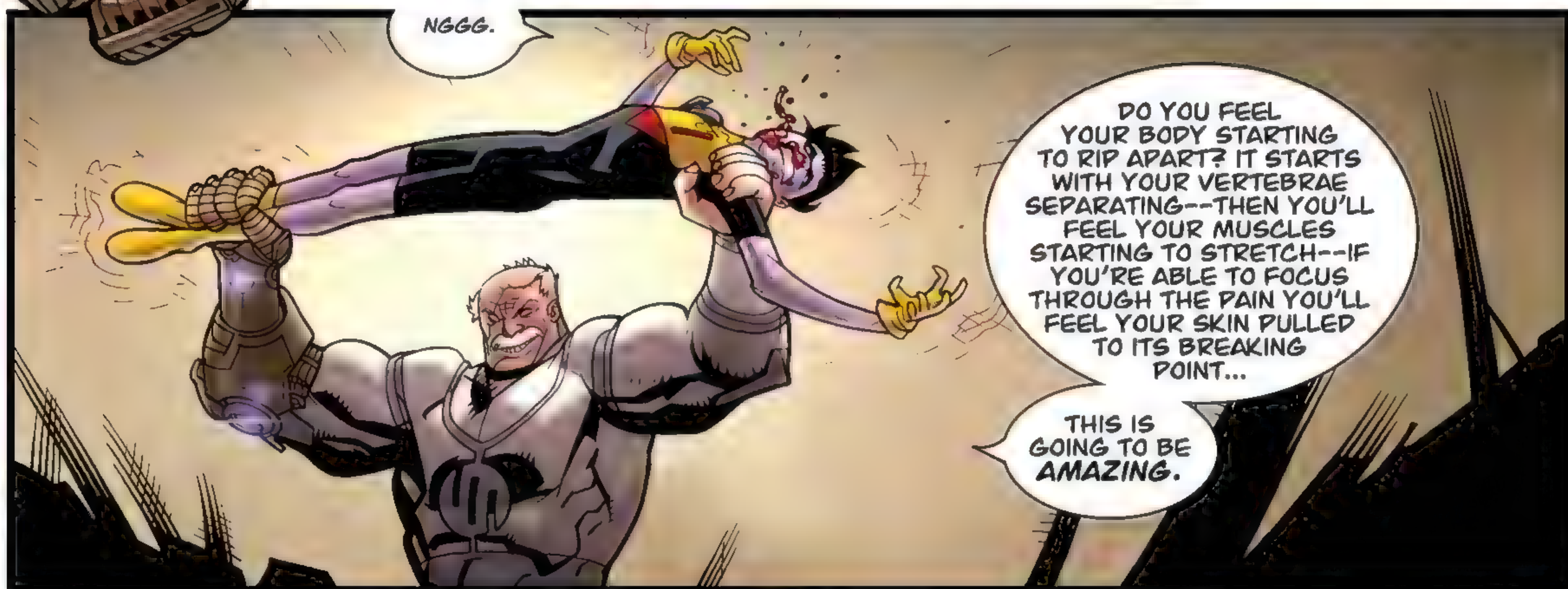
I DO
THANK YOU FOR
COMING BACK.
I WELCOME THE
SECOND CHANCE.

I'M GOING
TO SPLIT YOU
IN HALF AND
EAT YOUR HEART.
HOW'S THAT
SOUND?



I THINK THAT SOUNDS LIKE A BUNCH OF BULL---

TAKE A BREAK WHILE I FOCUS ON THE BOY.



DO YOU FEEL YOUR BODY STARTING TO RIP APART? IT STARTS WITH YOUR VERTEBRAE SEPARATING---THEN YOU'LL FEEL YOUR MUSCLES STARTING TO STRETCH--IF YOU'RE ABLE TO FOCUS THROUGH THE PAIN YOU'LL FEEL YOUR SKIN PULLED TO ITS BREAKING POINT...

THIS IS GOING TO BE AMAZING.

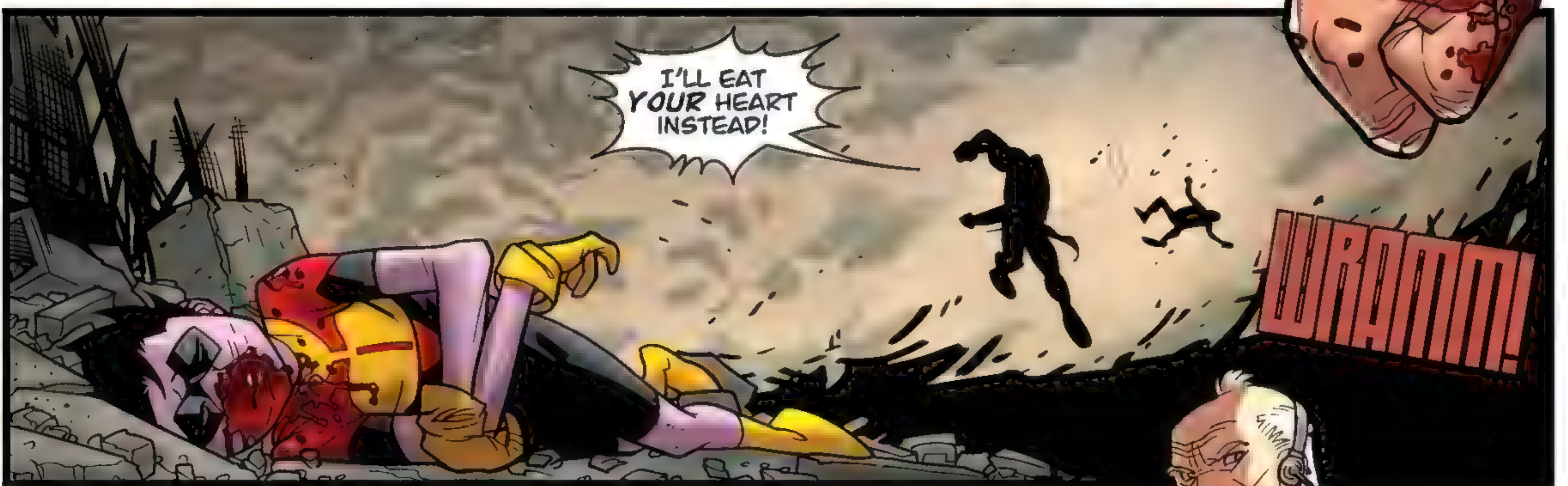
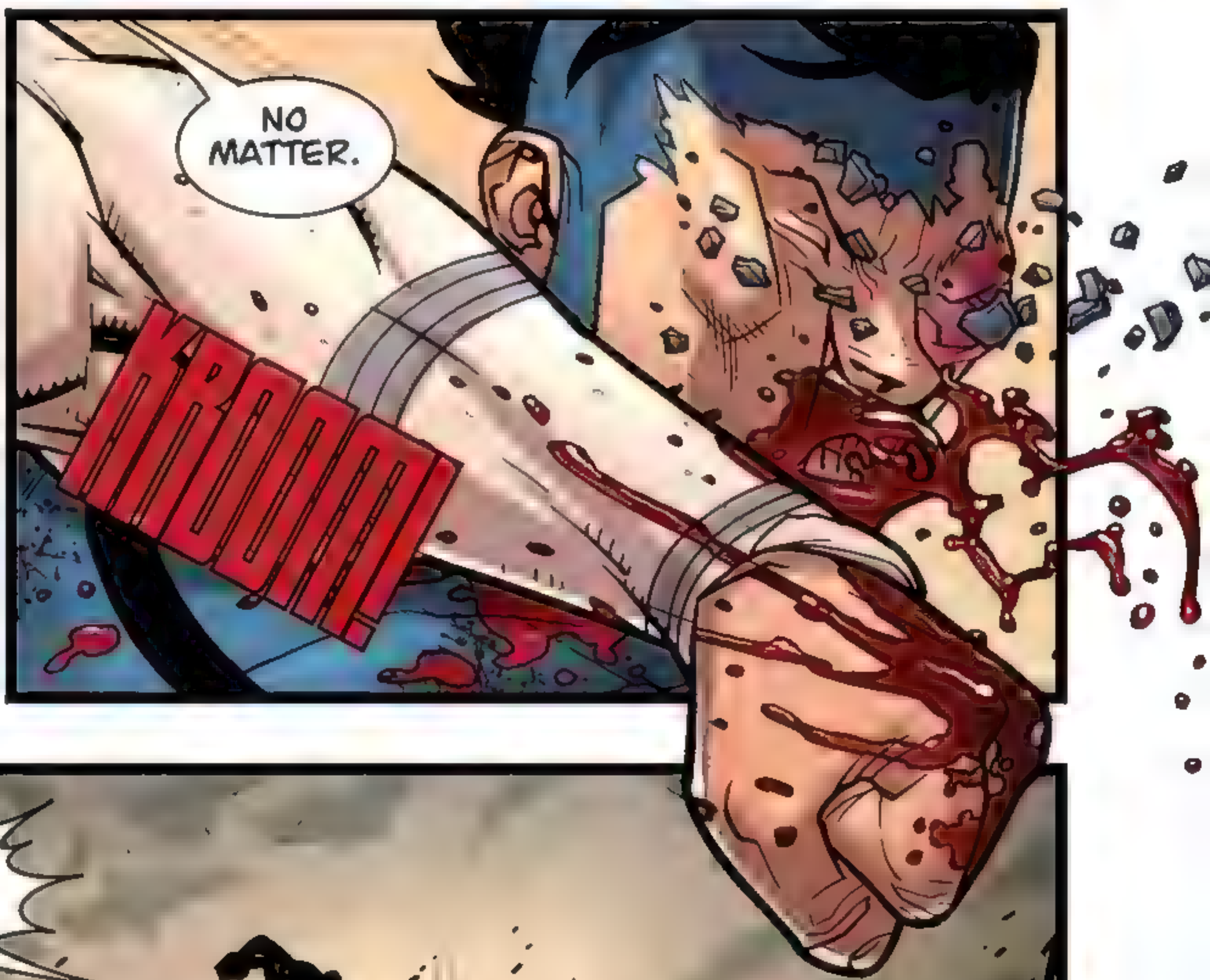
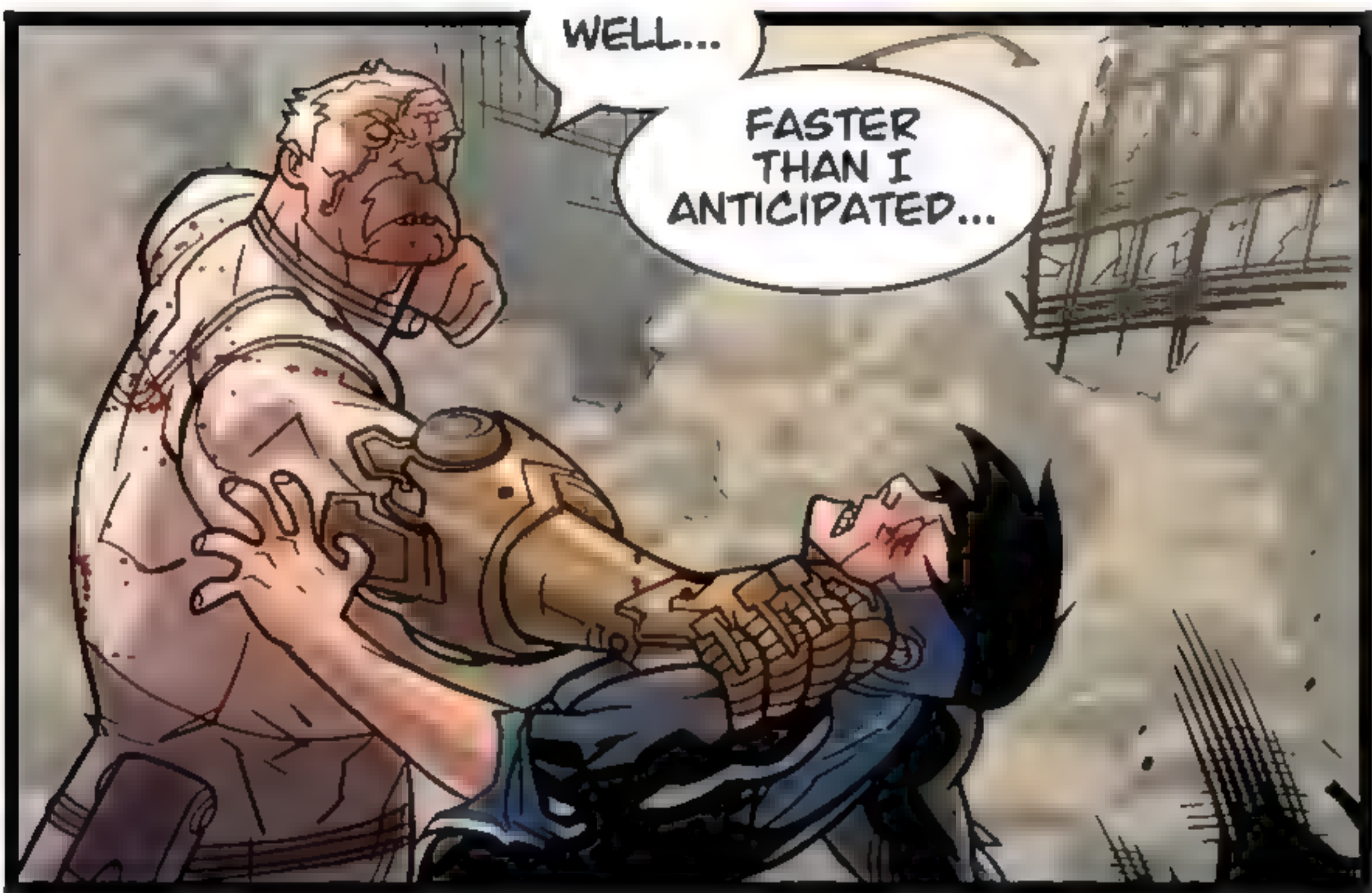


NO!

NO!

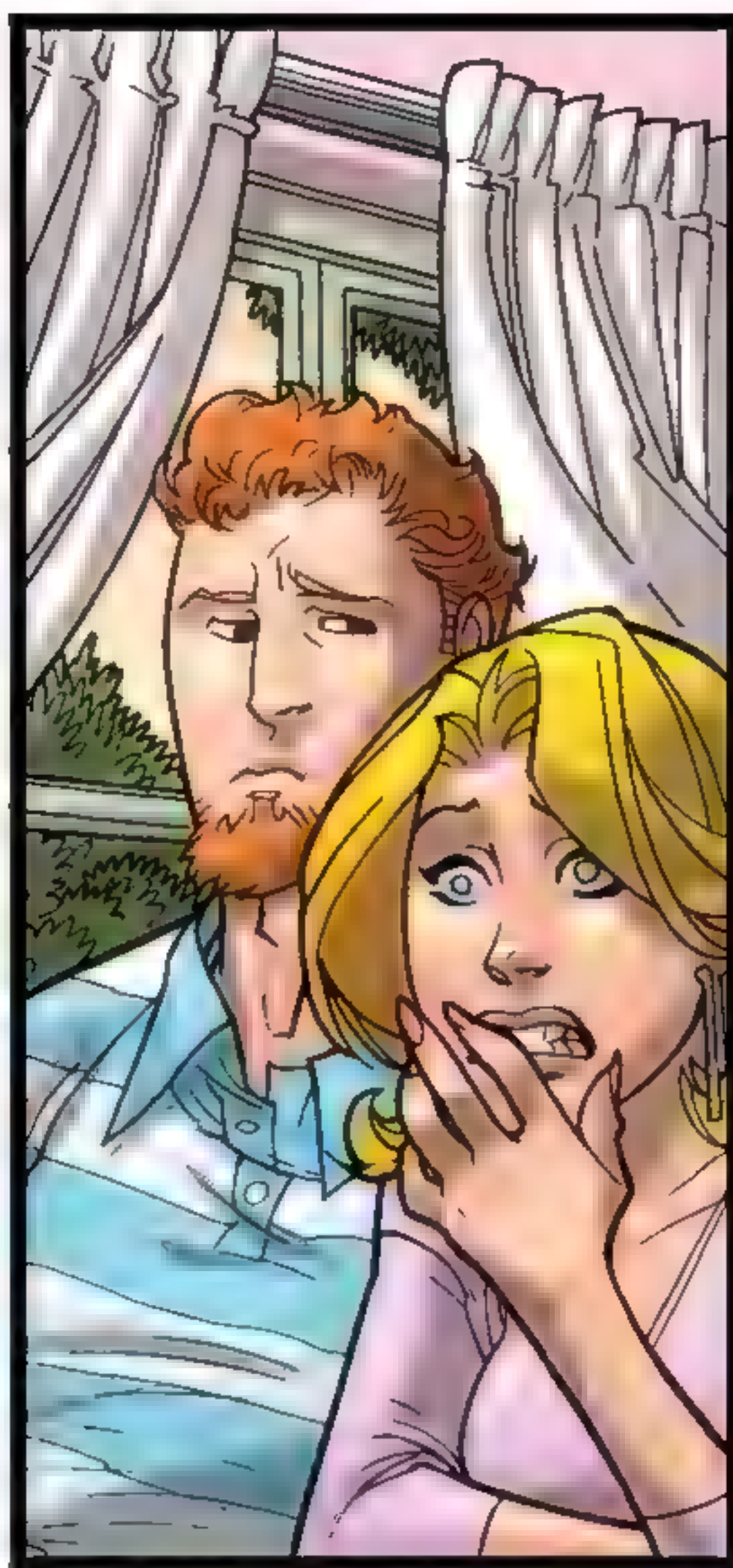
NO!

NO!



THAT WAS THEM, THEY SAID HE'S HURT BUT BREATHING---THEY SAY HE'S GOING TO BE OKAY.

THERE, THERE...



HALF OF THE SUPERHERO COMMUNITY IS EITHER IN THE HOSPITAL OR COMPLETELY SHELL-SHOCKED BY THE EVENTS THAT LEVELED THE WORLD.

OTHERWISE, I'D HAVE SUPERHEROES POPPING OUT OF PORTALS A MILE APART TRYING TO ANTICIPATE WHERE THIS FIGHT IS GOING---NEVER MIND THE FACT THAT WE'VE GOT MAYBE SIX PEOPLE ON THE PLANET WHO COULD HOLD THEIR OWN WITH THIS GUY FOR MORE THAN A MINUTE.

WHAT I'M SAYING IS---I CAN SEND YOU, BUT BY THE TIME YOU STEP OUT OF THAT PORTAL THEY COULD BE GONE. THEY'RE MOVING AT INCREDIBLE SPEEDS---WE'VE BEEN BEHIND AS MUCH AS FIVE MINUTES TRYING TO FOLLOW THEIR FIGHT ON SATELLITE FEEDS.

I DON'T CARE---I HAVE TO TRY. IF I GET THERE IN TIME---I CAN HOLD THE MAN DOWN WITH MY FORCE FIELDS.

DO IT.

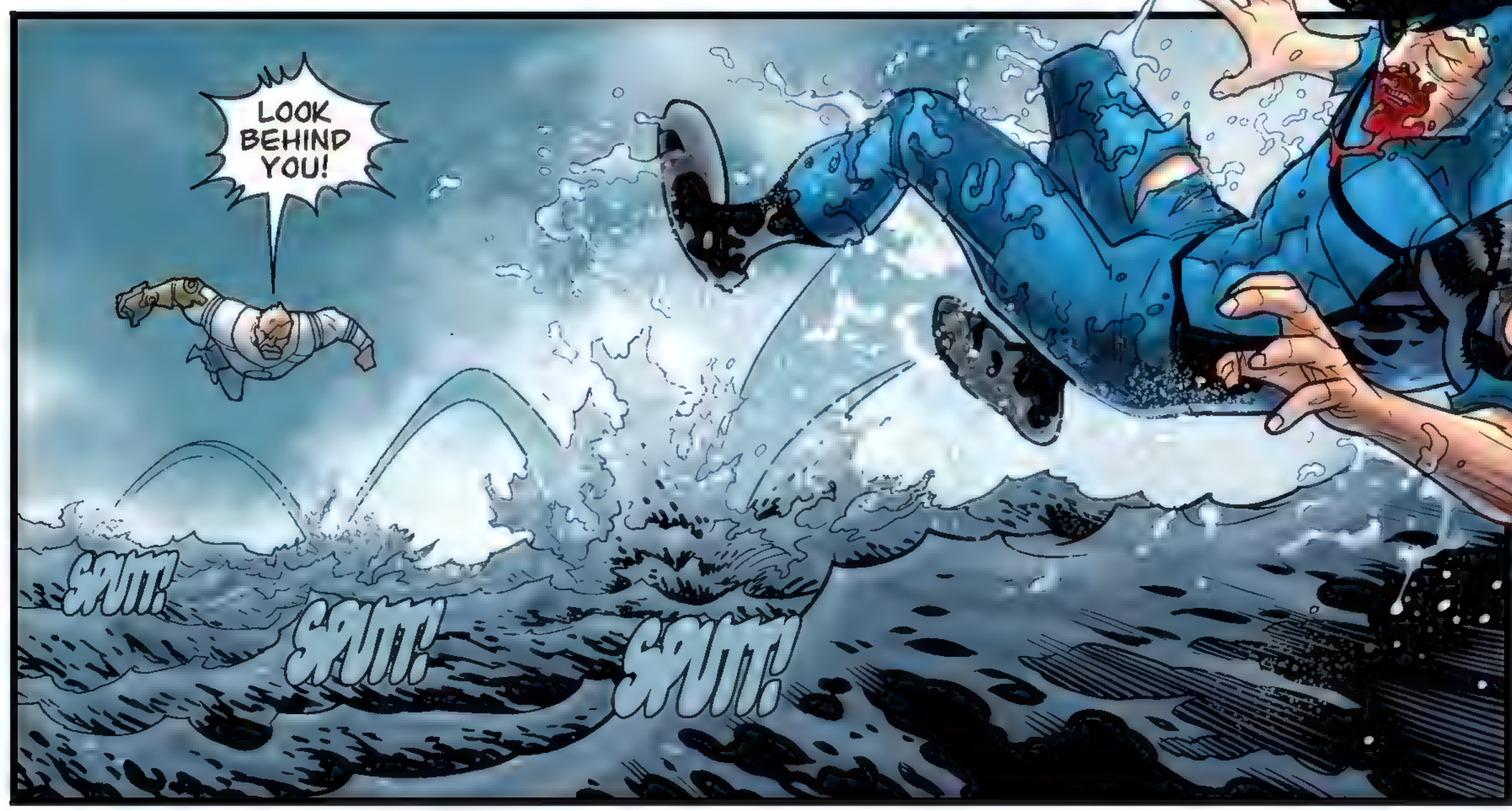


LOOK BEHIND YOU!

SPLOOSH!

SPLOOSH!

SPLOOSH!







YEAH,
BAD NEWS
FOR YOU.

MARK!

GET OUT
OF HERE!
GO!

NOW!

WRAAAM!

SO CONCERNED
FOR OTHERS'
SAFETY...

YOU
REALLY
ARE
PATHETIC.

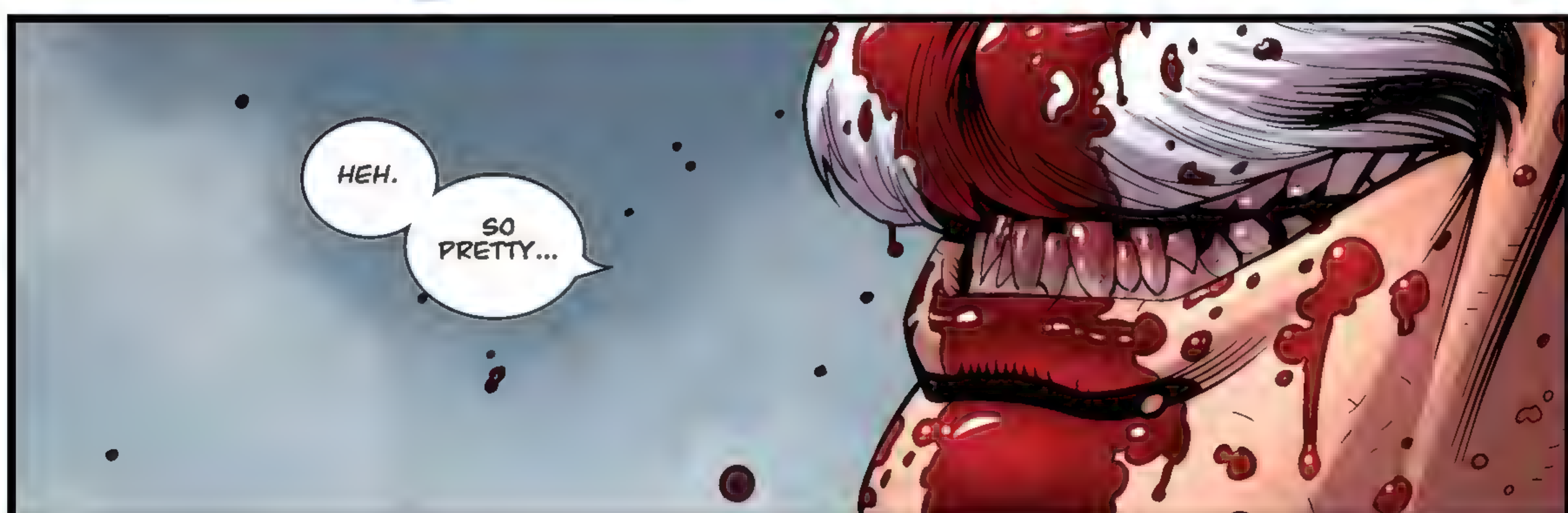
WIRUKK!

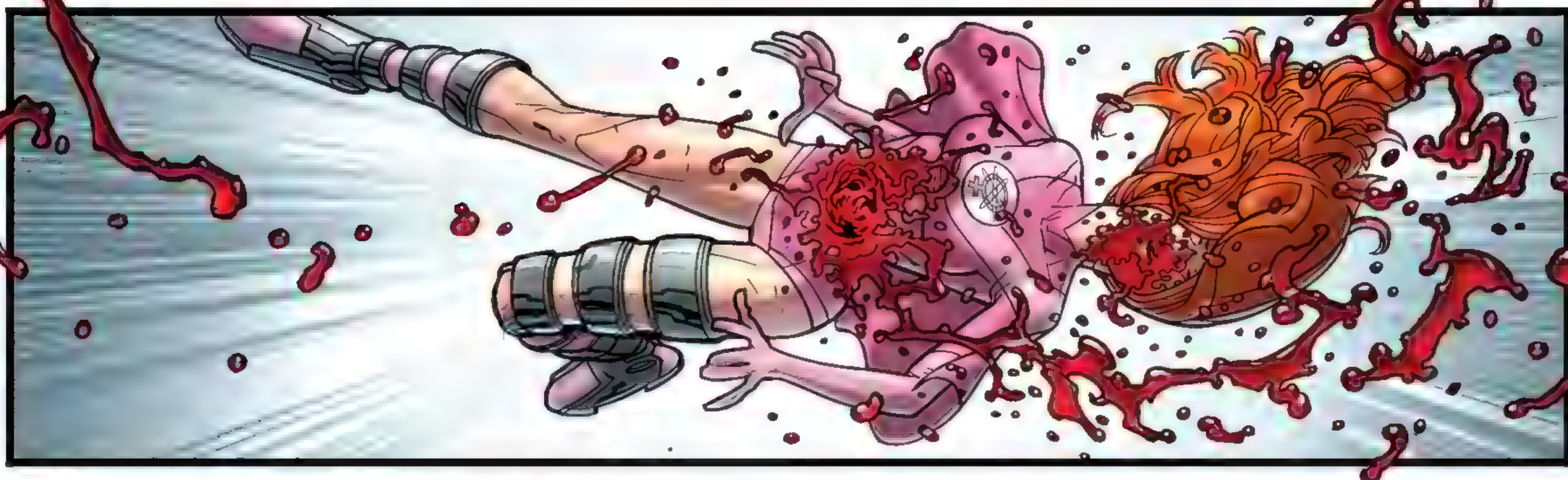
AAAGGH!

NO!

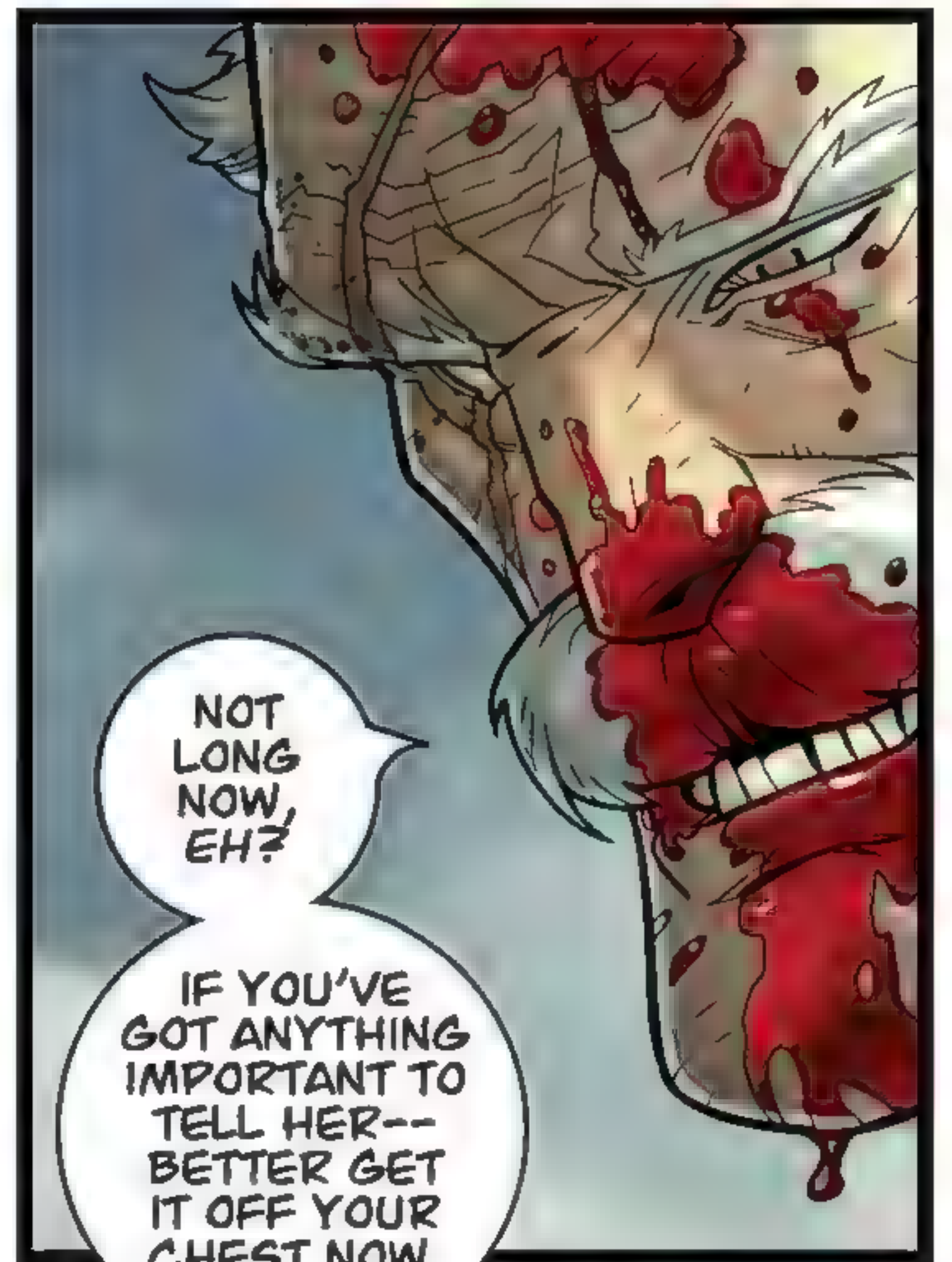
YOU'VE GOT
PROBLEMS
OF YOUR OWN,
KITTEN.

CHOOOM!











I SHOULD
DO THIS NOW--
DON'T KNOW
WHEN I'LL GET
THE CHANCE
AGAIN.

I WANT
TO THANK
YOU, MARK
GRAYSON...
INVINCIBLE.

REALLY.

FROM
THE
BOTTOM
OF MY
HEART.

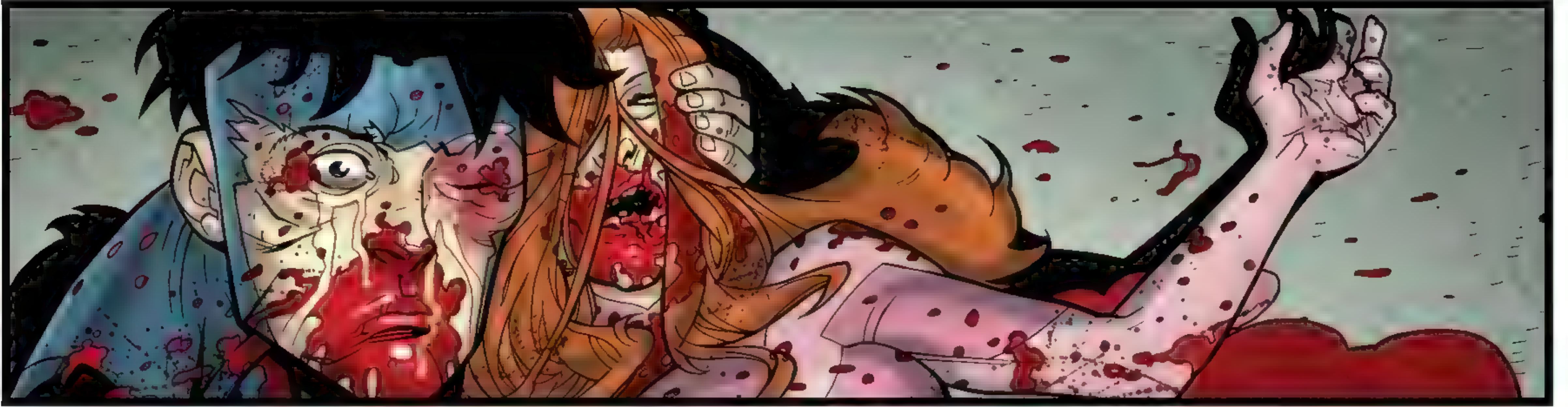
IT'S NOT
VERY OFTEN
THAT I GET TO
CUT LOOSE LIKE
THIS. I MEAN
REALLY CUT LOOSE
LIKE I HAVE HERE.
USUALLY, THERE
ARE SO MANY
MISSION
PARAMETERS.

"DON'T
DESTROY
THIS."

"KEEP
THIS
PERSON
ALIVE."

BUT NOT HERE--
NOT WITH **THIS** PLANET.
FOR WHATEVER REASON,
I DON'T REALLY CARE
WHY, TO BE HONEST, I
WAS TOLD--TAKE CONTROL,
NO MATTER WHAT IT
TAKES... TAKE CONTROL
OF THE PLANET.

SO WHATEVER
YOU DID TO PISS
US OFF--THANK
YOU. THIS HAS
BEEN FUN.



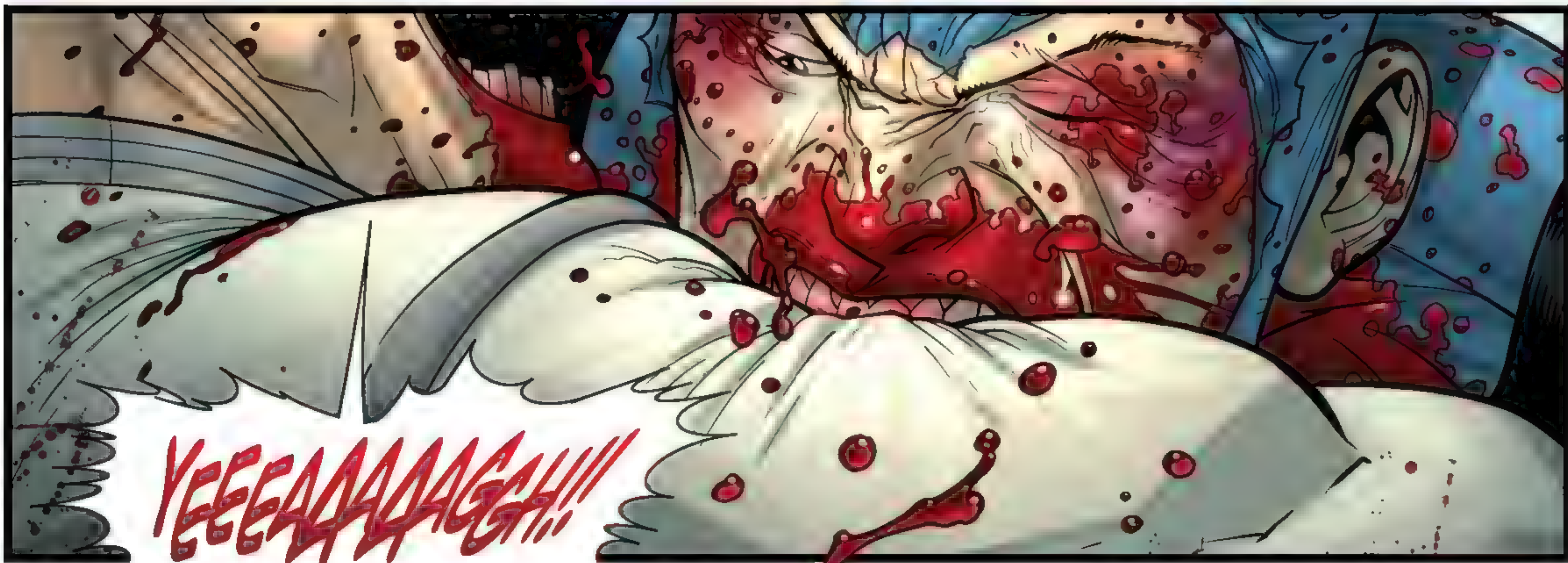
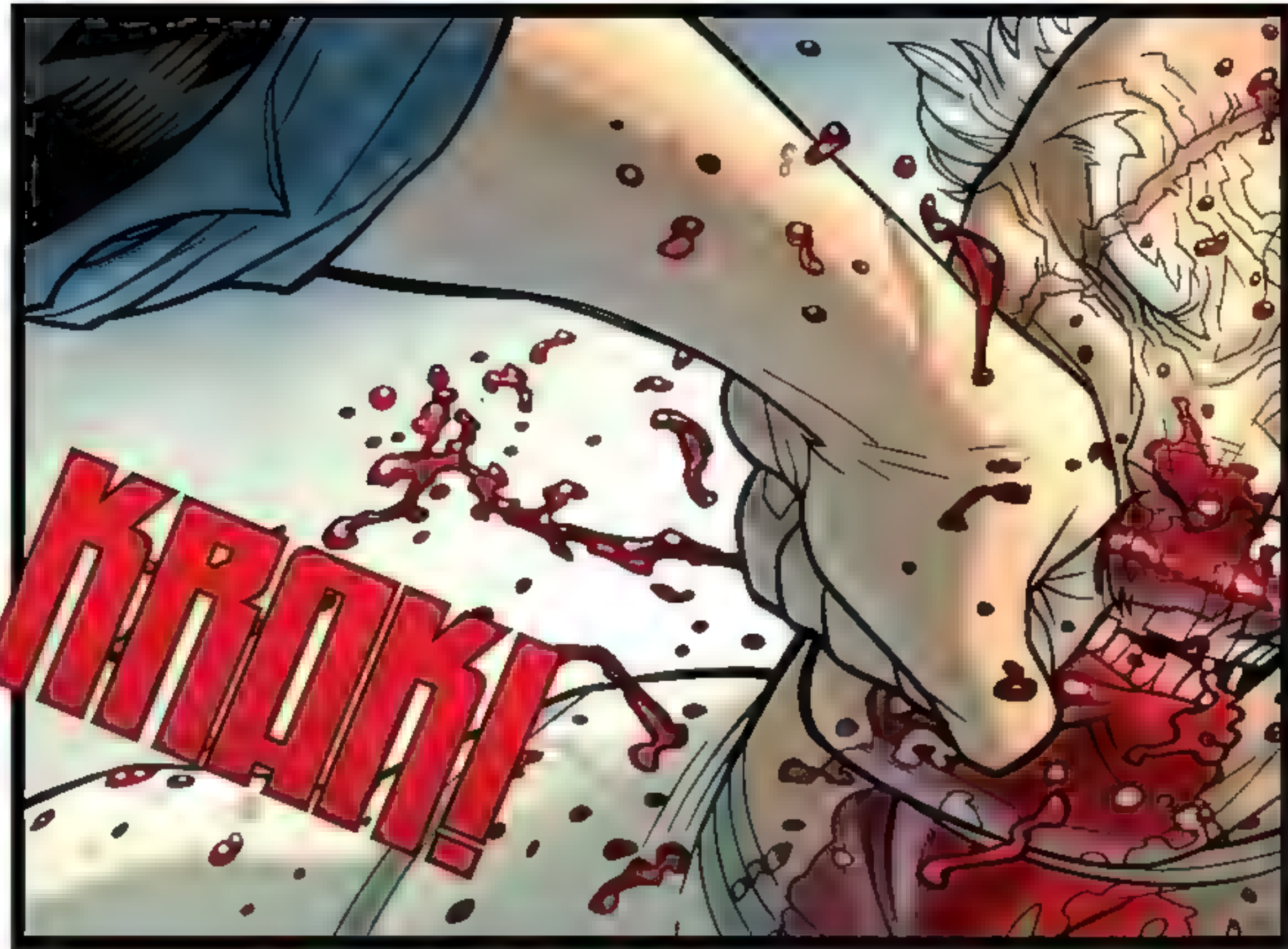
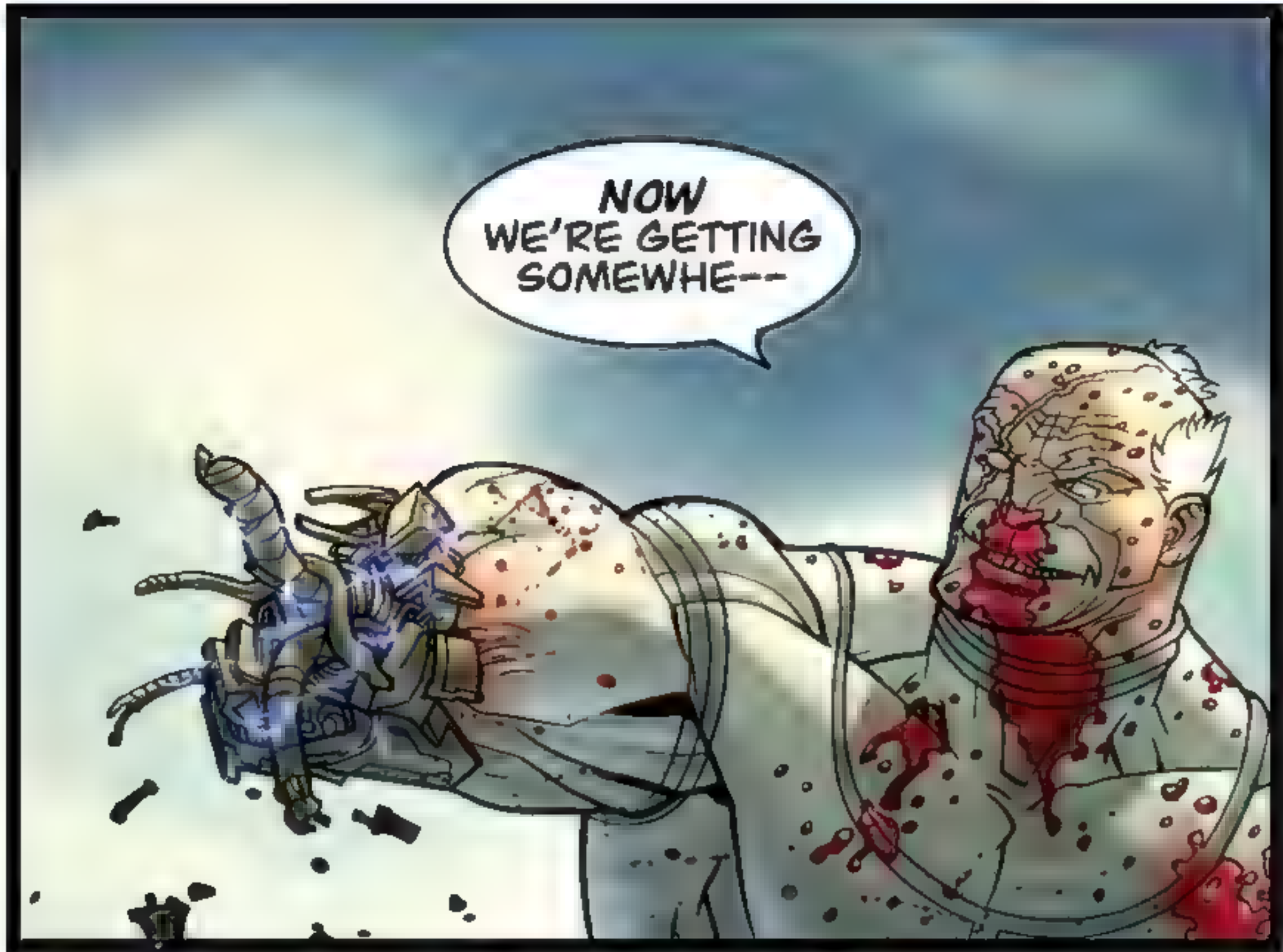


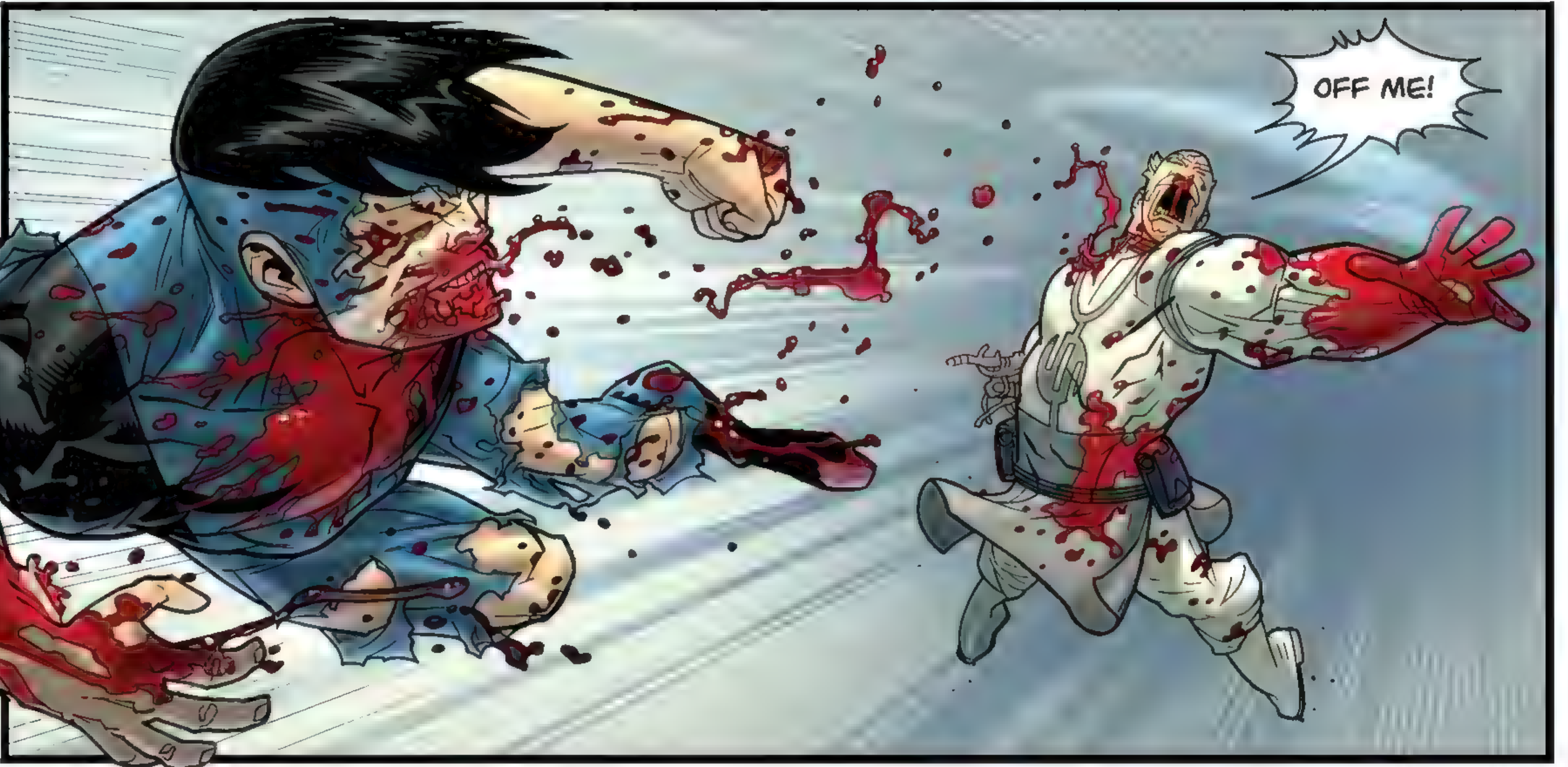
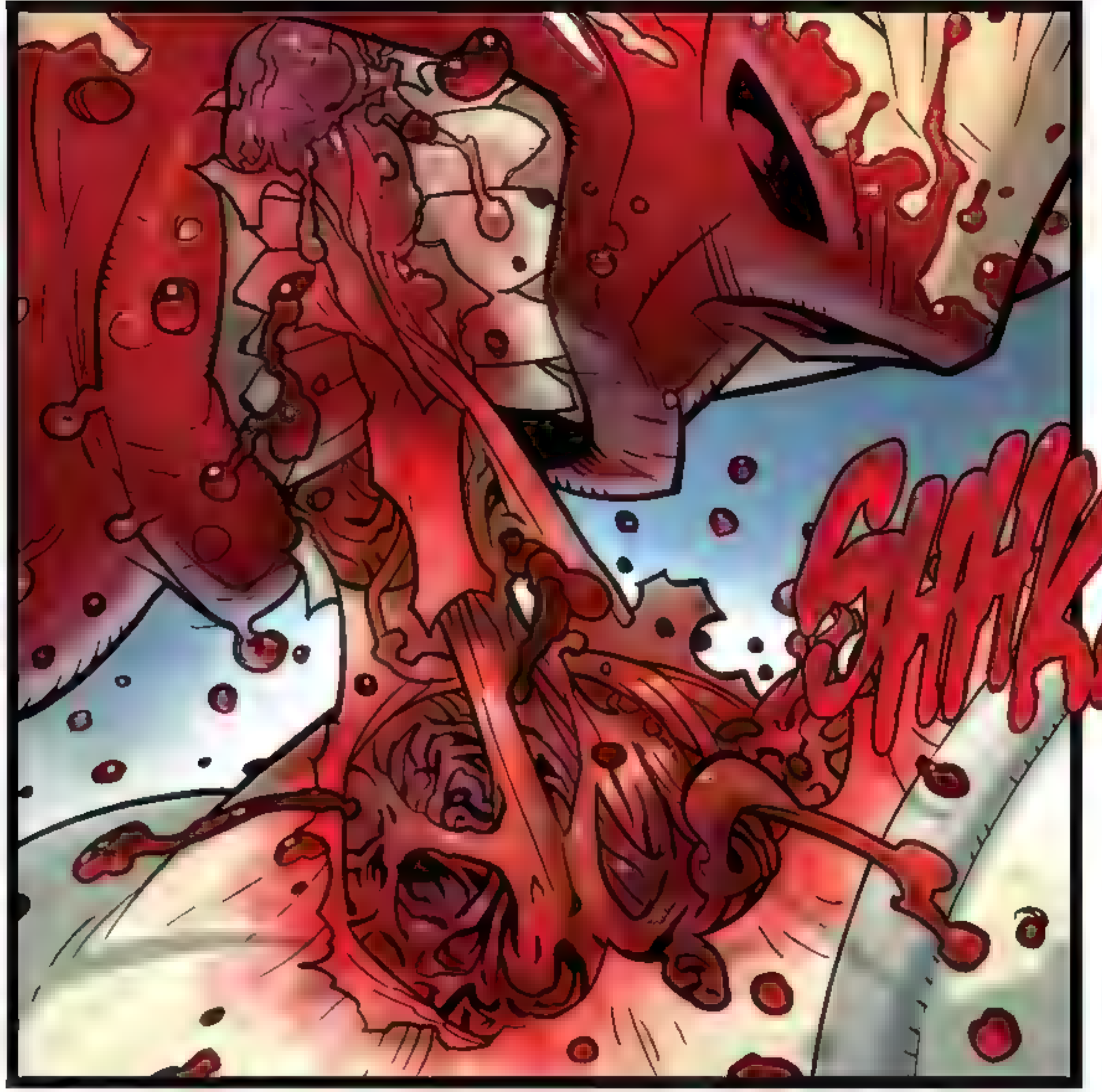
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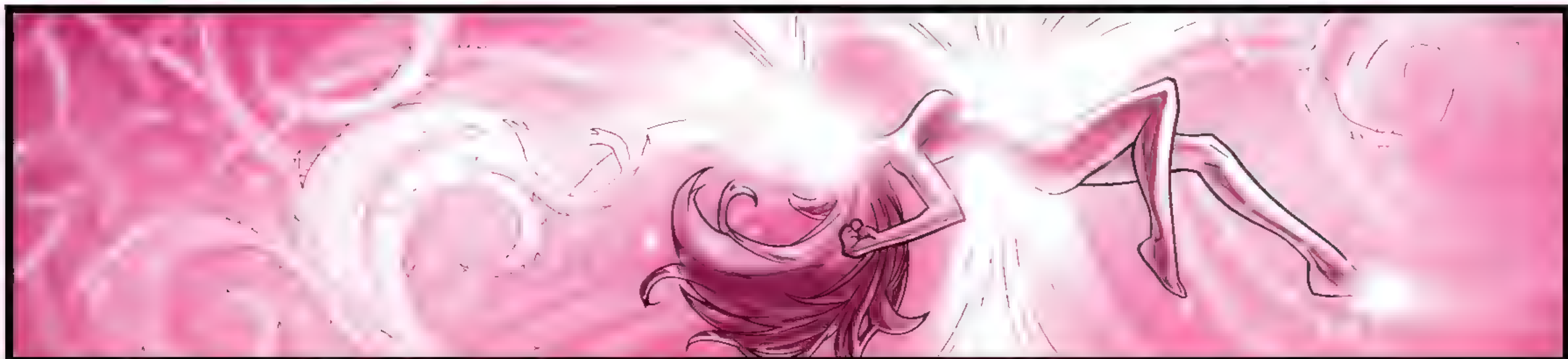
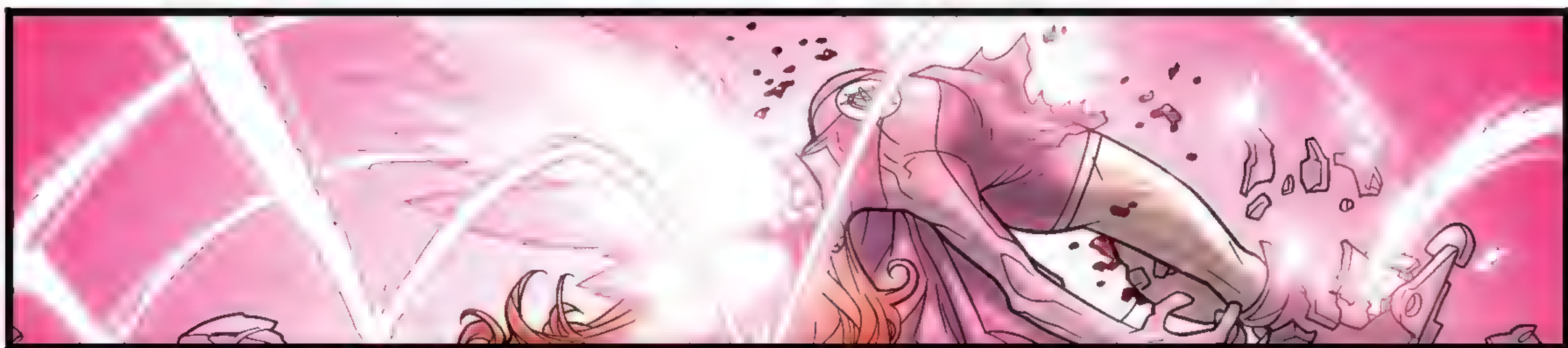
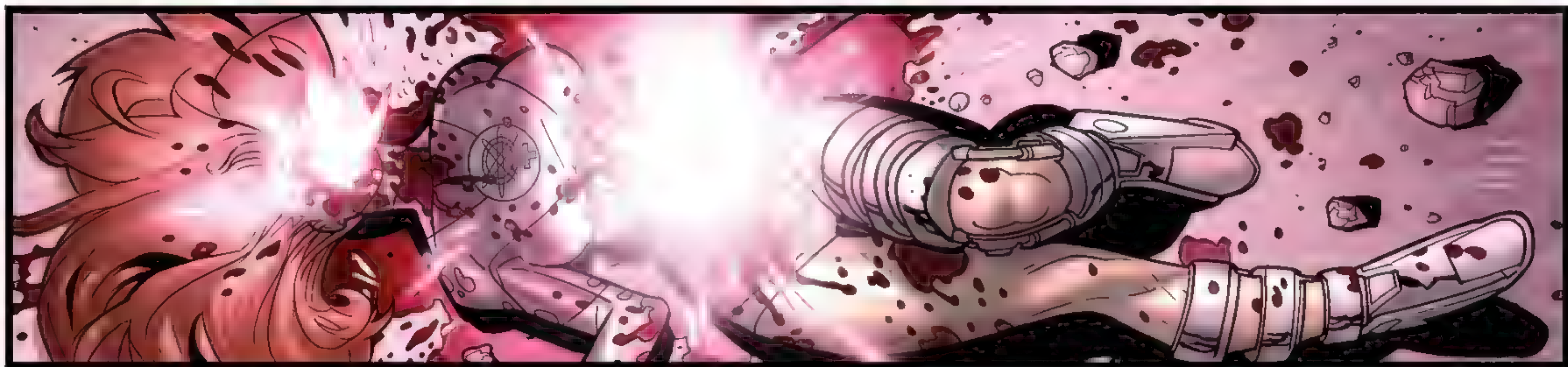
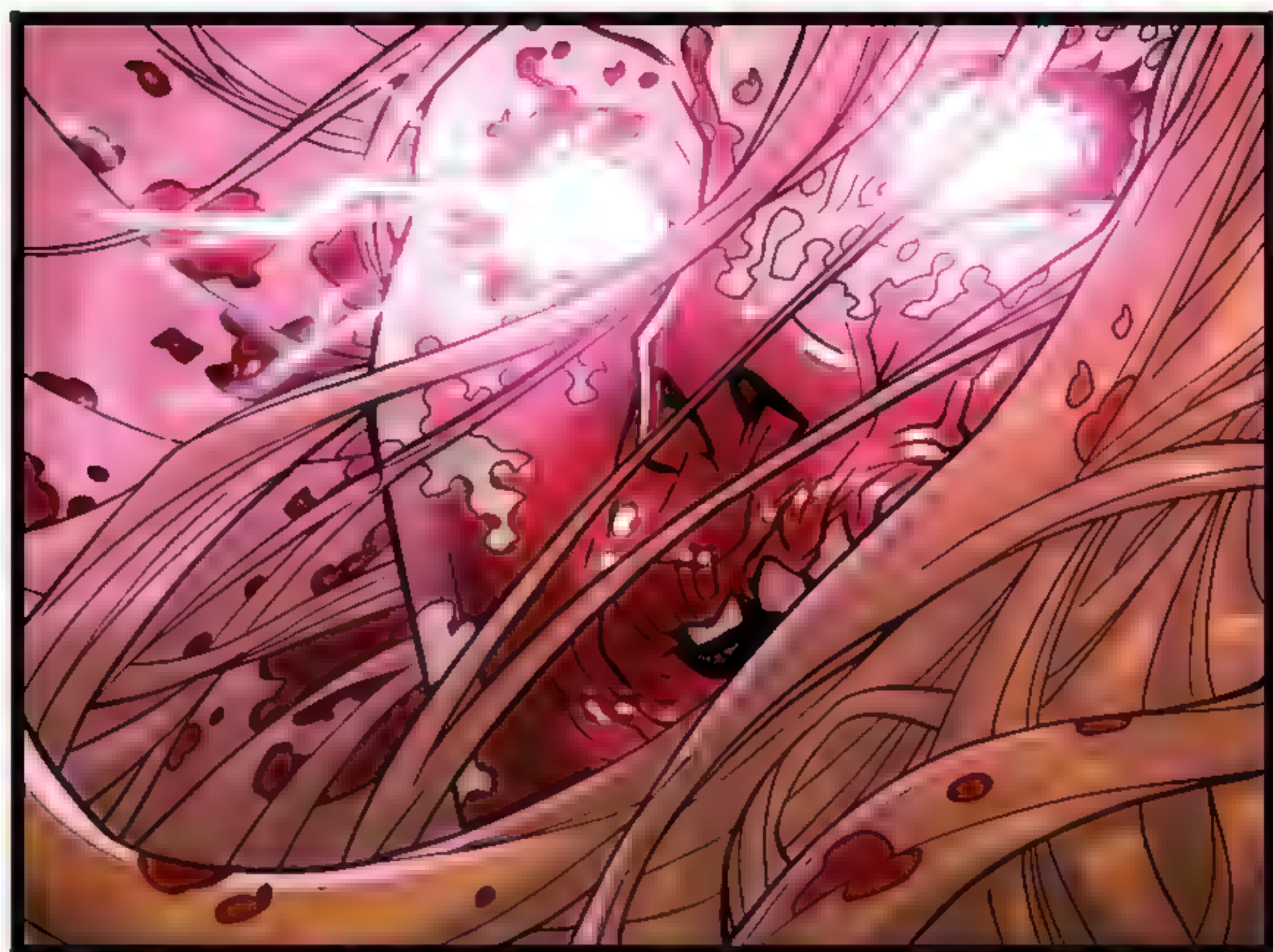


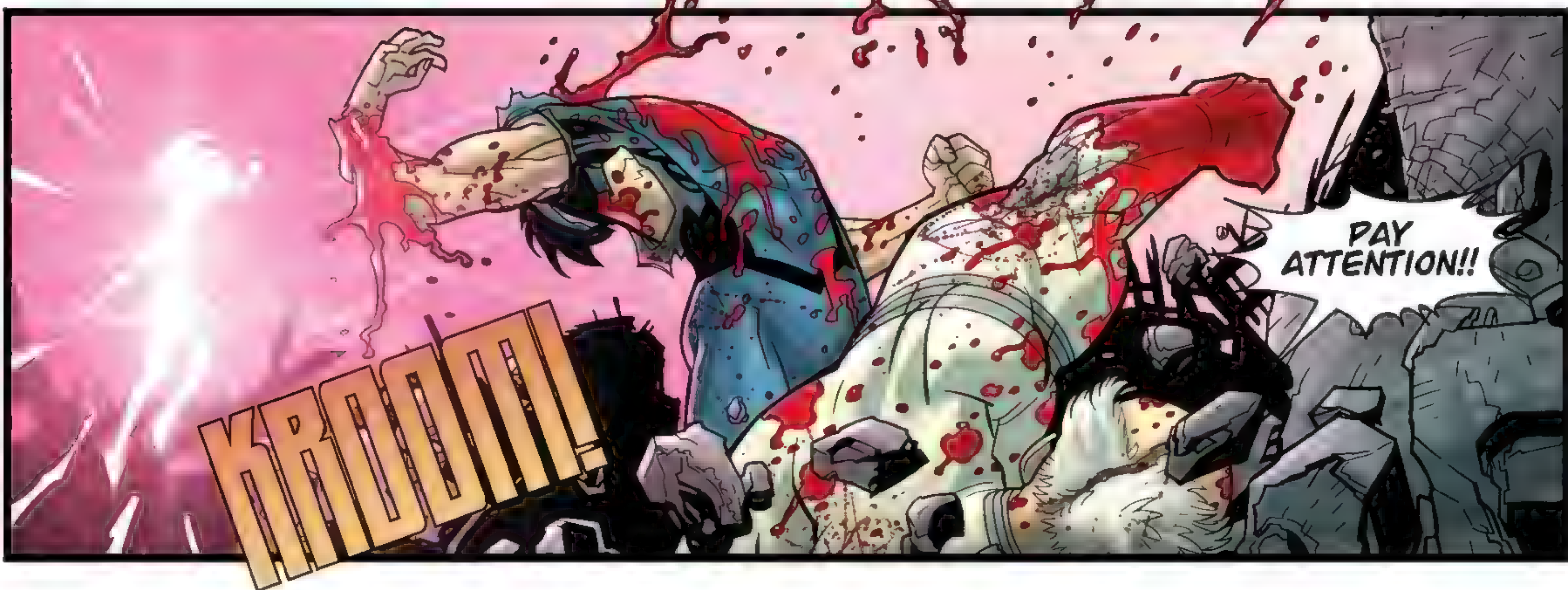
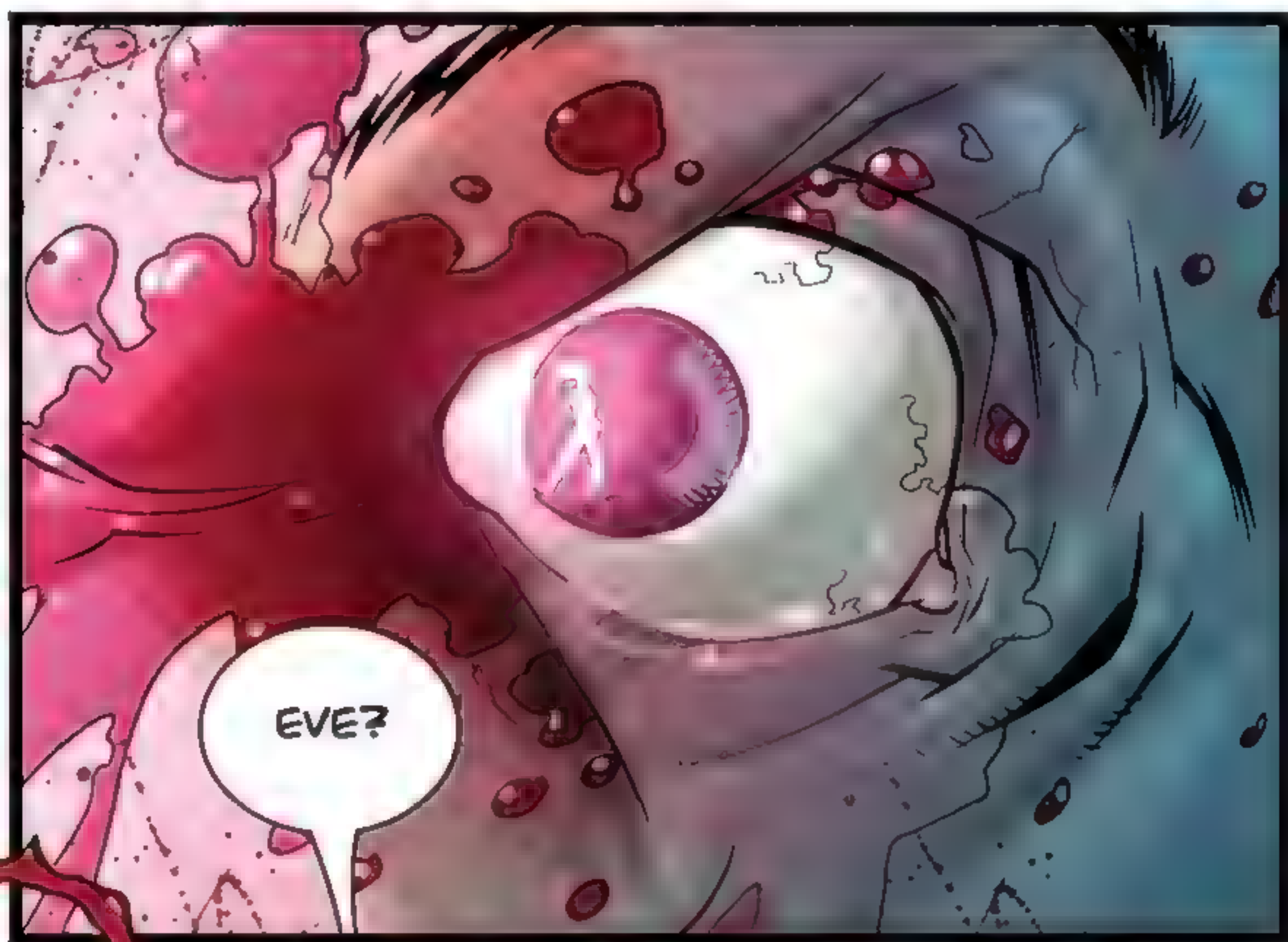
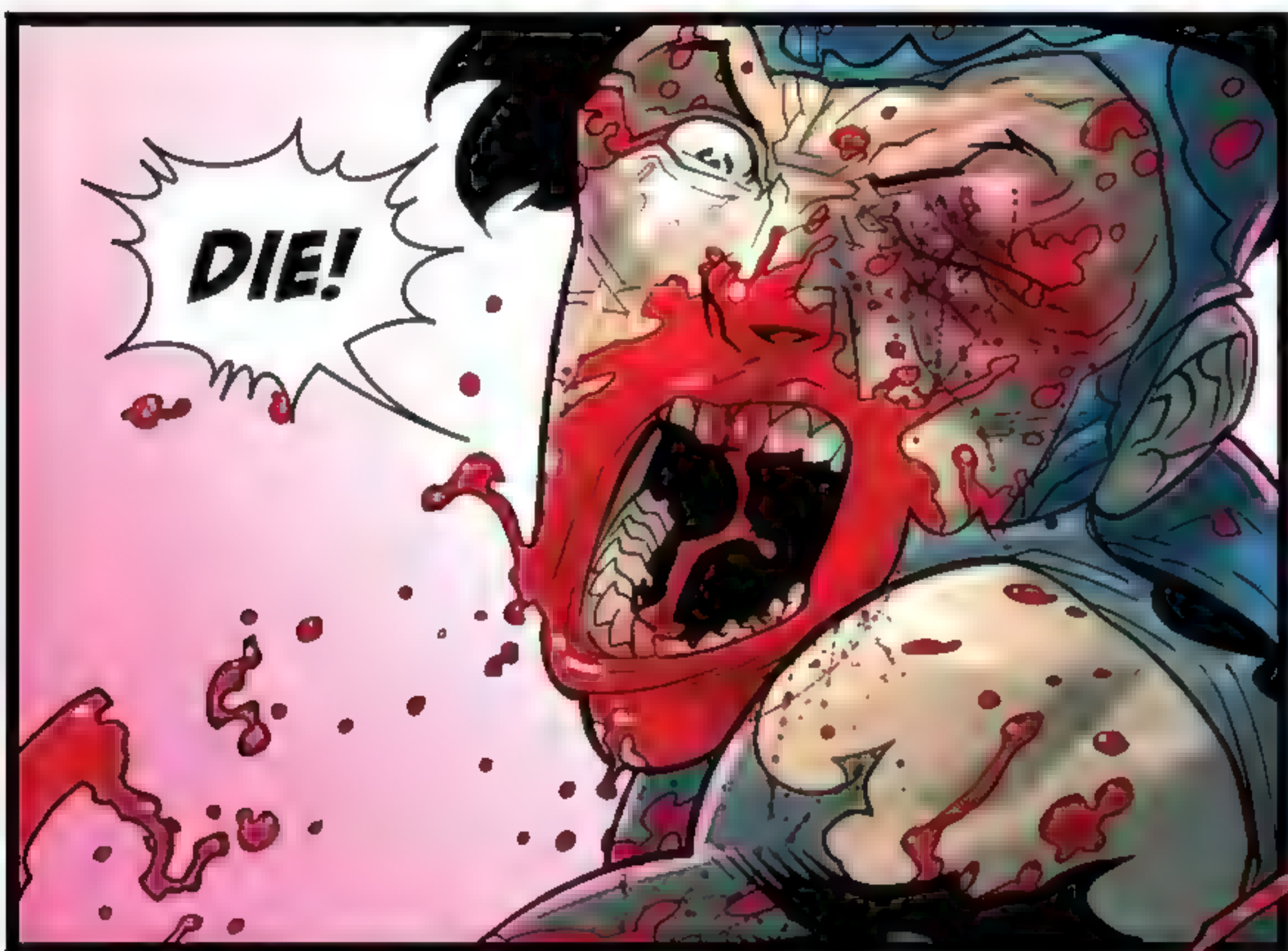
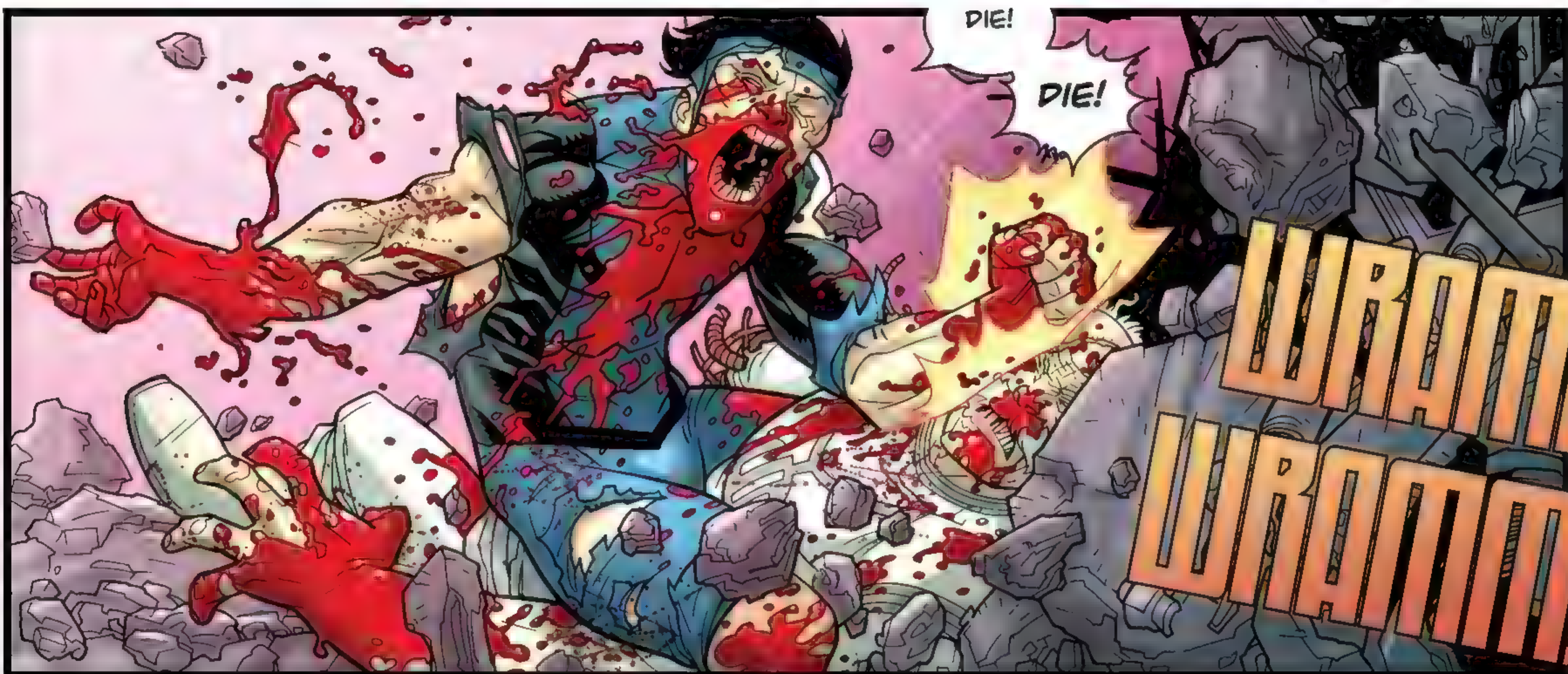




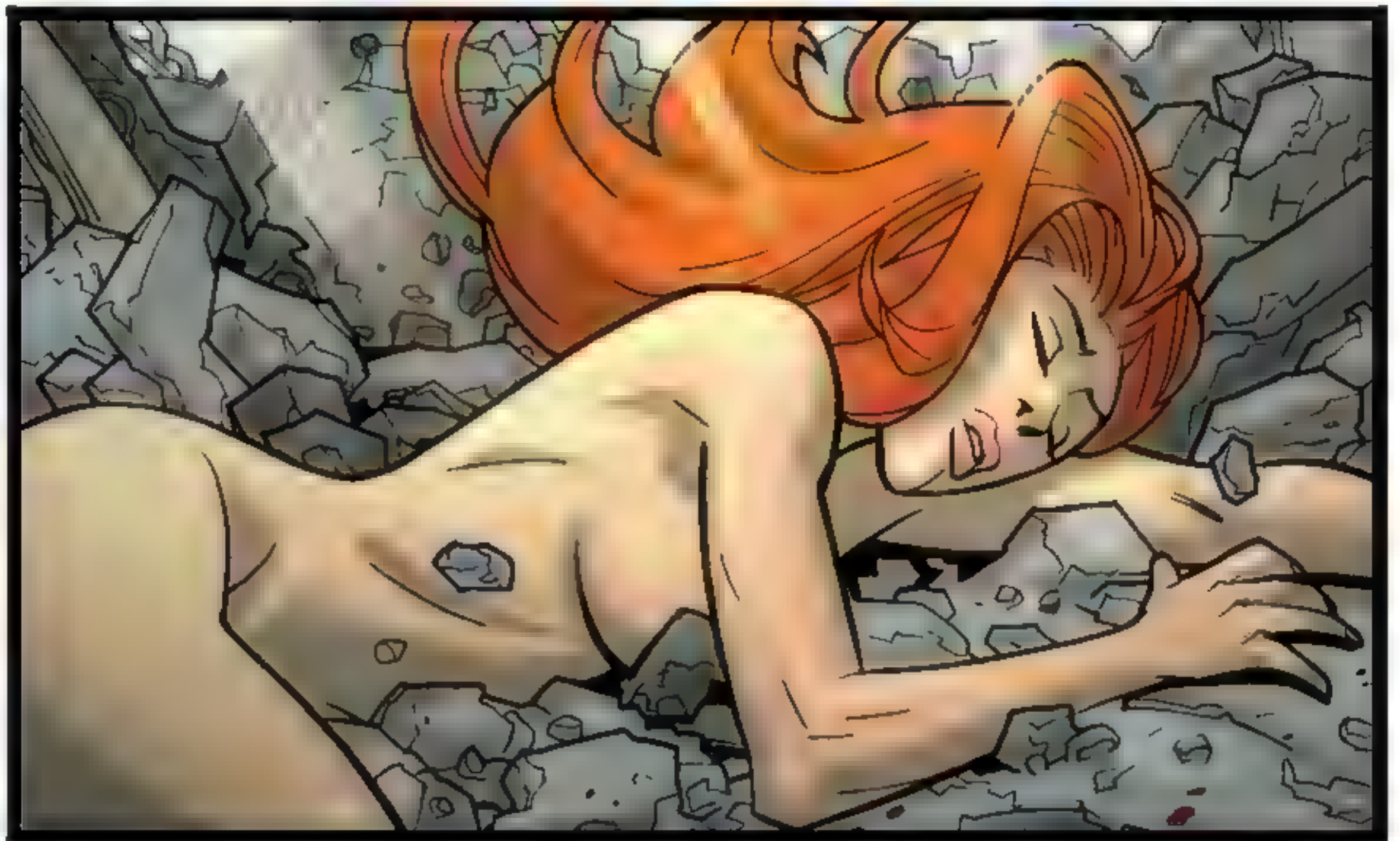
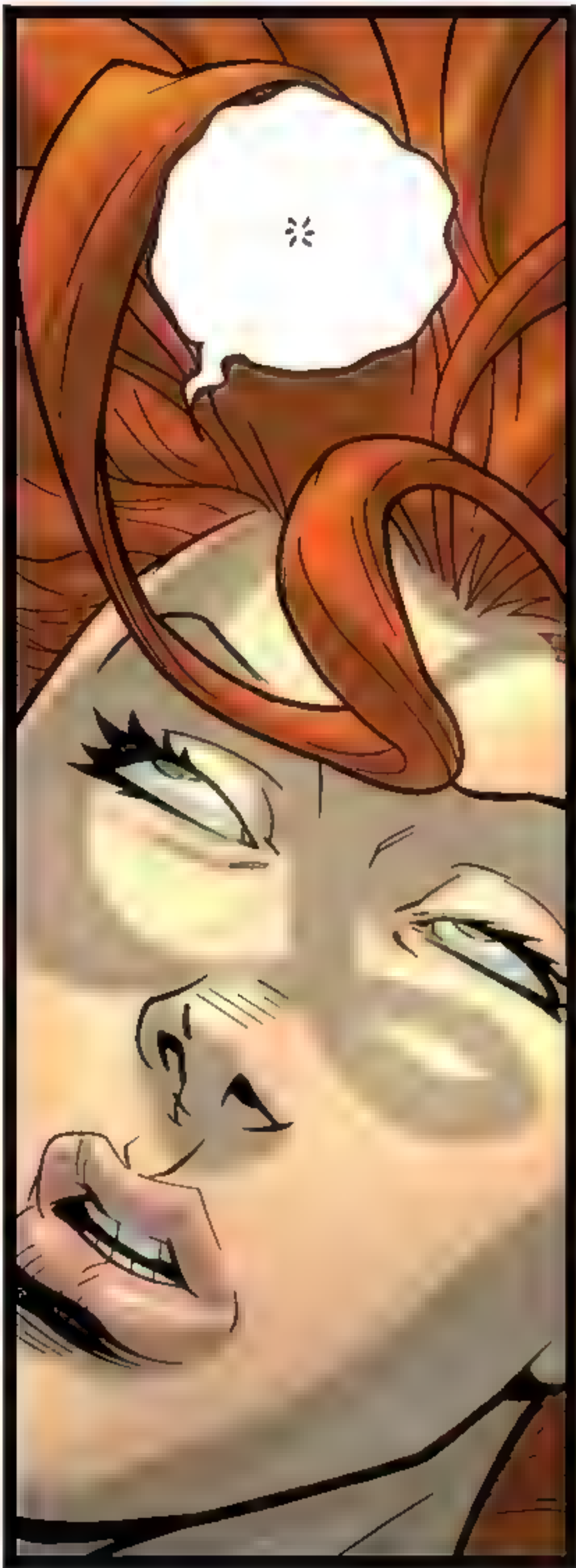
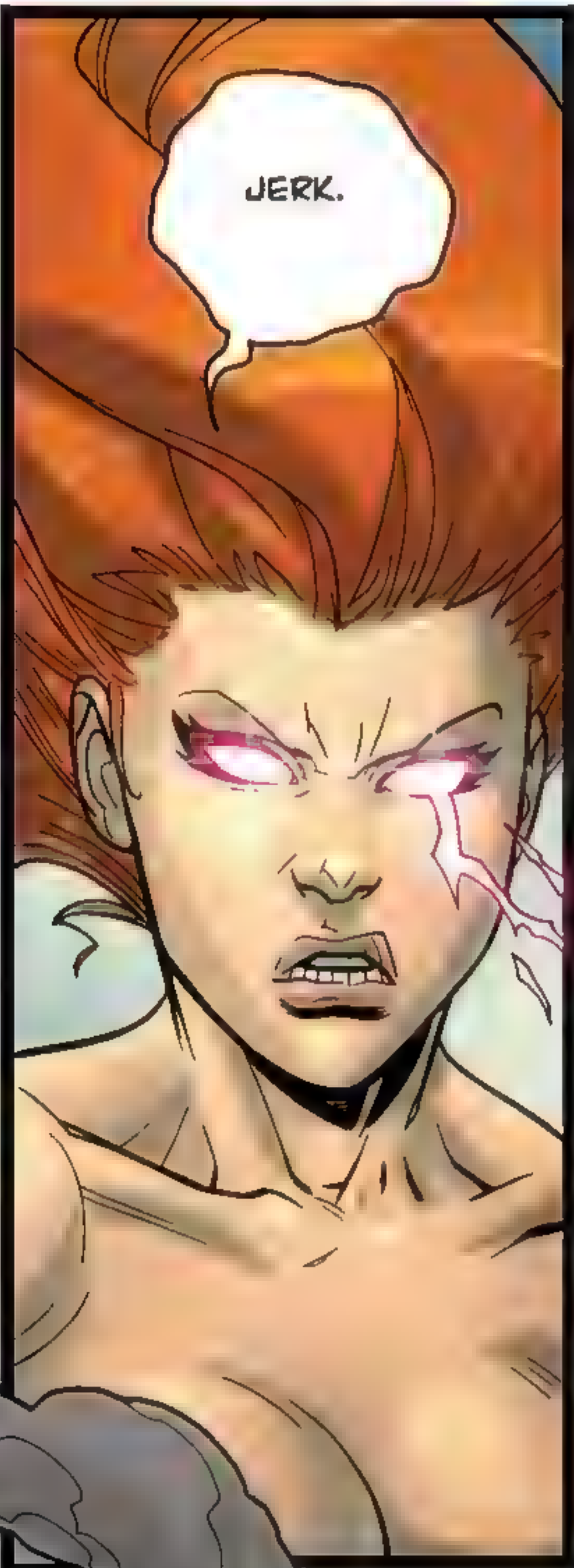
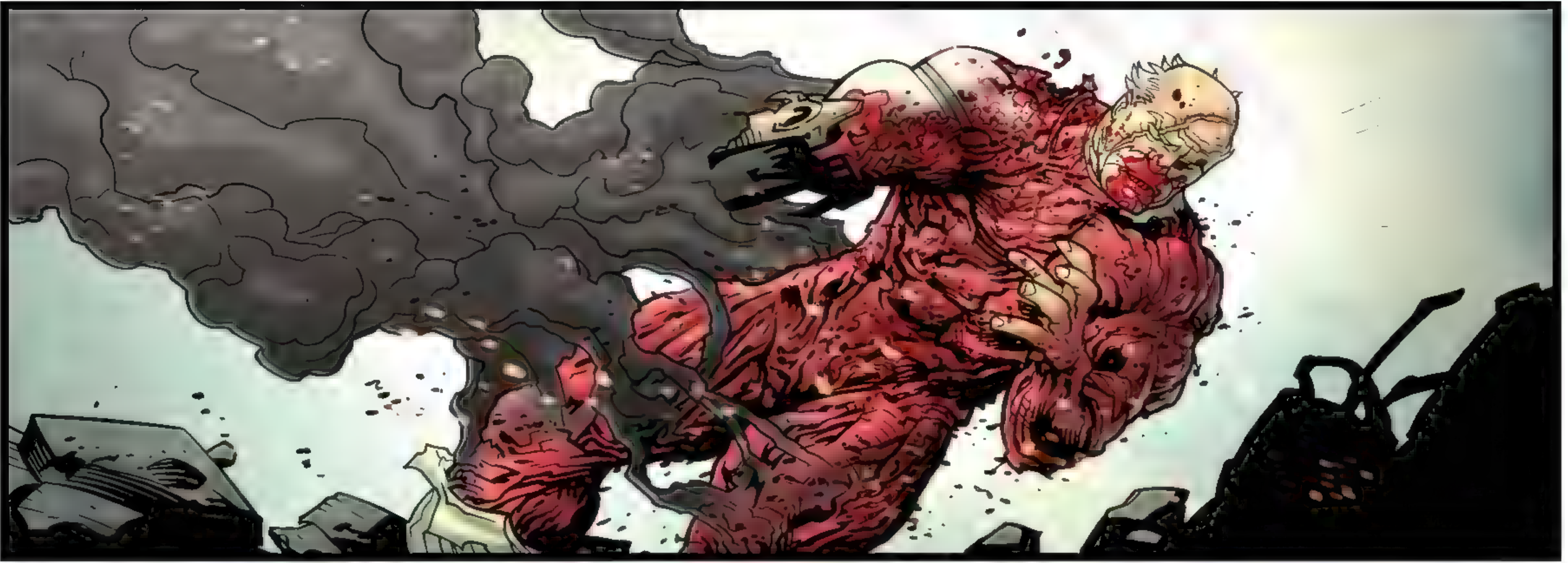


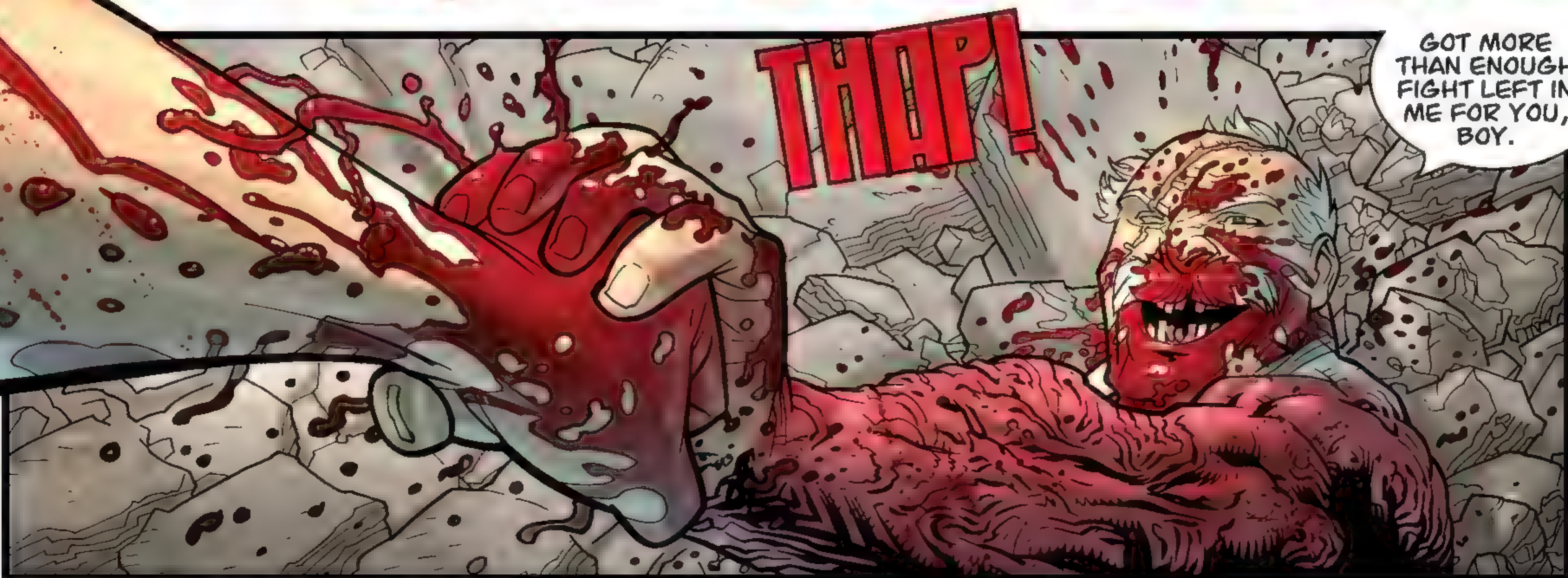
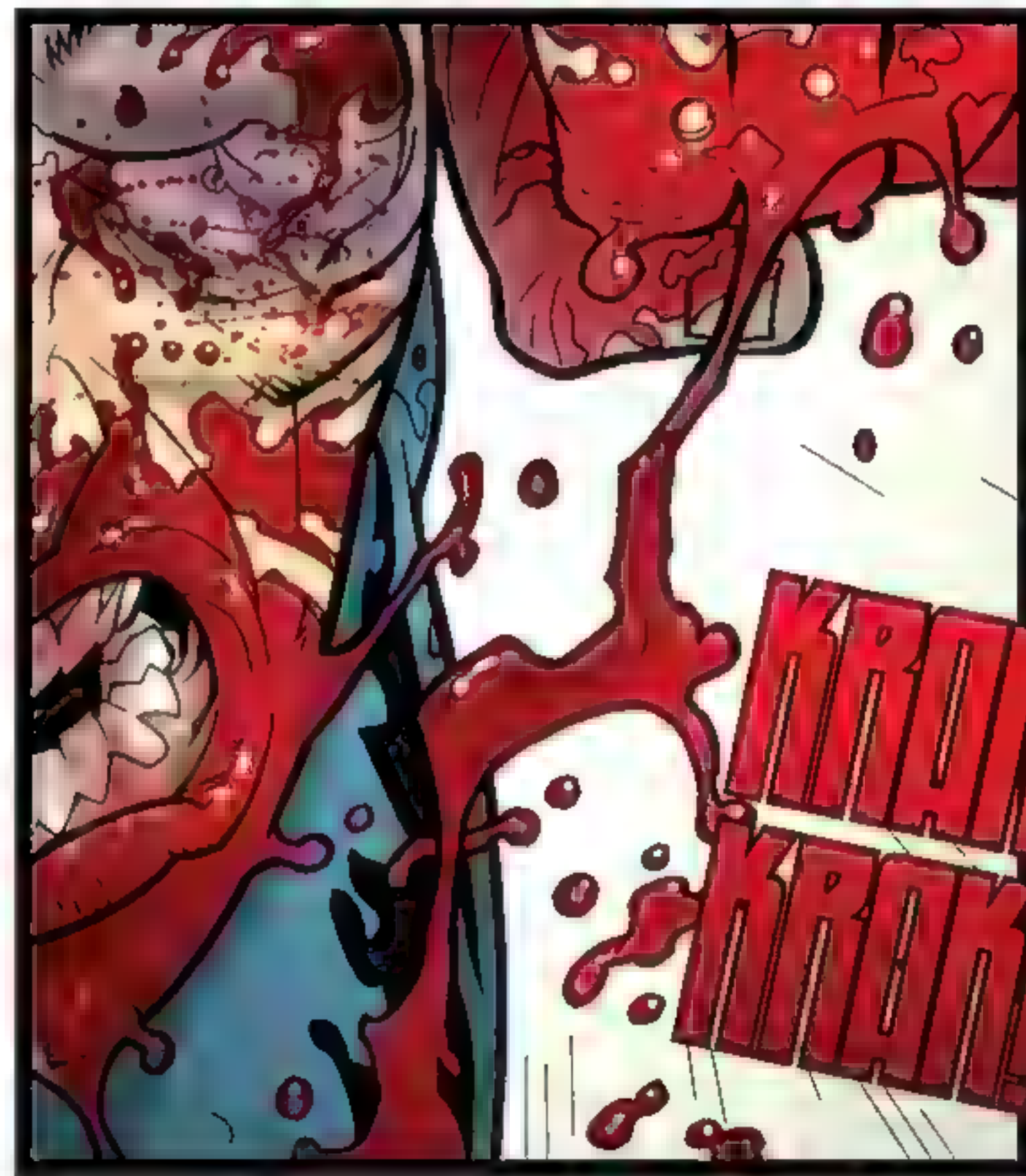
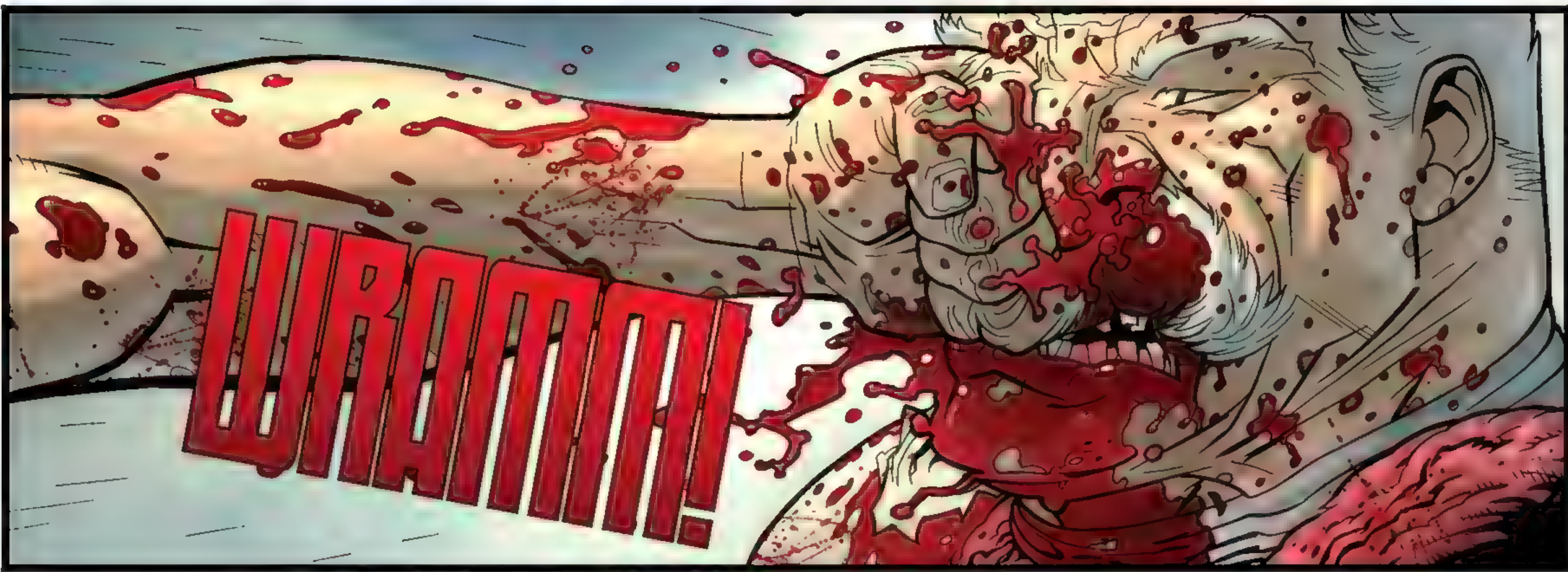


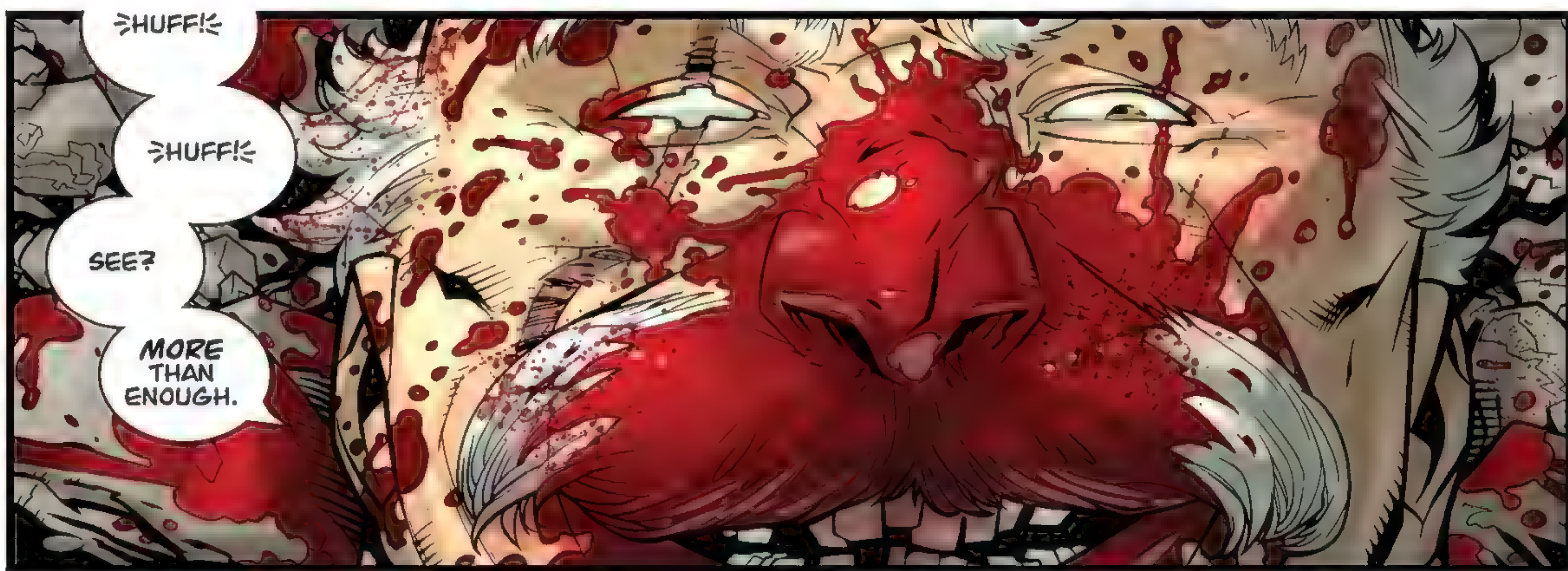


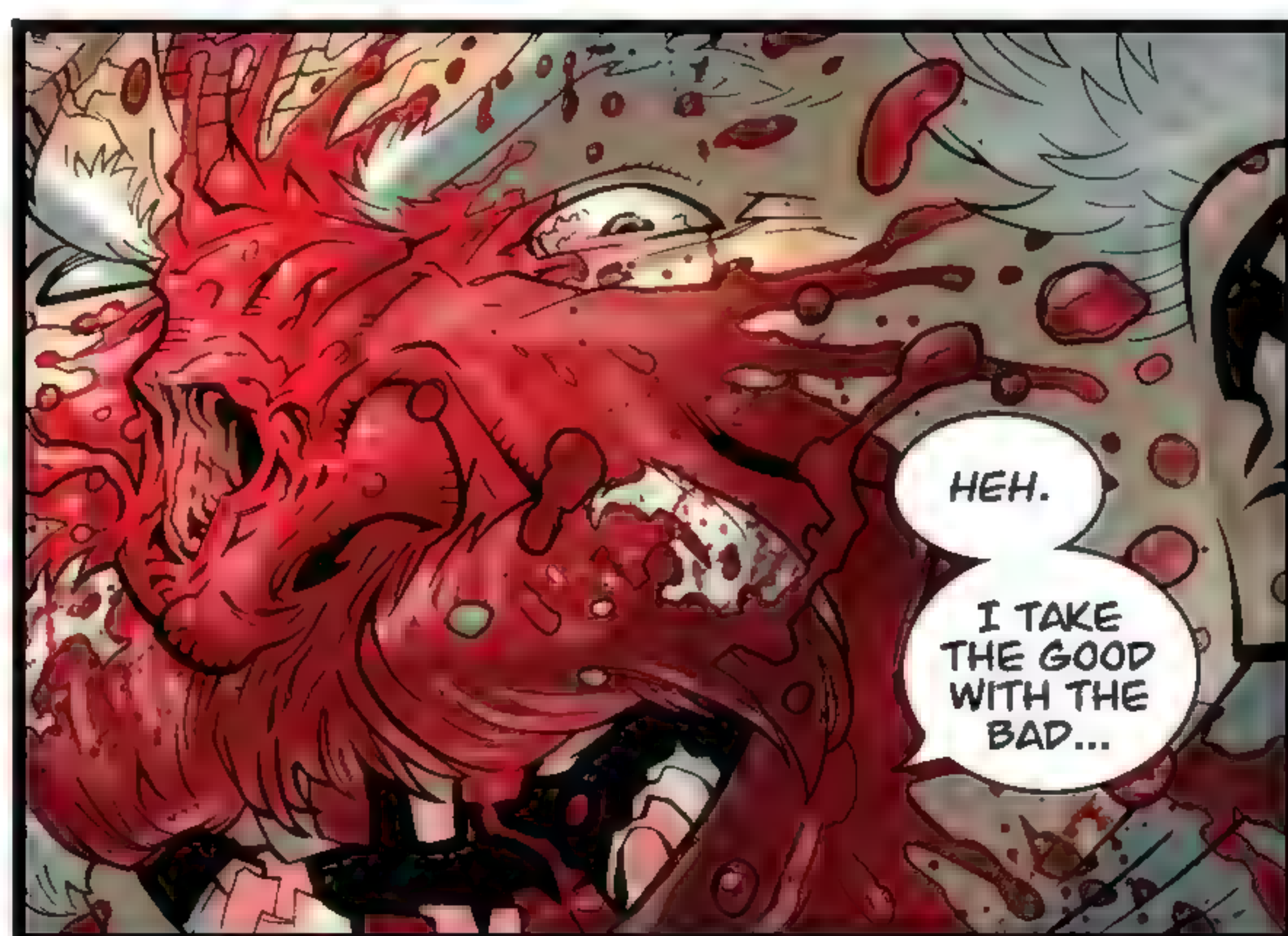
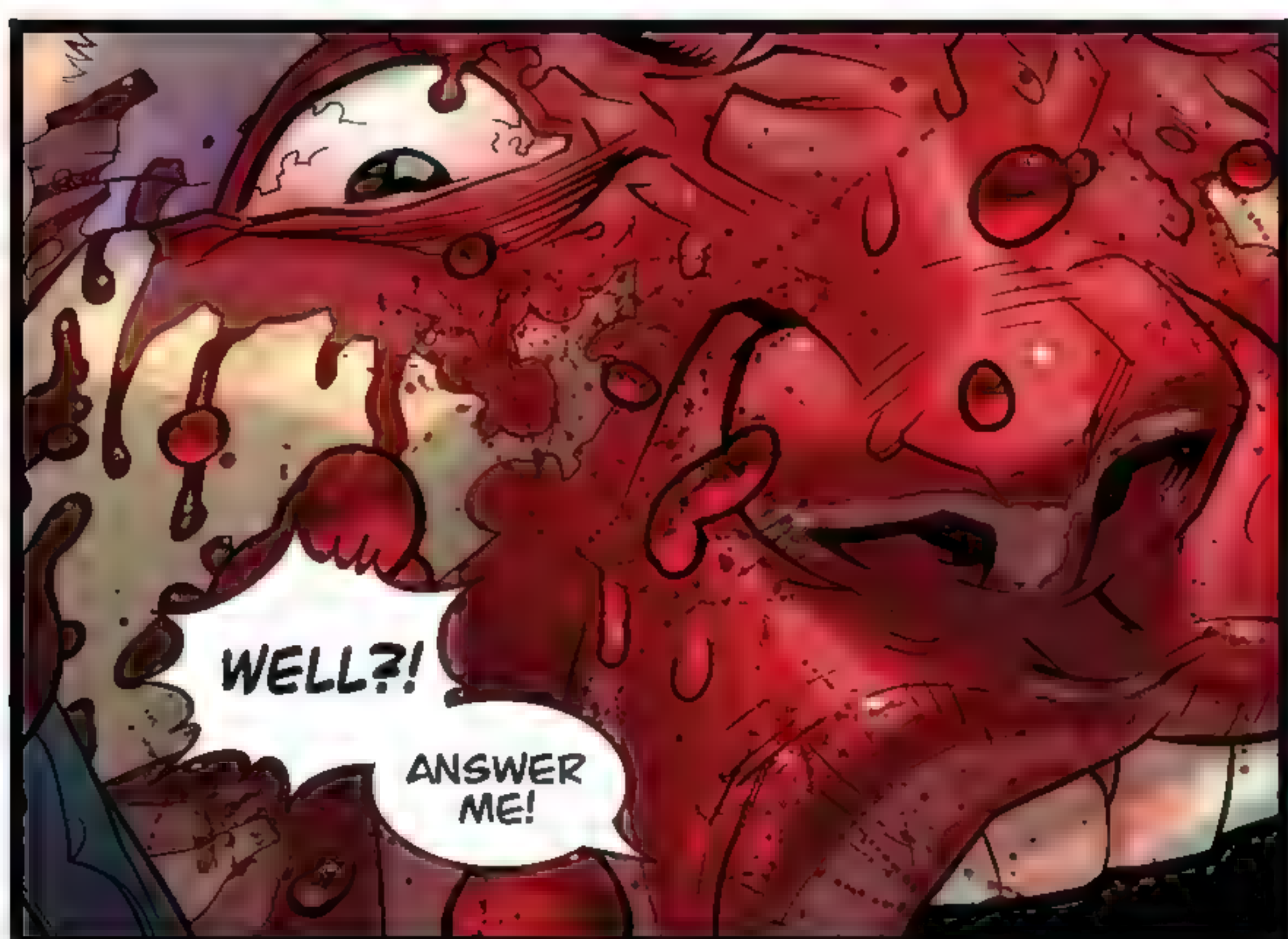




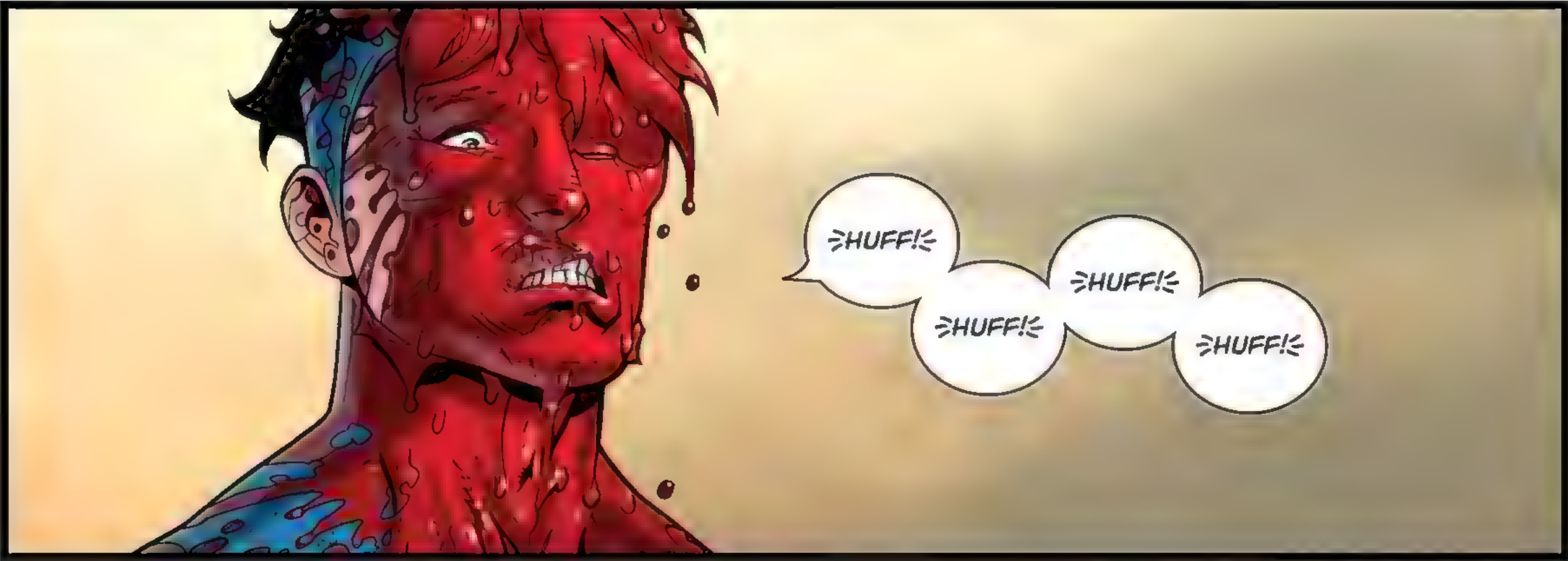


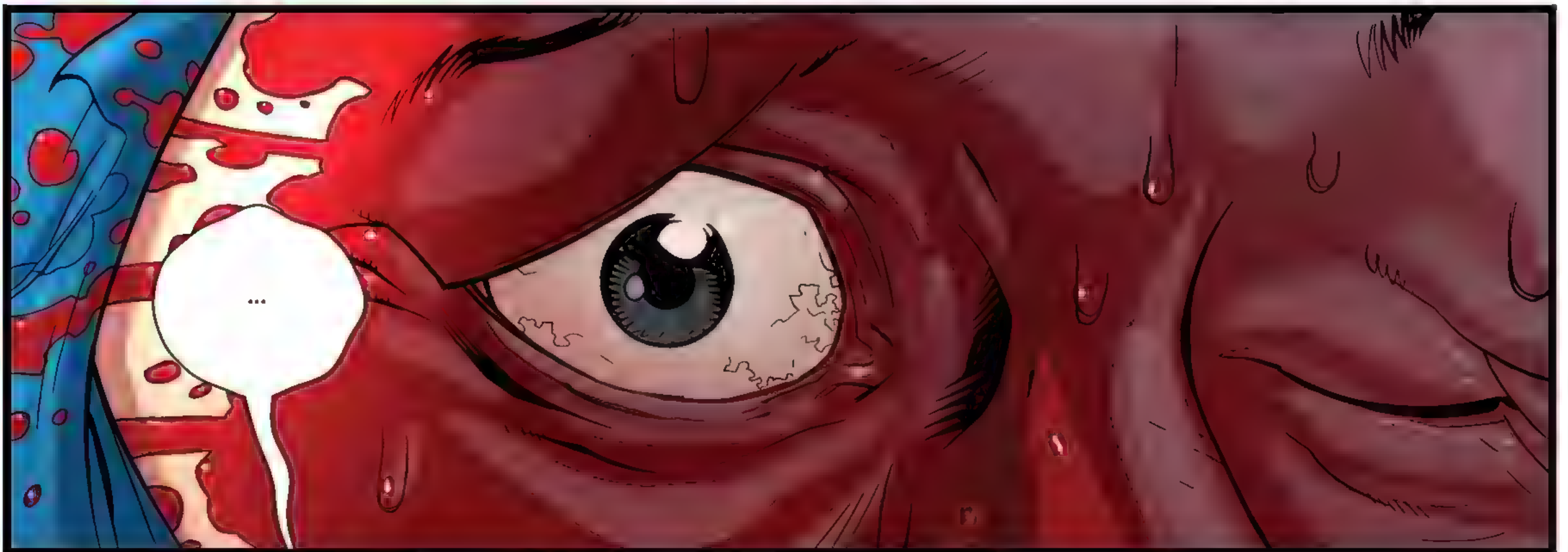
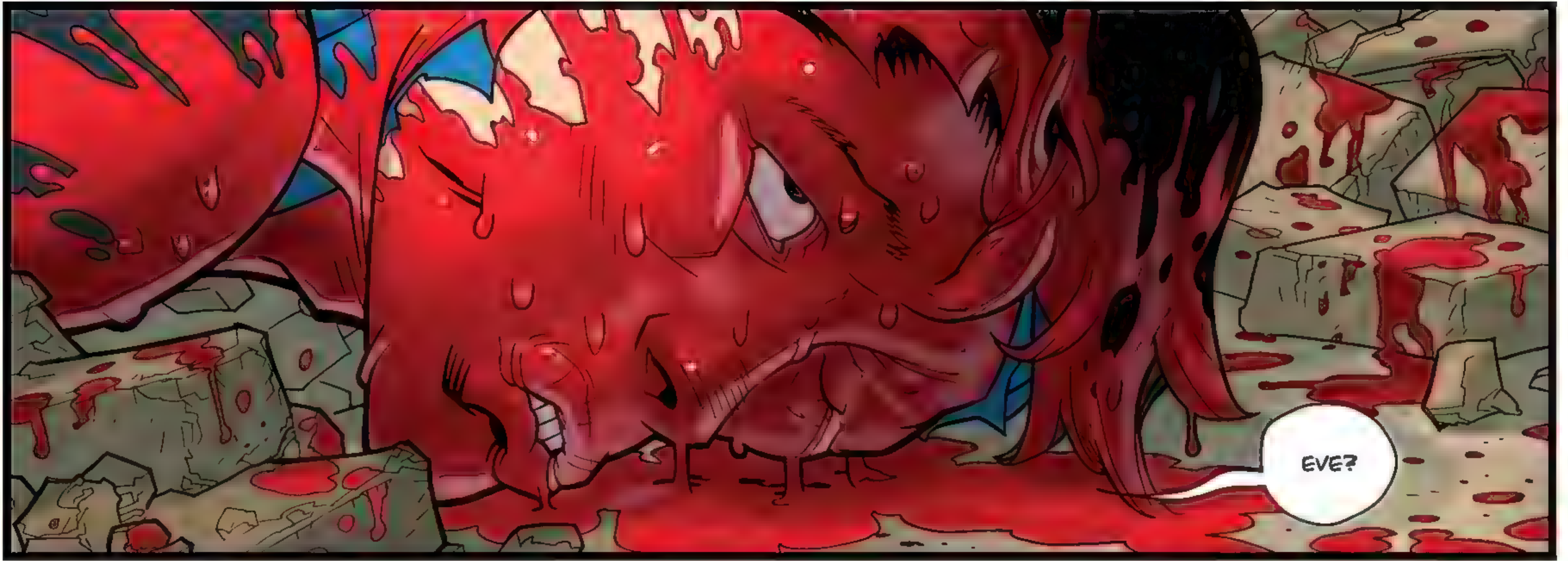








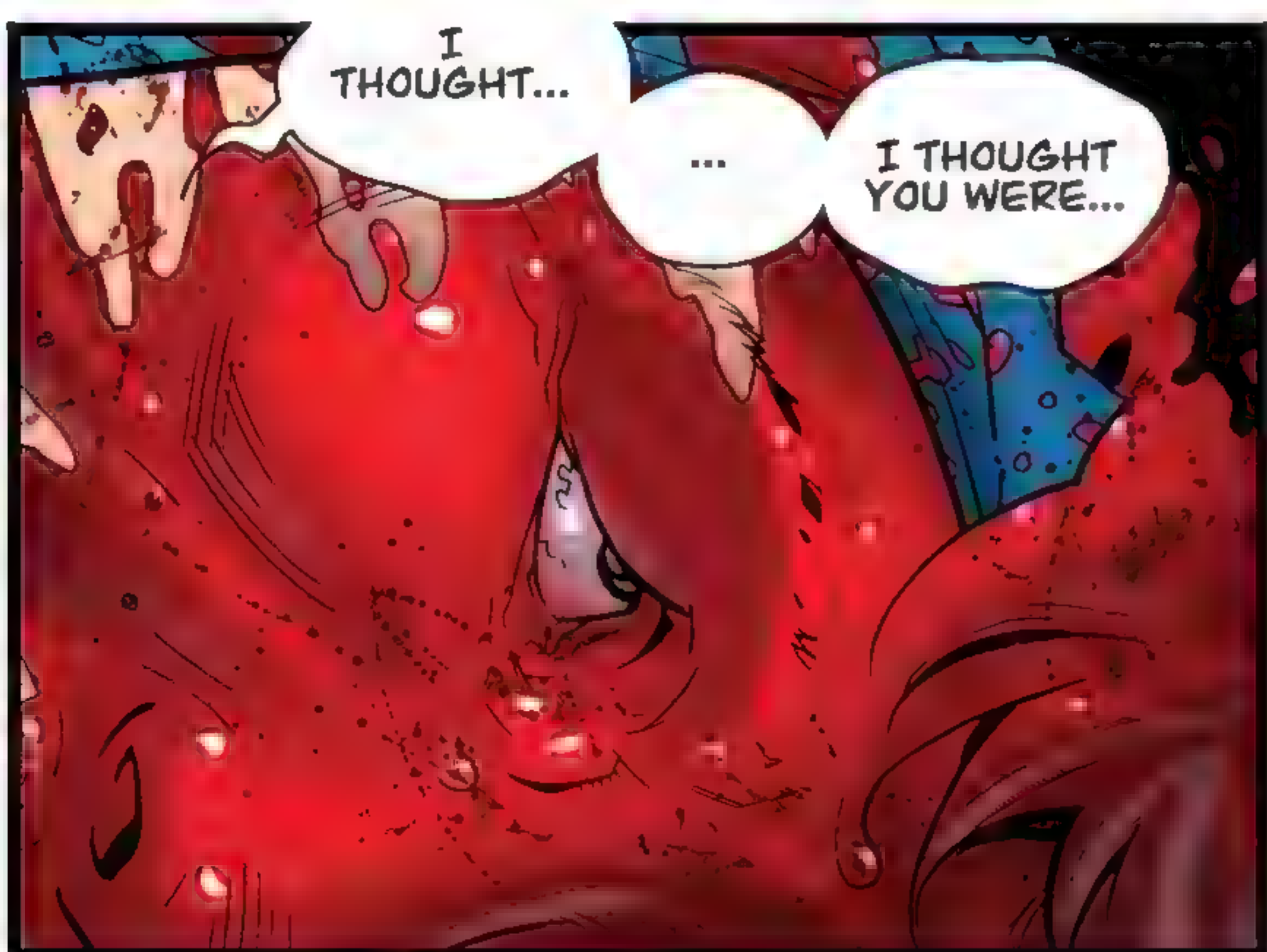
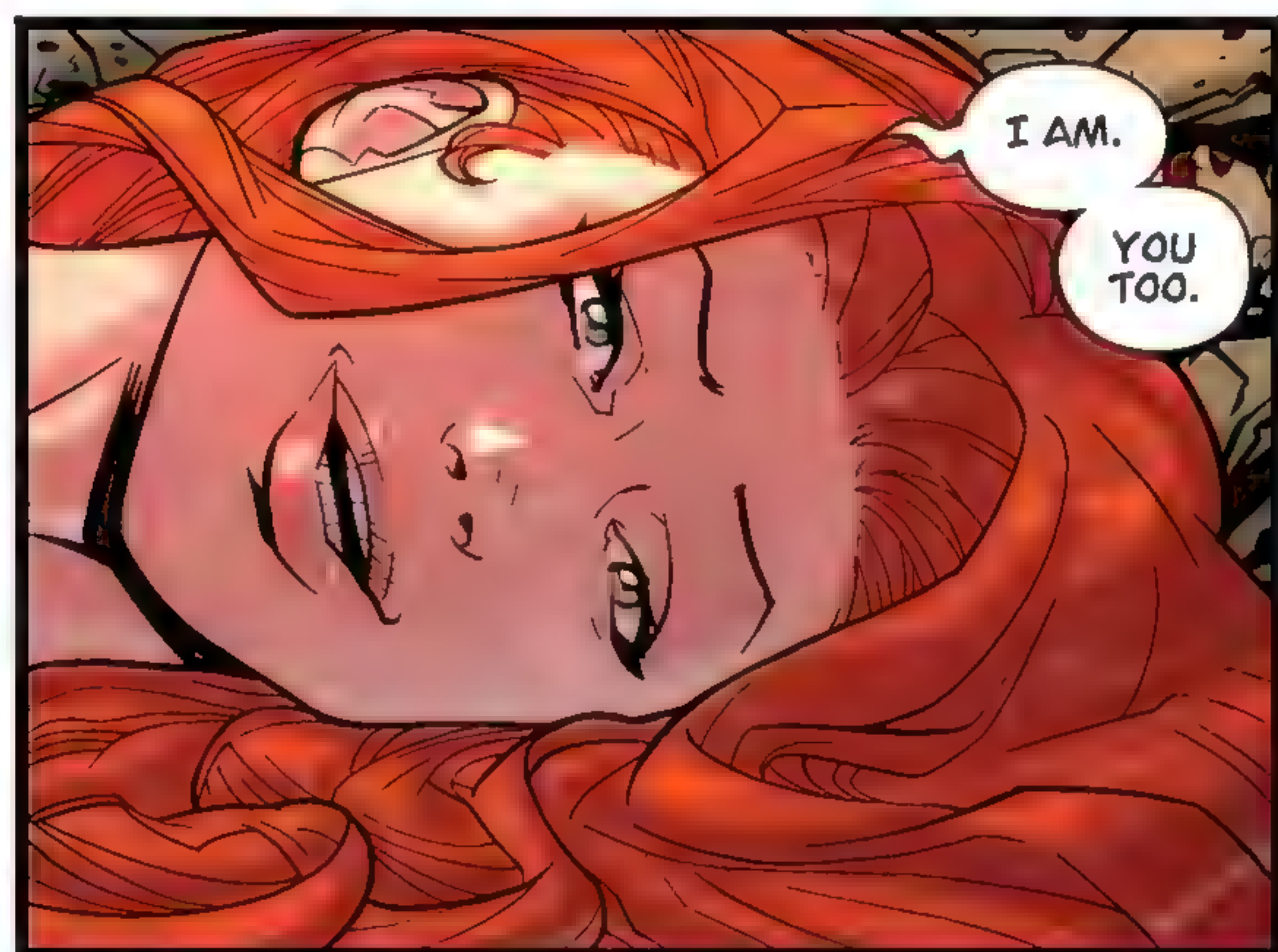
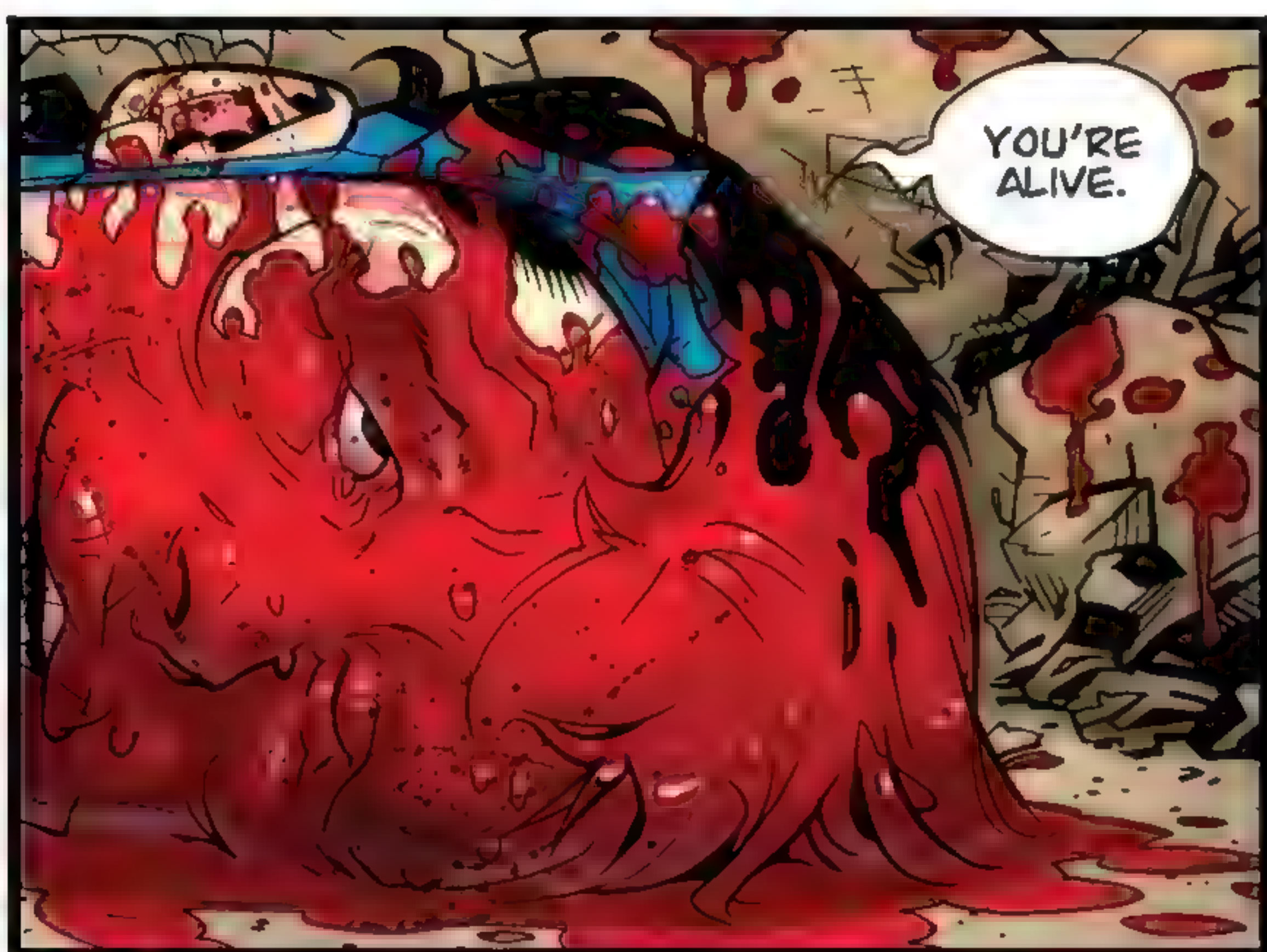
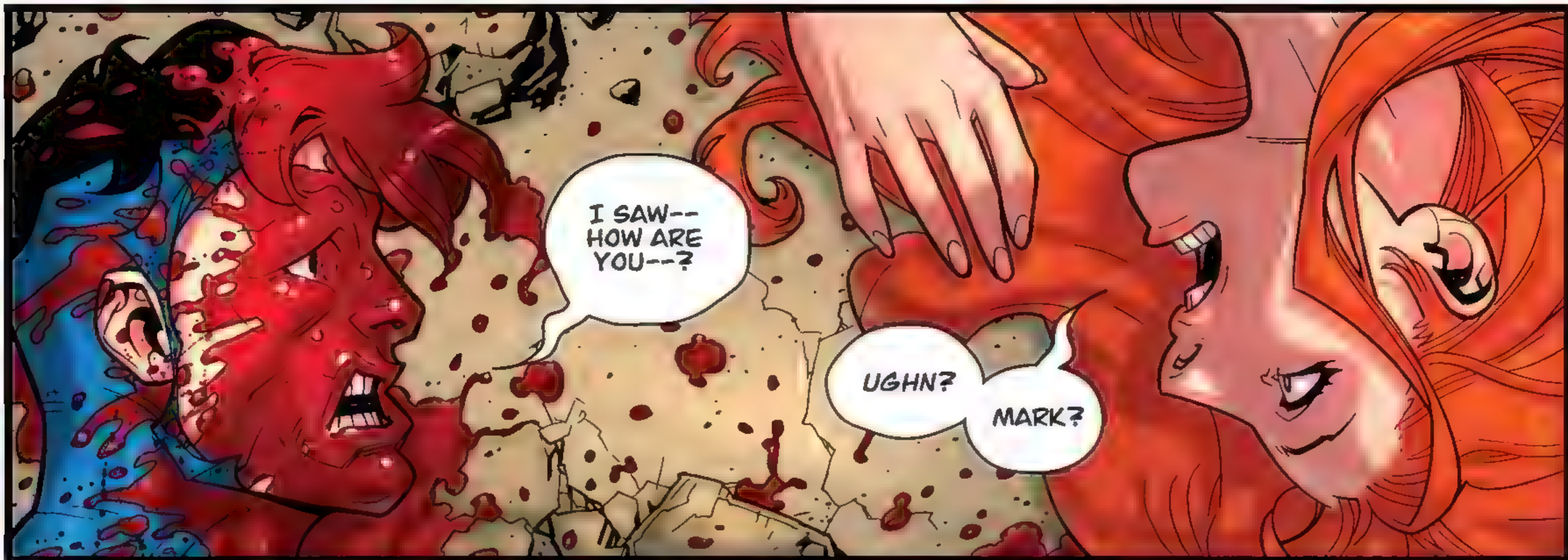


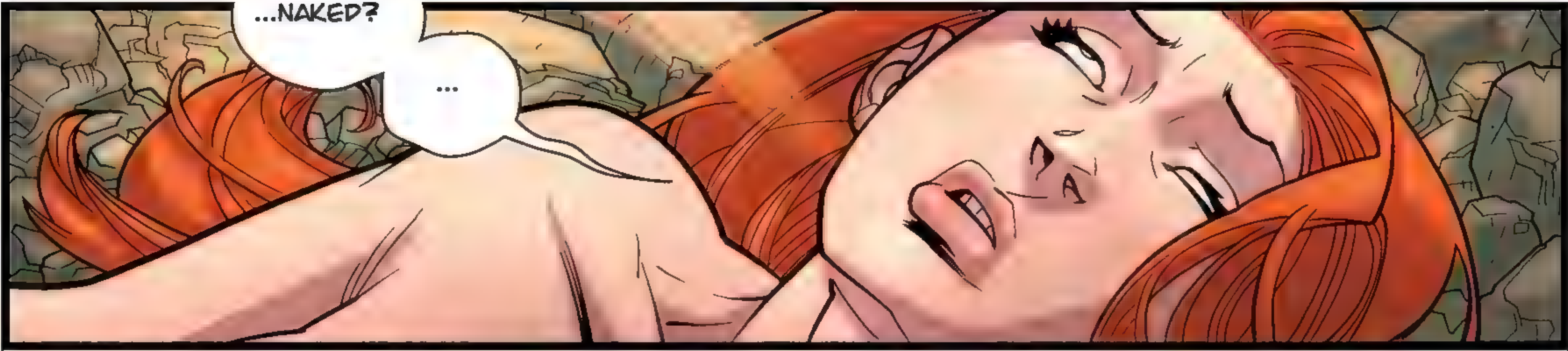




EVE?

HOW?

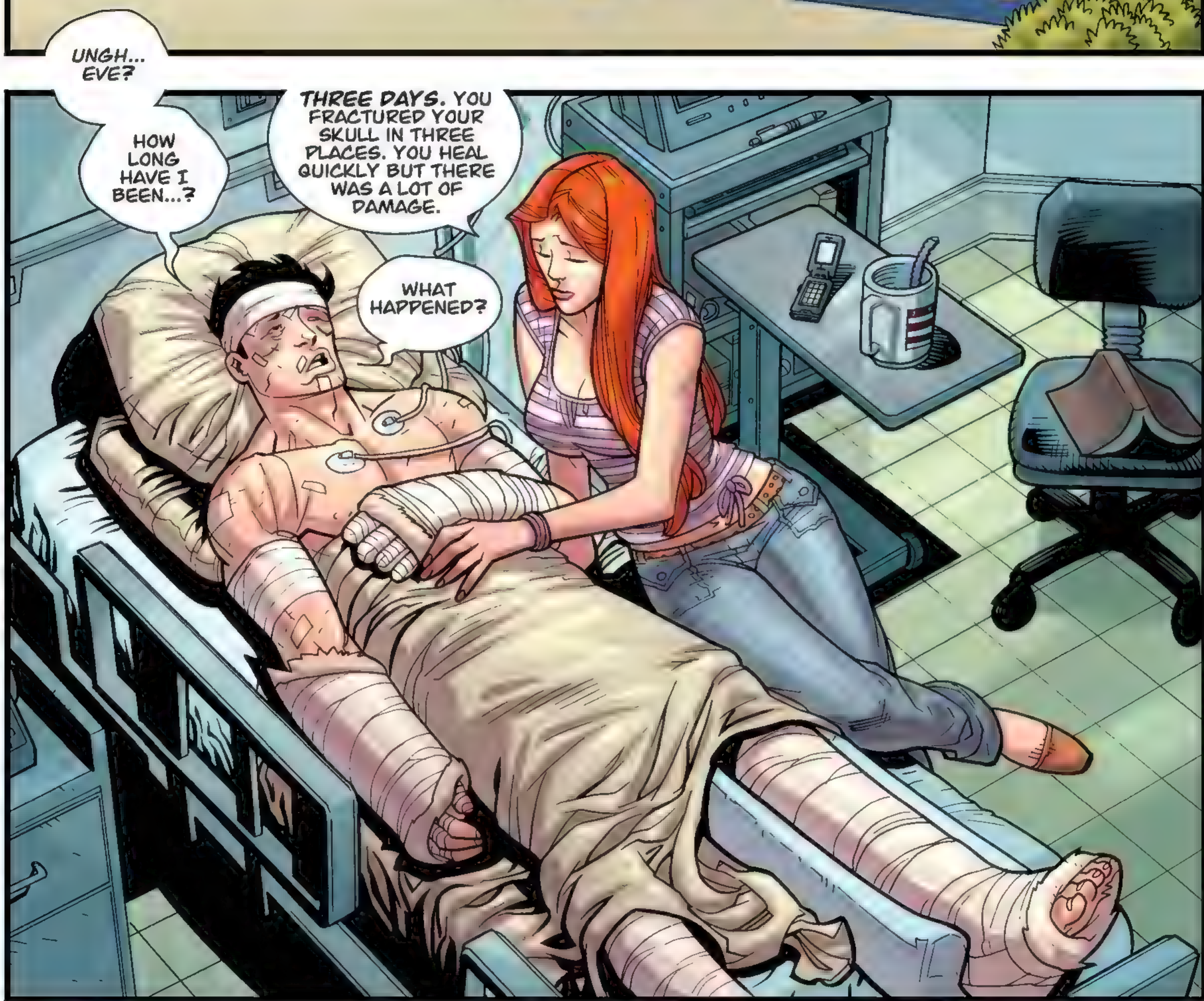
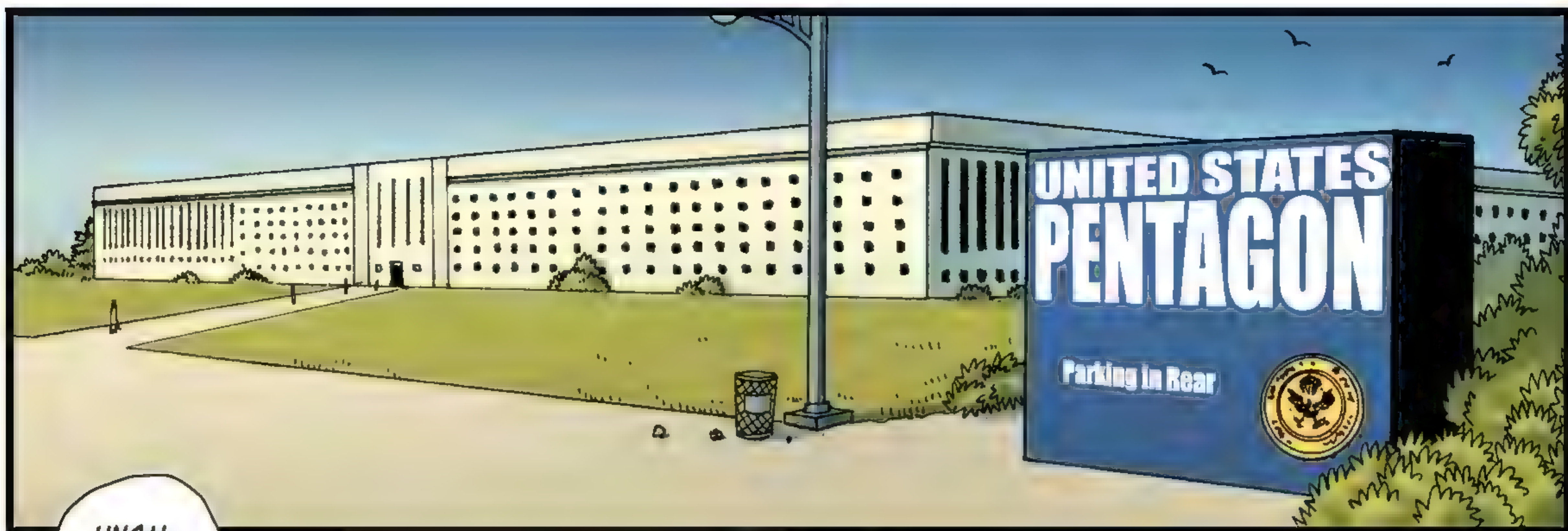






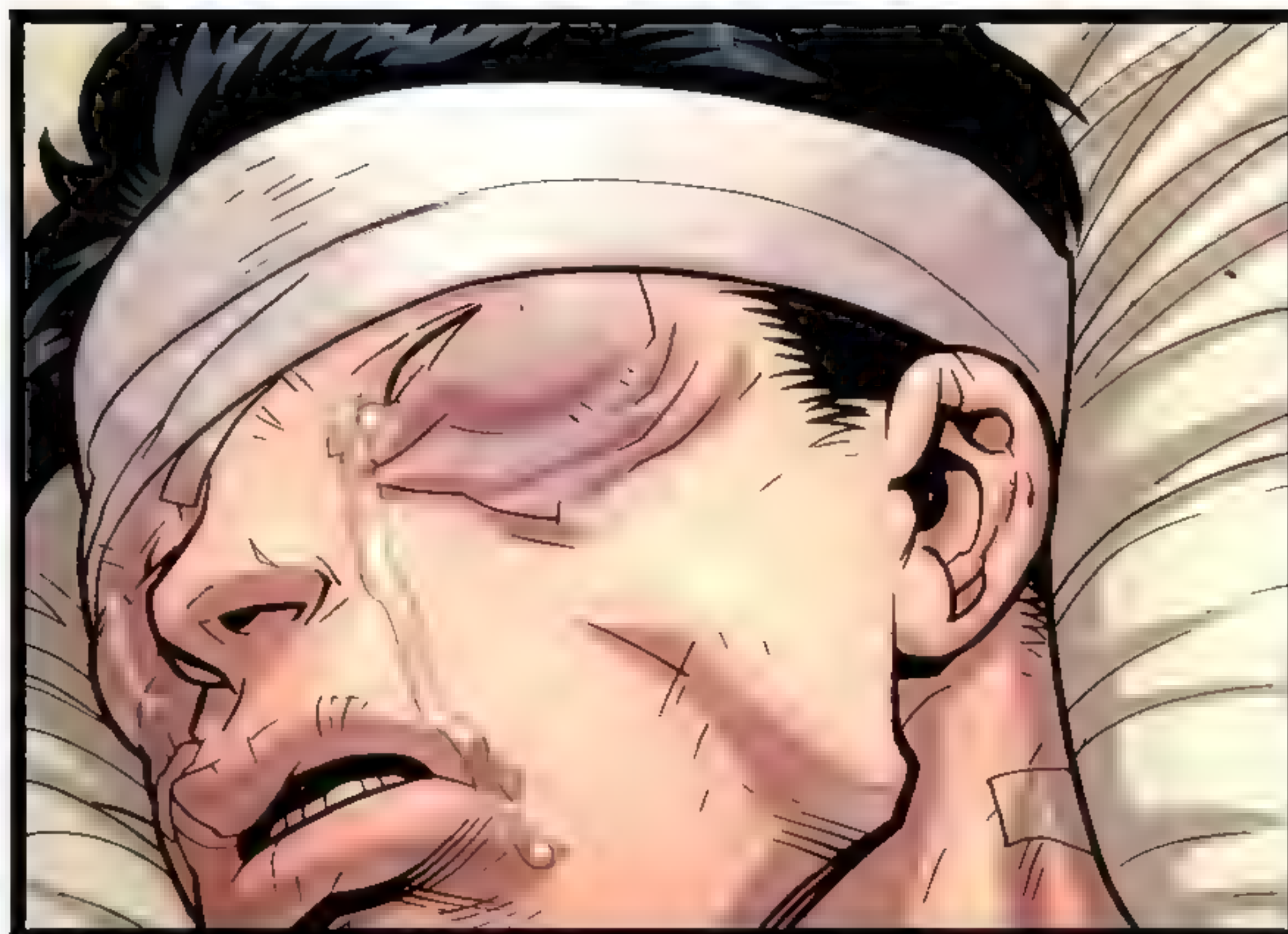
CHAPTER 65







NO... I
REMEMBER
EVERYTHING.

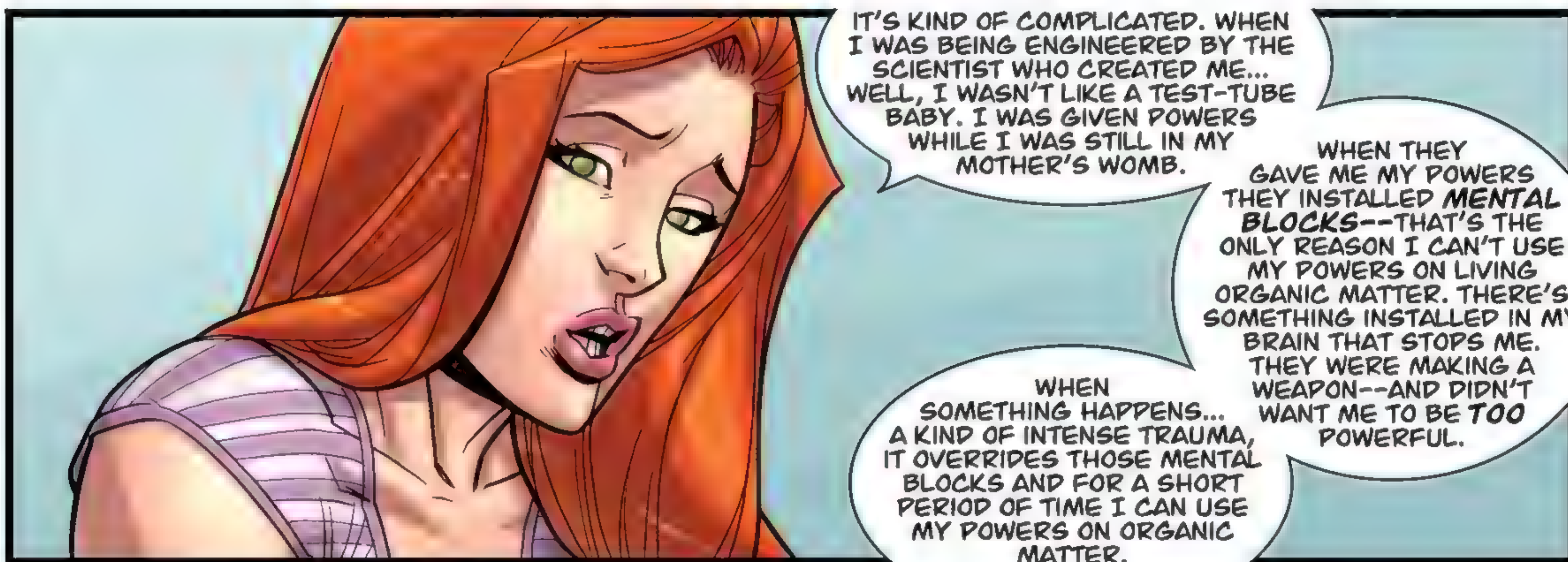


I REMEMBER
YOU... I
REMEMBER
THAT YOU
DIED.

ARE YOU
REALLY
HERE?
ARE YOU
ALIVE?

YES. I'M
ALIVE AND WELL.
I NEVER ACTUALLY
DIED... I JUST
GOT REALLY
CLOSE.

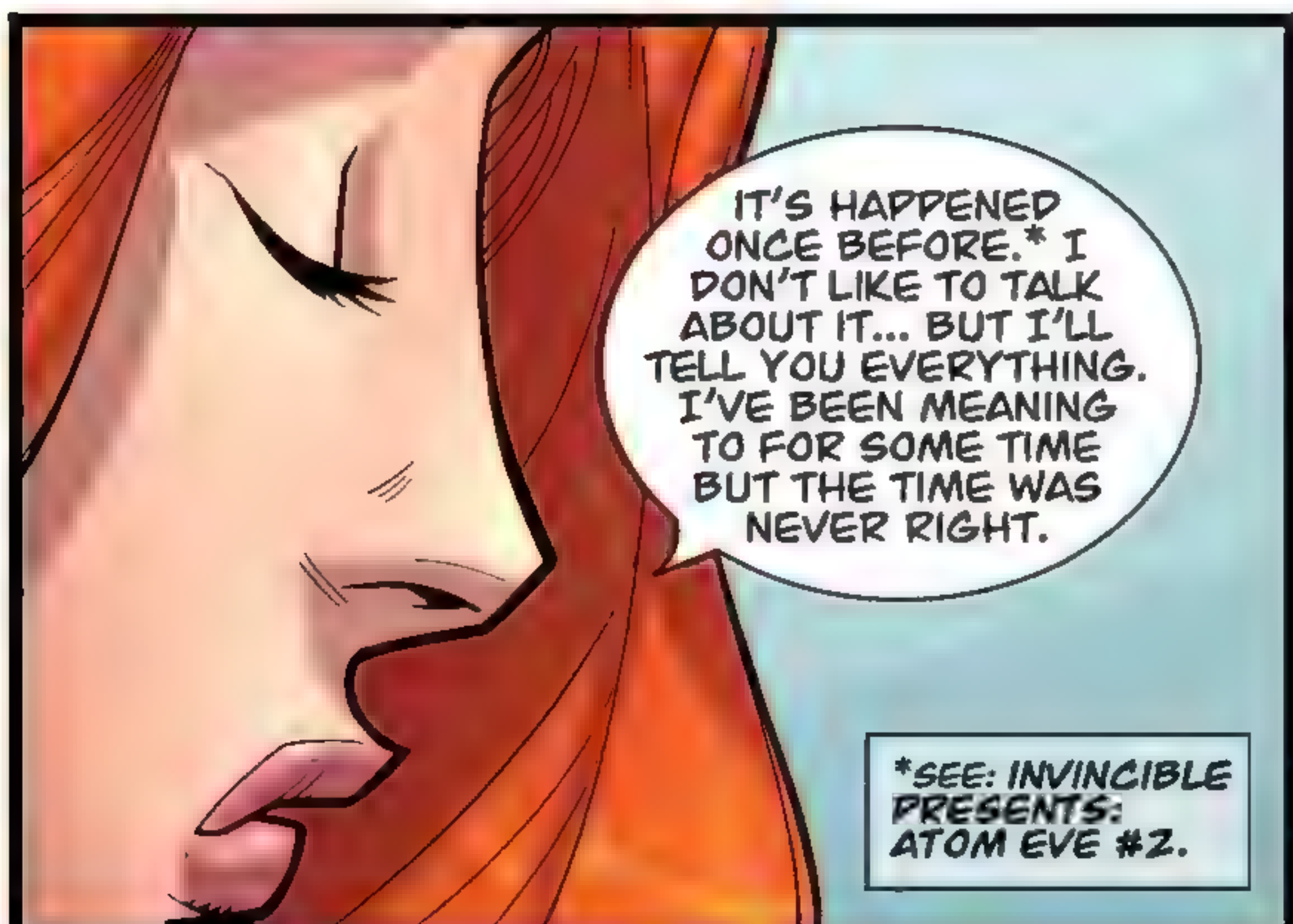
H--
HOW?



IT'S KIND OF COMPLICATED. WHEN
I WAS BEING ENGINEERED BY THE
SCIENTIST WHO CREATED ME...
WELL, I WASN'T LIKE A TEST-TUBE
BABY. I WAS GIVEN POWERS
WHILE I WAS STILL IN MY
MOTHER'S WOMB.

WHEN THEY
GAVE ME MY POWERS
THEY INSTALLED **MENTAL
BLOCKS**--THAT'S THE
ONLY REASON I CAN'T USE
MY POWERS ON LIVING
ORGANIC MATTER. THERE'S
SOMETHING INSTALLED IN MY
BRAIN THAT STOPS ME.
THEY WERE MAKING A
WEAPON--AND DIDN'T
WANT ME TO BE TOO
POWERFUL.

WHEN
SOMETHING HAPPENS...
A KIND OF INTENSE TRAUMA,
IT OVERRIDES THOSE MENTAL
BLOCKS AND FOR A SHORT
PERIOD OF TIME I CAN USE
MY POWERS ON ORGANIC
MATTER.

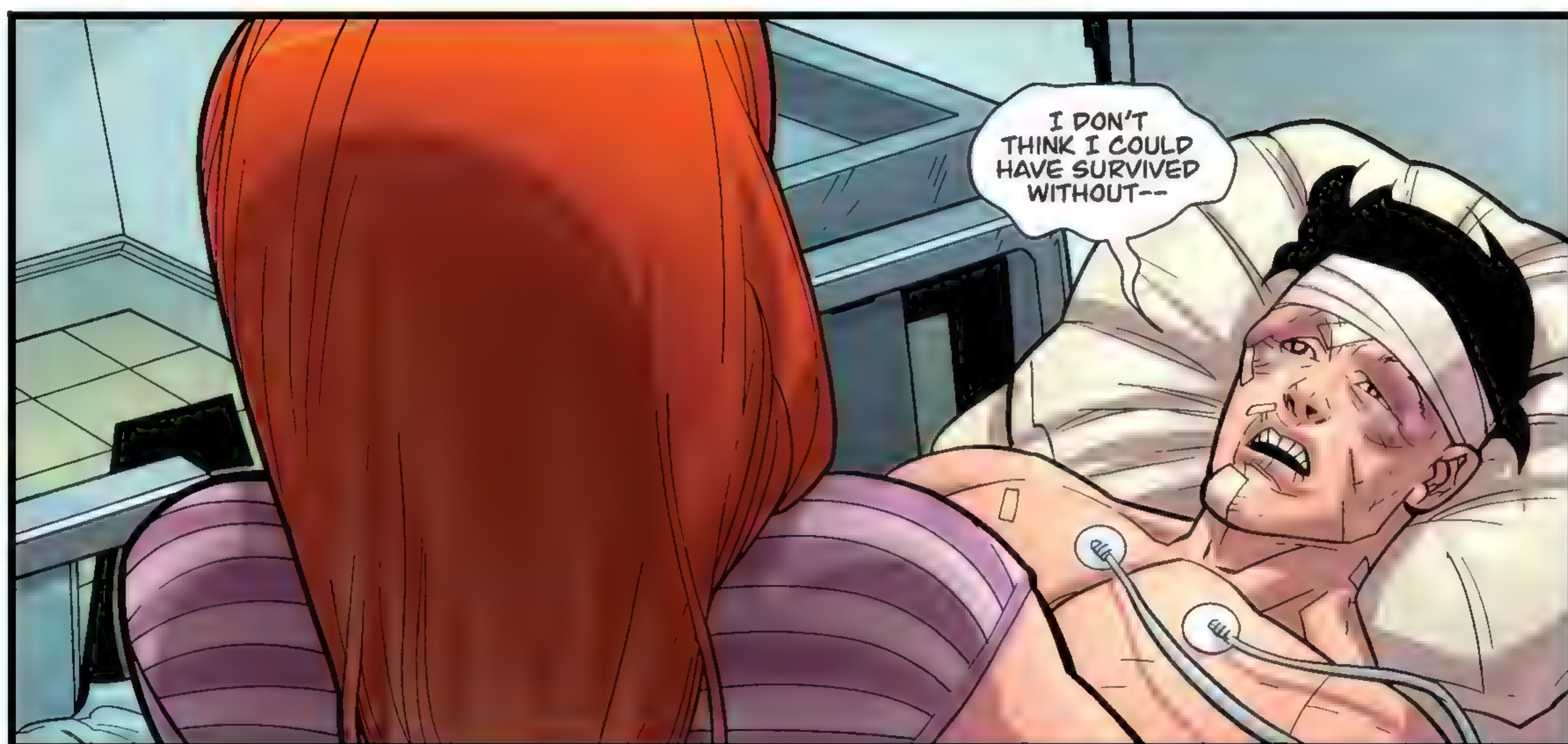


IT'S HAPPENED
ONCE BEFORE.* I
DON'T LIKE TO TALK
ABOUT IT... BUT I'LL
TELL YOU EVERYTHING.
I'VE BEEN MEANING
TO FOR SOME TIME
BUT THE TIME WAS
NEVER RIGHT.

*SEE: INVINCIBLE
PRESENTS:
ATOM EVE #2.



SO BASICALLY...
BEING NEAR DEATH
WAS STRESSFUL
ENOUGH TO ALLOW
ME TO REBUILD
MY BODY.

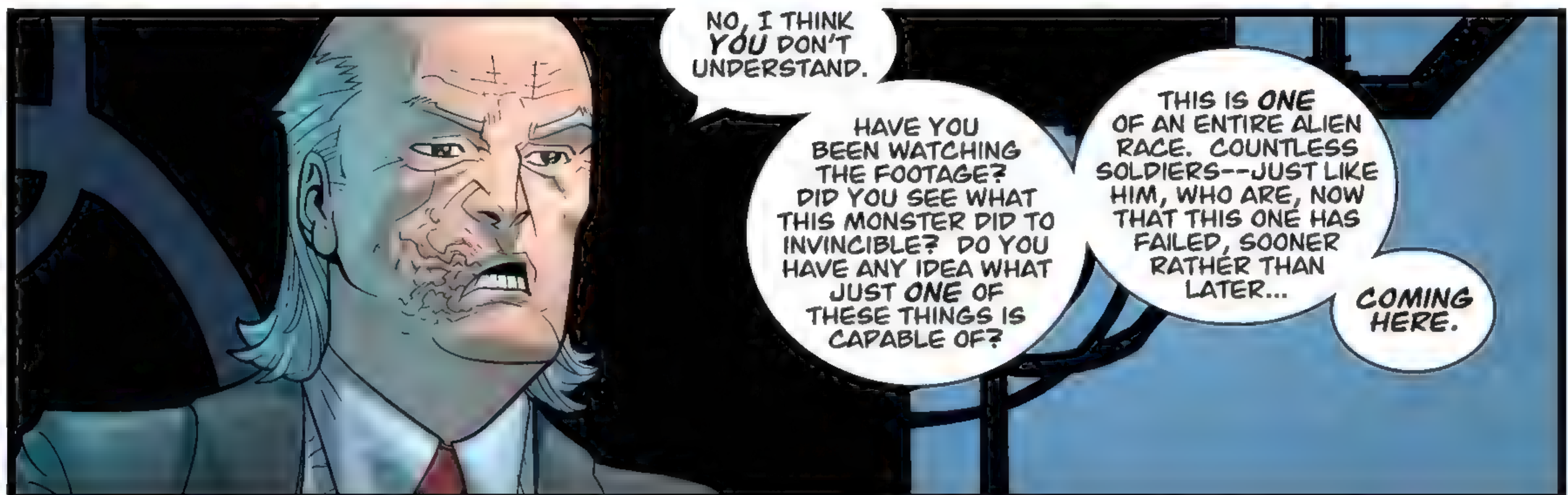




I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND. I WOULD LOVE TO HAVE SO MUCH AS ONE OF THESE GUYS COMPLETED AND OPERATIONAL... BUT IT'S JUST NOT FEASIBLE.

I'M DOING MY BEST--REALLY. THERE'S JUST--SO MUCH WORK INVOLVED IN REBUILDING THESE BODIES. I'M ESSENTIALLY INVENTING NEW TOOLS TO MAKE THIS JOB POSSIBLE.

IT SIMPLY CAN'T BE RUSHED.



NO, I THINK YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.

HAVE YOU BEEN WATCHING THE FOOTAGE? DID YOU SEE WHAT THIS MONSTER DID TO INVINCIBLE? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT JUST ONE OF THESE THINGS IS CAPABLE OF?

THIS IS ONE OF AN ENTIRE ALIEN RACE. COUNTLESS SOLDIERS--JUST LIKE HIM, WHO ARE, NOW THAT THIS ONE HAS FAILED, SOONER RATHER THAN LATER...

COMING HERE.



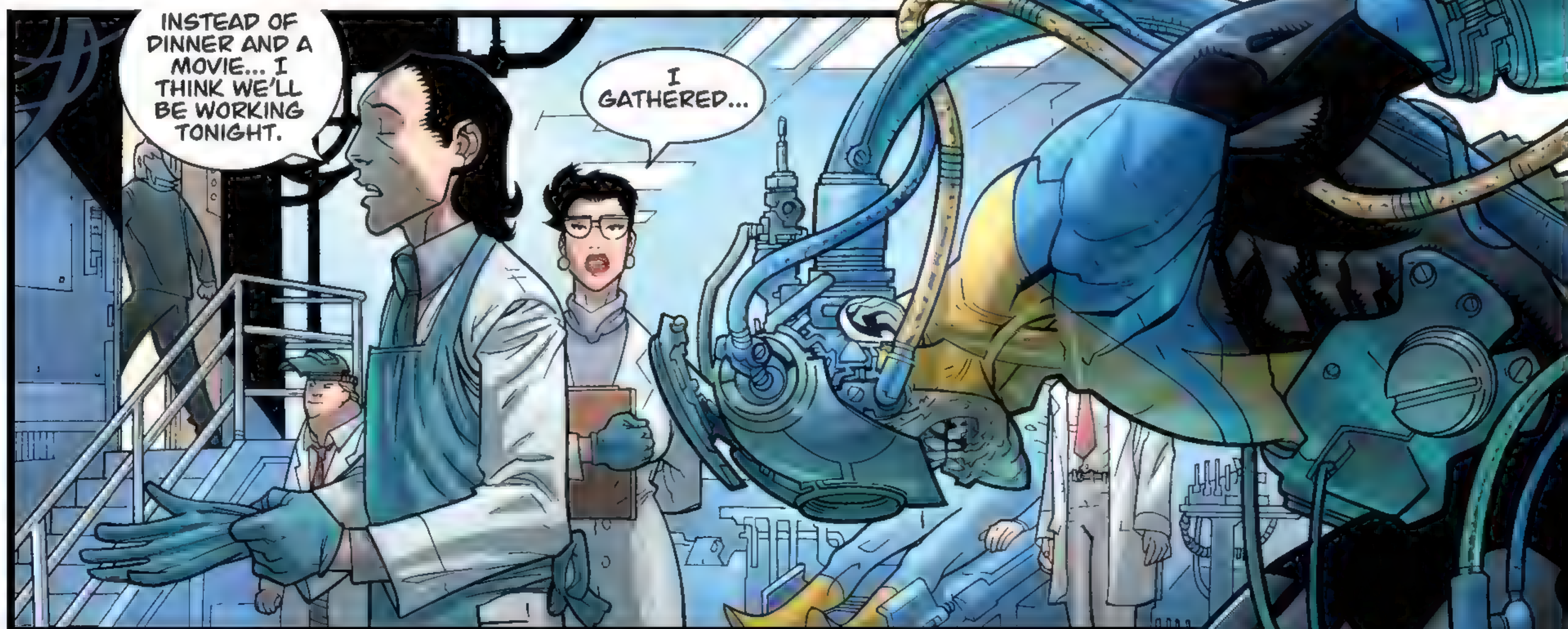
I HAD, OF COURSE, ALREADY CONSIDERED THIS... BUT HEARING IT PUT SO BLUNTLY...

I THINK I UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION.



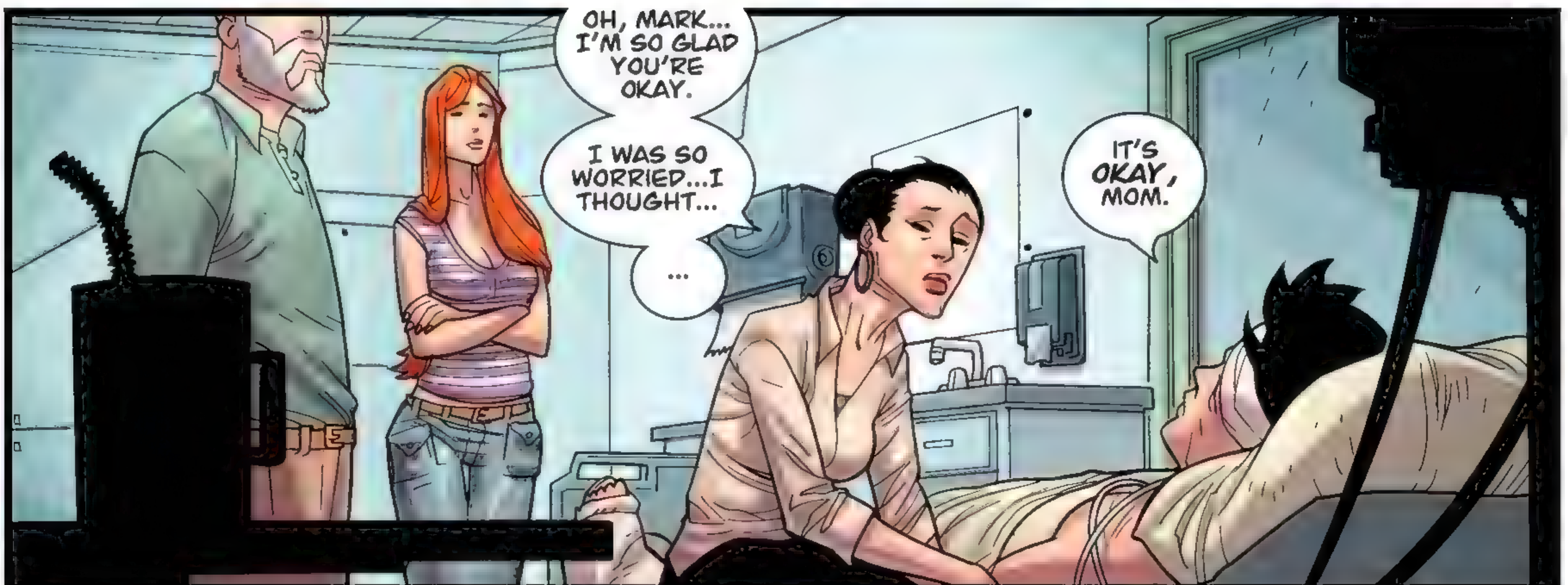
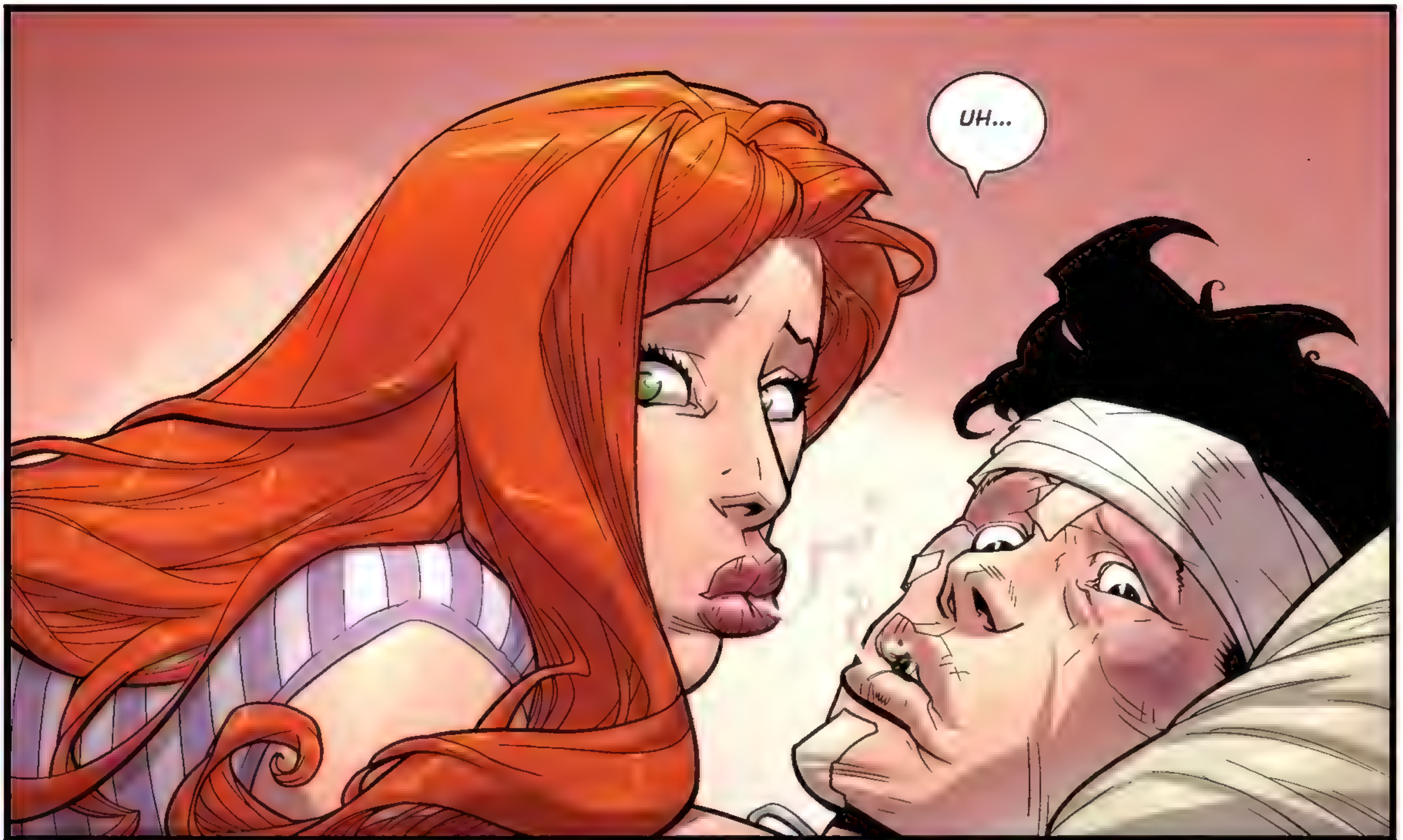
SPARE NO EXPENSE-- I DON'T CARE WHAT IT TAKES--

FINISH THESE THINGS PRONTO!



INSTEAD OF DINNER AND A MOVIE... I THINK WE'LL BE WORKING TONIGHT.

I GATHERED...





NO, IT'S NOT.

I'M SO SORRY, MARK.



I DON'T UNDERSTAND, MOM.

WHY?



WHEN I MARRIED YOUR FATHER... I KNEW ABOUT HIS POWERS--WHAT HE DID. I DIDN'T KNOW EVERYTHING...

...BUT I KNEW ENOUGH.

I BROUGHT YOU INTO THIS LIFE. I RAISED YOU, KNOWING THAT **THIS** WOULD BE YOUR LIFE. WE PRACTICALLY **ENCOURAGED** YOU. EVERY TIME I SEE YOU OUT THERE... GETTING HURT, FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE...

I FEEL LIKE IT'S MY FAULT.



MOM, IT'S NOT YOUR--

I COULD HAVE TAKEN YOU AWAY FROM ALL THIS... WE COULD HAVE HIDDEN YOUR FATHER'S POWERS LONGER.



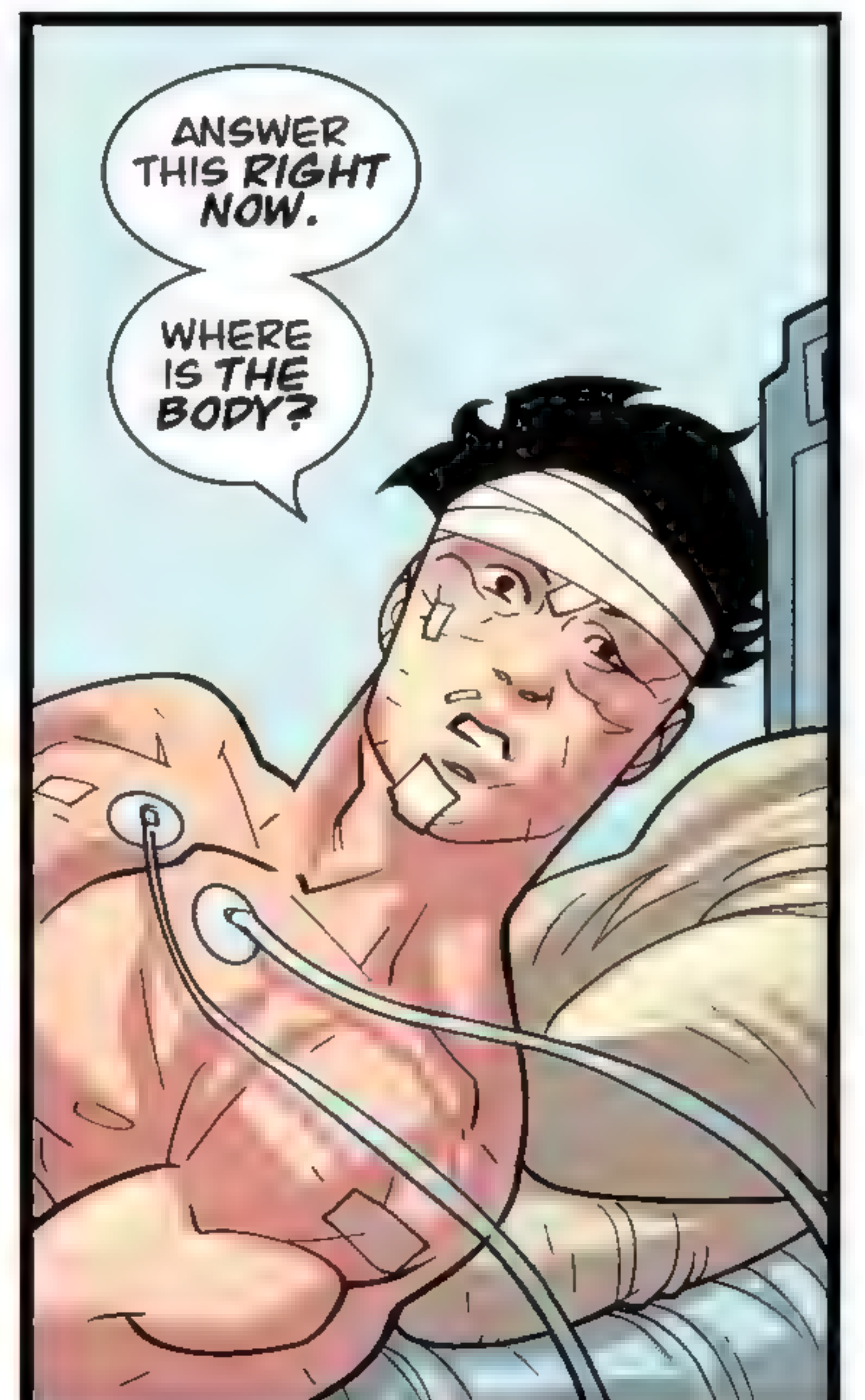
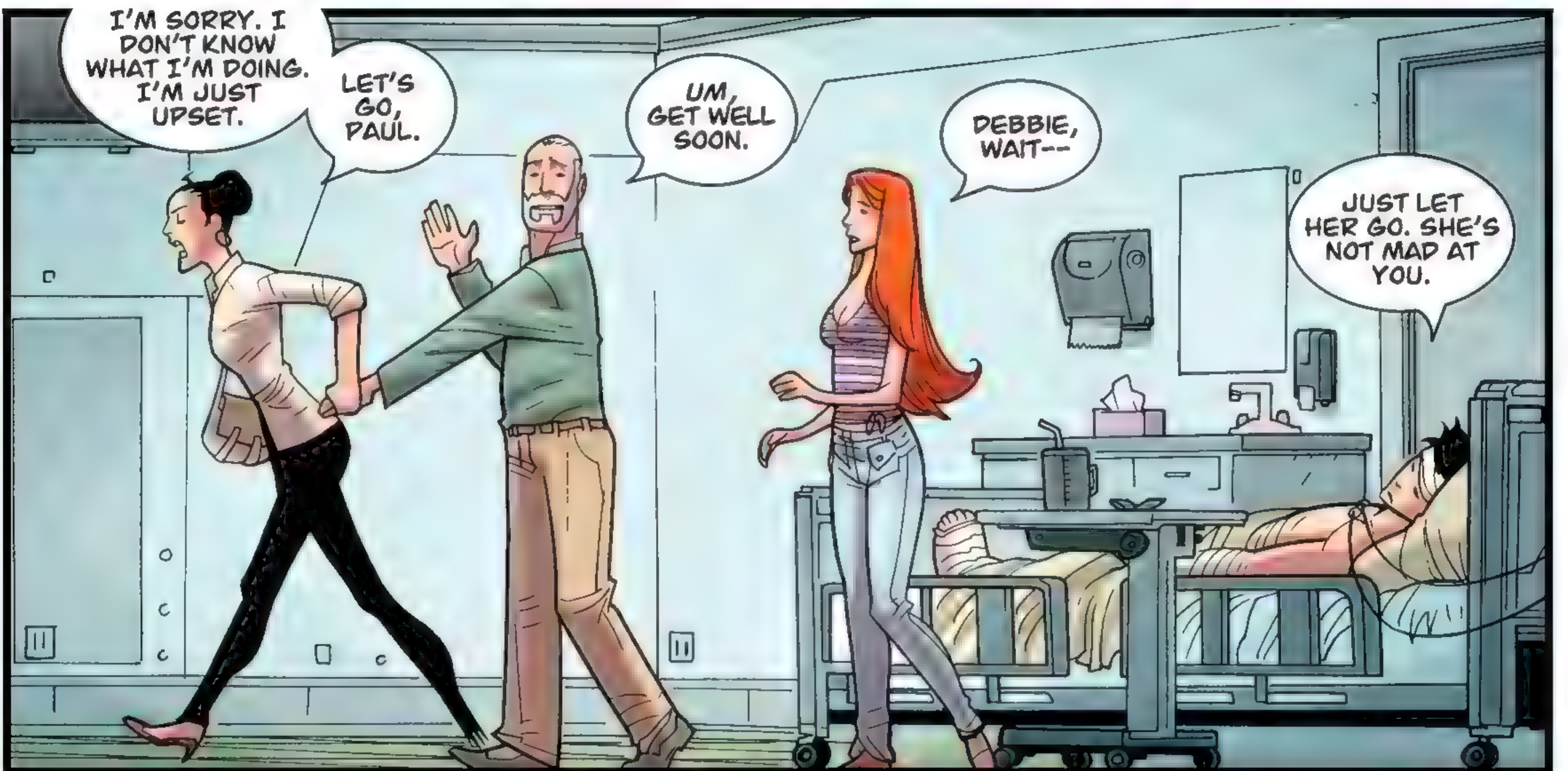
I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET HIM CONVINCE ME THIS WOULD BE OKAY. YOU COULD BE DOING SOMETHING ELSE WITH THESE POWERS-- ANYTHING...

...ANYTHING BUT THIS.

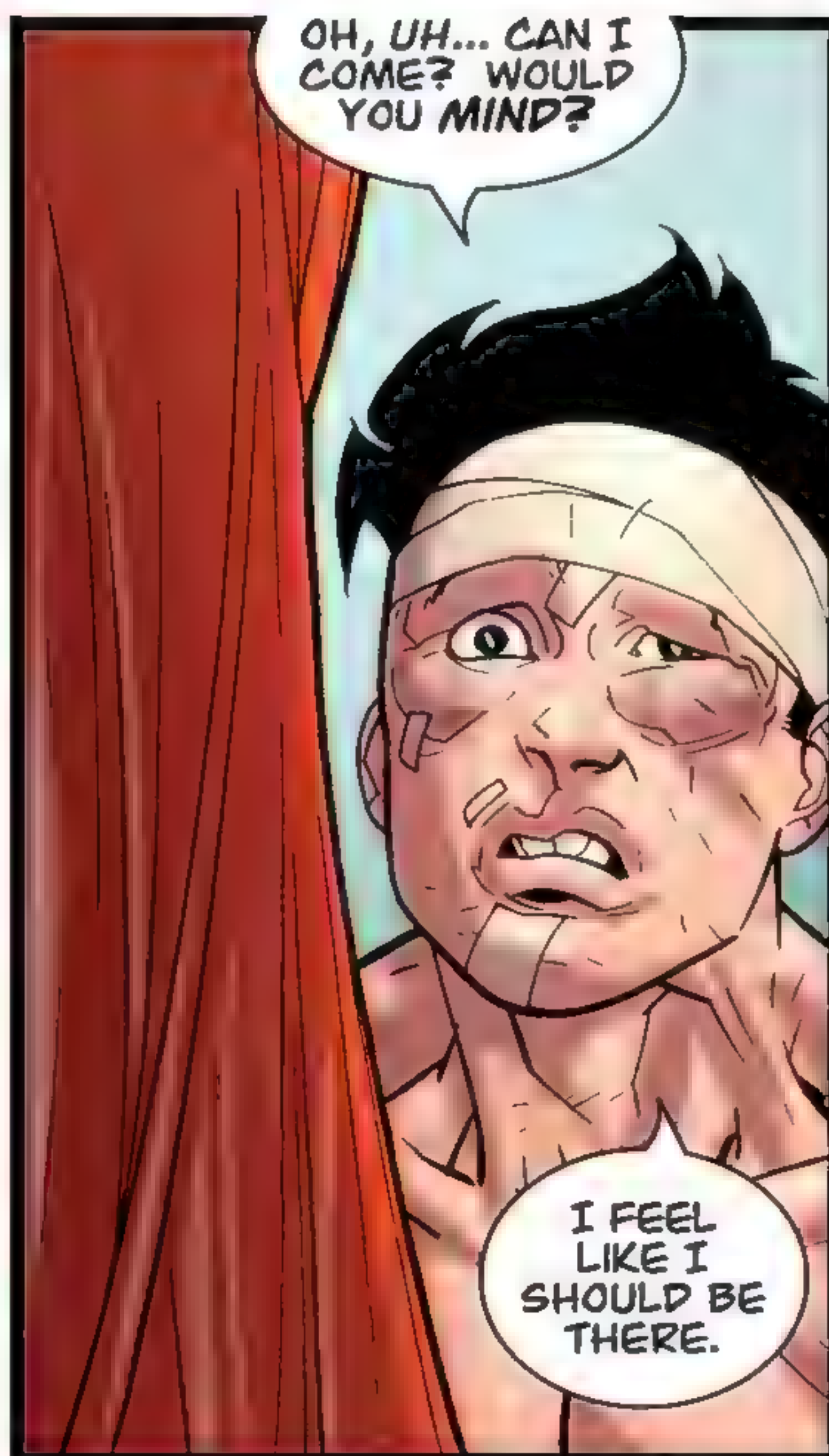
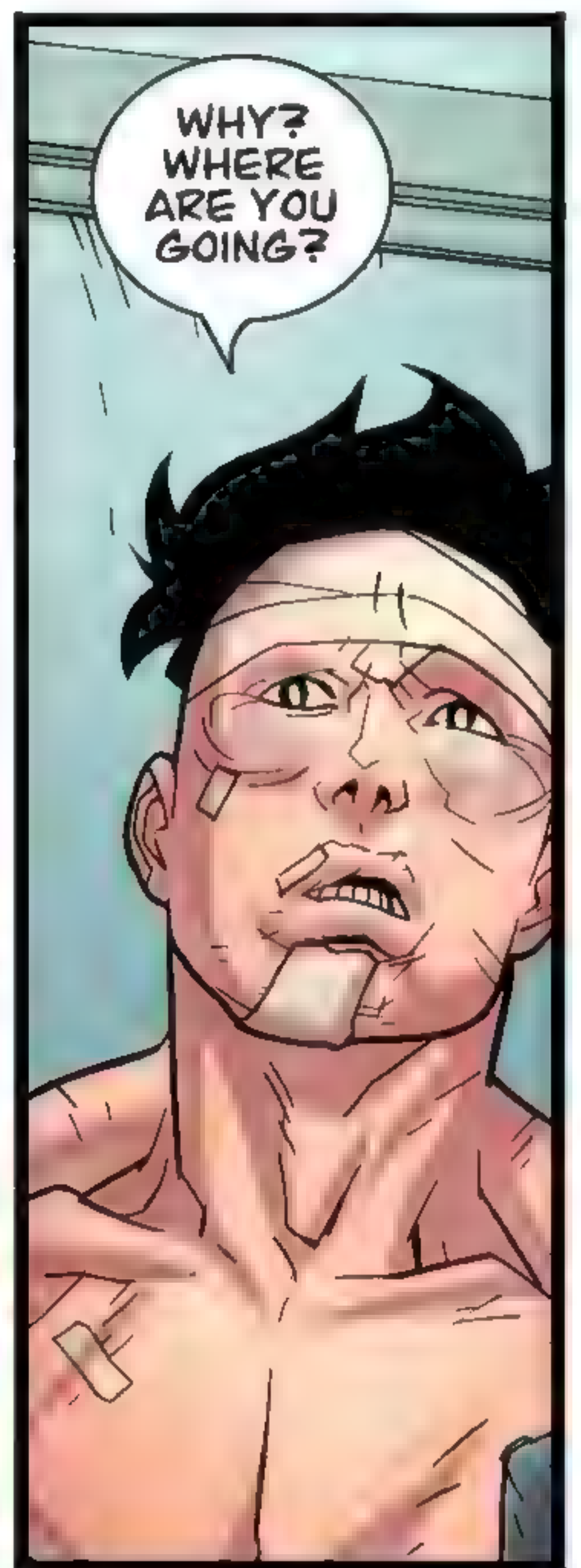
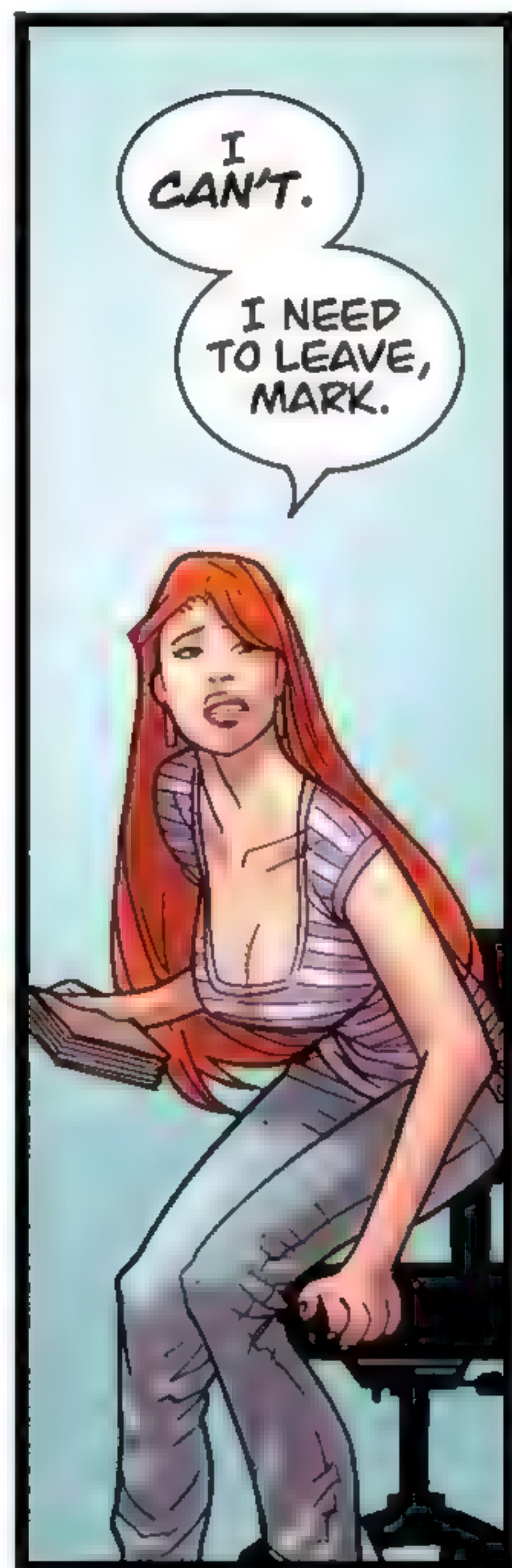
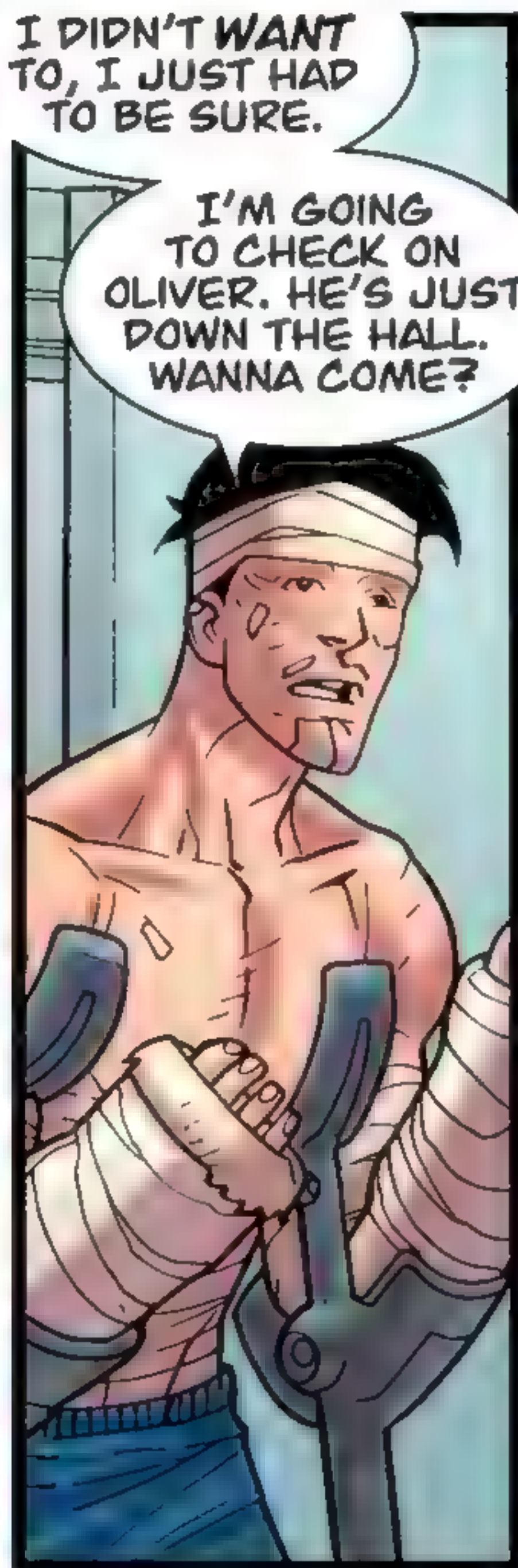
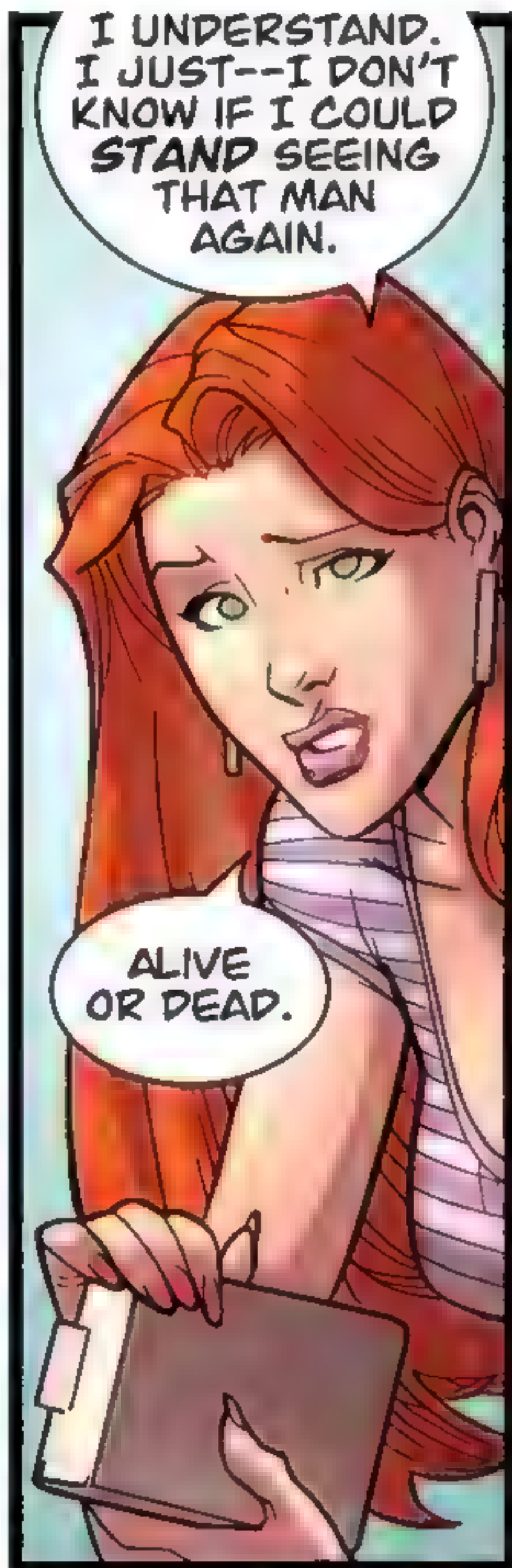


BUT WHAT I'M DOING IS GOOD.

PEOPLE NEED ME--









...WE DIDN'T GET ALONG AT FIRST. HE WAS ALWAYS PUSHING MY BUTTONS.

HUH.

BUTTONS... ROBOT... HE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT WAS FUNNY. I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I DIDN'T LIKE HIM AT FIRST, THE TRUTH IS, I IDOLIZED HIM. HE WAS ALWAYS SO **CONFIDENT**, SO SURE OF HIMSELF AT ALL TIMES.

AND NOW HE'S GONE. I WILL MISS HIM MORE THAN I CAN EVER SAY.

HE WAS EVERYTHING I WANTED TO BE...

I'VE LIVED MOST OF MY LIFE THROUGH DRONES LIKE THE ONE YOU SEE BEFORE YOU NOW. I HAVE ALWAYS SIMPLY BEEN "**ROBOT**." I HAVE NEVER BEEN COMFORTABLE USING MY GIVEN NAME-- IT REMINDS ME OF THE DISFIGURED BODY I INHABITED MOST OF MY LIFE... BEFORE I TRANSFERRED MYSELF INTO A CLONED BODY OF MY OLDEST FRIEND.

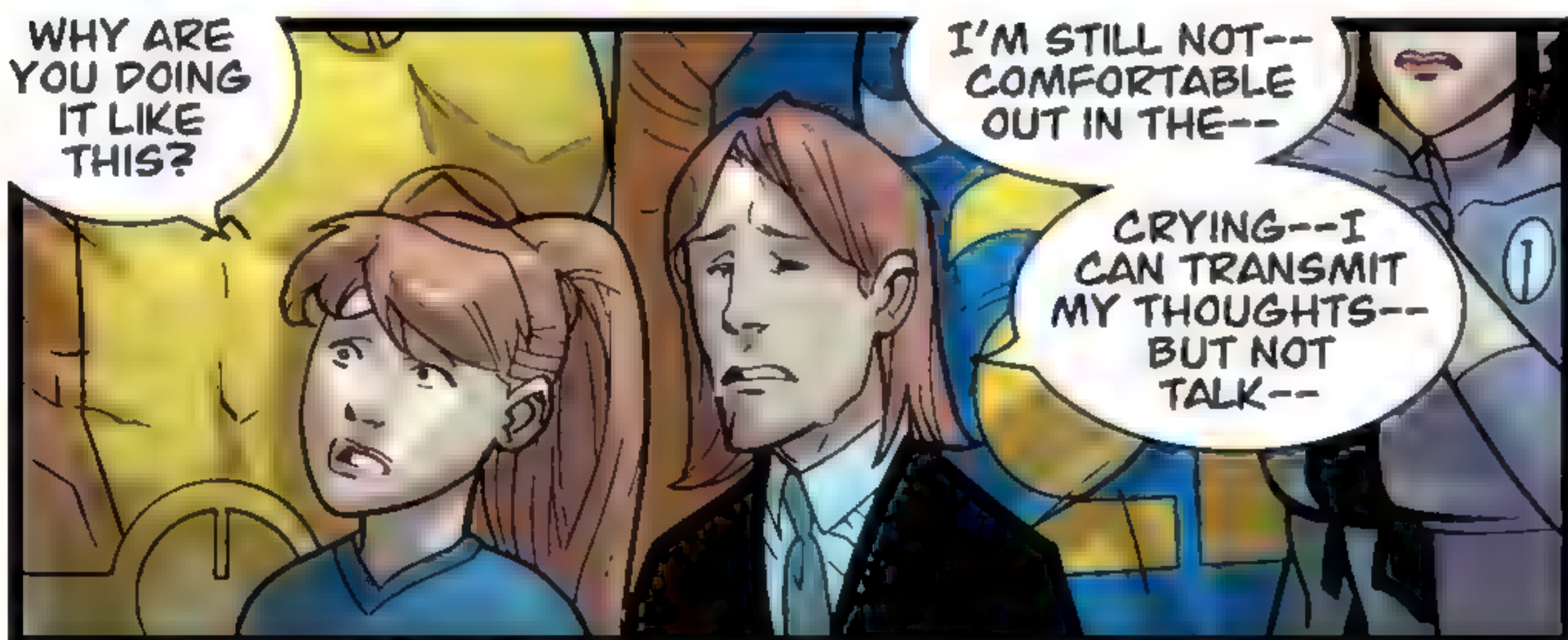
IN HONOR OF THIS FALLEN HERO, I'VE DECIDED THAT I WILL TAKE HIS NAME. I AM CHANGING MY NAME TO "**REX**." THAT MUCH OF HIM, AT LEAST, WILL LIVE ON.

HE WILL BE MISSED.

I ONLY HOPE THAT I CAN LIVE UP TO HIS SACRIFICE. HE DIED AS HE LIVED--SAVING LIVES.



NOW I BELIEVE ATOM EVE WANTED TO SAY A FEW WORDS.



WHY ARE YOU DOING IT LIKE THIS?

I'M STILL NOT-- COMFORTABLE OUT IN THE--

CRYING--I CAN TRANSMIT MY THOUGHTS-- BUT NOT TALK--



OH, HONEY, I DIDN'T-- YOU'RE APORABLE.

I LOVE YOU... "**REX**."

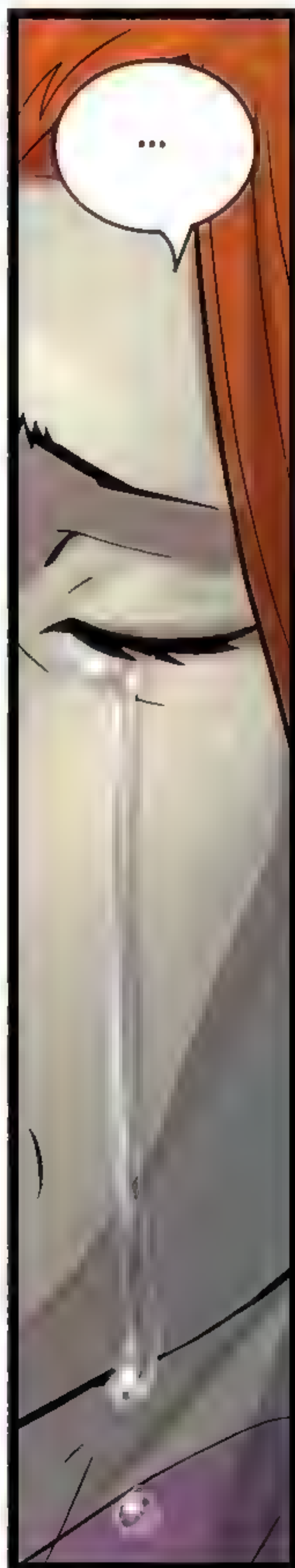


REX SPLODE WAS...

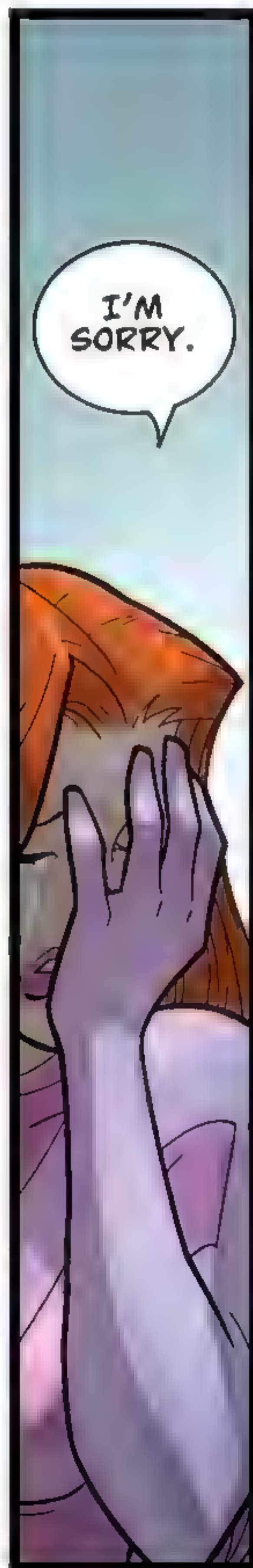
HE WAS MY FIRST... EVERYTHING...



HE WAS...

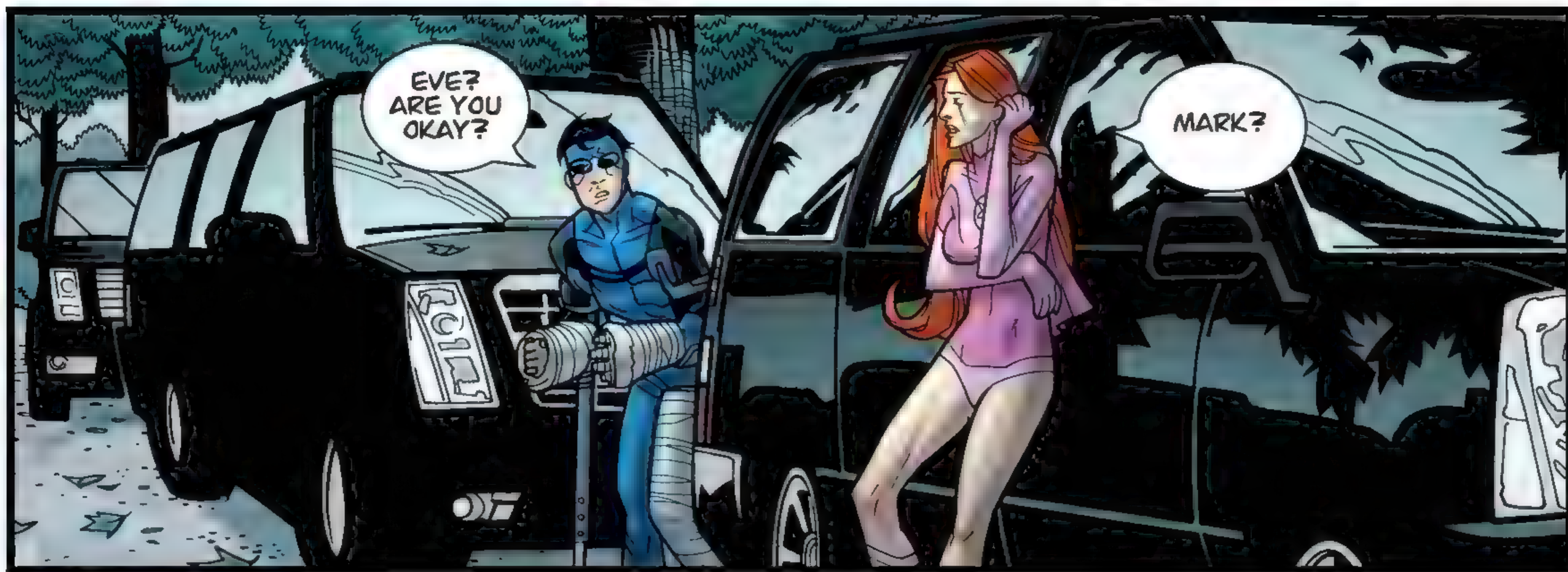


...



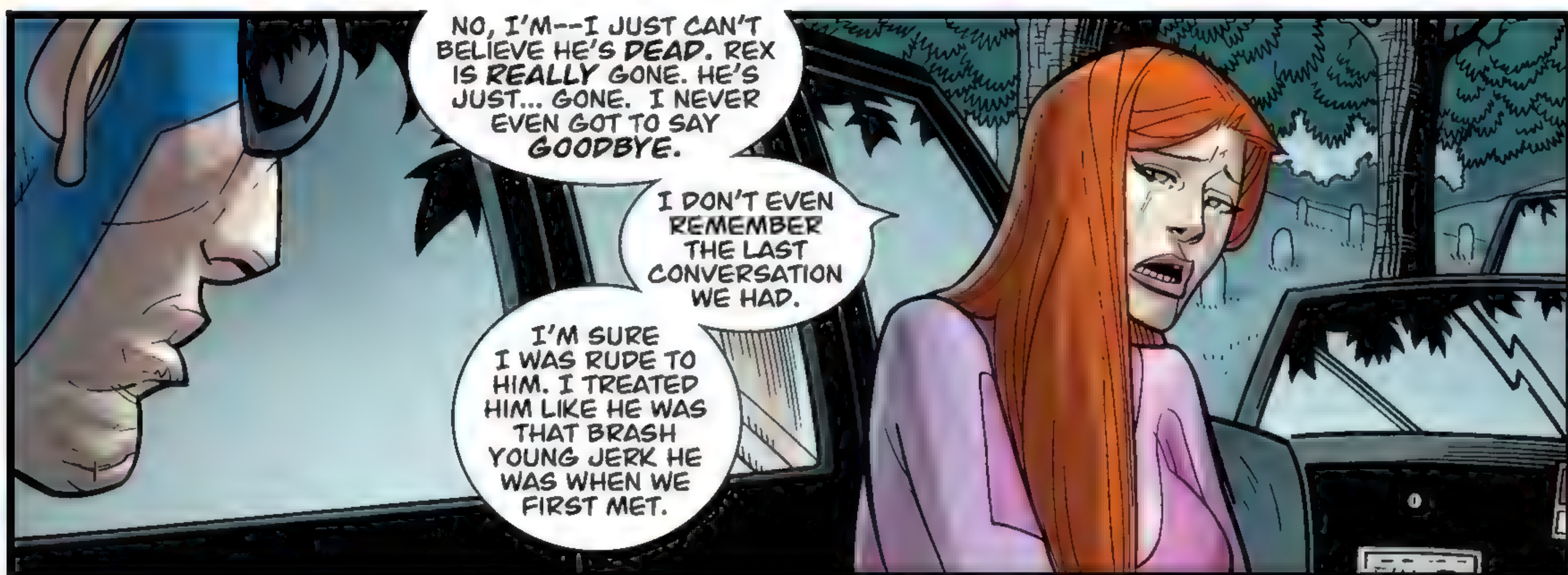
I'M SORRY.





EVE?
ARE YOU
OKAY?

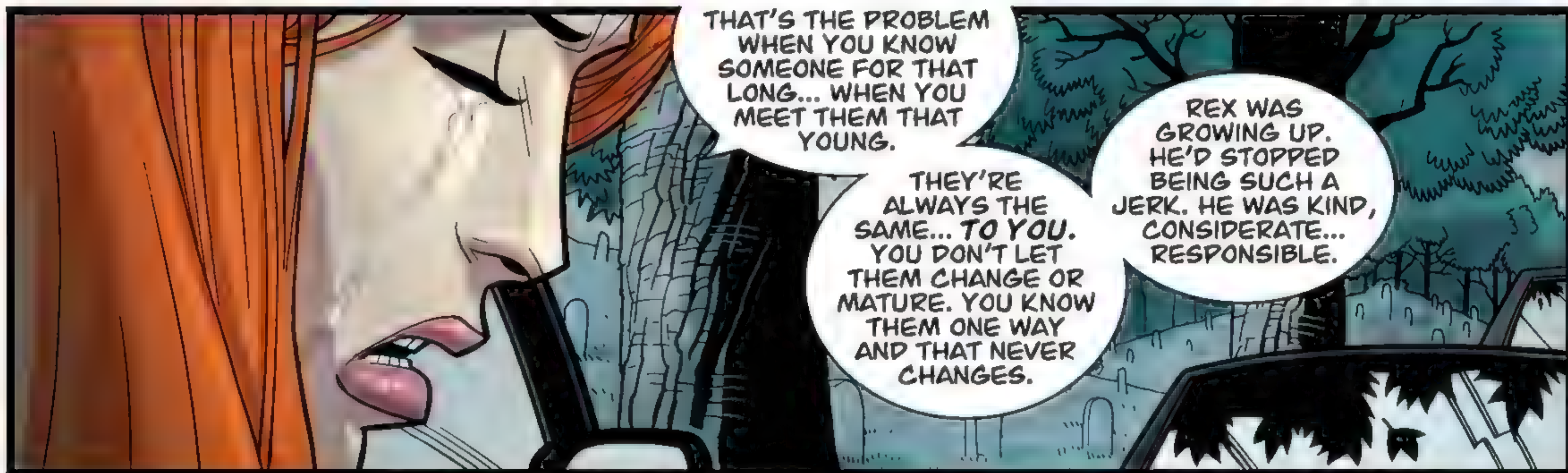
MARK?



NO, I'M--I JUST CAN'T
BELIEVE HE'S DEAD. REX
IS REALLY GONE. HE'S
JUST... GONE. I NEVER
EVEN GOT TO SAY
GOODBYE.

I DON'T EVEN
REMEMBER
THE LAST
CONVERSATION
WE HAD.

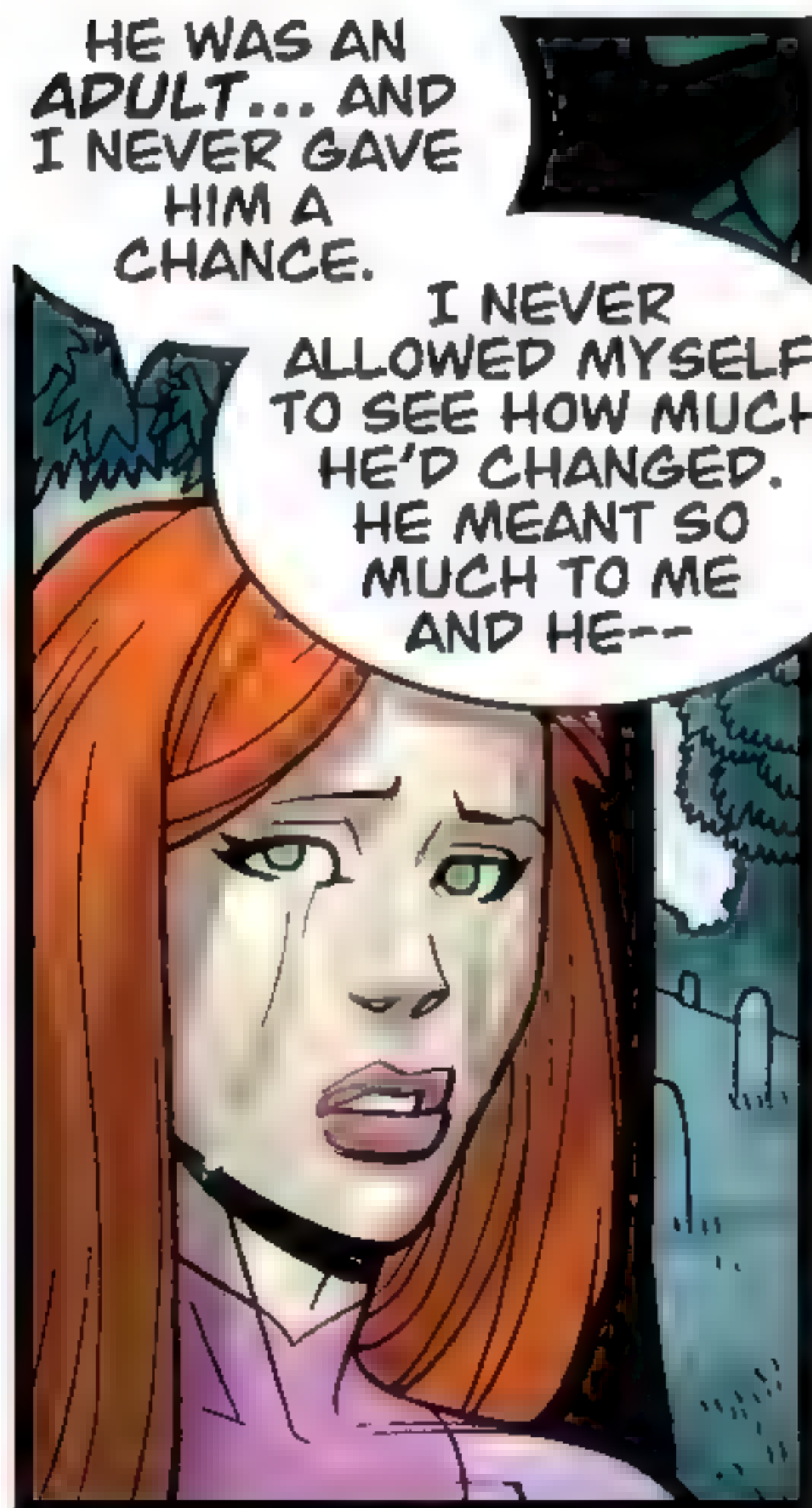
I'M SURE
I WAS RUDE TO
HIM. I TREATED
HIM LIKE HE WAS
THAT BRASH
YOUNG JERK HE
WAS WHEN WE
FIRST MET.



THAT'S THE PROBLEM
WHEN YOU KNOW
SOMEONE FOR THAT
LONG... WHEN YOU
MEET THEM THAT
YOUNG.

THEY'RE
ALWAYS THE
SAME... TO YOU.
YOU DON'T LET
THEM CHANGE OR
MATURE. YOU KNOW
THEM ONE WAY
AND THAT NEVER
CHANGES.

REX WAS
GROWING UP.
HE'D STOPPED
BEING SUCH A
JERK. HE WAS KIND,
CONSIDERATE...
RESPONSIBLE.



HE WAS AN
ADULT... AND
I NEVER GAVE
HIM A
CHANCE.

I NEVER
ALLOWED MYSELF
TO SEE HOW MUCH
HE'D CHANGED.
HE MEANT SO
MUCH TO ME
AND HE--

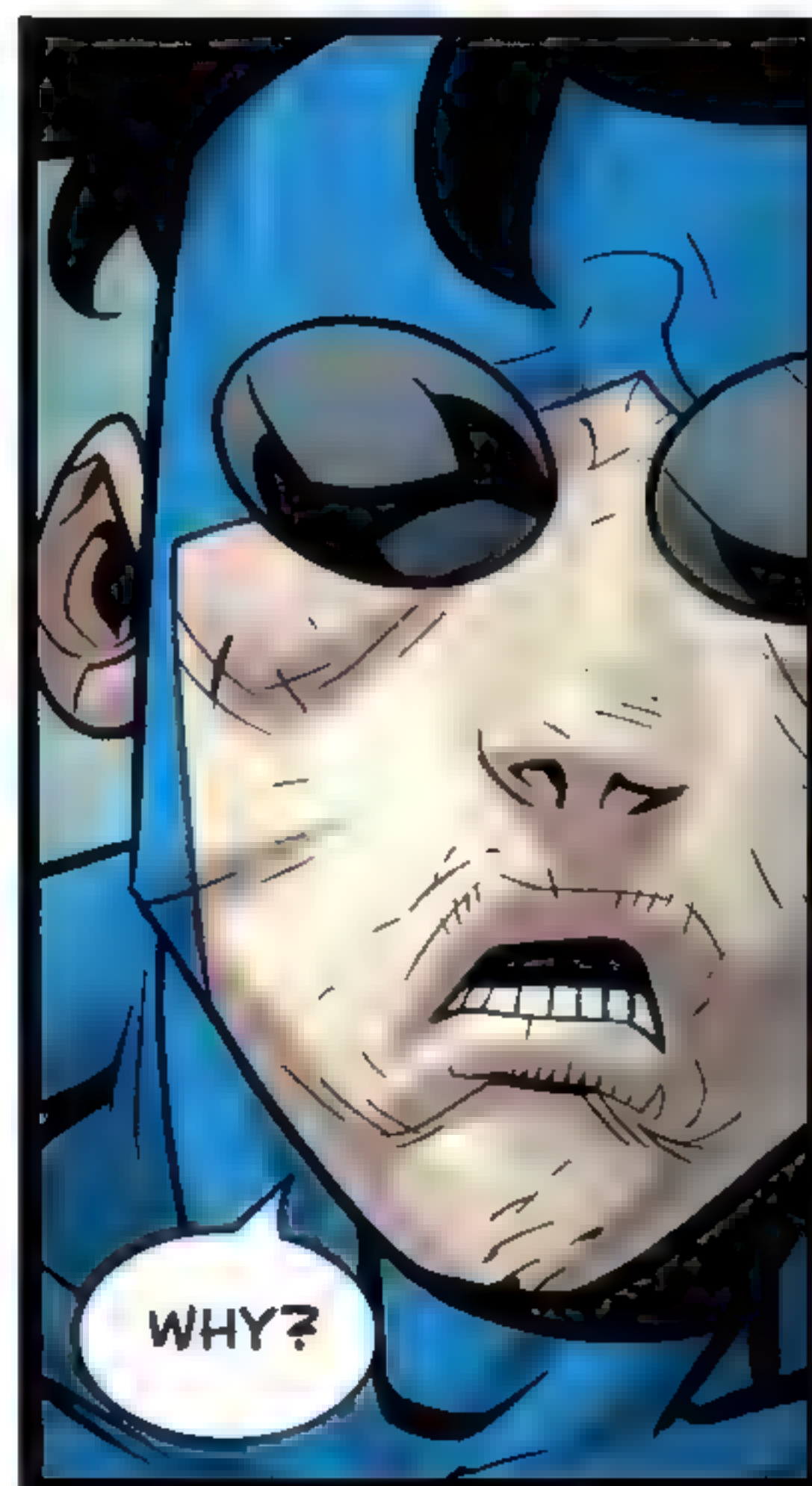


WHAT?
WHAT IS
IT?

I'M SORRY.
I DON'T MEAN
TO TALK ABOUT
HIM LIKE THIS
IN FRONT OF
YOU.



I FEEL
GUILTY BEING
SAD IN FRONT
OF YOU...



WHY?

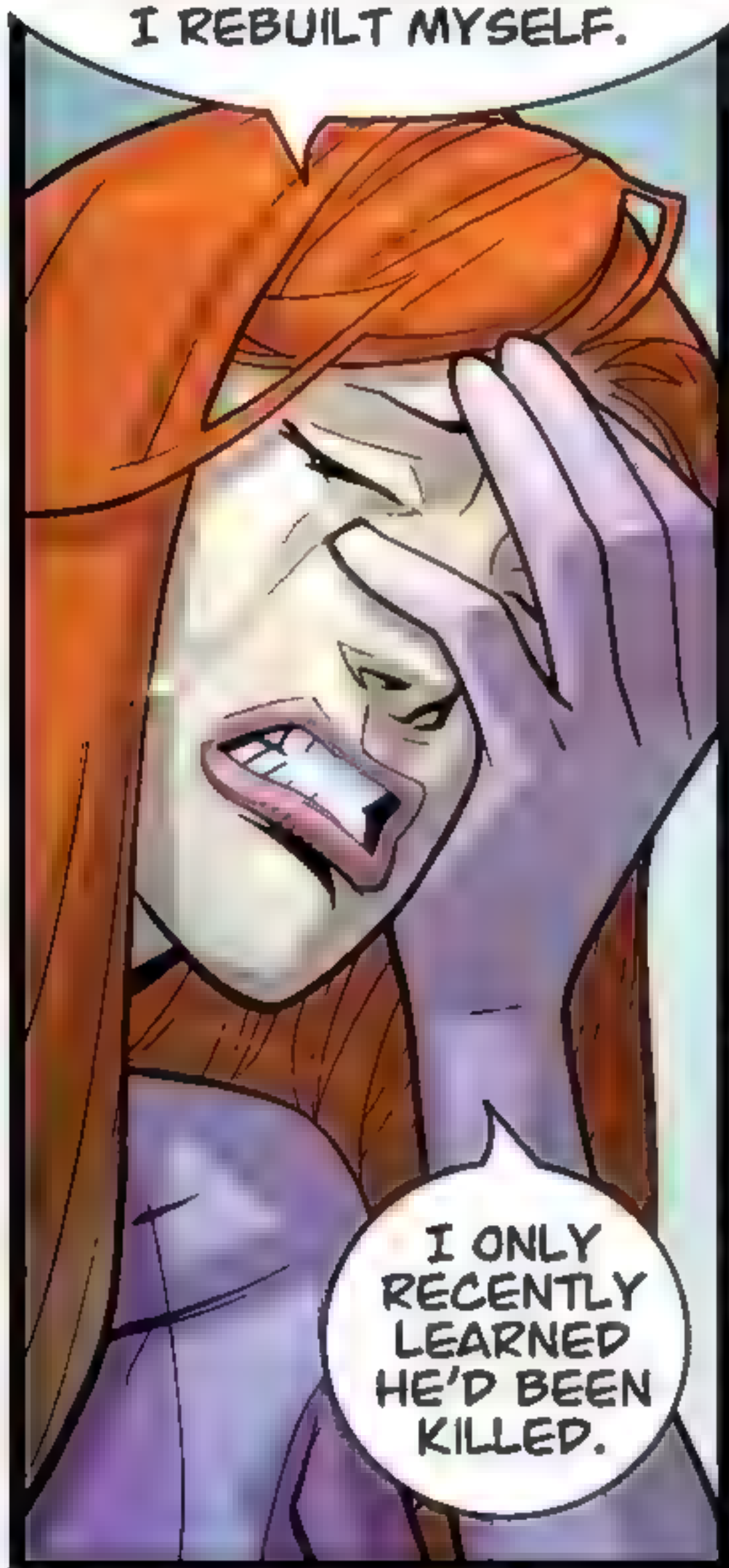


CAN
I SAY I
LOVED
HIM?

IS THAT
TOO WEIRD
FOR YOU? HE
MEANT SO MUCH
TO ME BEFORE
HE CHEATED ON ME.
IF I'M HONEST, I
WAS ALREADY
STARTING TO HAVE
FEELINGS FOR
YOU BEFORE HE
DID THAT.

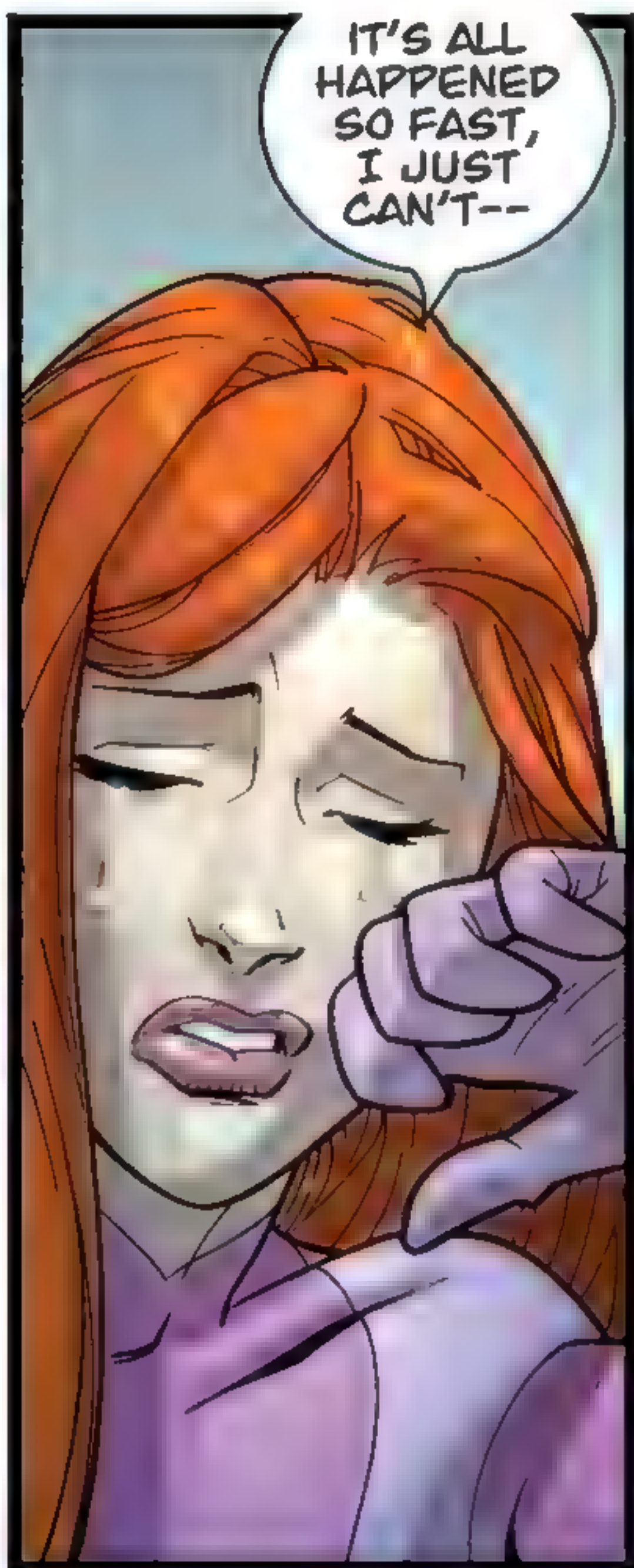
THAT
JUST MAKES
ME FEEL
MORE
GUILTY...

I'M A WRECK, I JUST--IT'S
BEEN SO HARD, I CAME OUT
OF MY COMA, YOU WERE
FIGHTING CONQUEST--
I REBUILT MYSELF.

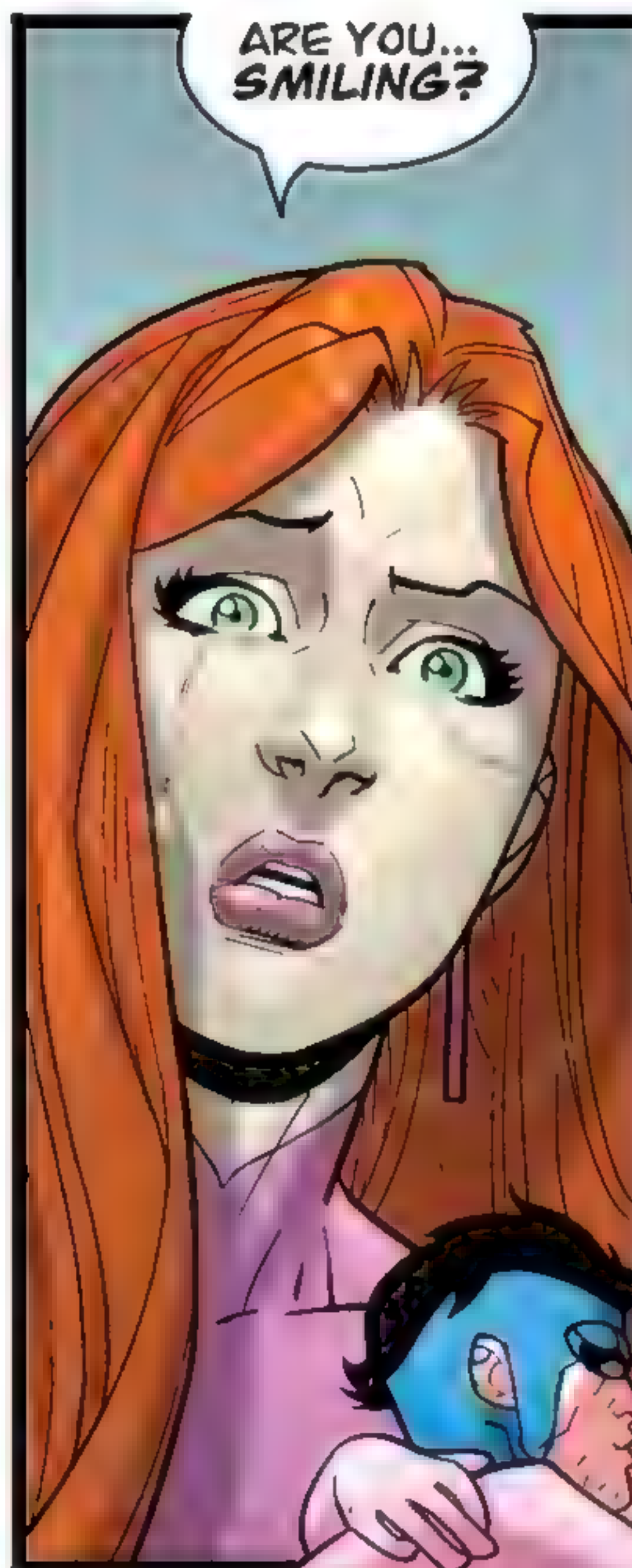


I ONLY
RECENTLY
LEARNED
HE'D BEEN
KILLED.

IT'S ALL
HAPPENED
SO FAST,
I JUST
CAN'T--



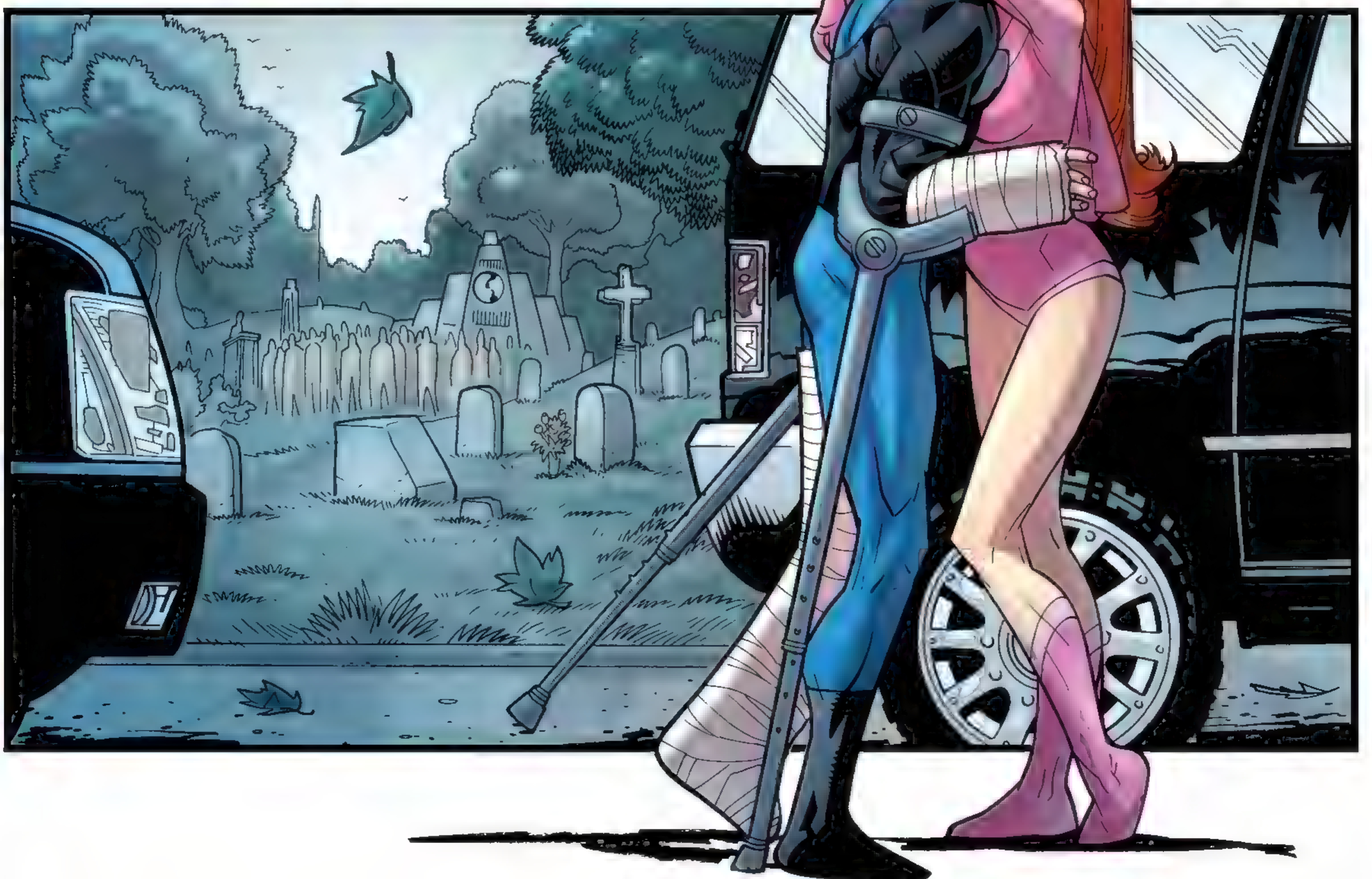
ARE YOU...
SMILING?

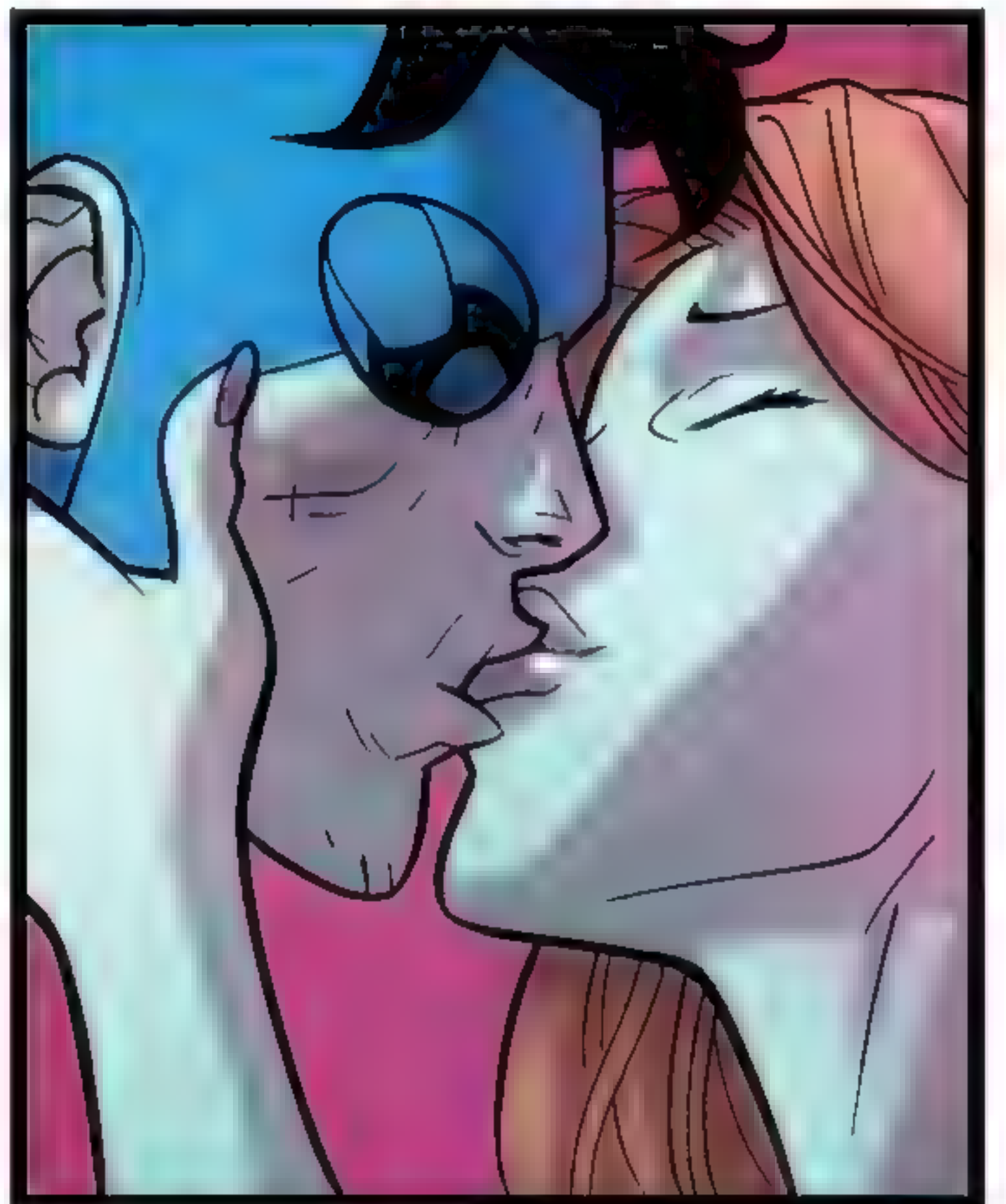
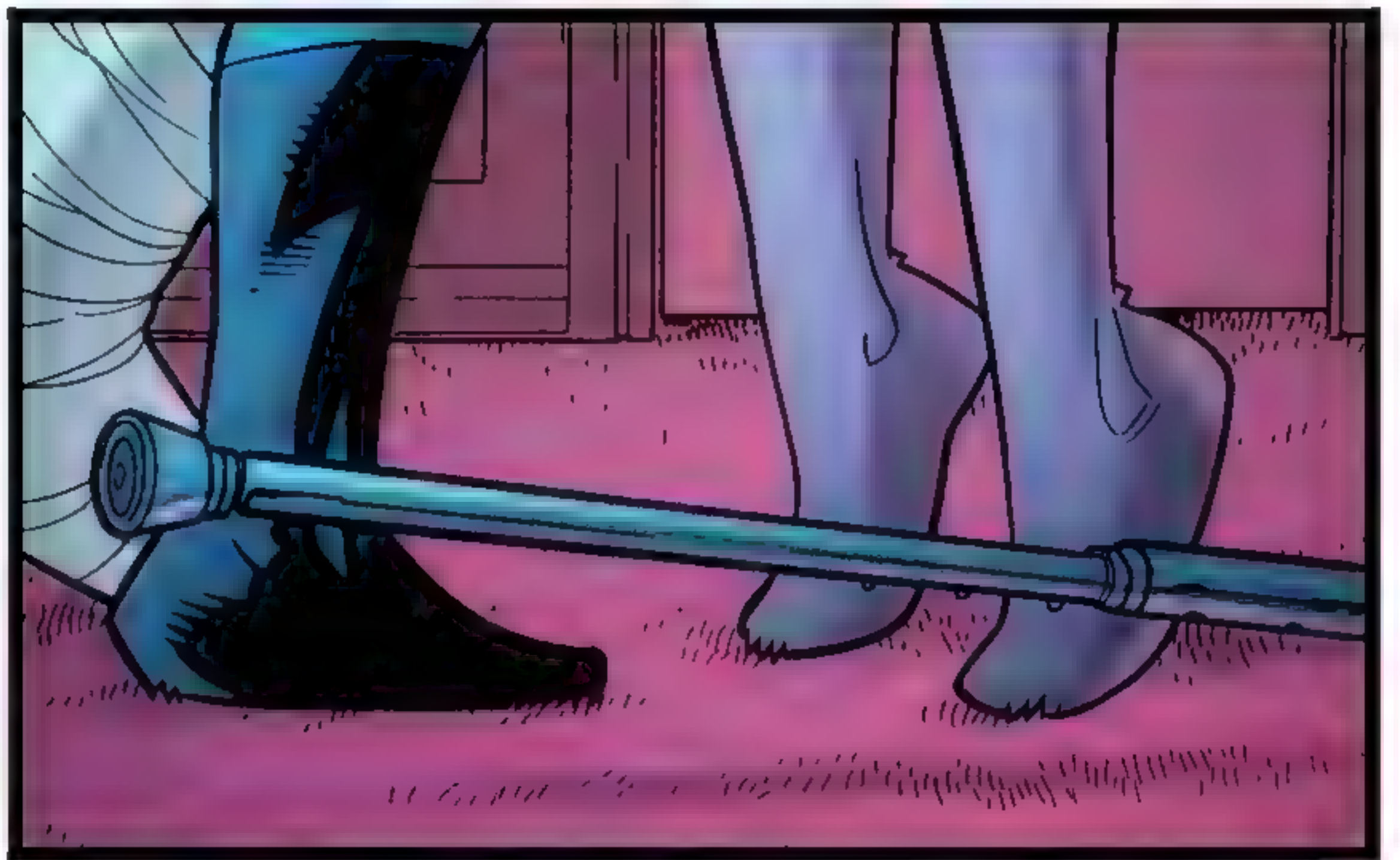
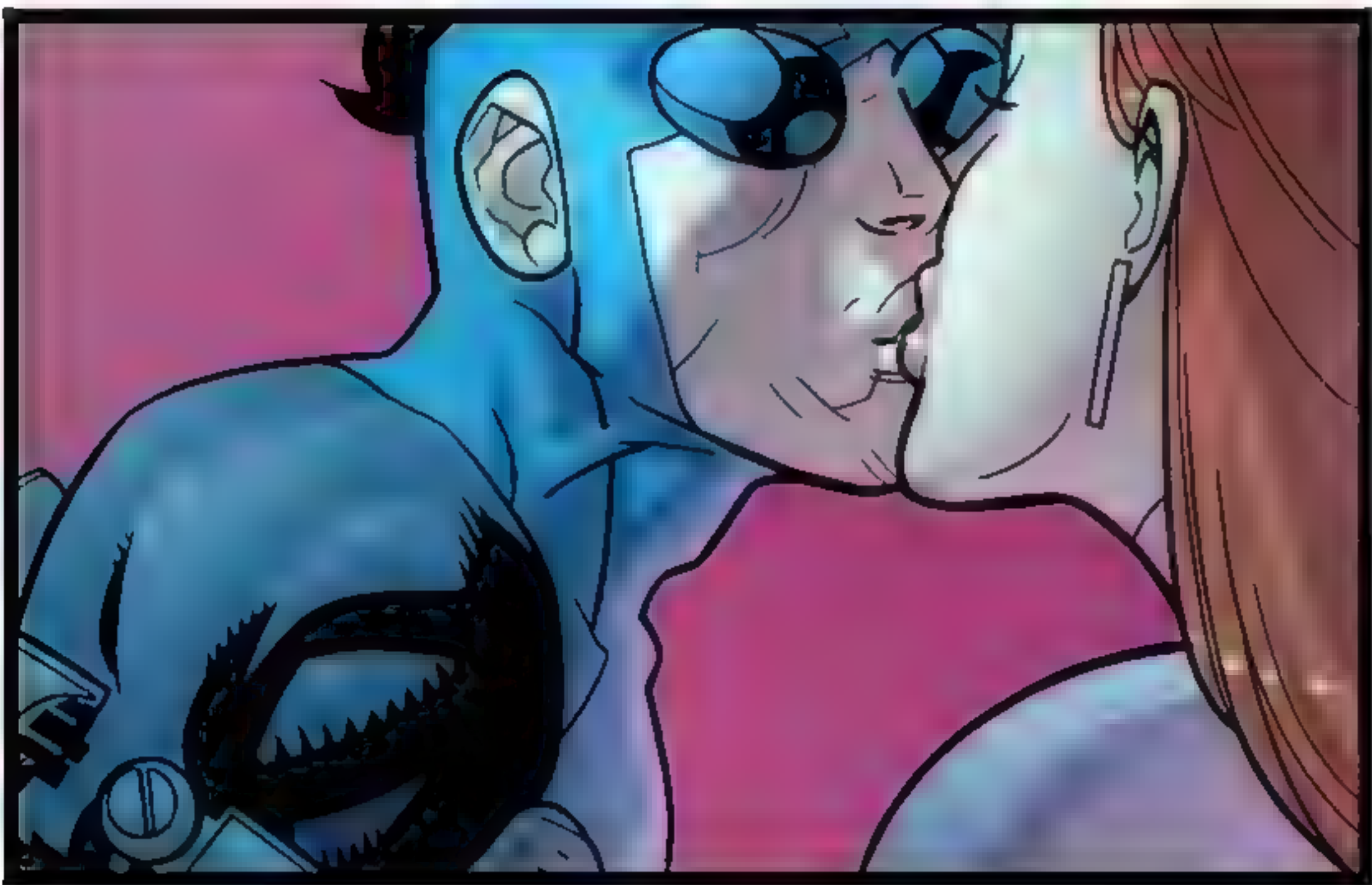
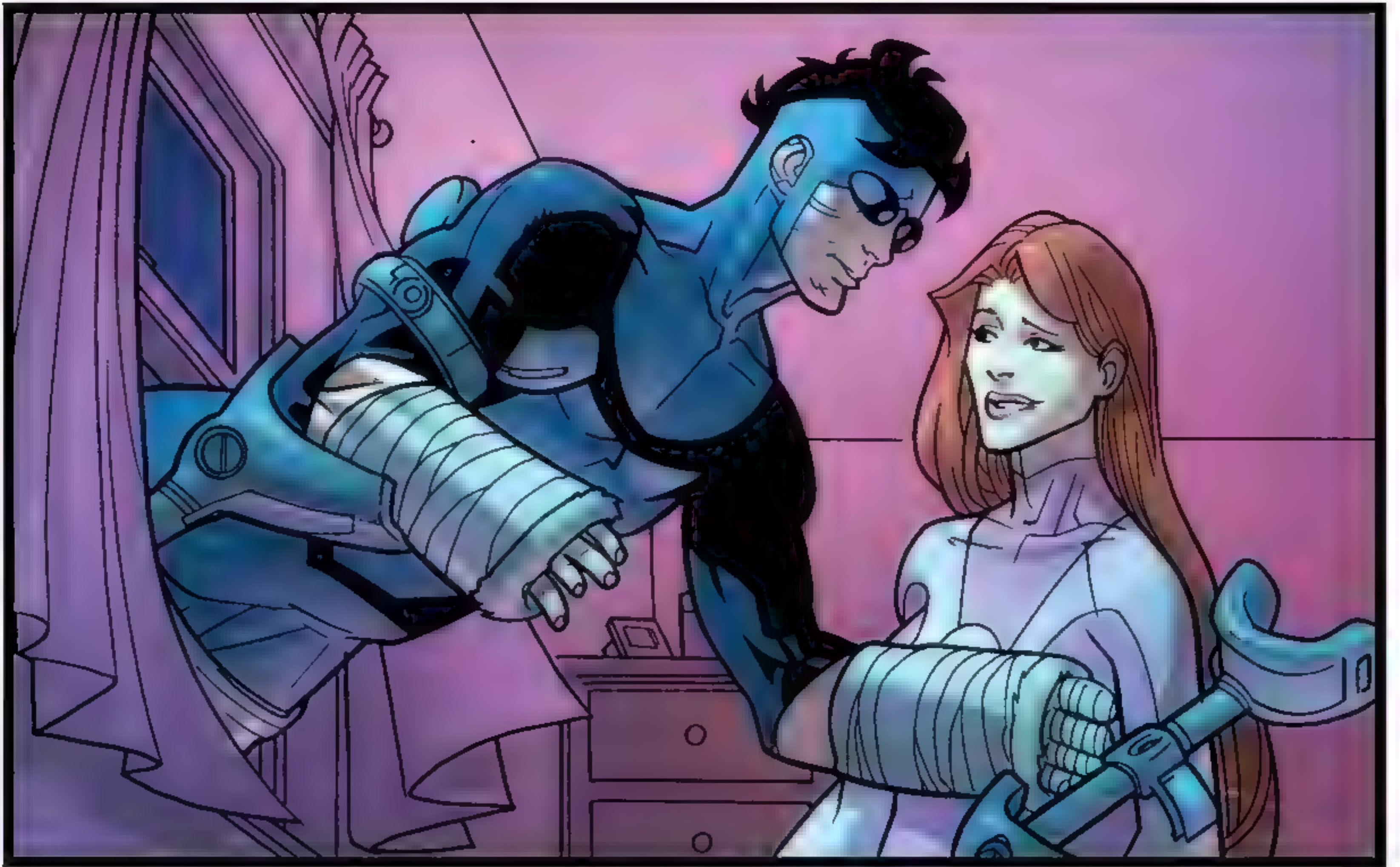


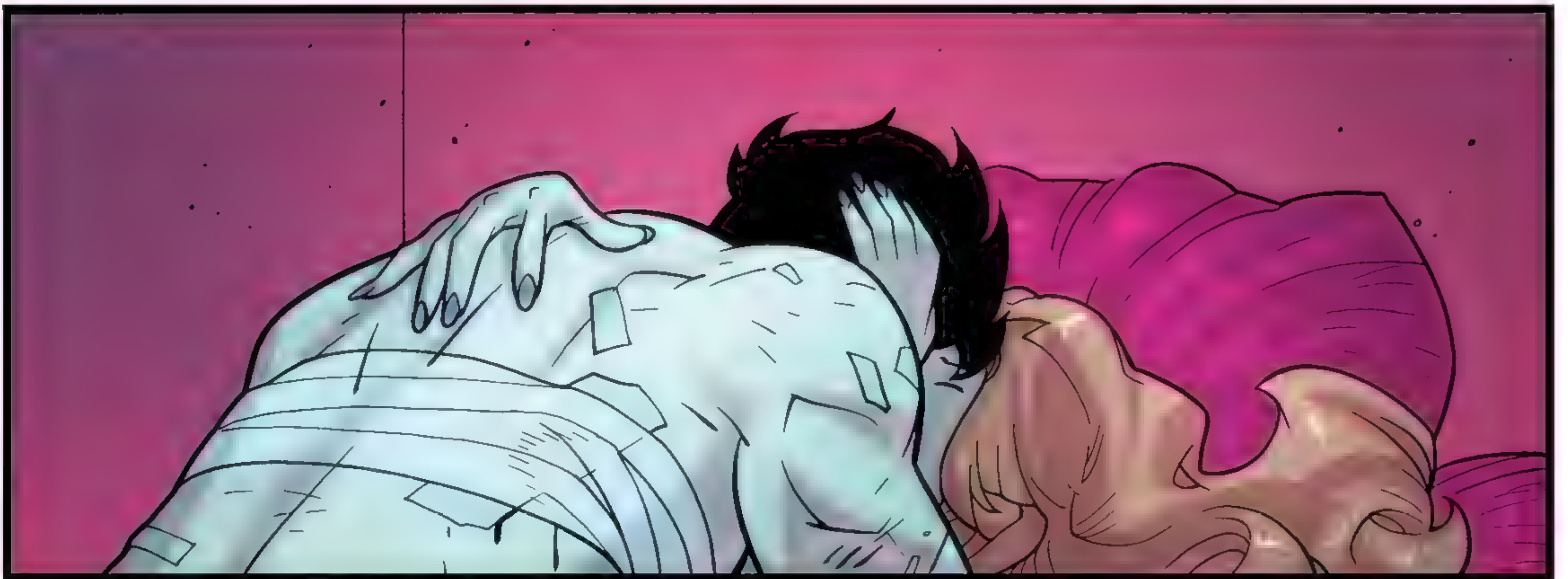
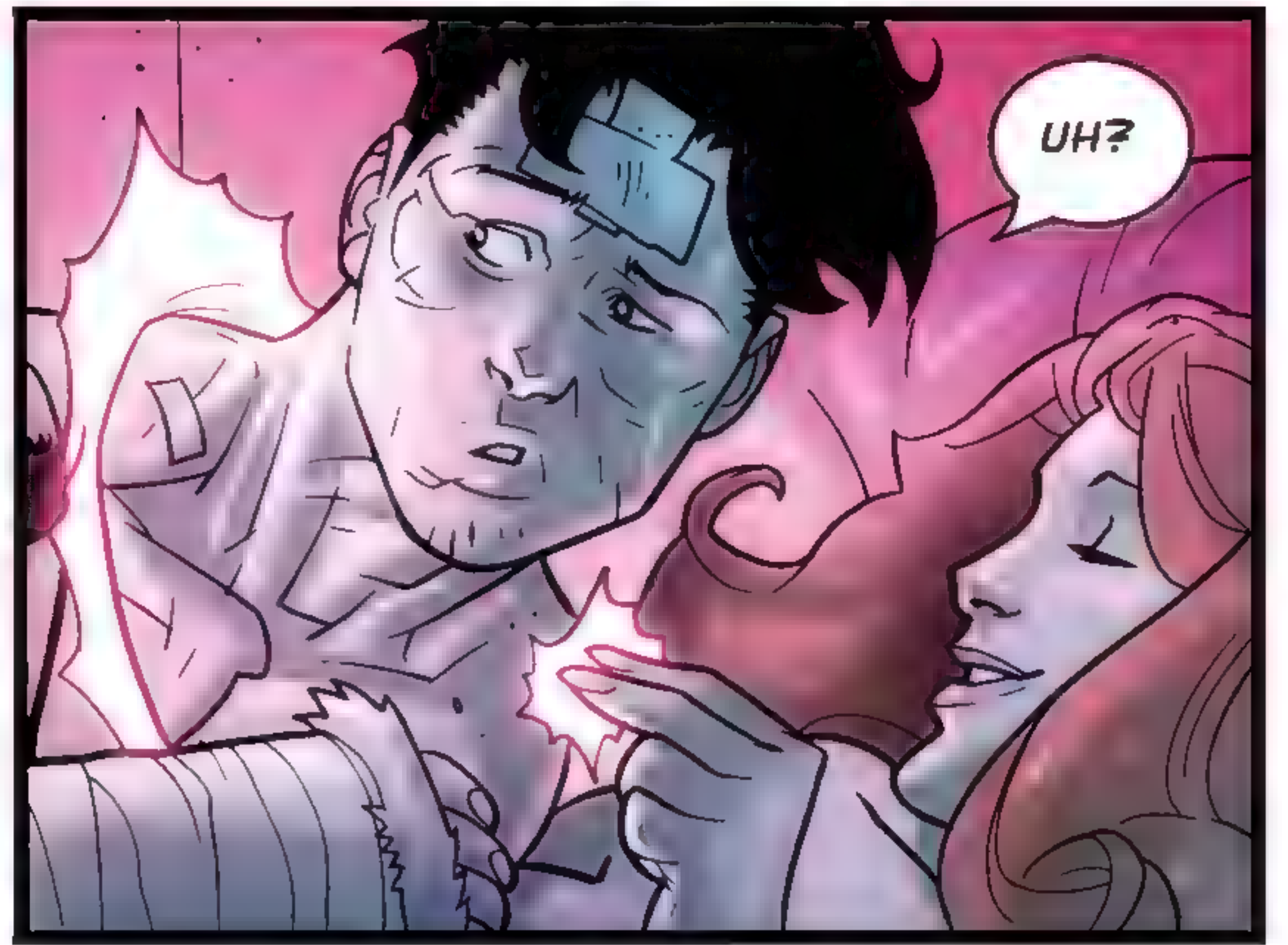
I'M SORRY, I JUST... I
THOUGHT I'D LOST YOU. I
CAN'T STOP THINKING
ABOUT HOW YOU'RE HERE
AND OKAY AND...



I
CAN'T
HELP
IT.









WELL?



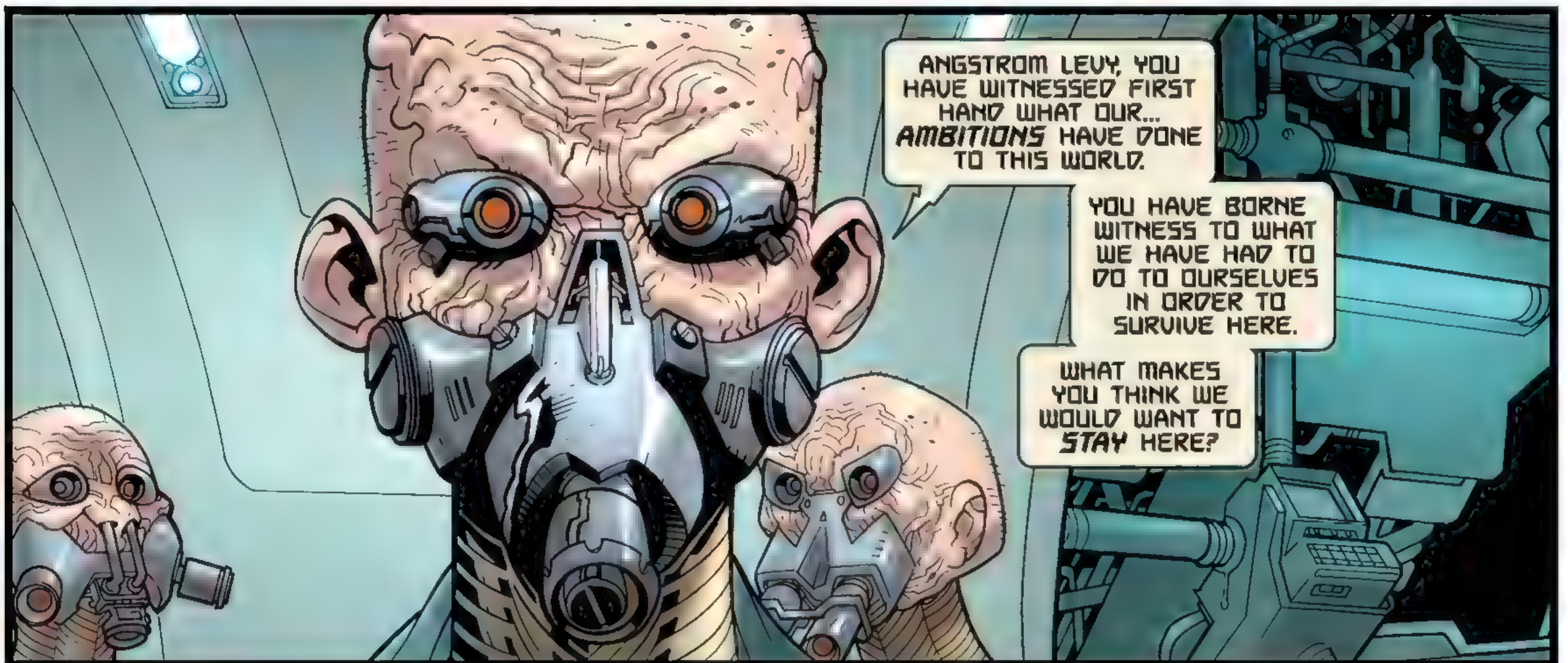
REMARKABLE.

IT BARELY
FEELS LIKE IT'S
NOT MY OWN
HAND--I HAVE
COMPLETE CONTROL
AND FEELING. VERY
IMPRESSIVE.



NOW.

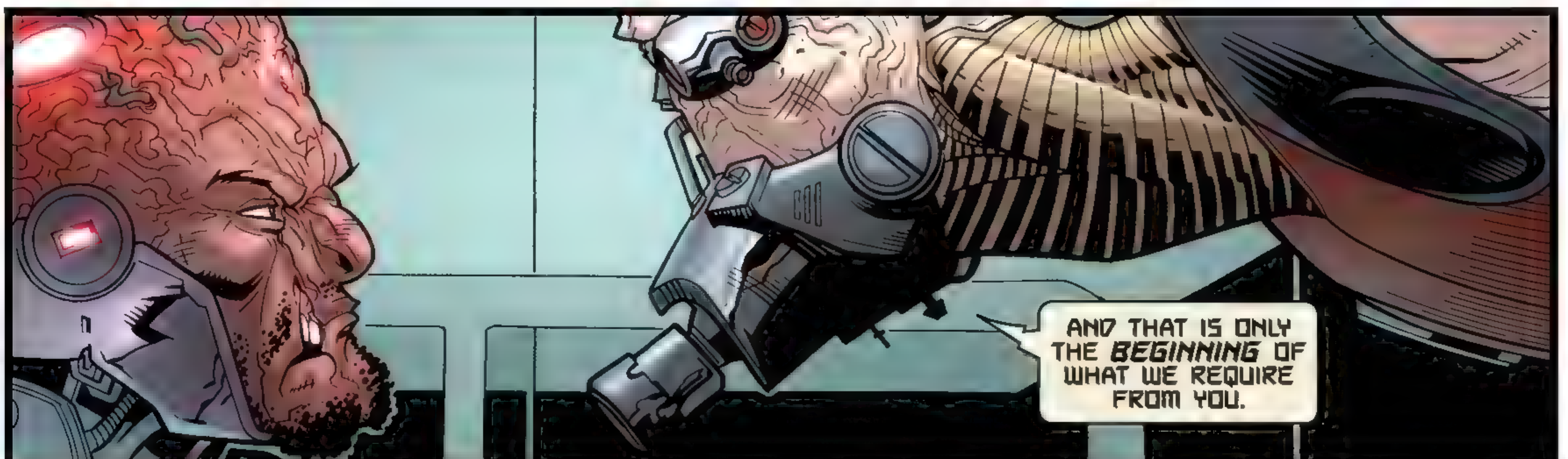
WHAT
IS IT YOU
WANT
FROM
ME?



ANGSTROM LEVY, YOU
HAVE WITNESSED FIRST
HAND WHAT OUR...
AMBITIONS HAVE DONE
TO THIS WORLD.

YOU HAVE BORNE
WITNESS TO WHAT
WE HAVE HAD TO
DO TO OURSELVES
IN ORDER TO
SURVIVE HERE.

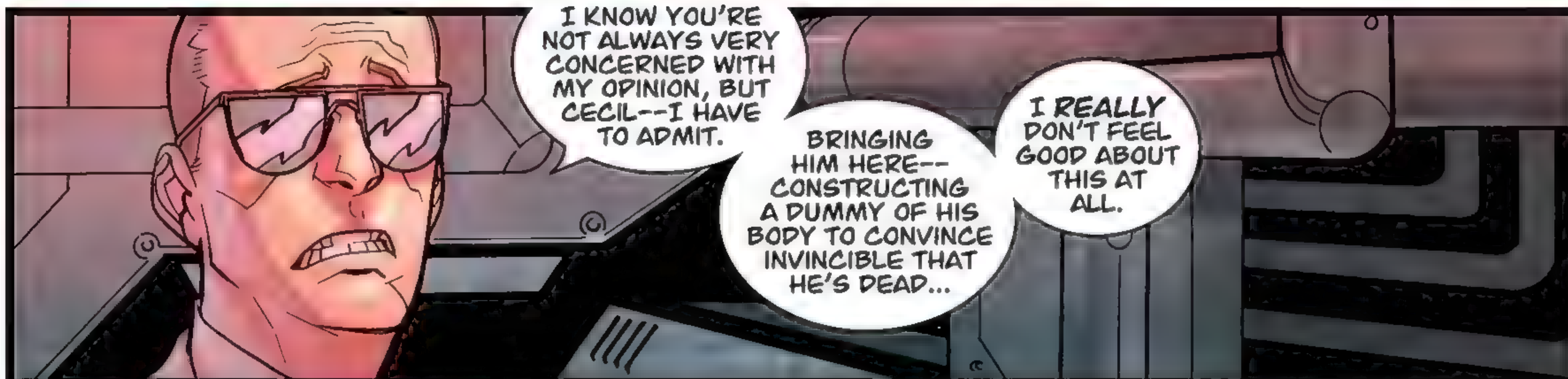
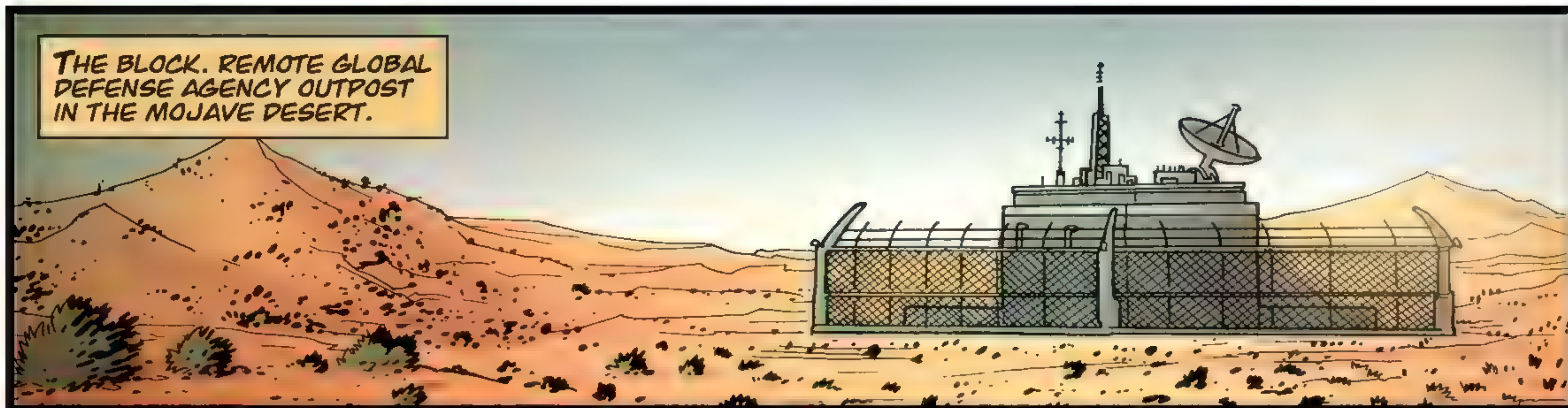
WHAT MAKES
YOU THINK WE
WOULD WANT TO
STAY HERE?



AND THAT IS ONLY
THE **BEGINNING** OF
WHAT WE REQUIRE
FROM YOU.



THE BLOCK. REMOTE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY OUTPOST IN THE MOJAVE DESERT.



I KNOW YOU'RE NOT ALWAYS VERY CONCERNED WITH MY OPINION, BUT CECIL--I HAVE TO ADMIT.

BRINGING HIM HERE-- CONSTRUCTING A DUMMY OF HIS BODY TO CONVINCE INVINCIBLE THAT HE'S DEAD...

I REALLY DON'T FEEL GOOD ABOUT THIS AT ALL.

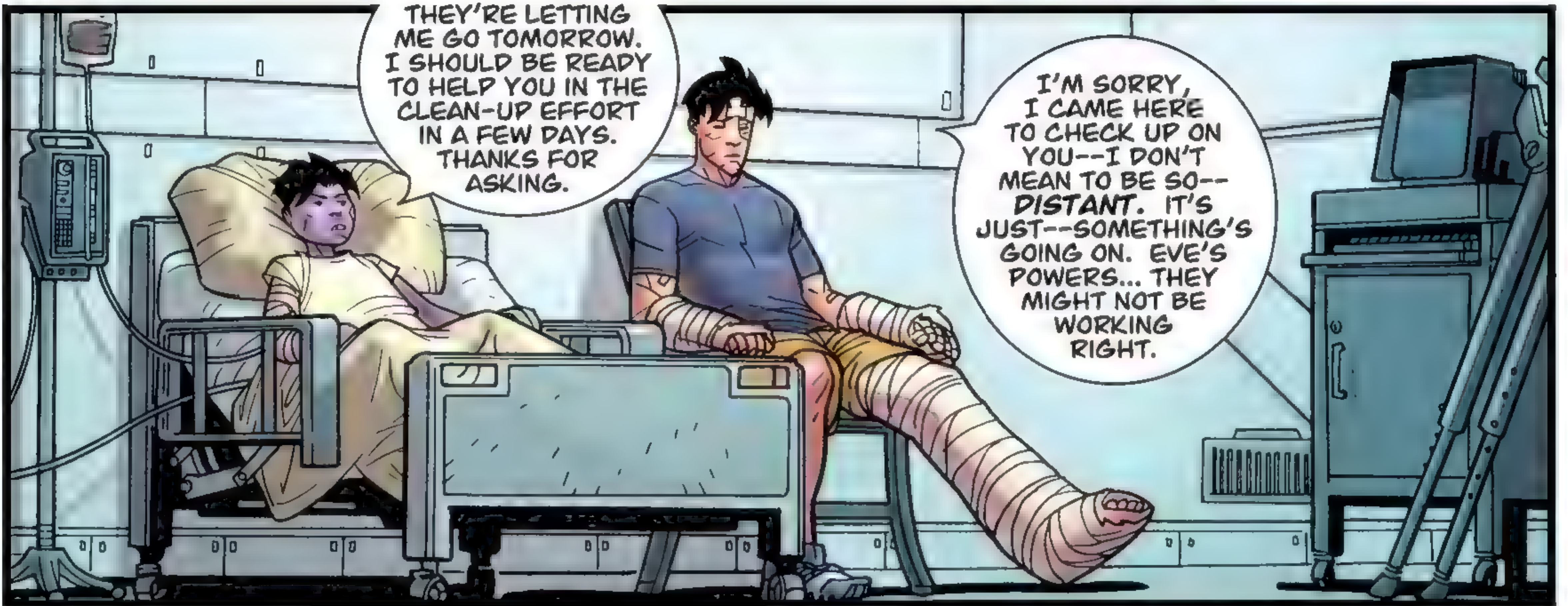
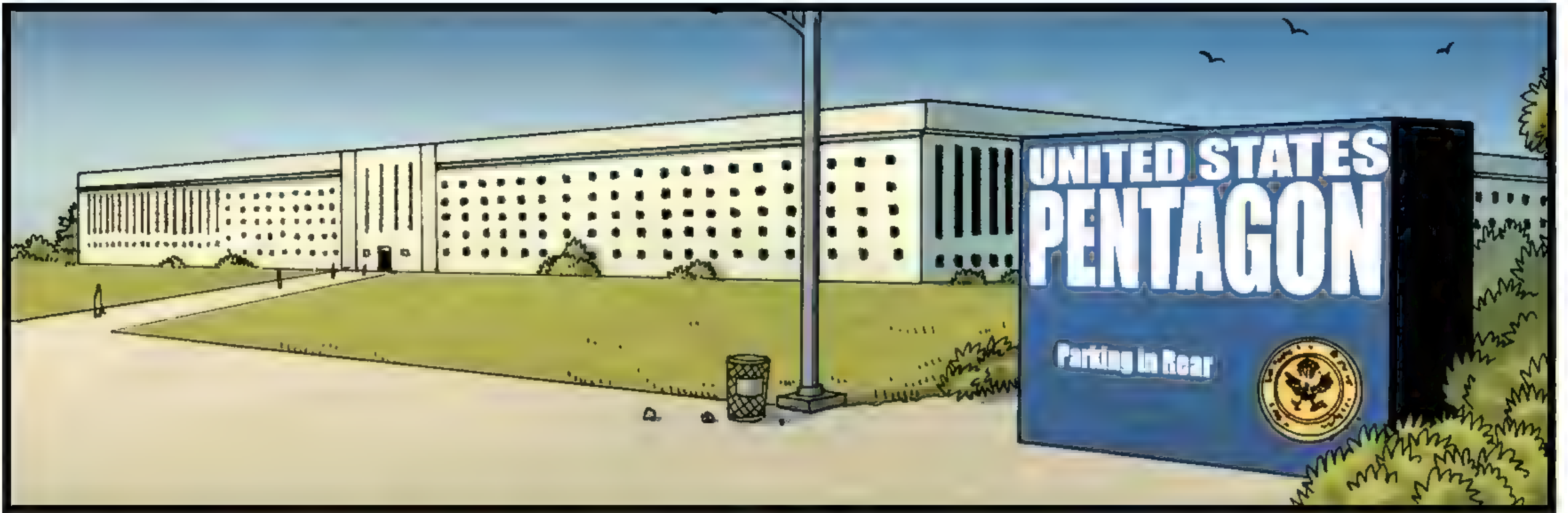


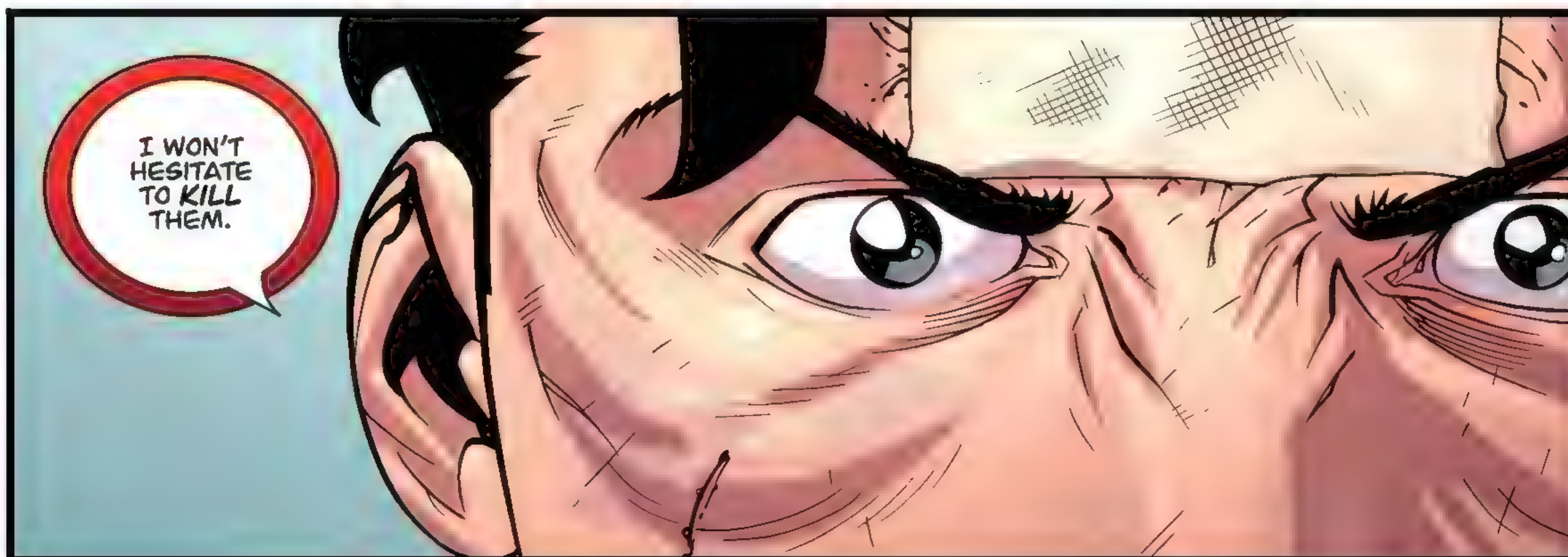
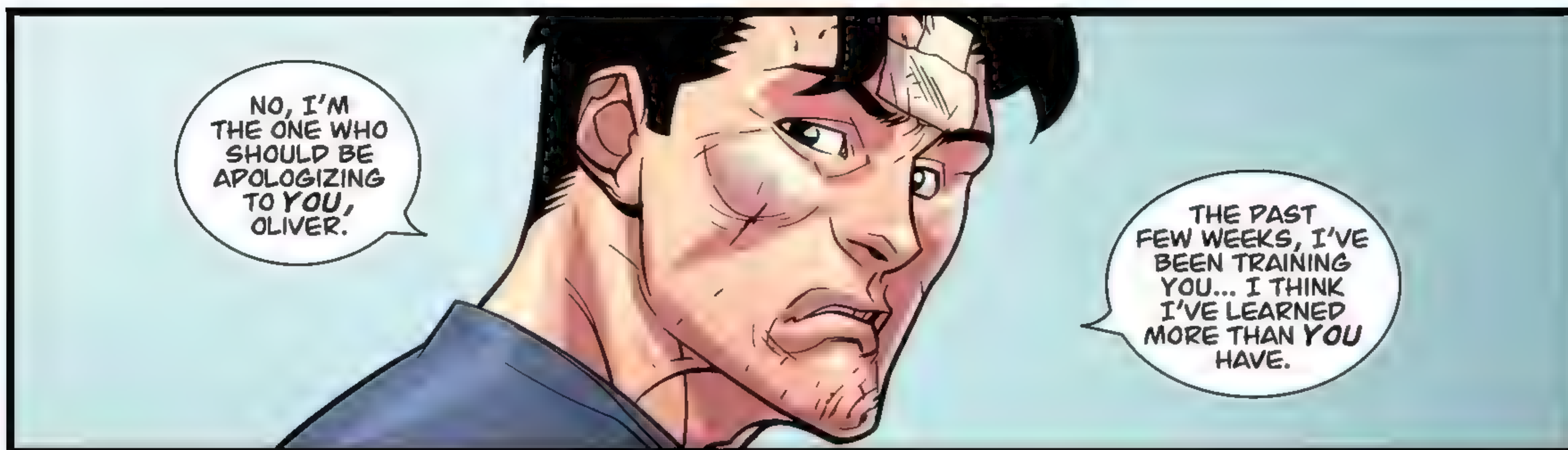
WHAT'S THERE TO WORRY ABOUT? HIS BODY IS CAST IN A FOUR-HUNDRED TON BLOCK OF SOLID TEMPERED STEEL. HE'S IN AN UN-MANNED STATION SIX MILES BELOW THE EARTH'S SURFACE. HE SO MUCH AS TWITCHES AND THIS PLACE IMPLODES.

HE'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

AND AS SOON AS HIS HEAD HEALS ENOUGH FOR HIM TO REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS...

...HE'S GOING TO TELL ME EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THE VILTRUM EMPIRE AND THE THREAT IT POSES TOWARD THIS PLANET.

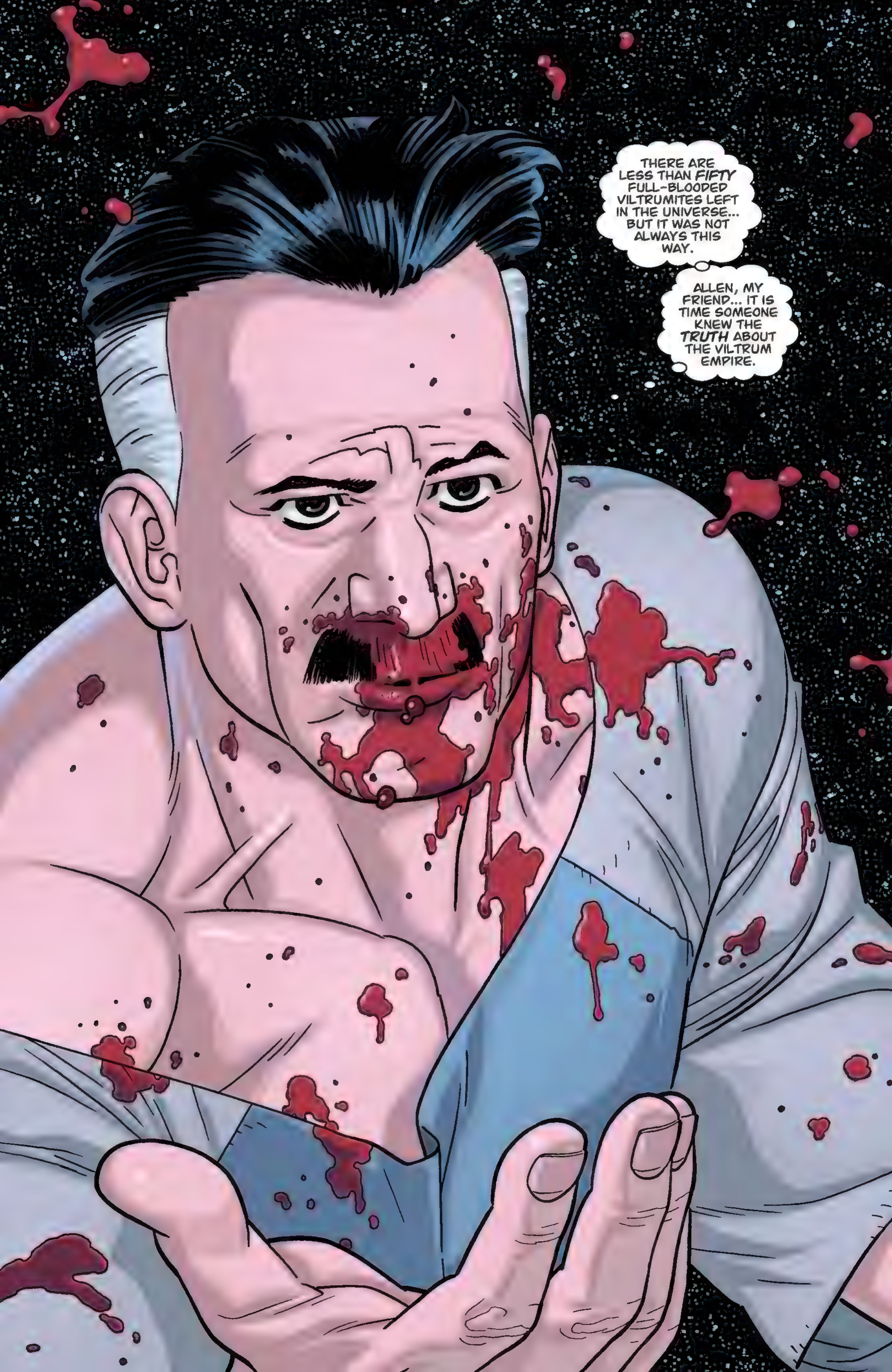






CHAPTER 66





THERE ARE
LESS THAN FIFTY
FULL-BLOODED
VILTRUMITES LEFT
IN THE UNIVERSE...
BUT IT WAS NOT
ALWAYS THIS
WAY.

ALLEN, MY
FRIEND... IT IS
TIME SOMEONE
KNEW THE
TRUTH ABOUT
THE VILTRUM
EMPIRE.



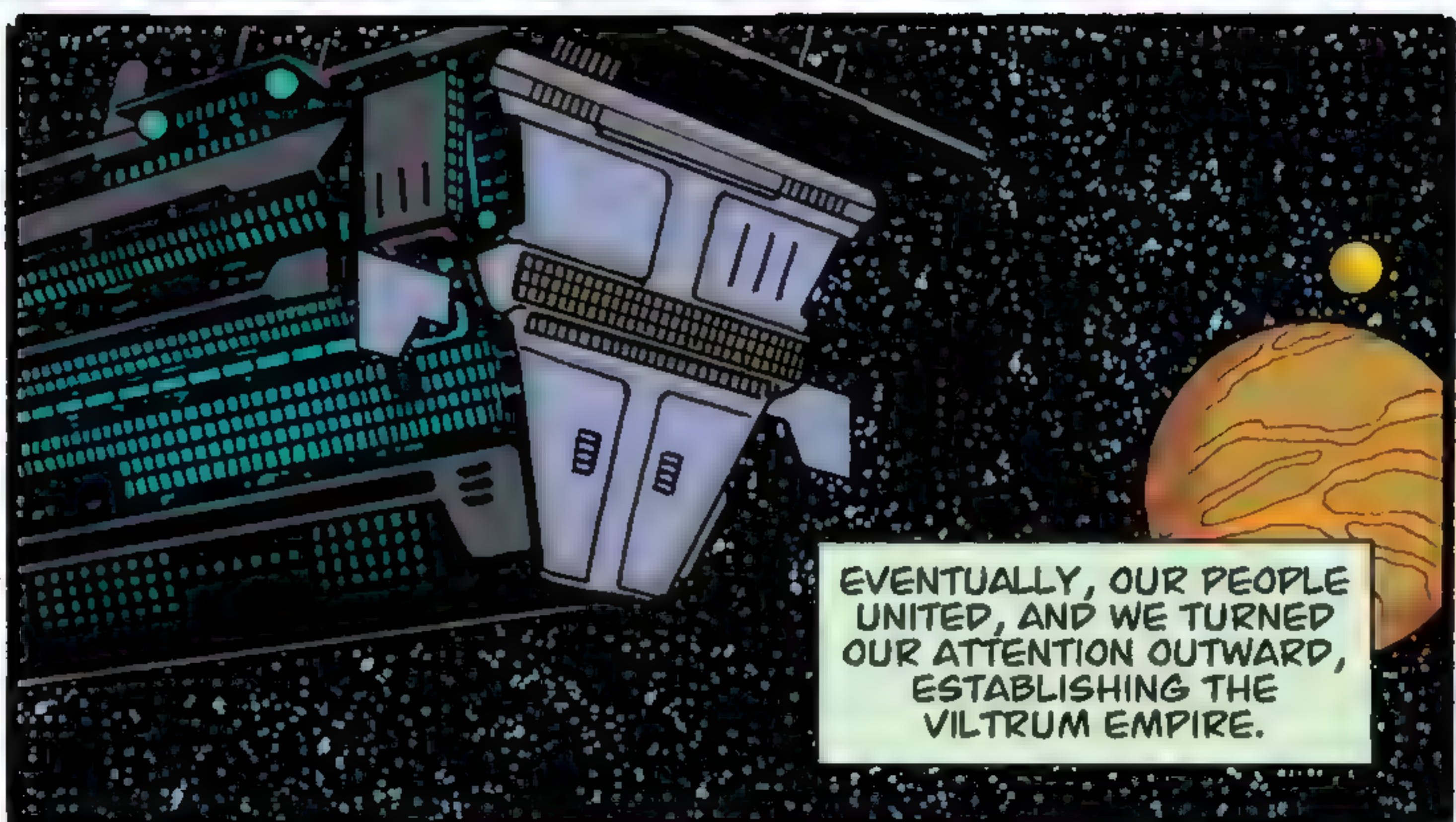
YOU KNOW A GREAT DEAL
ABOUT THE PLANET VILTRUM,
OUR HISTORY AND
OUR EMPIRE...

...AND MUCH OF
IT IS TRUE.



WE WERE A VIOLENT RACE
WHO VALUED STRENGTH
ABOVE ALL ELSE.

TO RID OURSELVES OF
ANY WEAKNESS WE
SLAUGHTERED EACH
OTHER UNTIL WE WERE
BRED INTO THE
VILTRUMITES YOU
KNOW TODAY.



EVENTUALLY, OUR PEOPLE
UNITED, AND WE TURNED
OUR ATTENTION OUTWARD,
ESTABLISHING THE
VILTRUM EMPIRE.

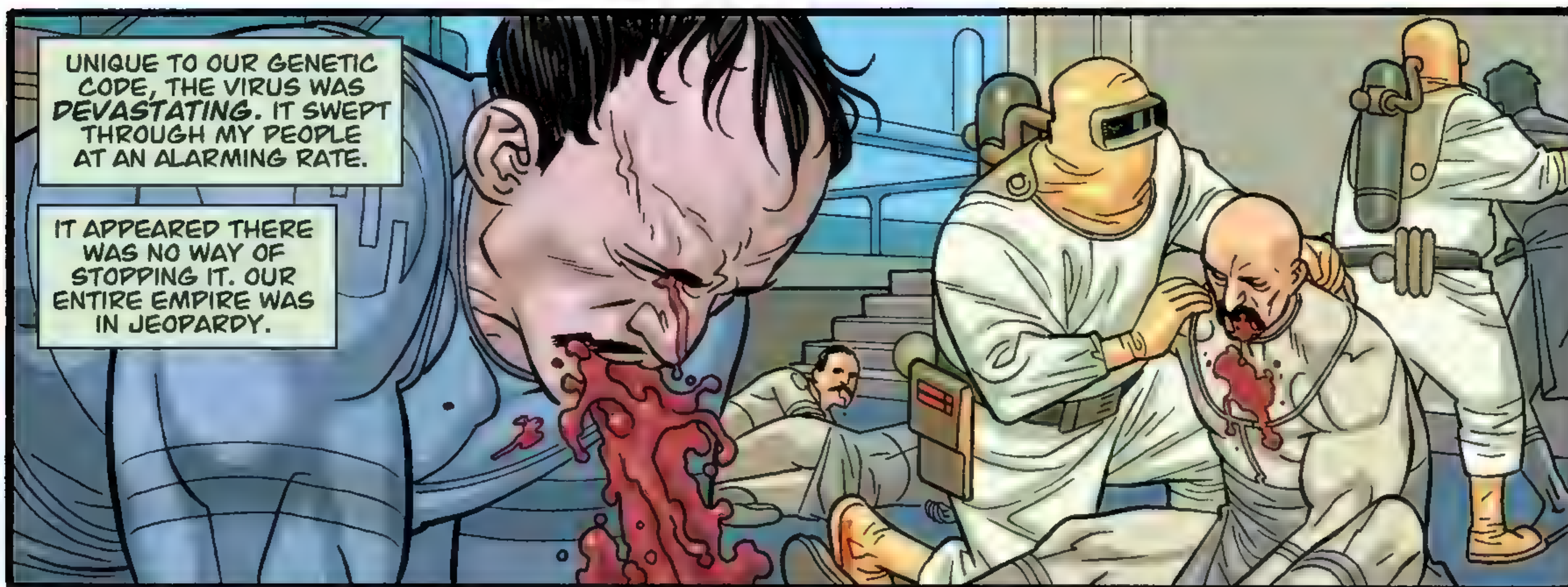


AN EMPIRE THAT CONTINUED
TO EXPAND AT AN ASTOUNDING
RATE FOR NEARLY
ONE-THOUSAND YEARS.



UNTIL OUR
ENEMIES MADE
A WEAPON
CAPABLE OF
HURTING US.

THEY MADE
A VIRUS.



UNIQUE TO OUR GENETIC CODE, THE VIRUS WAS DEVASTATING. IT SWEEPED THROUGH MY PEOPLE AT AN ALARMING RATE.

IT APPEARED THERE WAS NO WAY OF STOPPING IT. OUR ENTIRE EMPIRE WAS IN JEOPARDY.



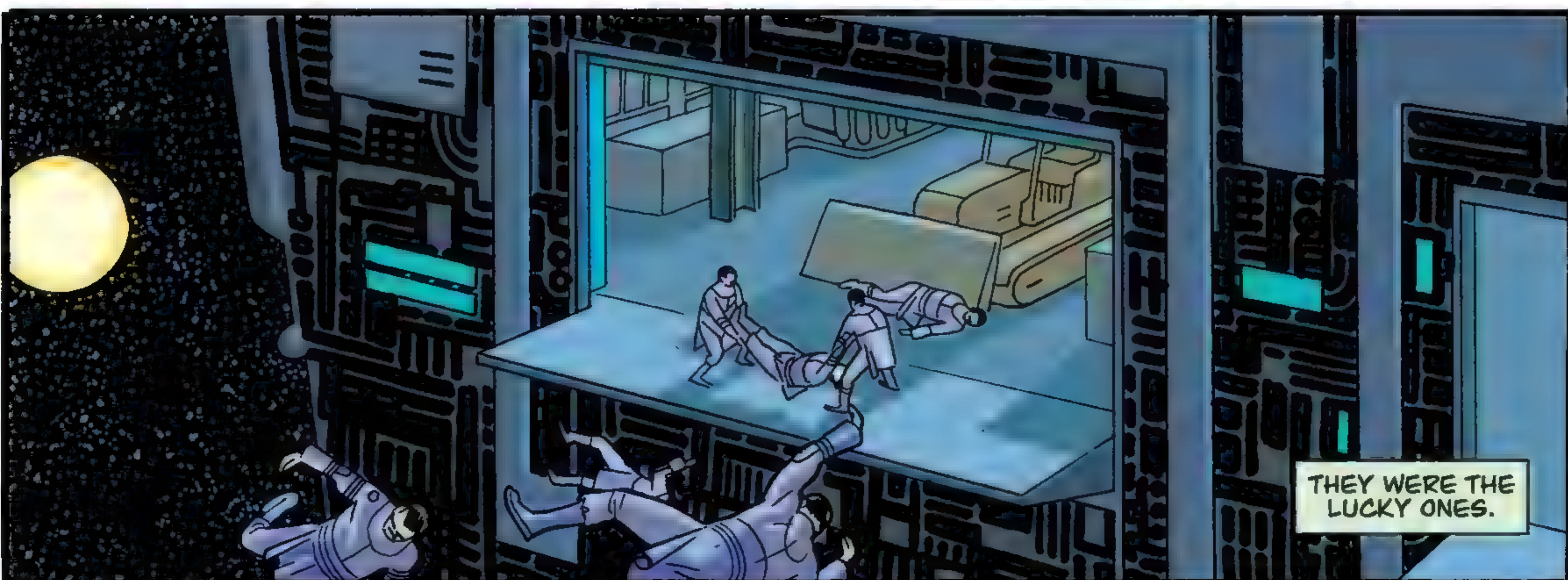
ATTEMPTS WERE MADE TO QUARANTINE THOSE WHO BECAME INFECTED... BUT IT WAS TOO LATE.

ALMOST THE ENTIRE POPULATION WAS INFECTED WITH WHAT WOULD BECOME KNOWN AS THE SCOURGE VIRUS.



THOSE WHO SURVIVED THE VIRUS DISCOVERED ITS DEADLY AFTER EFFECTS.

THERE WAS A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME AFTER THE VIRUS HAD LEFT THEIR SYSTEM, WHERE THEIR STRENGTH AND INVULNERABILITY HAD BEEN GREATLY DIMINISHED.

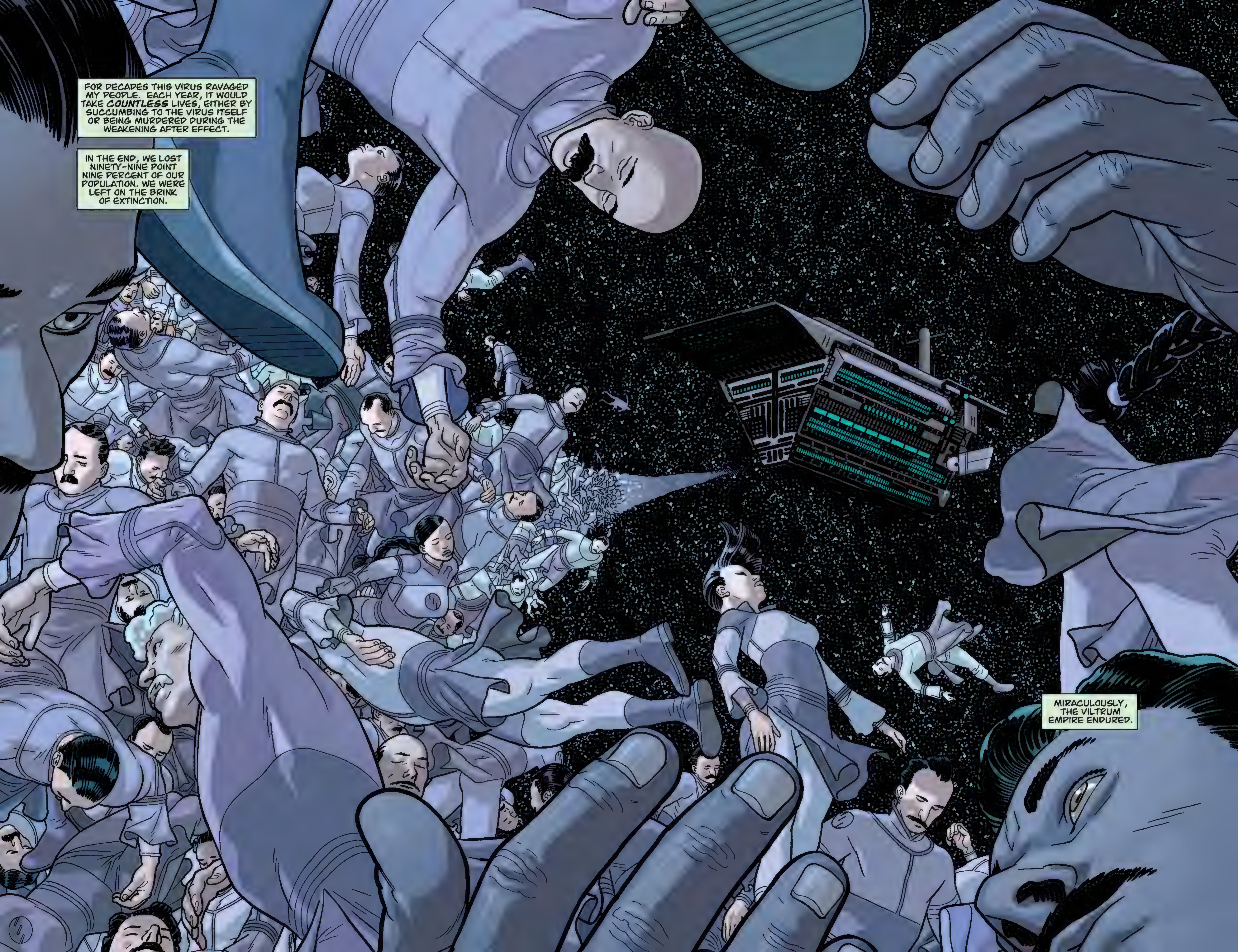


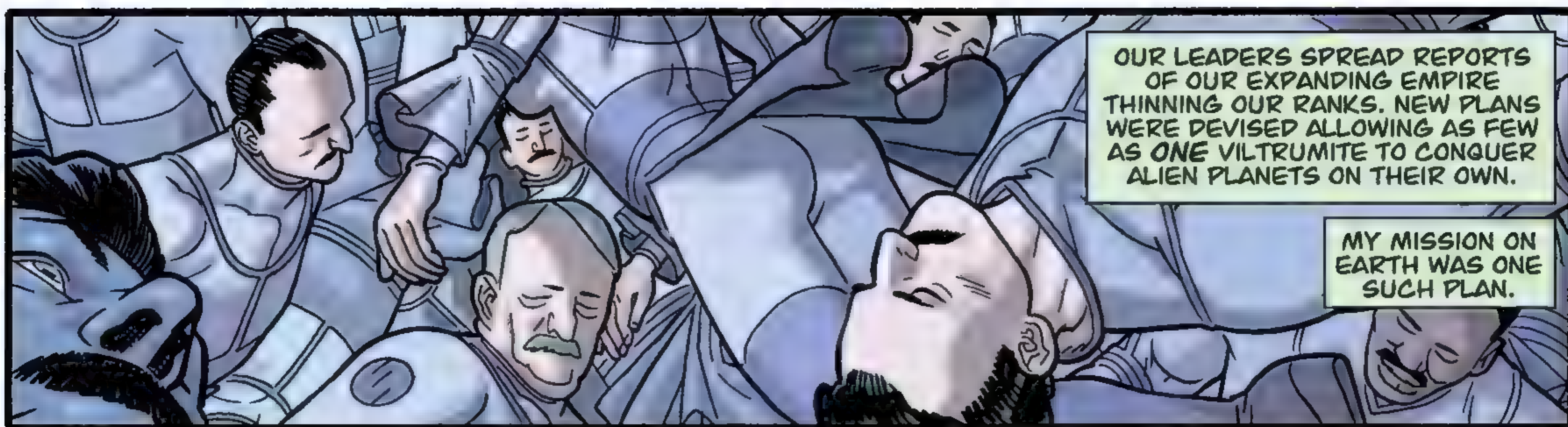
THEY WERE THE LUCKY ONES.

FOR DECADES THIS VIRUS RAVAGED MY PEOPLE. EACH YEAR, IT WOULD TAKE COUNTLESS LIVES, EITHER BY SUCCEUNING TO THE VIRUS ITSELF OR BEING MURDERED DURING THE WEAKENING AFTER EFFECT.

IN THE END, WE LOST NINETY-NINE POINT NINE PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION. WE WERE LEFT ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION.

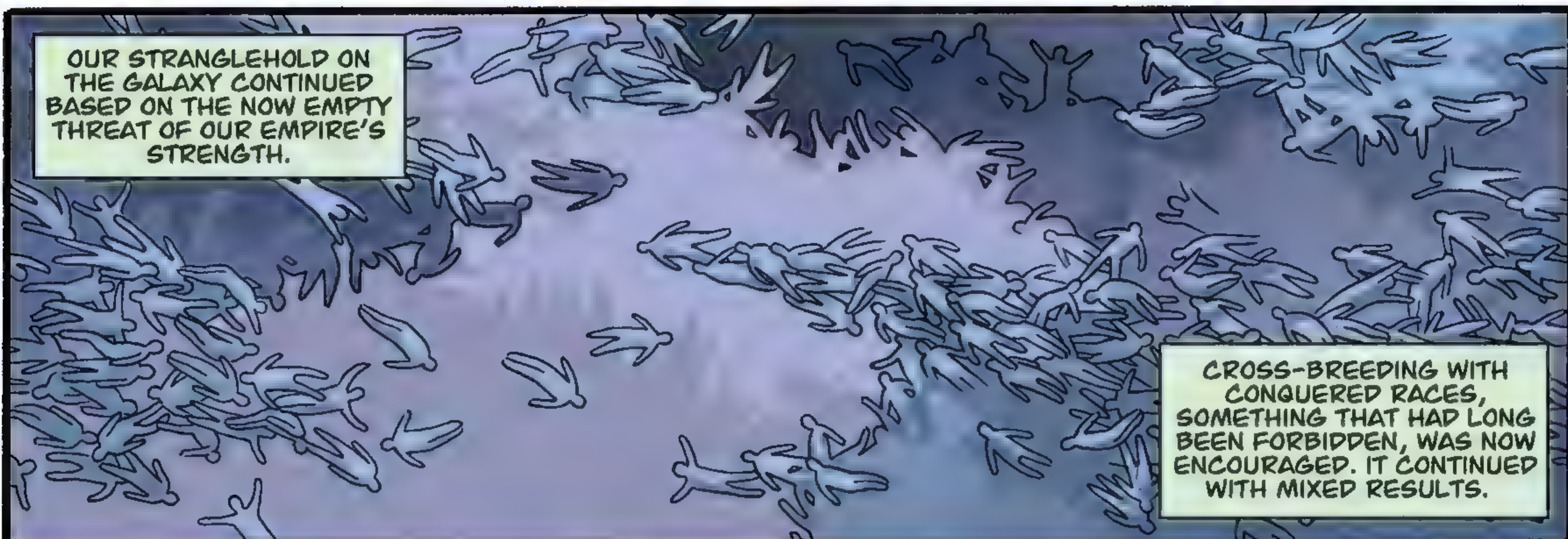
MIRACULOUSLY, THE VILTRUM EMPIRE ENDURED.





OUR LEADERS SPREAD REPORTS OF OUR EXPANDING EMPIRE THINNING OUR RANKS. NEW PLANS WERE DEVISED ALLOWING AS FEW AS ONE VILTRUMITE TO CONQUER ALIEN PLANETS ON THEIR OWN.

MY MISSION ON EARTH WAS ONE SUCH PLAN.



OUR STRANGLEHOLD ON THE GALAXY CONTINUED BASED ON THE NOW EMPTY THREAT OF OUR EMPIRE'S STRENGTH.

CROSS-BREEDING WITH CONQUERED RACES, SOMETHING THAT HAD LONG BEEN FORBIDDEN, WAS NOW ENCOURAGED. IT CONTINUED WITH MIXED RESULTS.



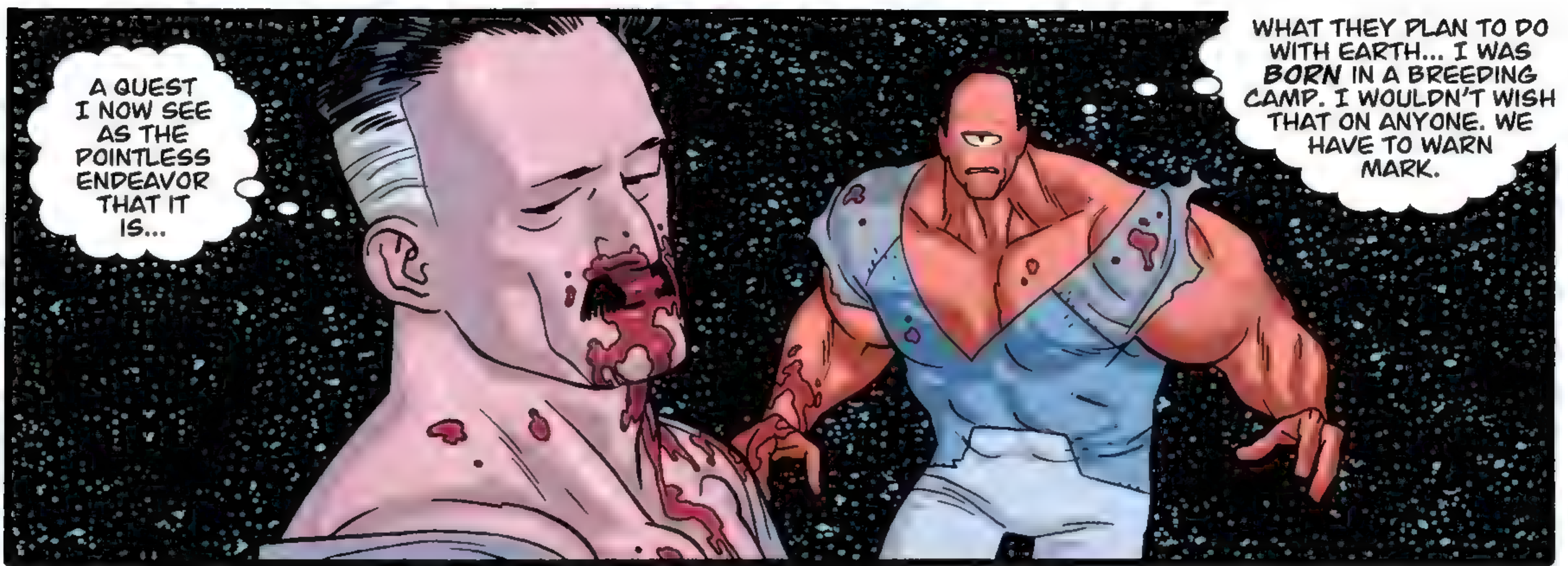
UNTIL EARTH, UNTIL MY SON. I NEVER TOLD HIM OUR MAIN REASON FOR CONQUERING EARTH... WHAT MADE IT SO IMPORTANT.

HUMAN DNA IS ALMOST ONE-HUNDRED PERCENT COMPATIBLE WITH VILTRUMITES. EARTH IS TO BECOME A BREEDING CAMP.



THE RESULTS OF THE SCOURGE VIRUS WERE HIDDEN, BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN.

OUR PLANET, CUT OFF FROM ANY OUTSIDE RACES, NOW STANDS AS A TRIBUTE TO OUR FALLEN BRETHREN. A REMINDER OF WHAT WE'VE SACRIFICED TO CONTINUE OUR QUEST FOR INTER-PLANETARY DOMINATION.



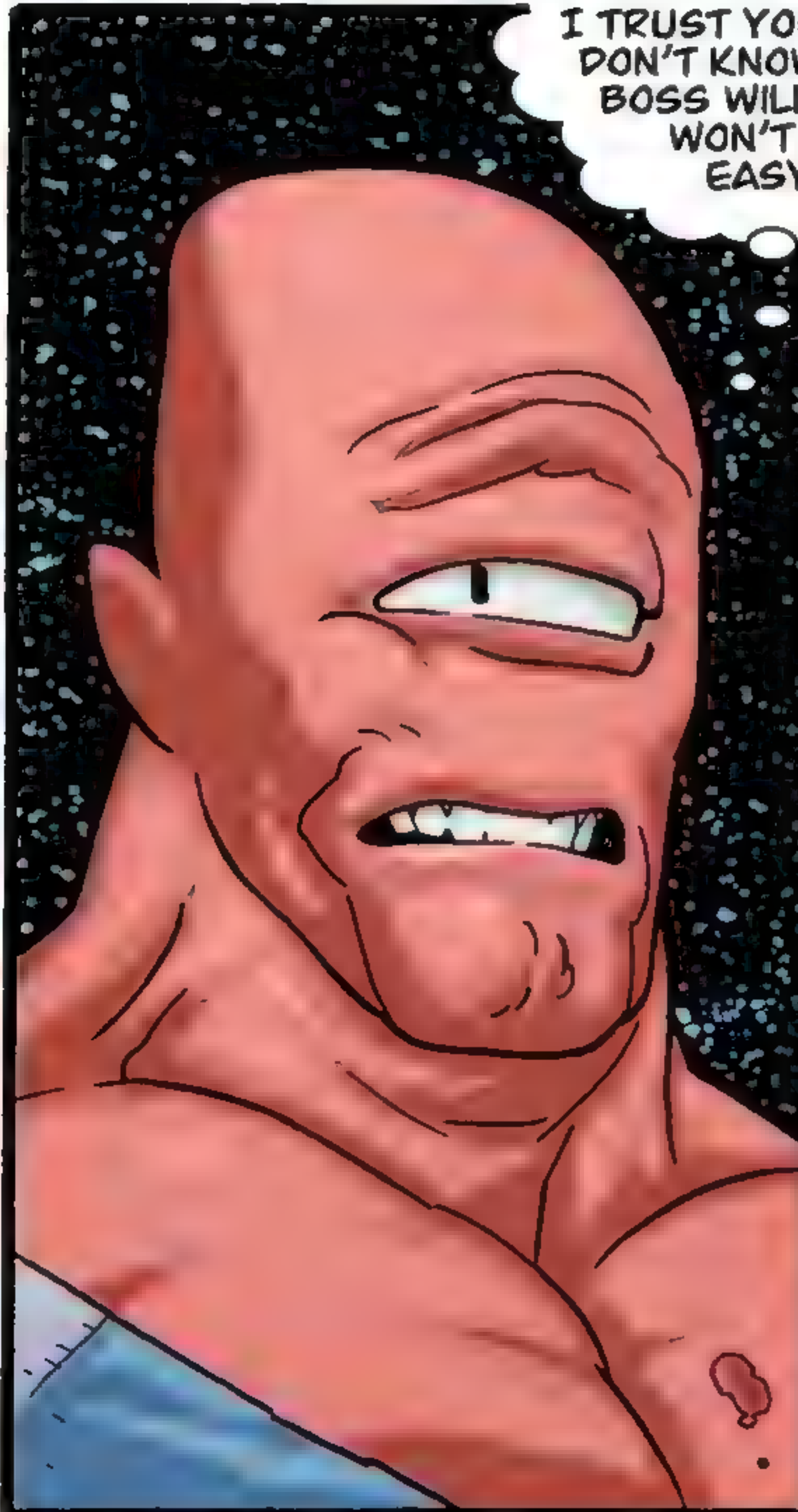
A QUEST
I NOW SEE
AS THE
POINTLESS
ENDEAVOR
THAT IT
IS...

WHAT THEY PLAN TO DO
WITH EARTH... I WAS
BORN IN A BREEDING
CAMP. I WOULDN'T WISH
THAT ON ANYONE. WE
HAVE TO WARN
MARK.



NO.

YOU HAVE
TO TAKE ME
TO YOUR PEOPLE.
I NEED TO MEET
WITH THE COALITION
OF PLANETS.
IMMEDIATELY.



I TRUST YOU, BUT I
DON'T KNOW IF MY
BOSS WILL. THIS
WON'T BE
EASY.



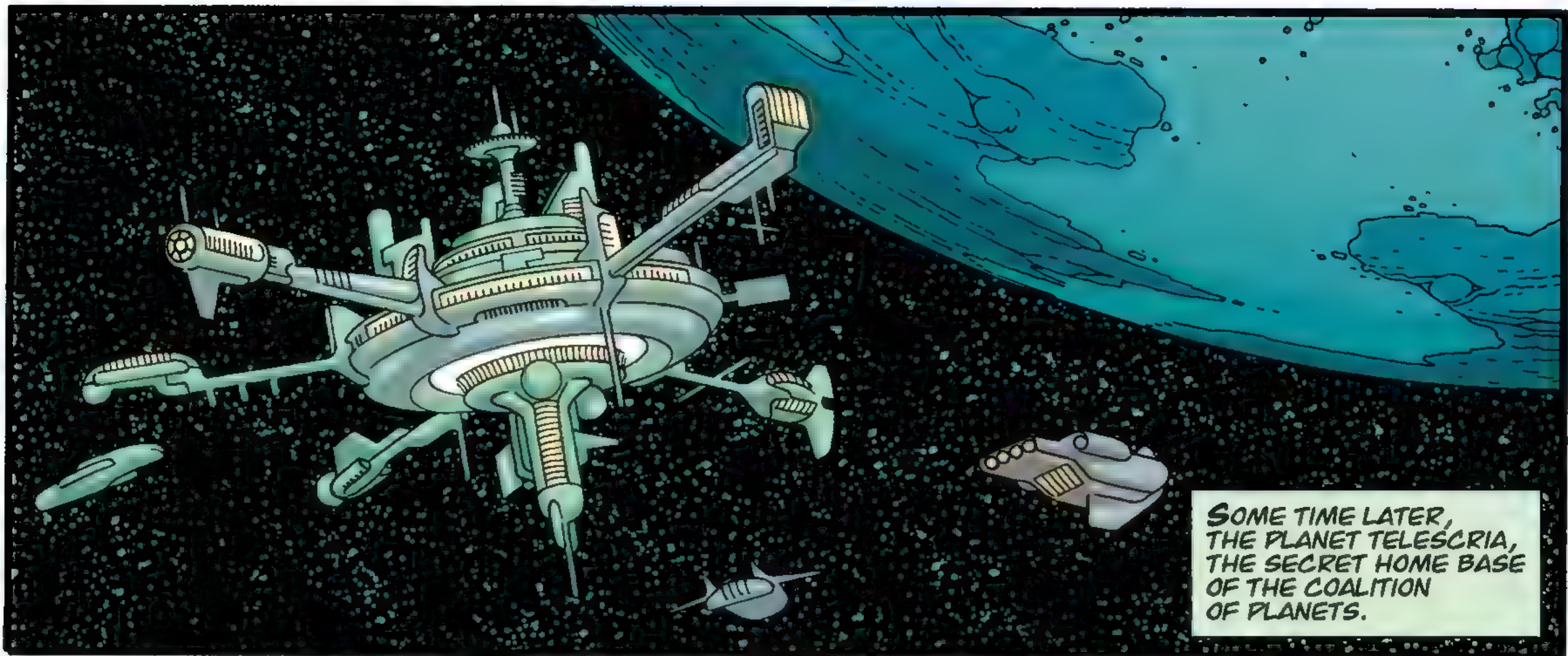
IT DOESN'T MATTER. IF
WE'RE GOING TO BE ABLE
TO SAVE EARTH AND STOP
THE VILTRUM EMPIRE
ONCE AND FOR ALL, THE
COALITION NEEDS TO
KNOW EVERYTHING
I KNOW.



WE'LL ALSO NEED THE INFORMATION
CONTAINED IN MY BOOKS THAT YOU
SCANNED. I WROTE EVERYTHING
DOWN SO I WOULDN'T NEED TO
REMEMBER IT ALL--AND THERE
IS VALUABLE INFORMATION
ENCODED IN THE
WORDS.

INFORMATION
THAT WILL GAIN
YOUR BOSS'S
TRUST.

OKAY, LET
ME GET MY
GEAR AND
THEN WE'LL
GO.



SOME TIME LATER,
THE PLANET TELESORIA,
THE SECRET HOME BASE
OF THE COALITION
OF PLANETS.



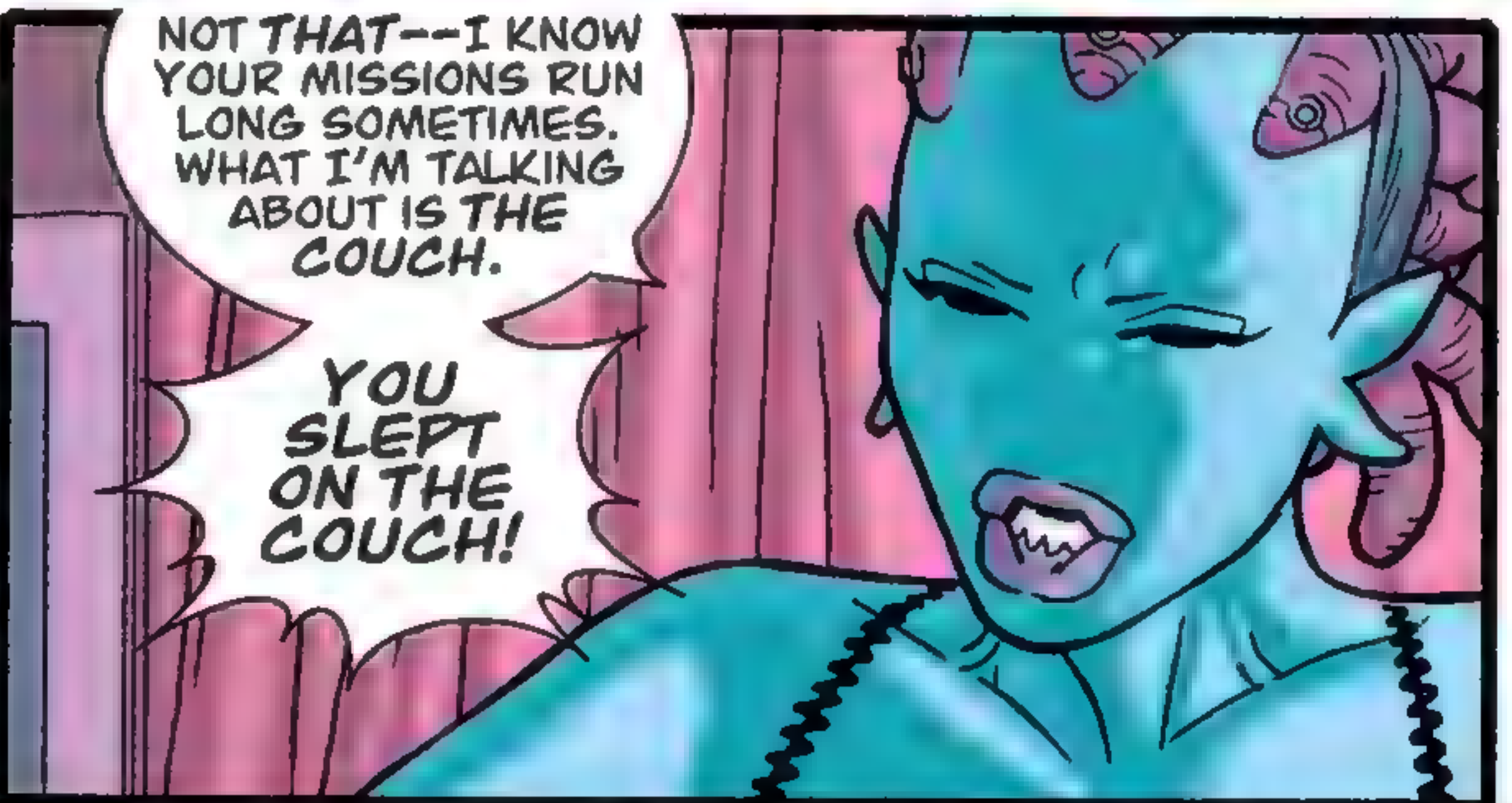
WHERE
HAVE YOU
BEEN?!



TELIA,
DEAR,
UH--I'M
SORRY.

I WAS ON
THAT MISSION
AND I WAS TAKEN
PRISONER BY THE
VILTRUMITES. THEY
HELD ME IN PRISON
FOR A FEW MONTHS,
I WAS JUST
RECENTLY ABLE
TO ESCAPE.

I WOULD
HAVE CONTACTED
YOU IF I COULD
HAVE--BUT THERE
WAS NEVER AN
OPPORTUNITY
AND--

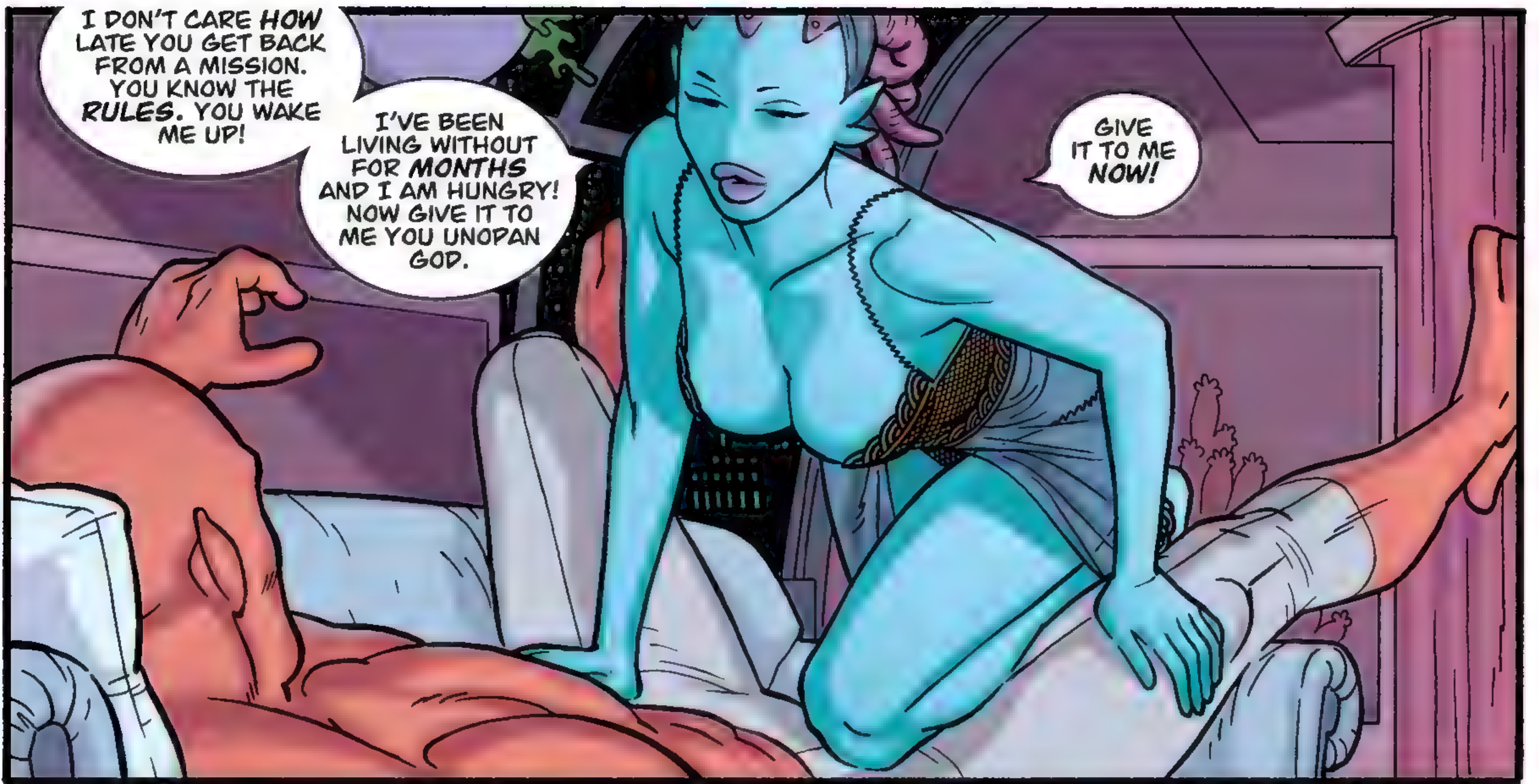


NOT THAT--I KNOW
YOUR MISSIONS RUN
LONG SOMETIMES.
WHAT I'M TALKING
ABOUT IS THE
COUCH.

YOU
SLEPT
ON THE
COUCH!



OH, UH... THAT. I'M
SORRY. THE THING
IS, WE GOT IN
REALLY LATE
AND--



I DON'T CARE HOW LATE YOU GET BACK FROM A MISSION. YOU KNOW THE RULES. YOU WAKE ME UP!

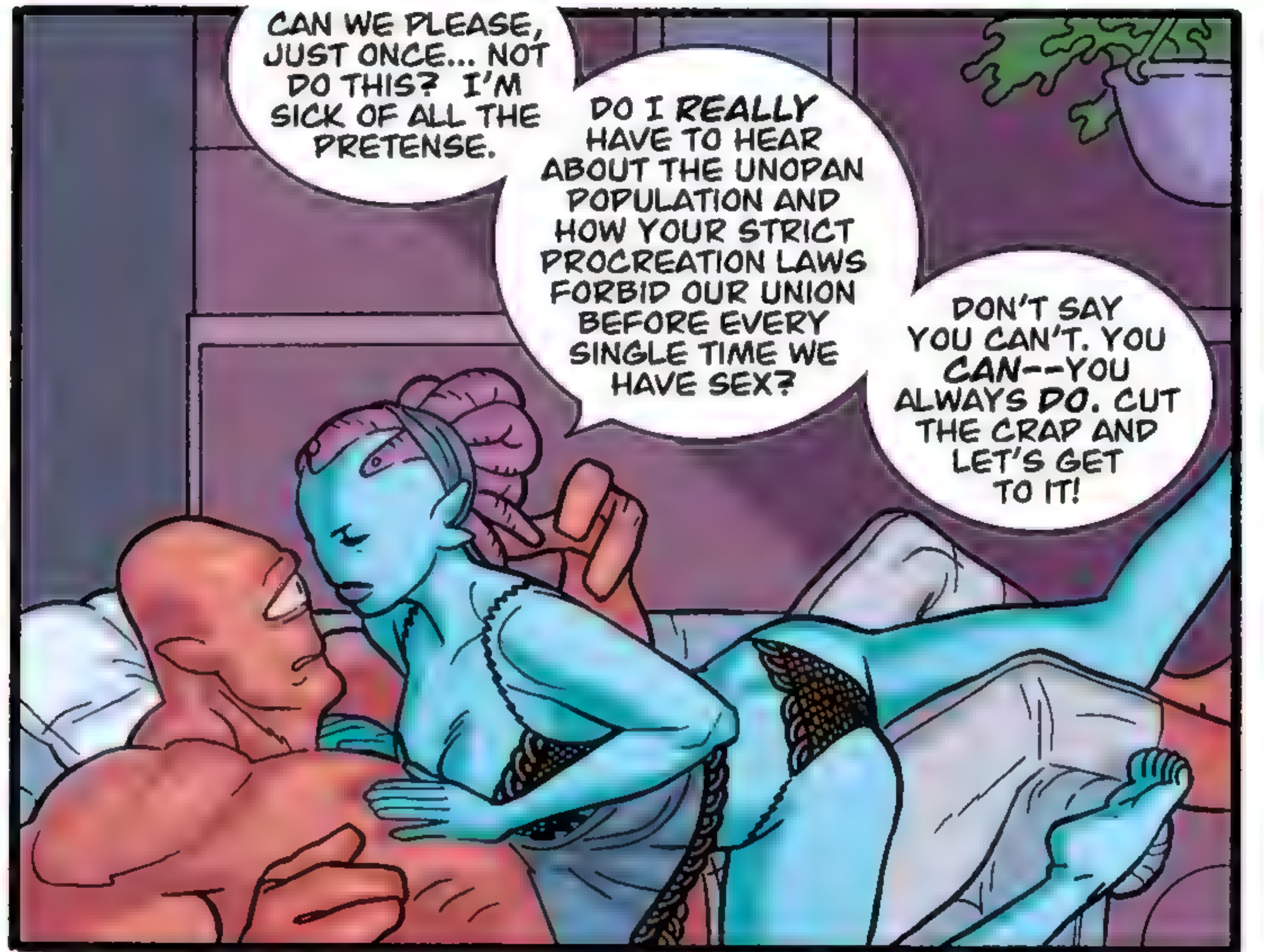
I'VE BEEN LIVING WITHOUT FOR MONTHS AND I AM HUNGRY! NOW GIVE IT TO ME YOU UNOPAN GOD.

GIVE IT TO ME NOW!



TELIA, PLEASE. I CAN'T RIGHT NOW.

STOP---



CAN WE PLEASE, JUST ONCE... NOT DO THIS? I'M SICK OF ALL THE PRETENSE.

DO I REALLY HAVE TO HEAR ABOUT THE UNOPAN POPULATION AND HOW YOUR STRICT PROCREATION LAWS FORBID OUR UNION BEFORE EVERY SINGLE TIME WE HAVE SEX?

DON'T SAY YOU CAN'T. YOU CAN--YOU ALWAYS DO. CUT THE CRAP AND LET'S GET TO IT!

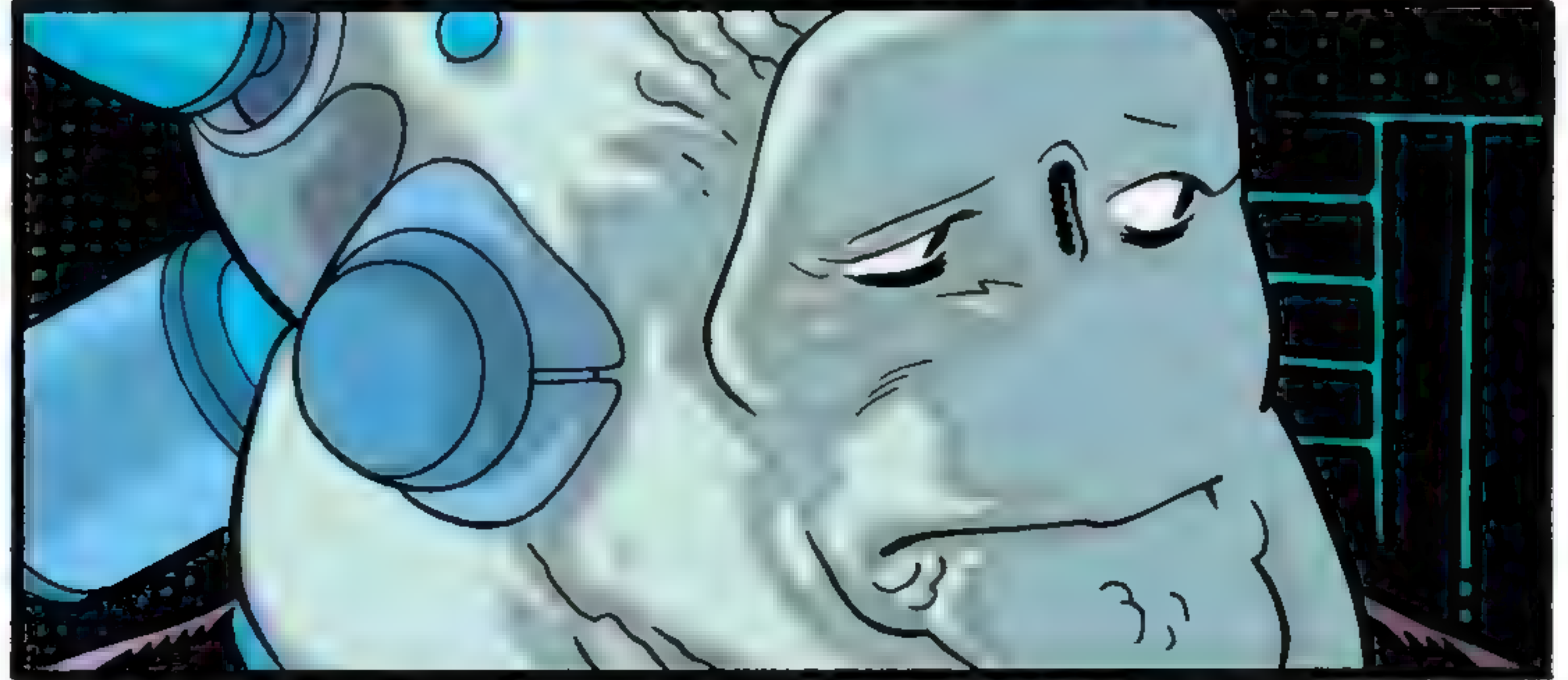
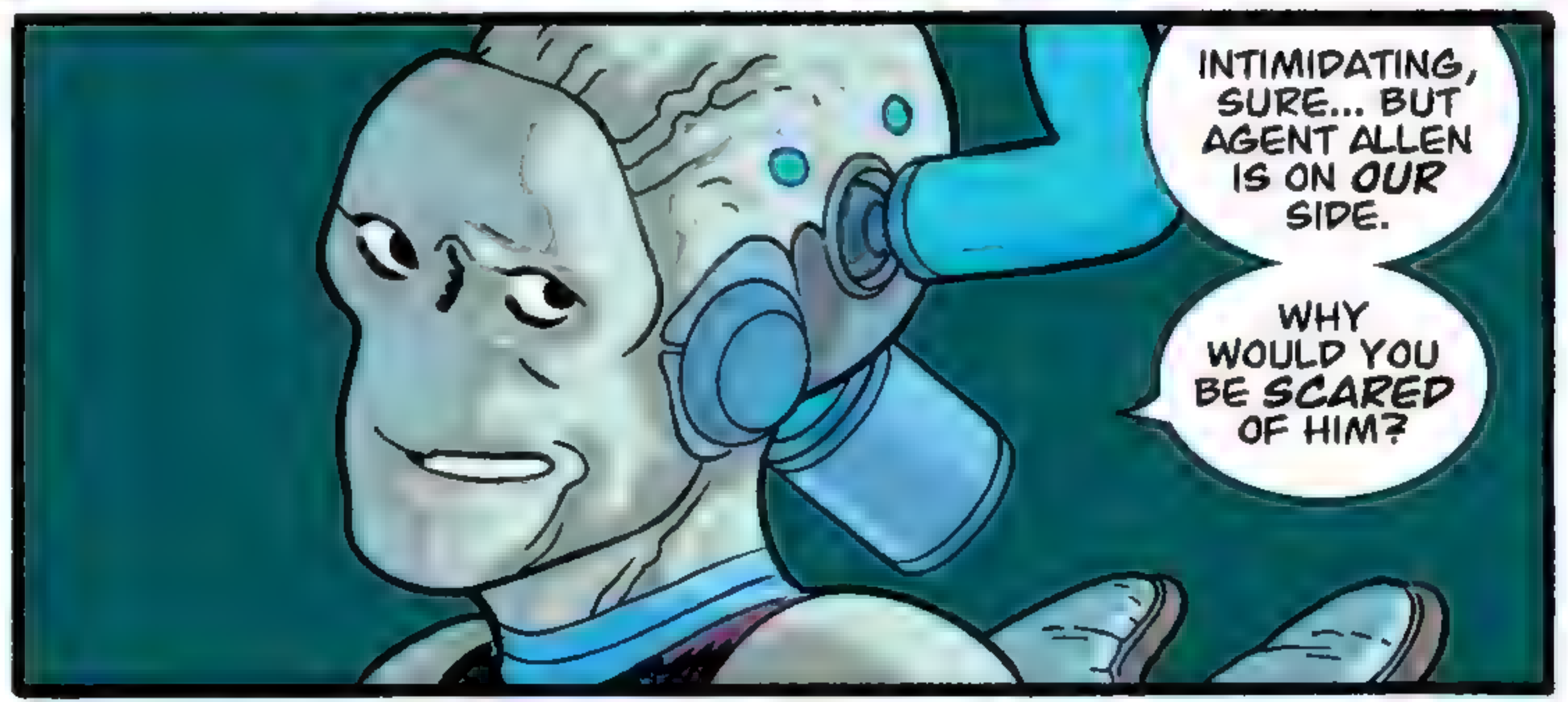
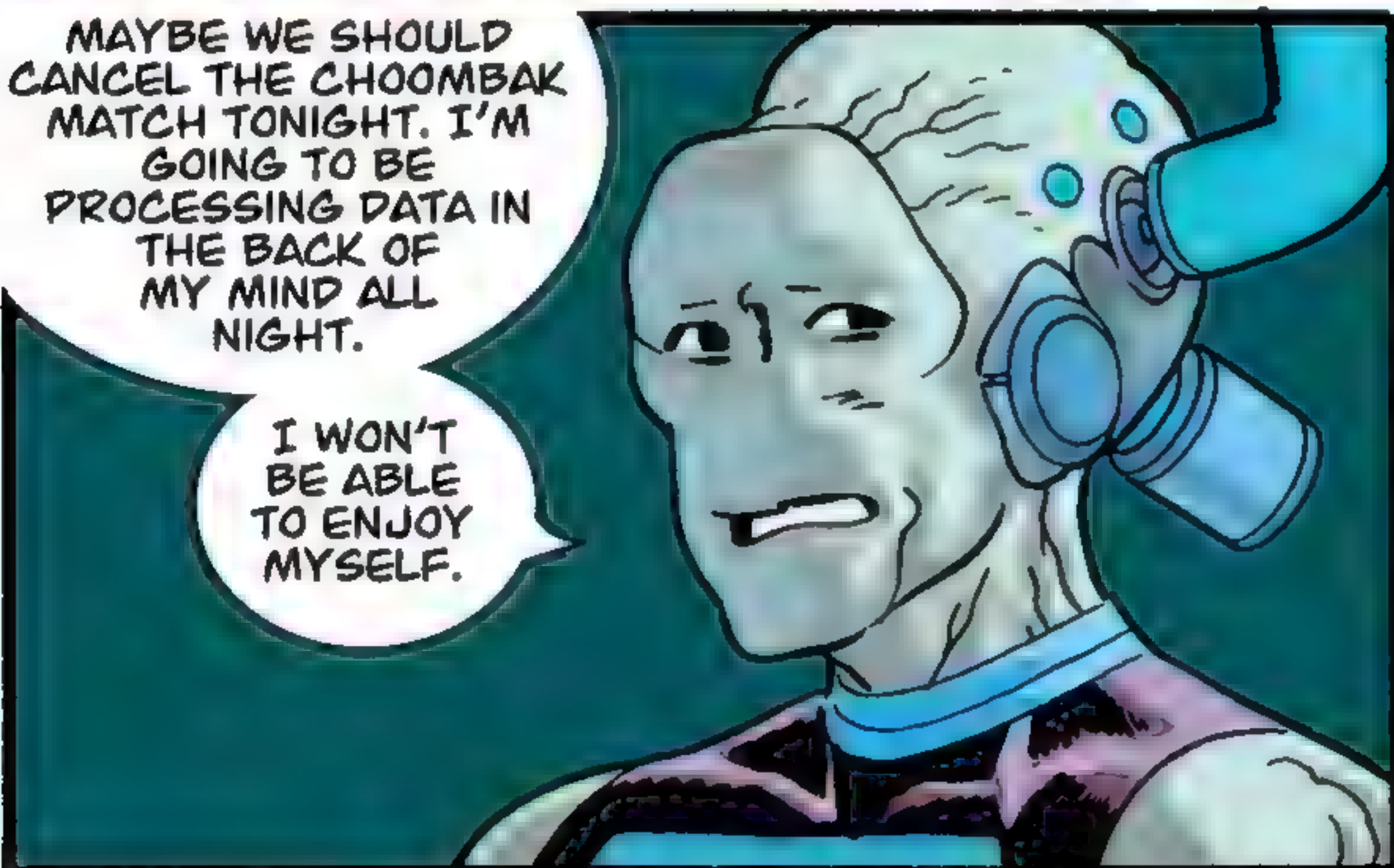
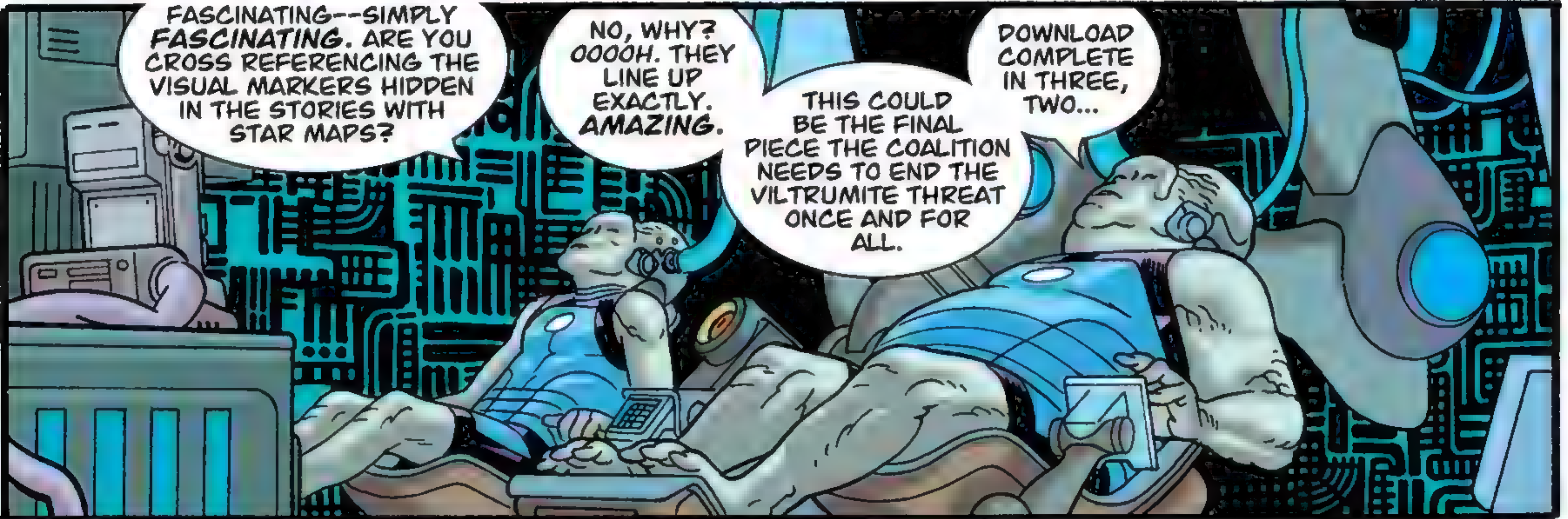
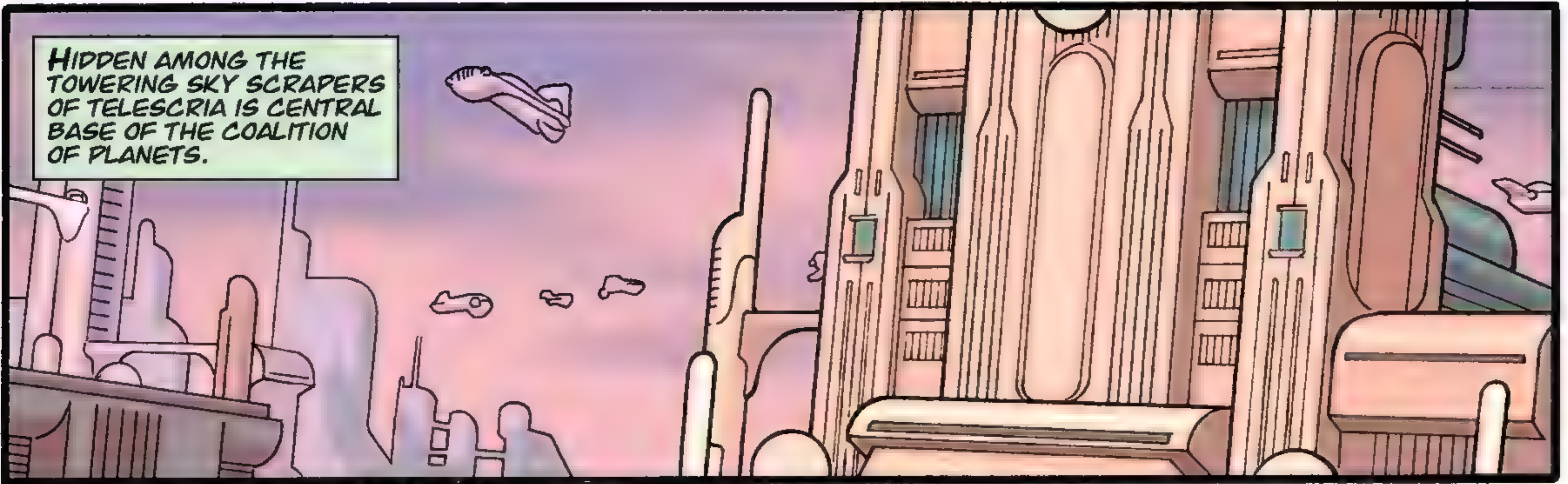


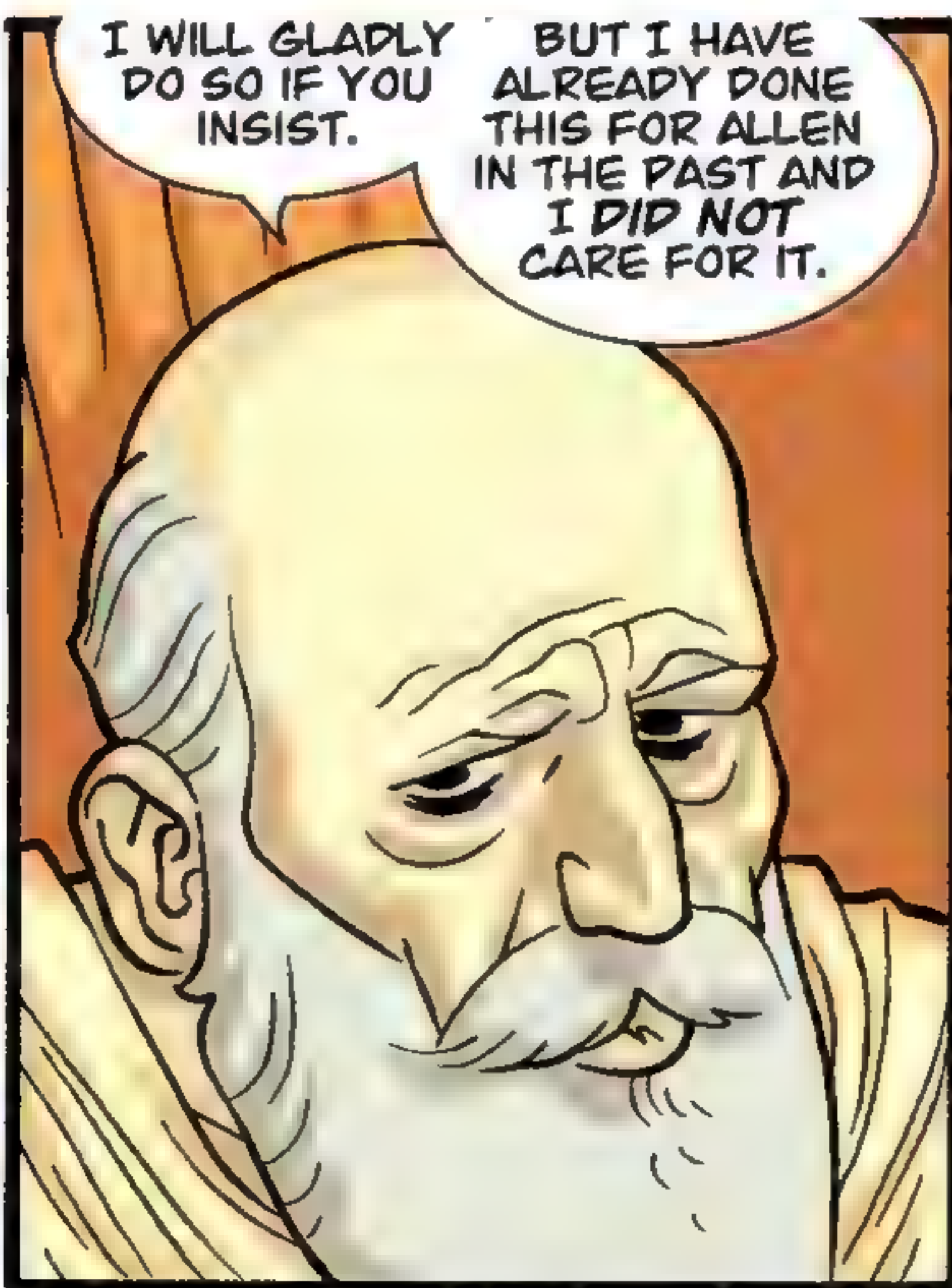
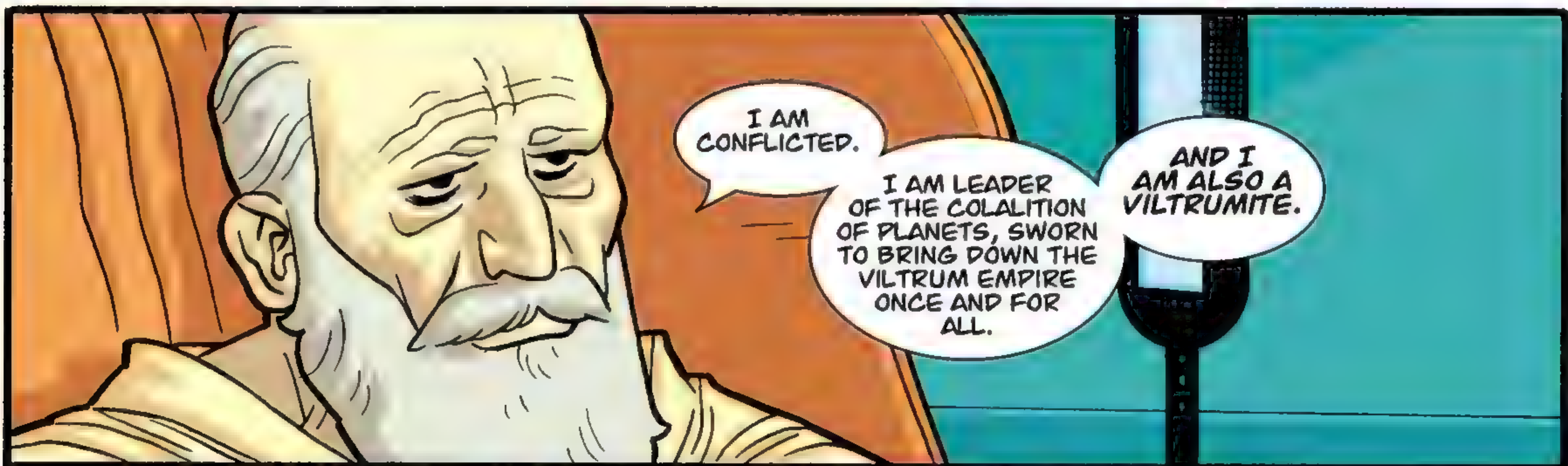
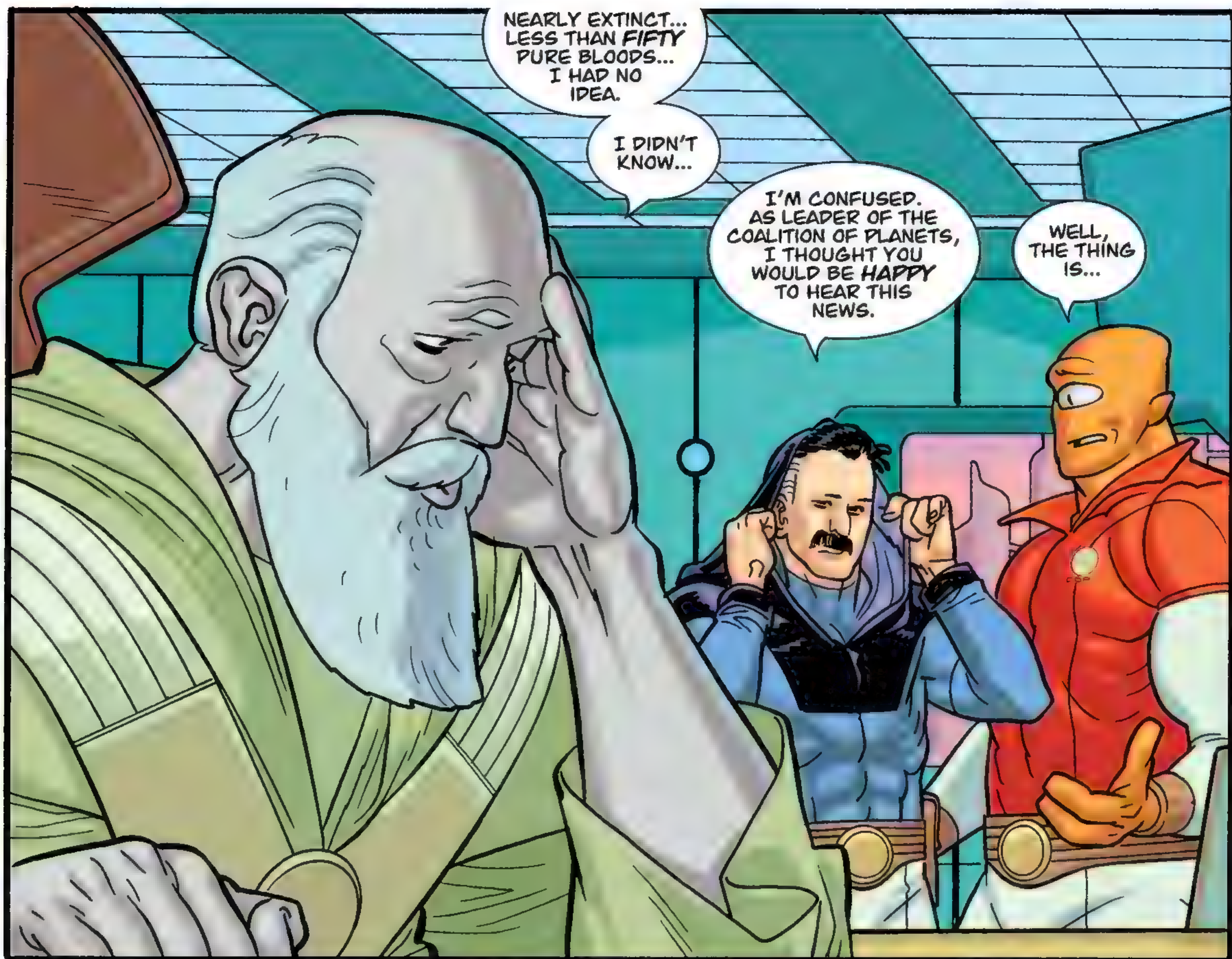
NO, THAT'S NOT IT--



WAIT A MINUTE... DID YOU SAY "WE" GOT IN REALLY LATE?









BUT I THOUGHT--I ALWAYS
FEARED THAT THERE WAS
SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME,
FOR TURNING MY BACK
AGAINST THE EMPIRE--
VILTRUMITES HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN
LOYAL...

...I
THOUGHT
I WAS THE
FIRST.

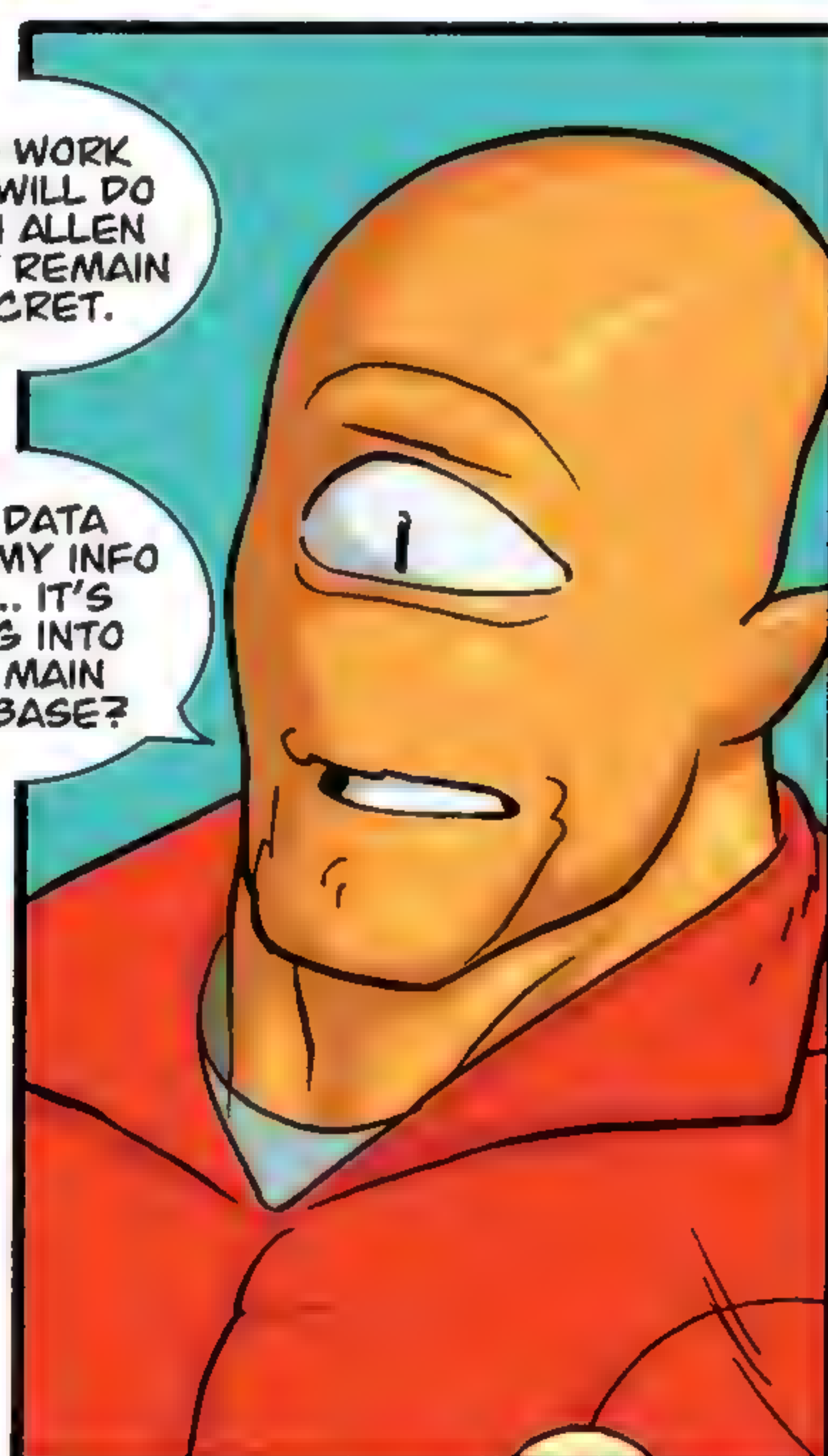
MY
BETRAYAL
WAS HIDDEN,
REMOVED FROM
HISTORY'S
RECORD.

BUT THERE
IS NO TIME FOR
THIS. WE HAVE
ALREADY BEEN
CONVERSING TOO
LONG. PEOPLE WILL
BECOME SUSPICIOUS
THAT THIS ISN'T
JUST A STANDARD
BRIEFING.

I
CAN'T
HAVE
THAT.



THERE IS AT LEAST ONE
VILTRUMITE AGENT AMONG
US, REPORTING BACK
TO THE EMPIRE.



THE WORK
YOU WILL DO
WITH ALLEN
MUST REMAIN
SECRET.

THE DATA
FROM MY INFO
POD... IT'S
GOING INTO
THE MAIN
DATABASE?



NO.

MY TRUSTED INNER-CIRCLE
HAS A SEPARATE DATABASE
FOR MORE SENSITIVE DATA.
AND EVEN THEY WILL BE
UNWARE OF YOUR
MISSION USING THIS
DATA.



WE NOW HAVE A LIST OF
WEAPONS AND BEINGS THAT
CAN HURT A VILTRUMITE--
THINGS THAT WILL BECOME
VERY VALUABLE TO
THE COALITION OF
PLANETS.

I CHARGE
YOU TWO WITH
THE TASK OF
GATHERING AS
MUCH OF THESE
THINGS THAT
STILL
REMAIN.

ALLEN, I'M GIVING
YOU ACCESS TO OUR
ARMORY FOR THE NEXT
HOUR--THAT'S AS MUCH
TIME AS I CAN KEEP
SECRET FROM THE
COUNCIL.

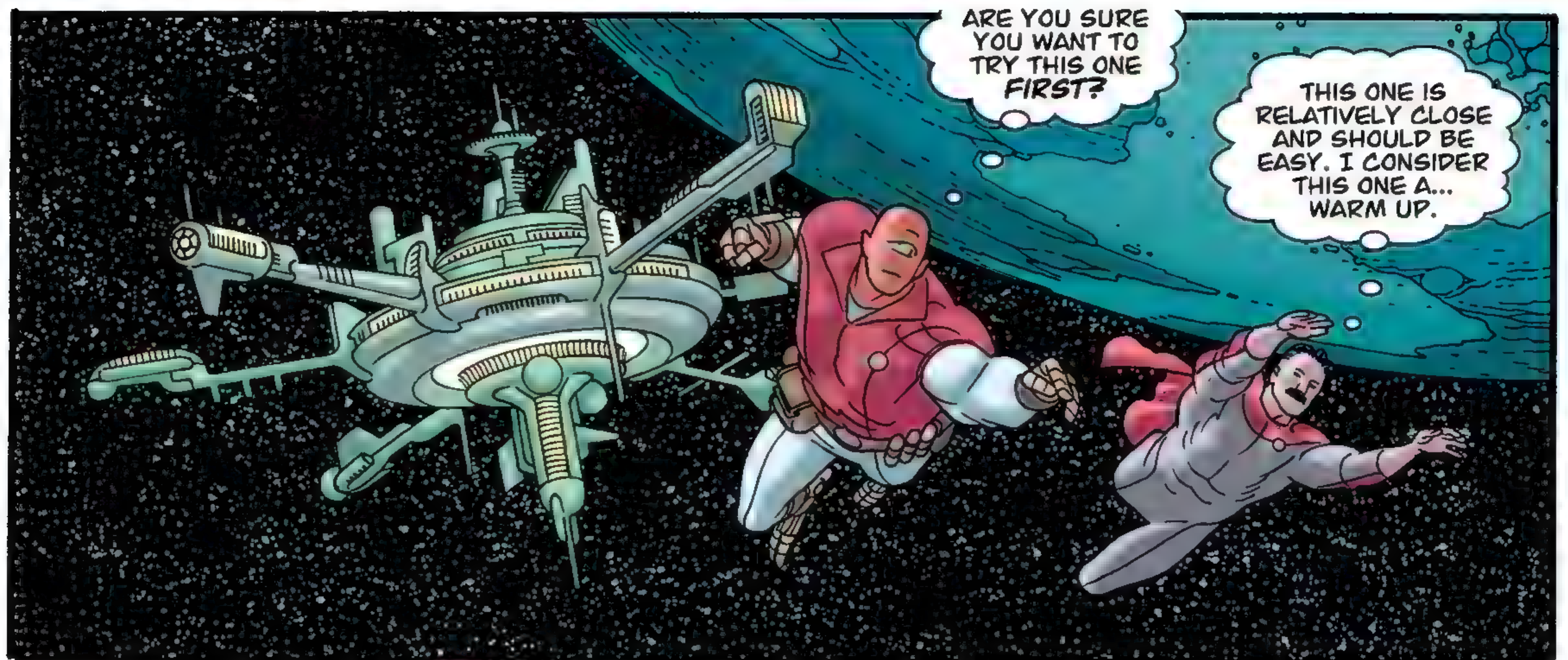
GO.



SWEET!

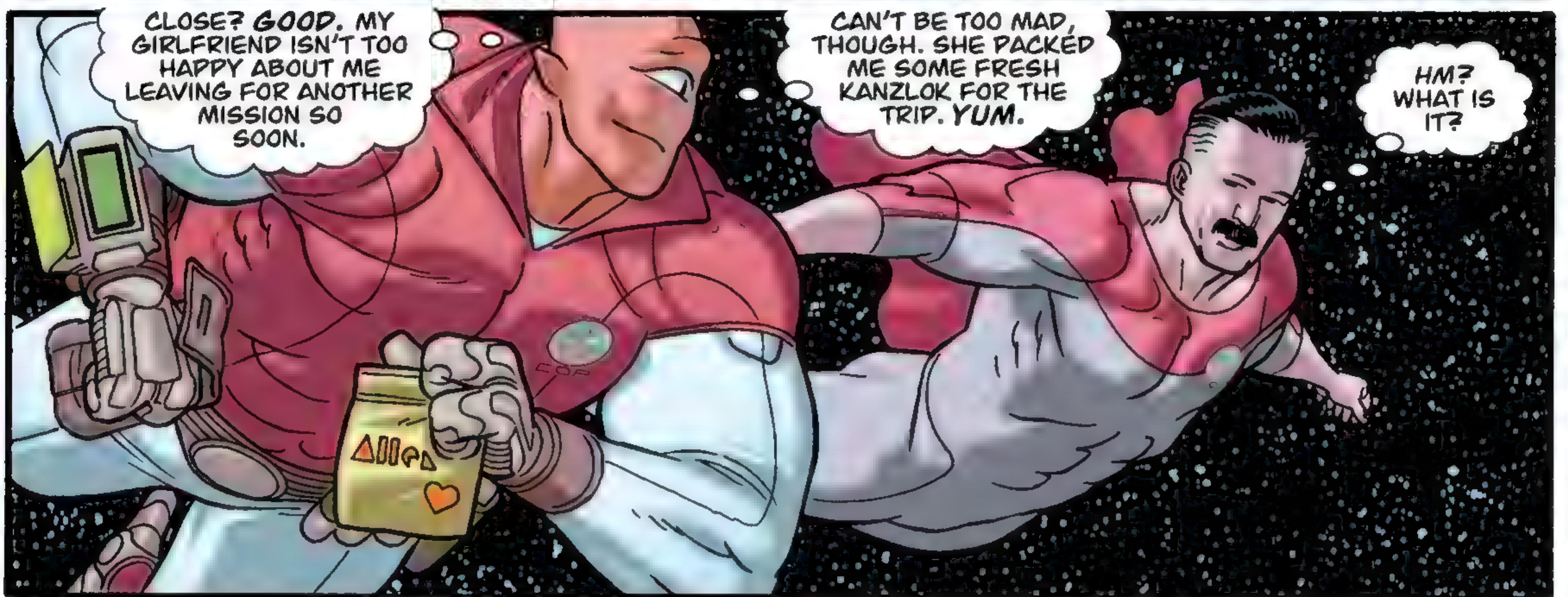
IT LOOKS COOL, BUT WITH YOUR STRENGTH AREN'T ALL THOSE GADGETS A LITTLE... UNNECESSARY? SEEMS LIKE THEY'LL JUST... SLOW YOU DOWN.

YEAH, AND YOUR SUIT'S ALL ABOUT PRACTICALITY. NICE CAPE, DUDE.



ARE YOU SURE
YOU WANT TO
TRY THIS ONE
FIRST?

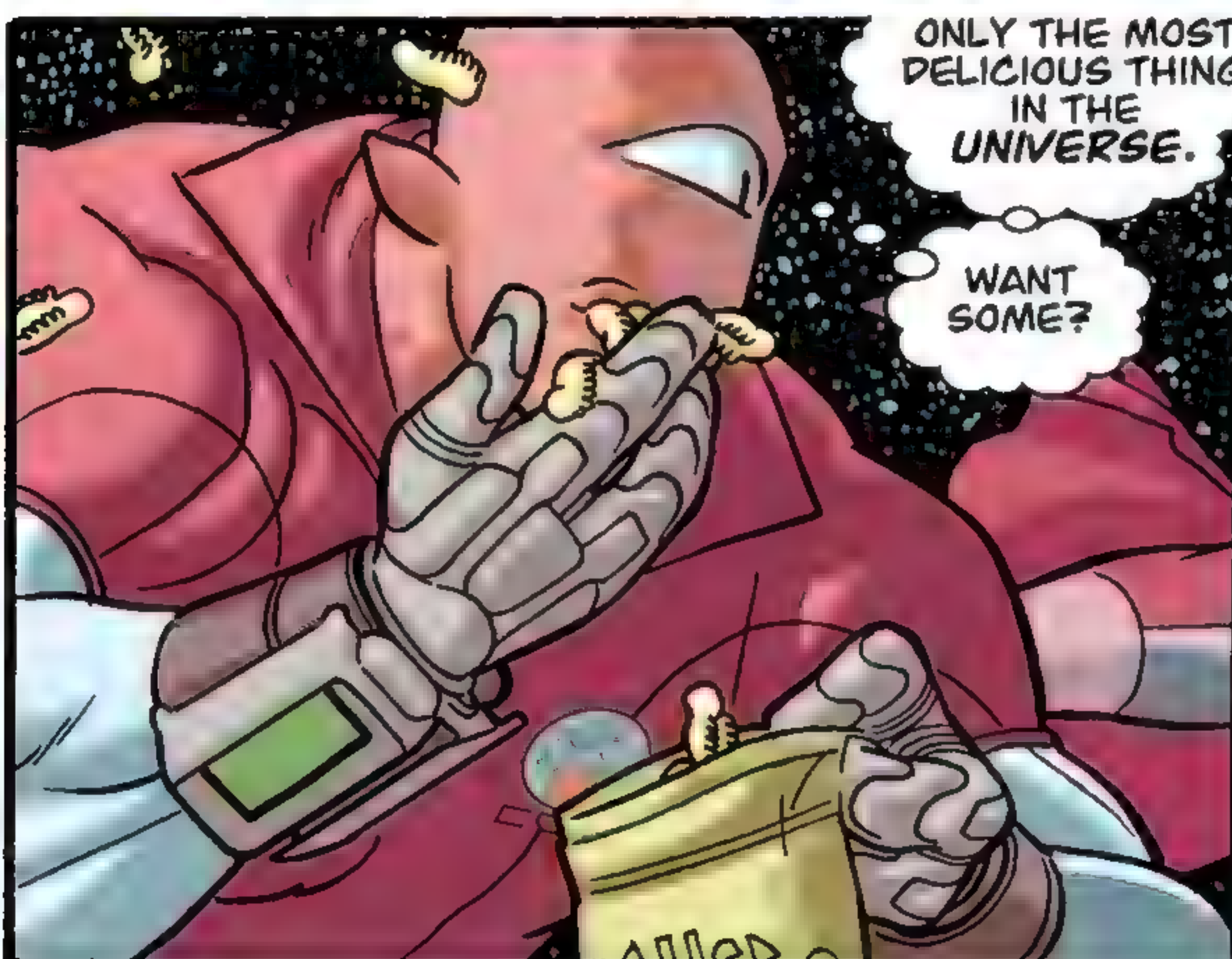
THIS ONE IS
RELATIVELY CLOSE
AND SHOULD BE
EASY. I CONSIDER
THIS ONE A...
WARM UP.



CLOSE? GOOD. MY
GIRLFRIEND ISN'T TOO
HAPPY ABOUT ME
LEAVING FOR ANOTHER
MISSION SO
SOON.

CAN'T BE TOO MAD,
THOUGH. SHE PACKED
ME SOME FRESH
KANZLOK FOR THE
TRIP. YUM.

HM?
WHAT IS
IT?



ONLY THE MOST
DELICIOUS THING
IN THE
UNIVERSE.

WANT
SOME?



PASS.





THERE IT IS, THE NEBULOID BELT. IT'S BEEN... ALMOST A HUNDRED YEARS SINCE I WAS HERE.

LOOKS EXACTLY THE SAME.

IT'S... A BUNCH OF ROCKS.



HAND ME YOUR INFO POD.



JUST SAYING...



THERE'S A CODE HIDDEN IN THE TEXT. THE NUMBER OF WORDS IN THESE PARAGRAPHS I WROTE ABOUT THE ASTEROIDS WILL SPELL OUT THE COORDINATES OF THE SPECIFIC ASTEROID WE'RE LOOKING FOR.

FOLLOW ME.

SO, IF IT'S BEEN ONE-HUNDRED YEARS, GIVE OR TAKE, AND THE ASTEROIDS ARE DRIFTING AT THIS SPEED, THEIR RELATIVE DISTANCE TO EACH OTHER WOULD BE SHIFTING...

AND...

YOU GOING TO BE ABLE TO FIND THIS... WHATEVER IT IS WE'RE AFTER?

ABSOLUTELY. JUST GIVE ME A MINUTE.

...
ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP?

NO, NO... ALMOST GOT IT.

THERE.

THIS IS IT.

HOW CAN YOU BE SURE?
IT'S A ROCK--
THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME.

I'M NOT SURE... BUT THIS LOOKS FAMILIAR.

AH!



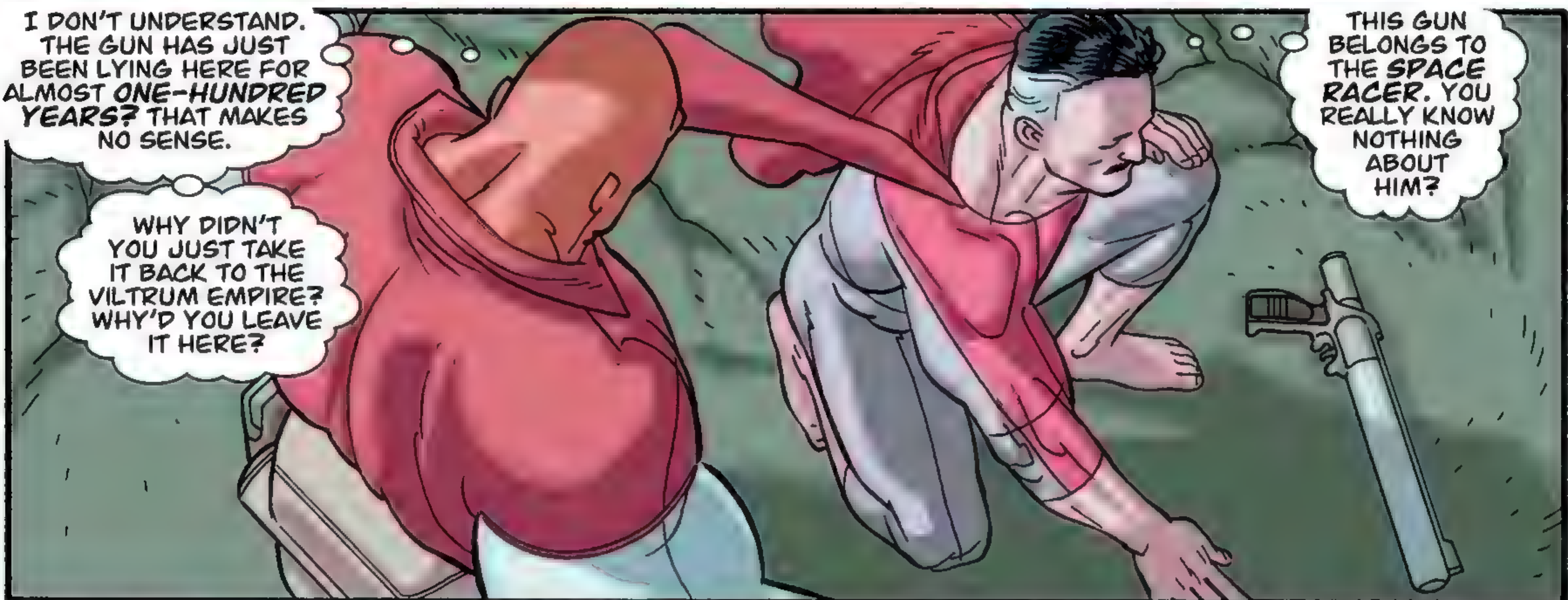
THERE IT IS.

WAIT, WHAT?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. THE GUN HAS JUST BEEN LYING HERE FOR ALMOST ONE-HUNDRED YEARS? THAT MAKES NO SENSE.

WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST TAKE IT BACK TO THE VILTRUM EMPIRE? WHY'D YOU LEAVE IT HERE?

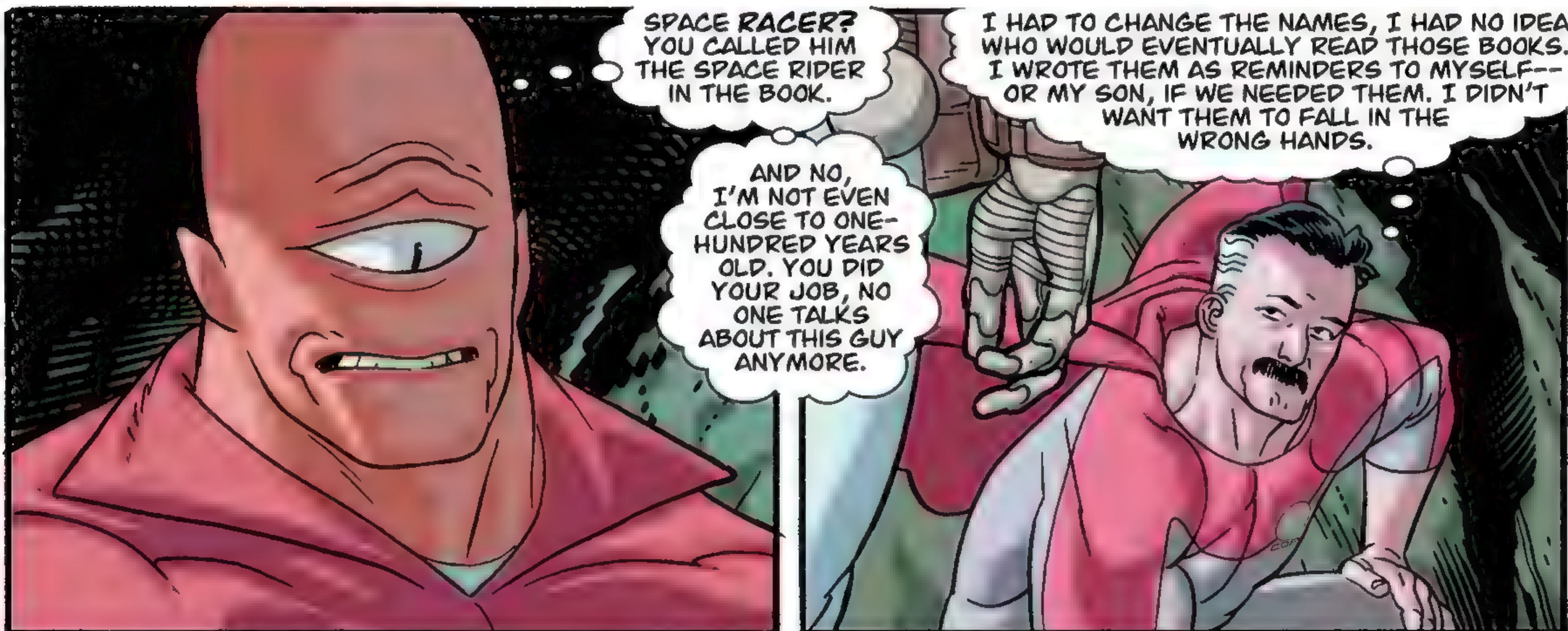
THIS GUN BELONGS TO THE SPACE RACER. YOU REALLY KNOW NOTHING ABOUT HIM?



SPACE RACER? YOU CALLED HIM THE SPACE RIDER IN THE BOOK.

I HAD TO CHANGE THE NAMES, I HAD NO IDEA WHO WOULD EVENTUALLY READ THOSE BOOKS. I WROTE THEM AS REMINDERS TO MYSELF--OR MY SON, IF WE NEEDED THEM. I DIDN'T WANT THEM TO FALL IN THE WRONG HANDS.

AND NO, I'M NOT EVEN CLOSE TO ONE-HUNDRED YEARS OLD. YOU DID YOUR JOB, NO ONE TALKS ABOUT THIS GUY ANYMORE.

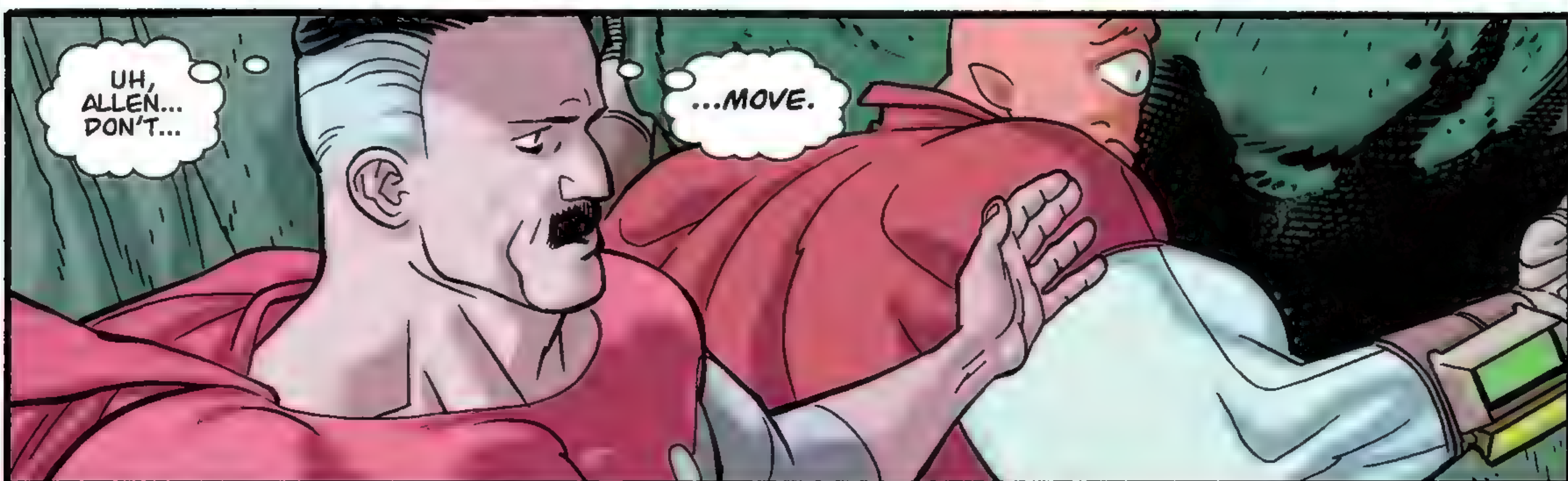
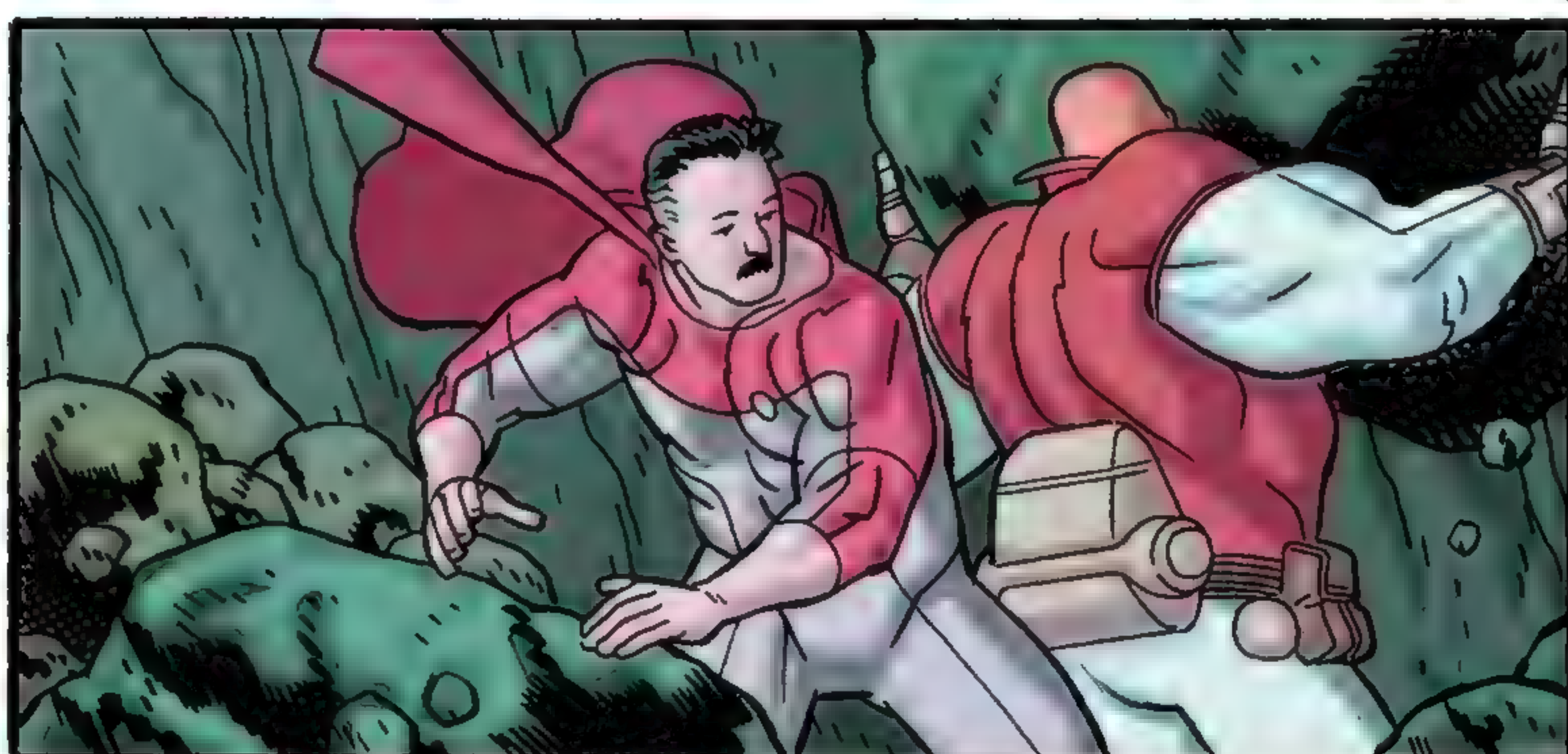


THE SPACE RACER'S GUN--THE ONE THAT FIRES INDESTRUCTIBLE BLASTS THAT WILL SHOOT THROUGH ANYTHING--CAN ONLY BE FIRED BY HIM.

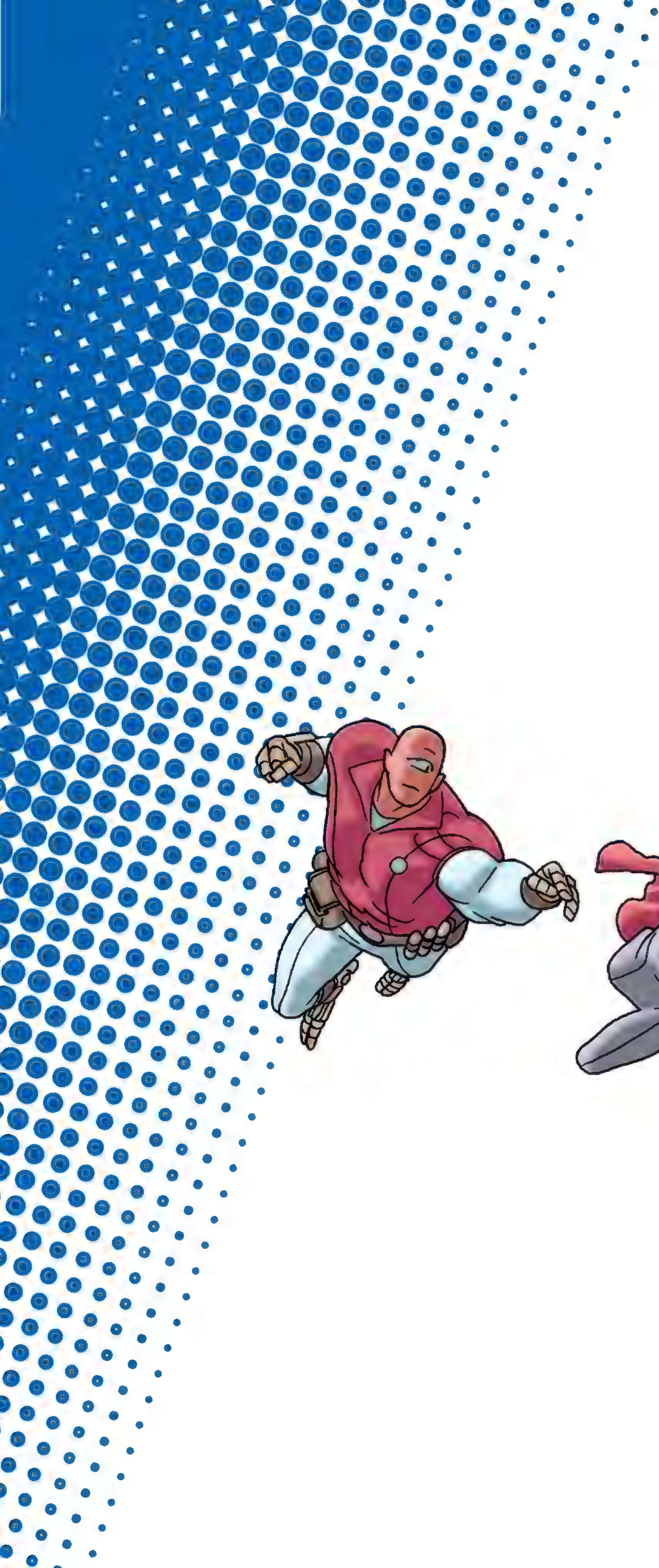
HE'S GOT SOME KIND OF BOND WITH THE GUN--IF ANYONE TRIES TO TAKE IT OR USE IT... IF I HAD TOUCHED IT WHILE HE WAS STILL ALIVE IT WOULD HAVE FLOWN INTO THE CENTER OF THE PILE OF RUBBLE I BURIED HIM UNDER AND GIVEN HIM THE MEANS TO ESCAPE.

MY ONLY OPTION WAS TO LEAVE IT EXACTLY WHERE HE DROPPED IT.



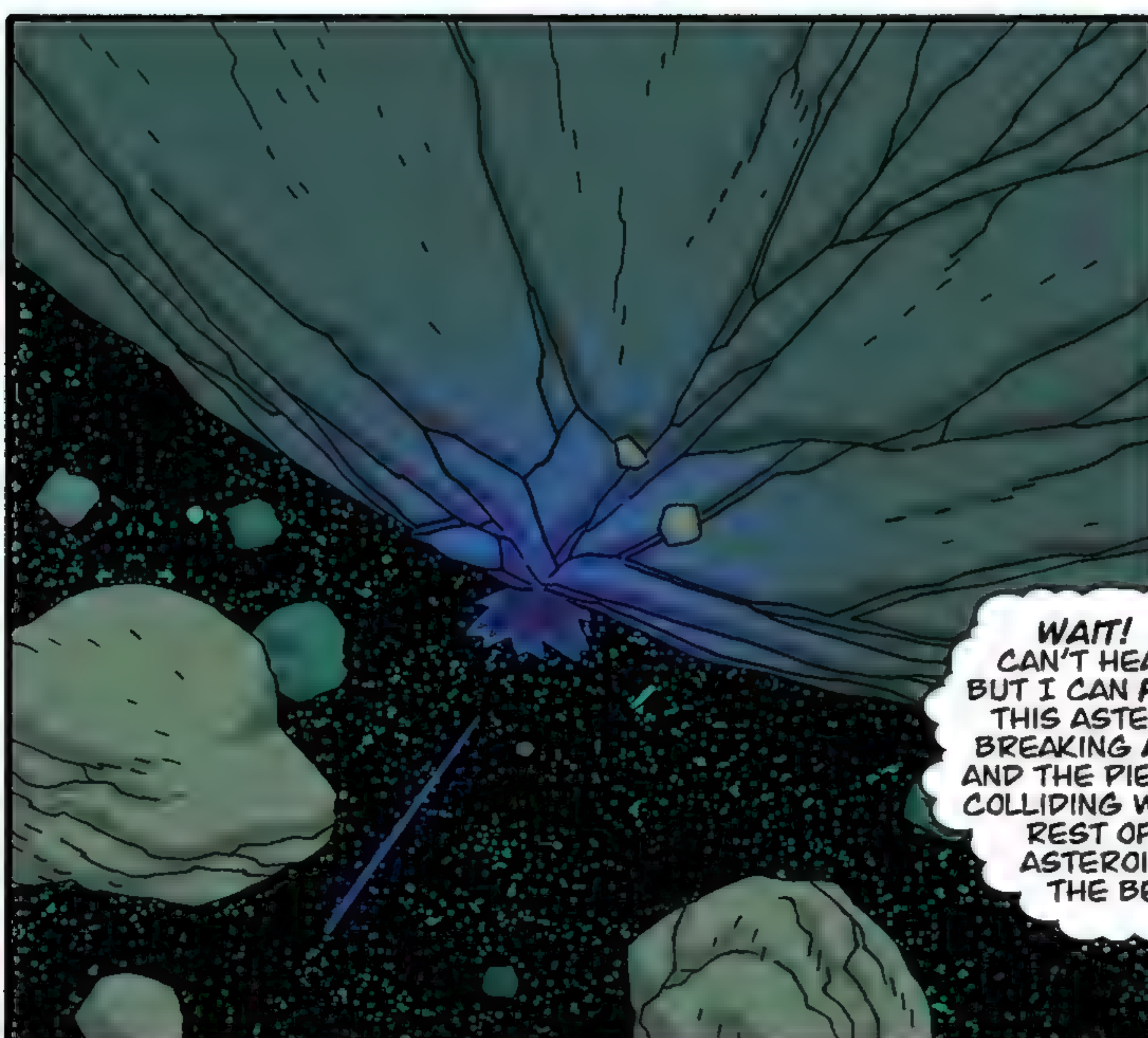
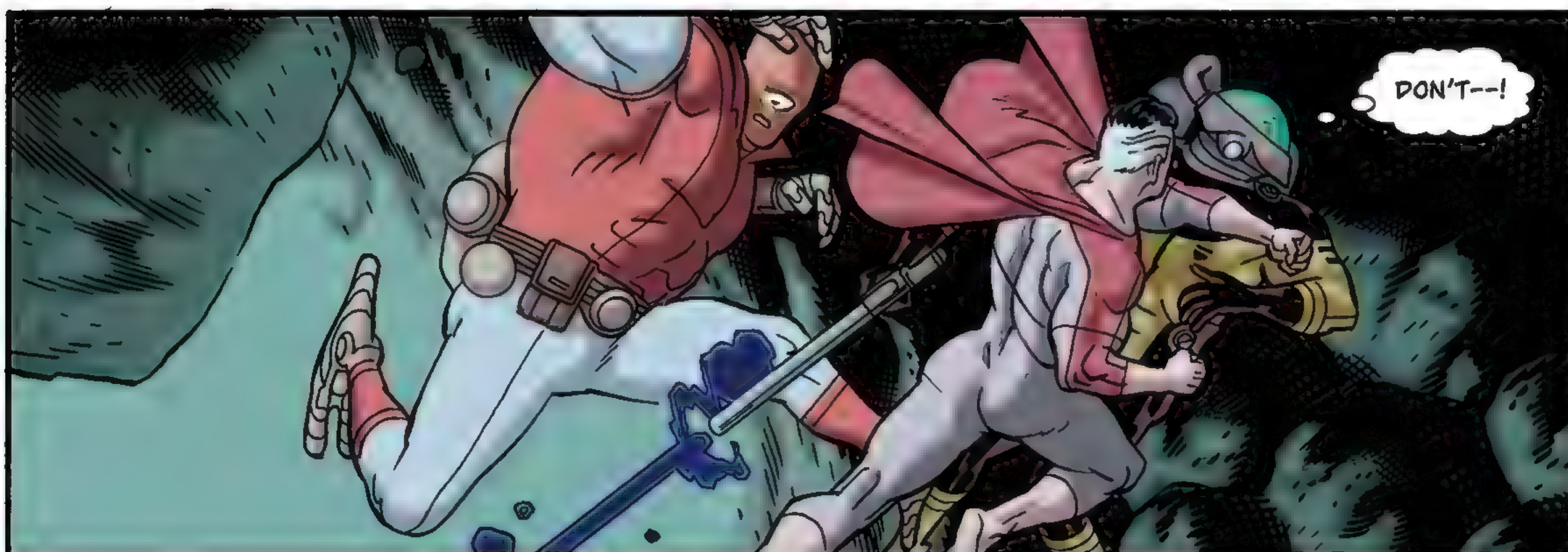




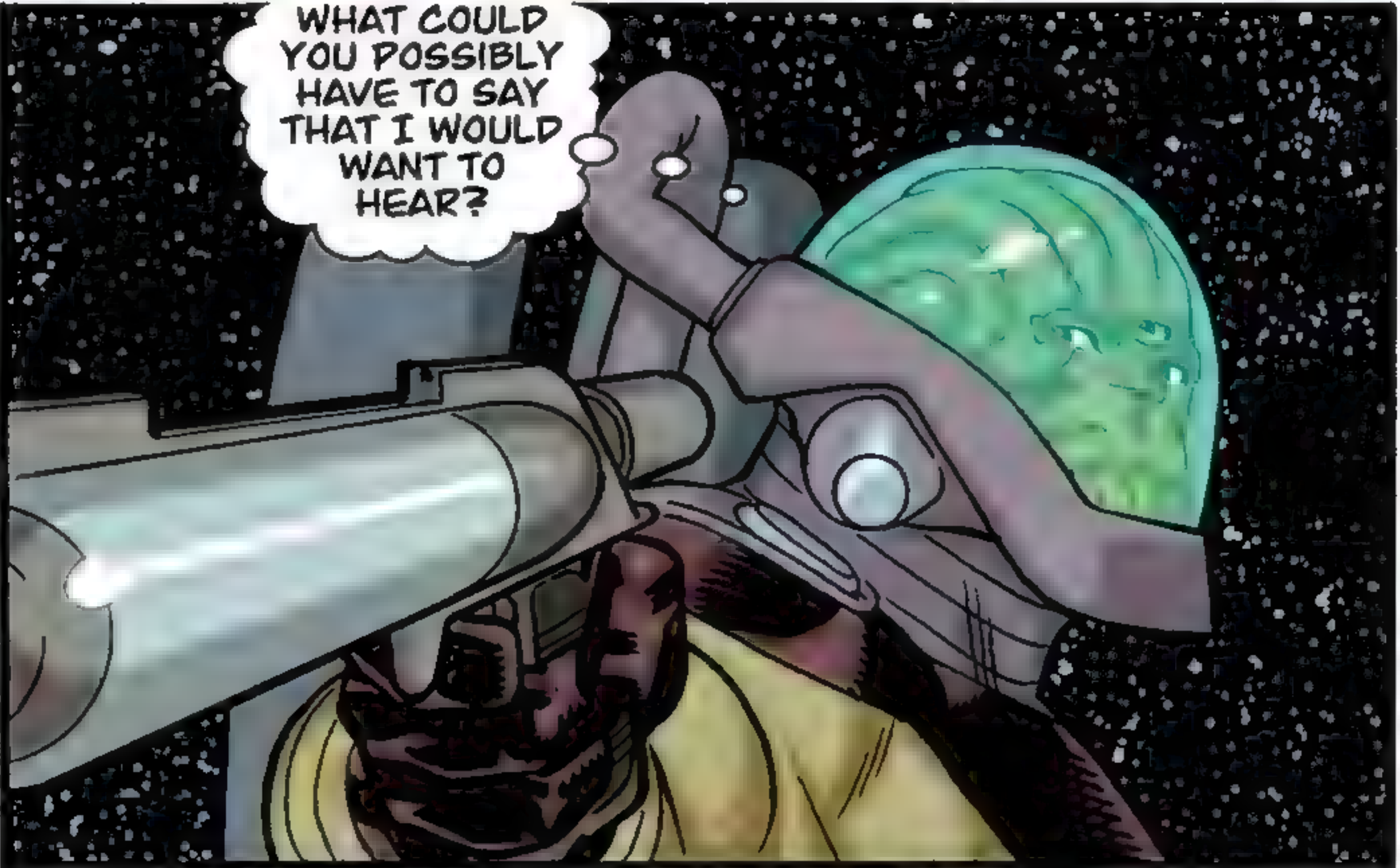
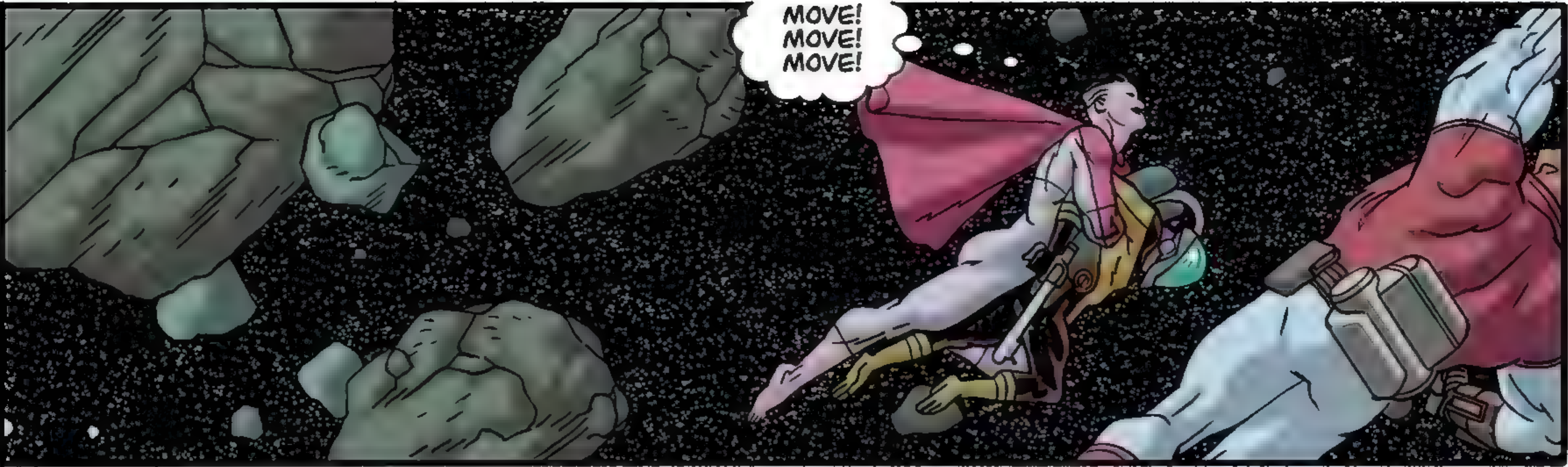


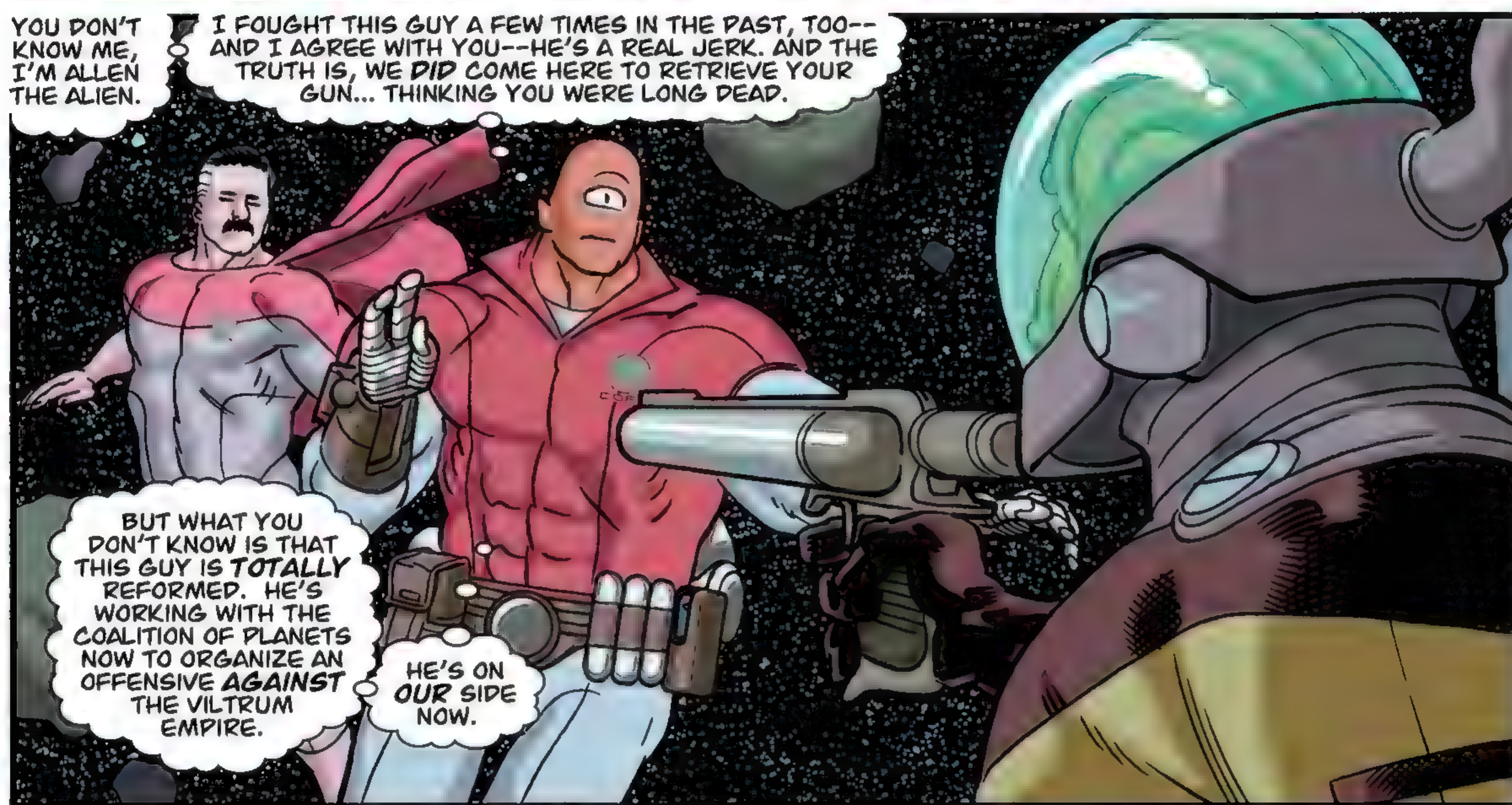
CHAPTER 67



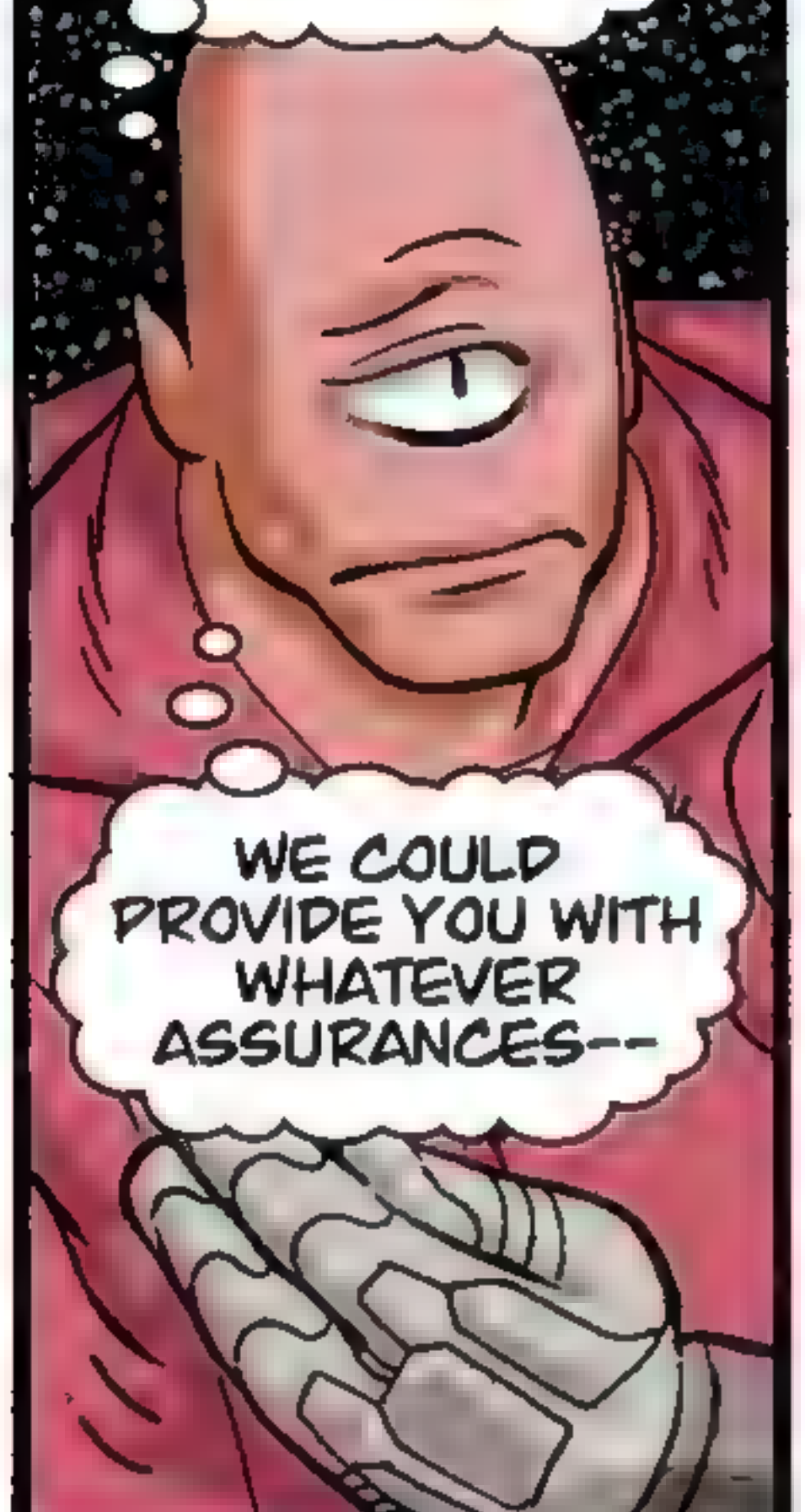








IF YOU COULD PLEASE
JUST ACCOMPANY US
BACK TO THE COALITION
HEADQUARTERS YOU
COULD SEE THAT WE
ARE INDEED FIGHTING
AGAINST THE
VILTRUMITES.



WE COULD
PROVIDE YOU WITH
WHATEVER
ASSURANCES--

I HAVE
BEEN BURIED
UNDER THAT
RUBBLE FOR
NEARLY ONE-
HUNDRED
YEARS...



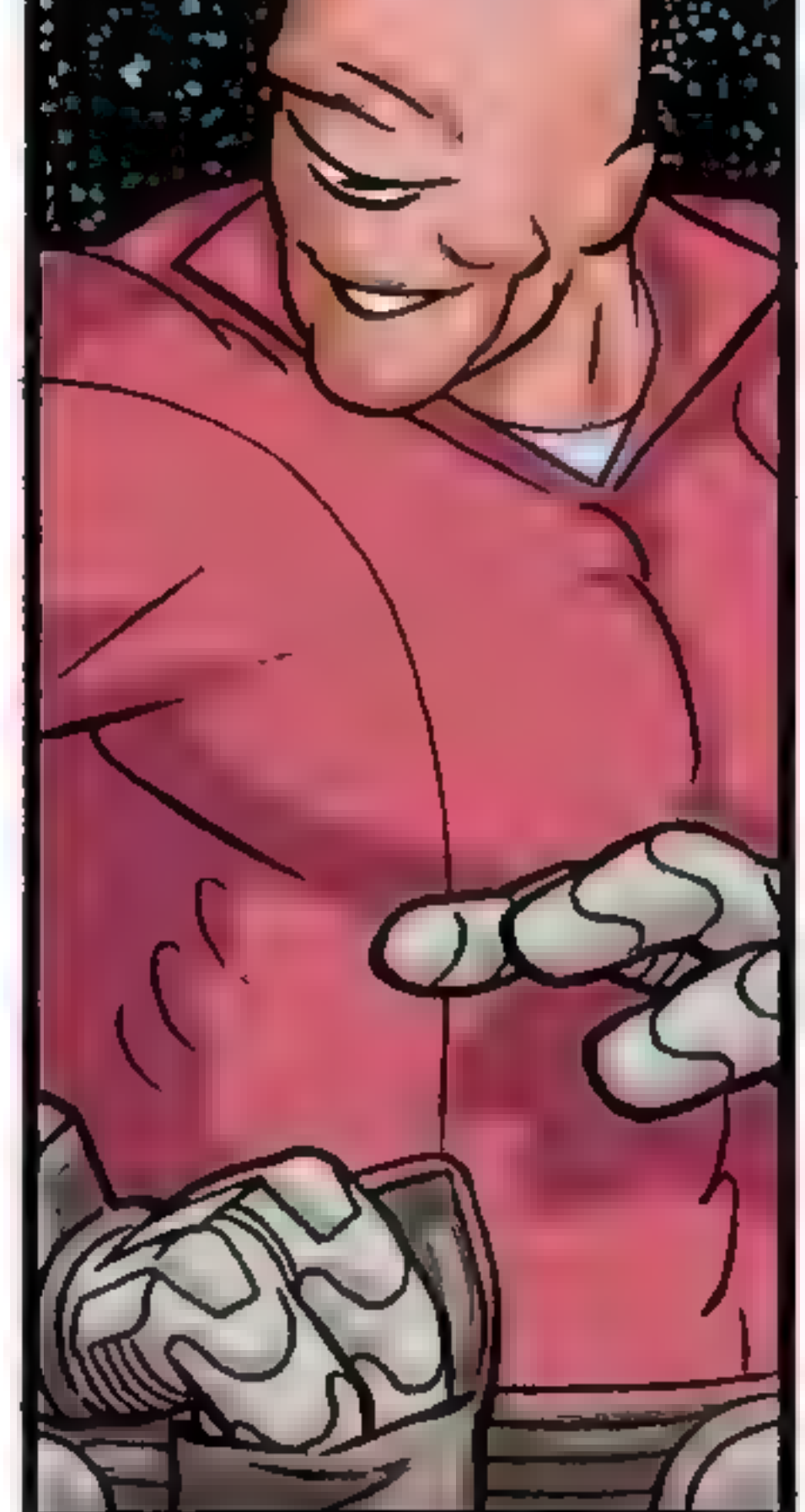
I KNOW AND MY
ASSOCIATE HAS
SAID HE'S VERY
SORRY ABOUT
THAT, AND--



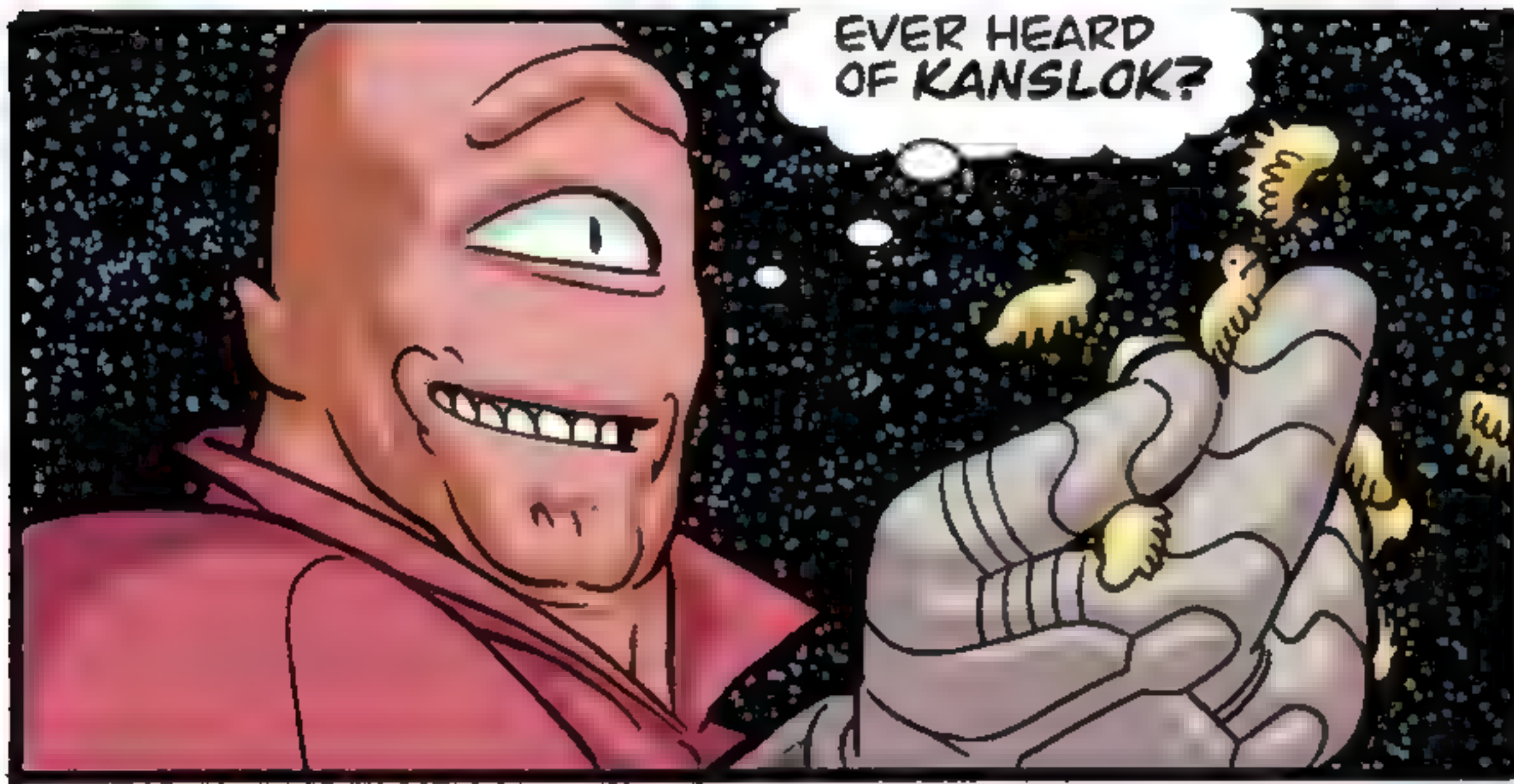
DO YOU
HAVE ANY
FOOD?



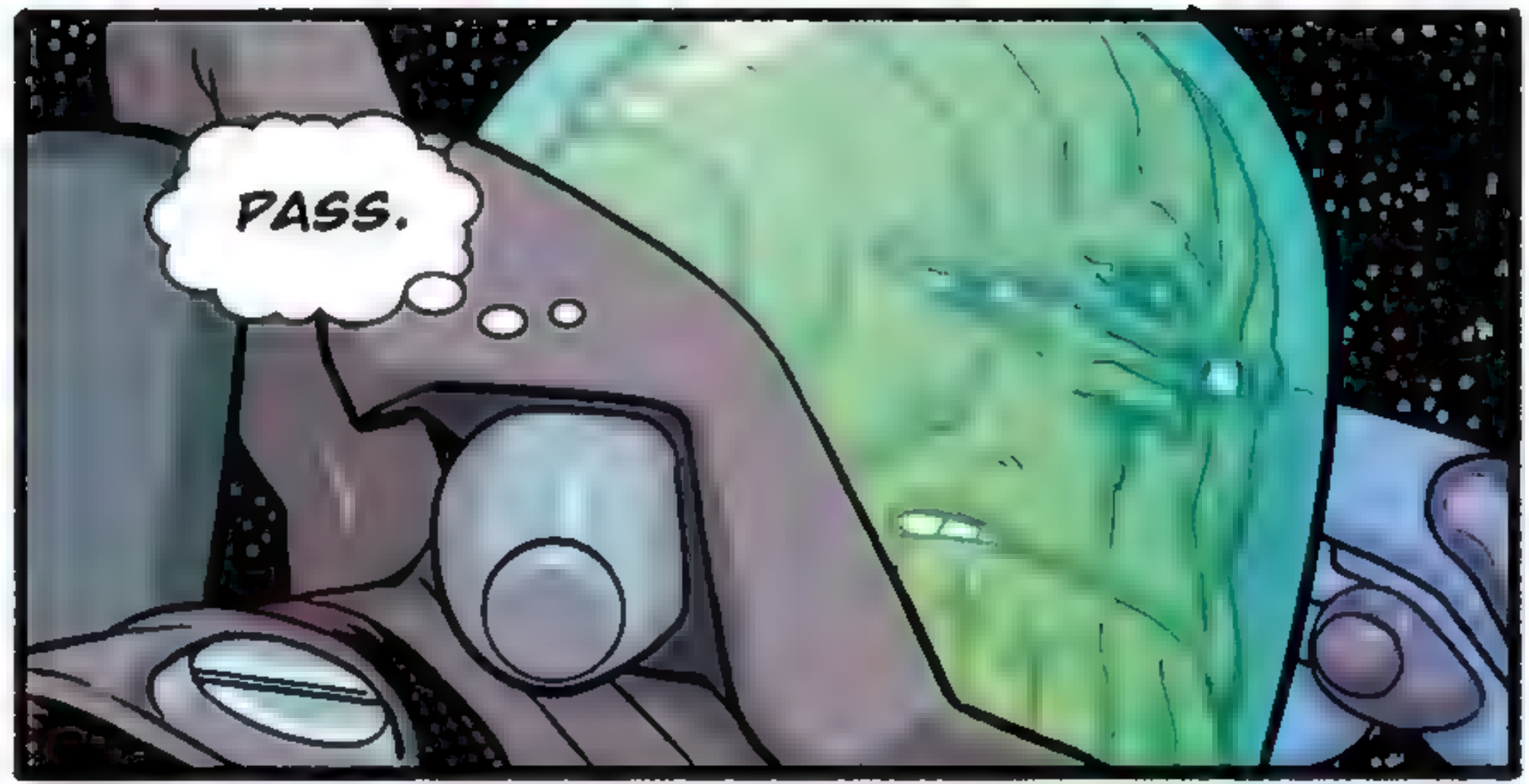
SURE DO!
JUST GIVE ME
A SECOND...



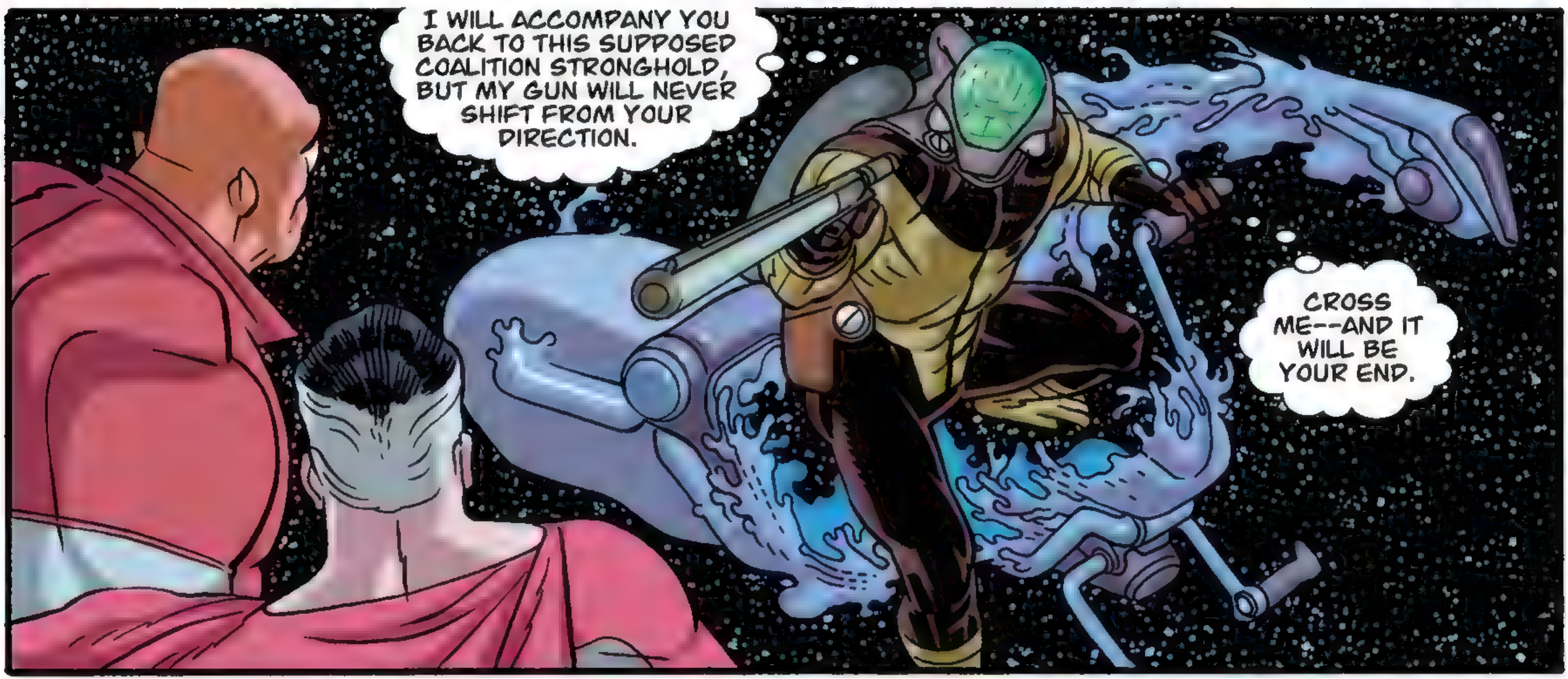
EVER HEARD
OF KANSLOK?



PASS.



I WILL ACCOMPANY YOU
BACK TO THIS SUPPOSED
COALITION STRONGHOLD,
BUT MY GUN WILL NEVER
SHIFT FROM YOUR
DIRECTION.

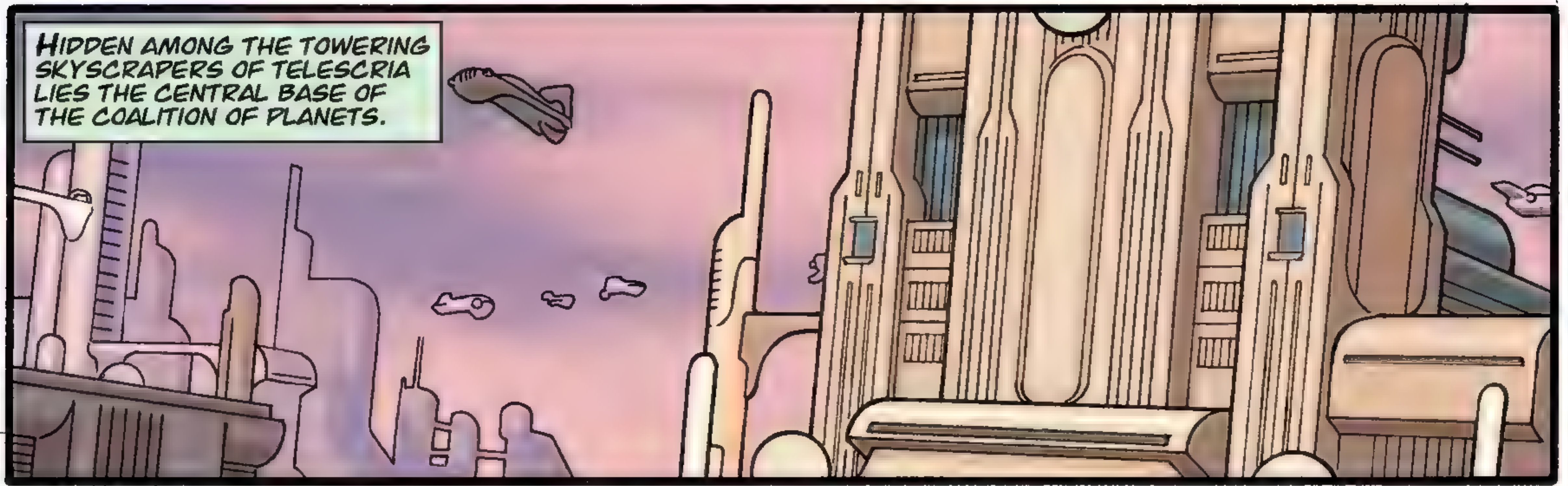


CROSS
ME--AND IT
WILL BE
YOUR END.

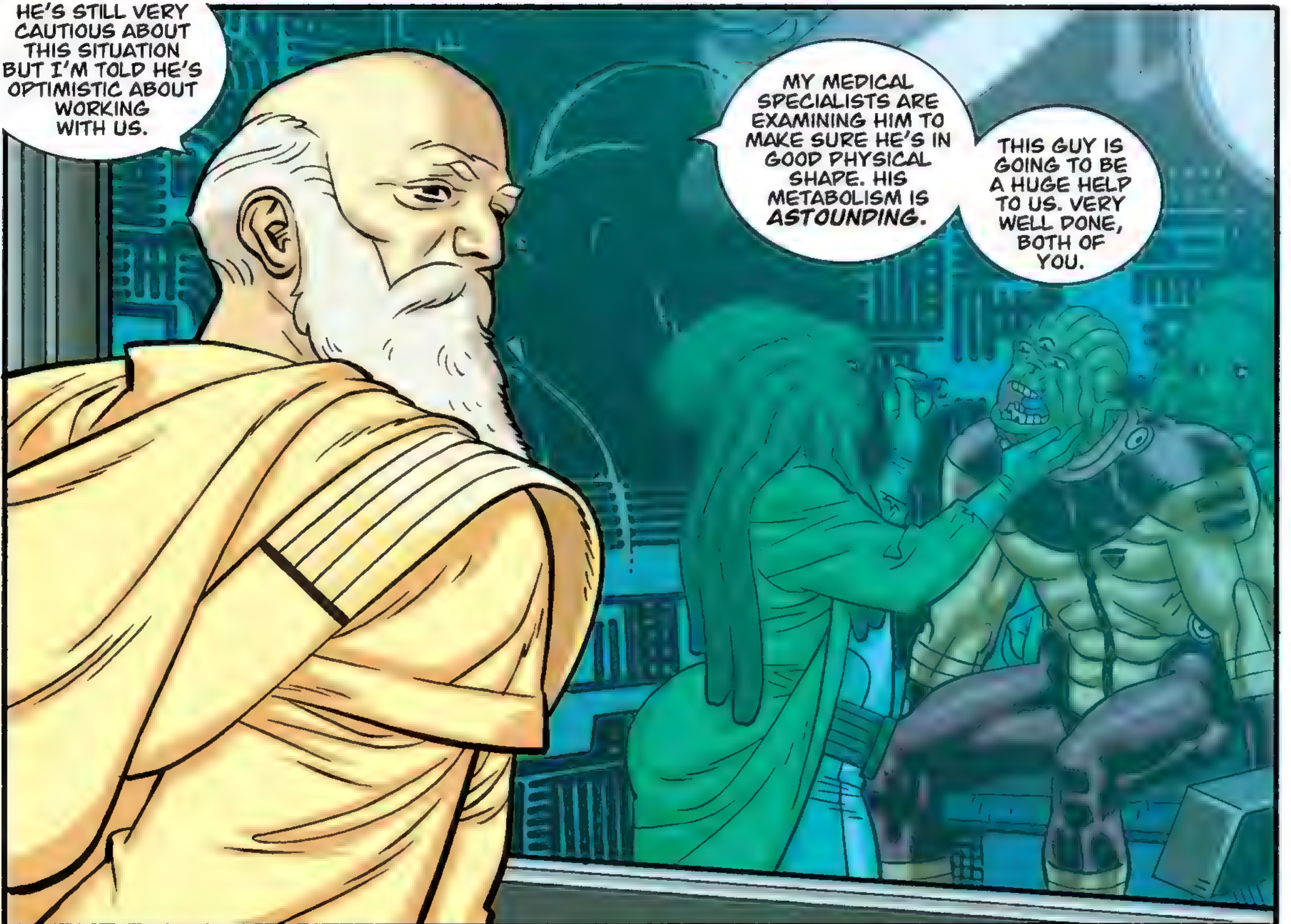
OOH,
SCARY.



HEH.



HIDDEN AMONG THE TOWERING SKYSCRAPERS OF TELESCRIA LIES THE CENTRAL BASE OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS.



HE'S STILL VERY CAUTIOUS ABOUT THIS SITUATION BUT I'M TOLD HE'S OPTIMISTIC ABOUT WORKING WITH US.

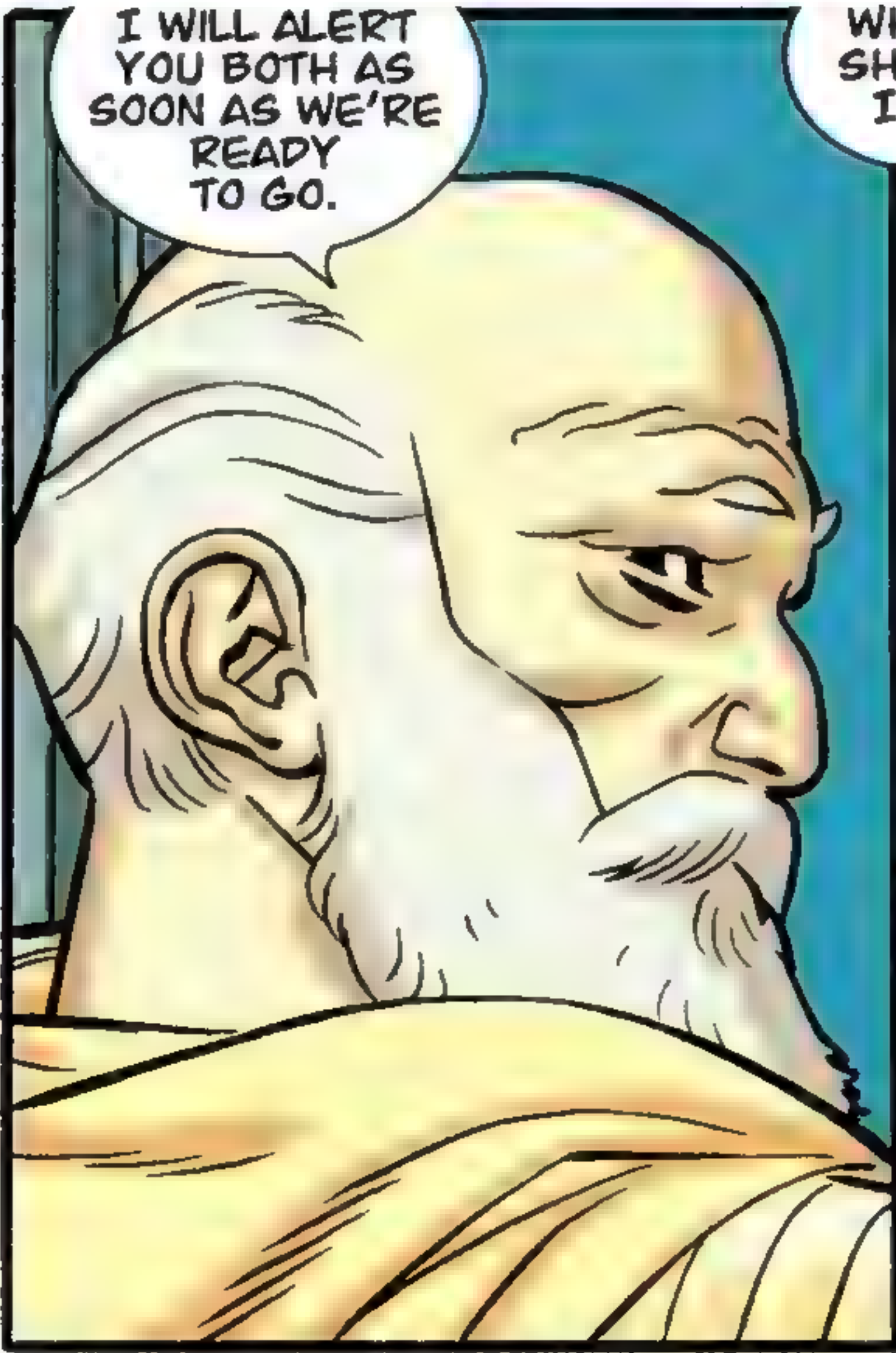
MY MEDICAL SPECIALISTS ARE EXAMINING HIM TO MAKE SURE HE'S IN GOOD PHYSICAL SHAPE. HIS METABOLISM IS ASTOUNDING.

THIS GUY IS GOING TO BE A HUGE HELP TO US. VERY WELL DONE, BOTH OF YOU.



THANK YOU, GREAT THÆDUS.

I'M GOING TO HEAD HOME WHILE YOUR TEAM ASSEMBLES FOR OUR NEXT MISSION. YOU SAY IT COULD BE TWO DAYS BEFORE THEY ARE READY?

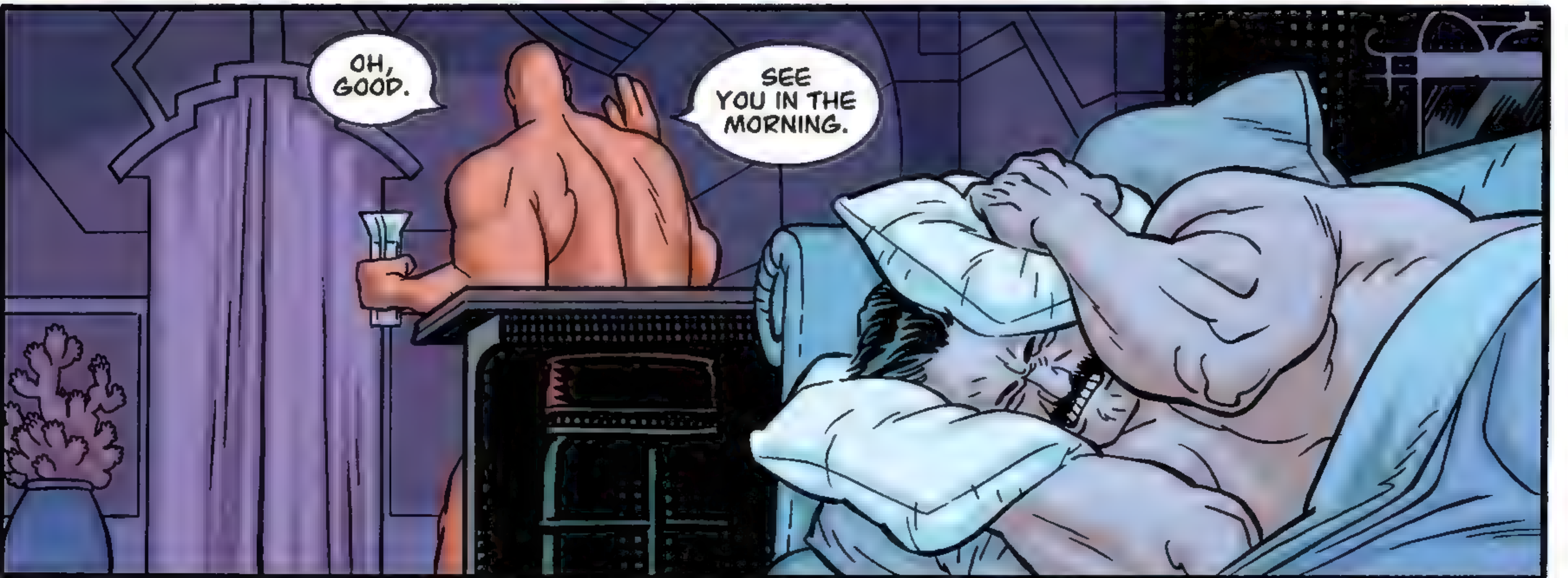
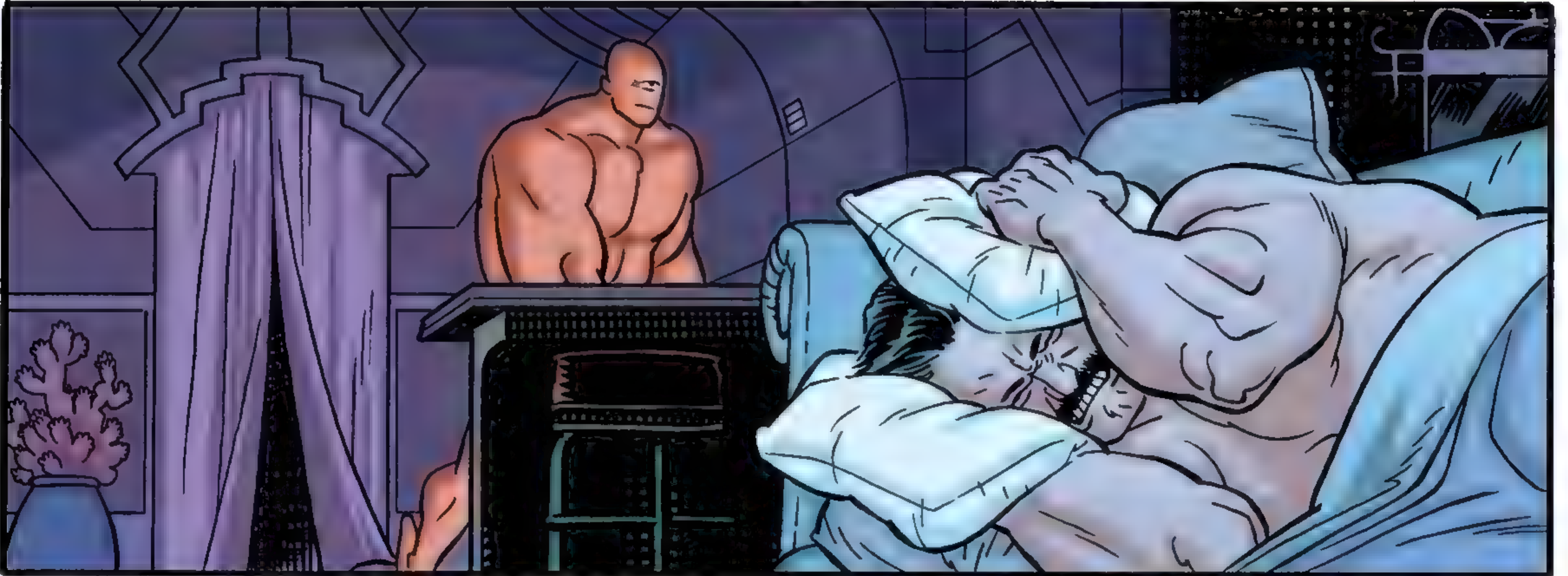


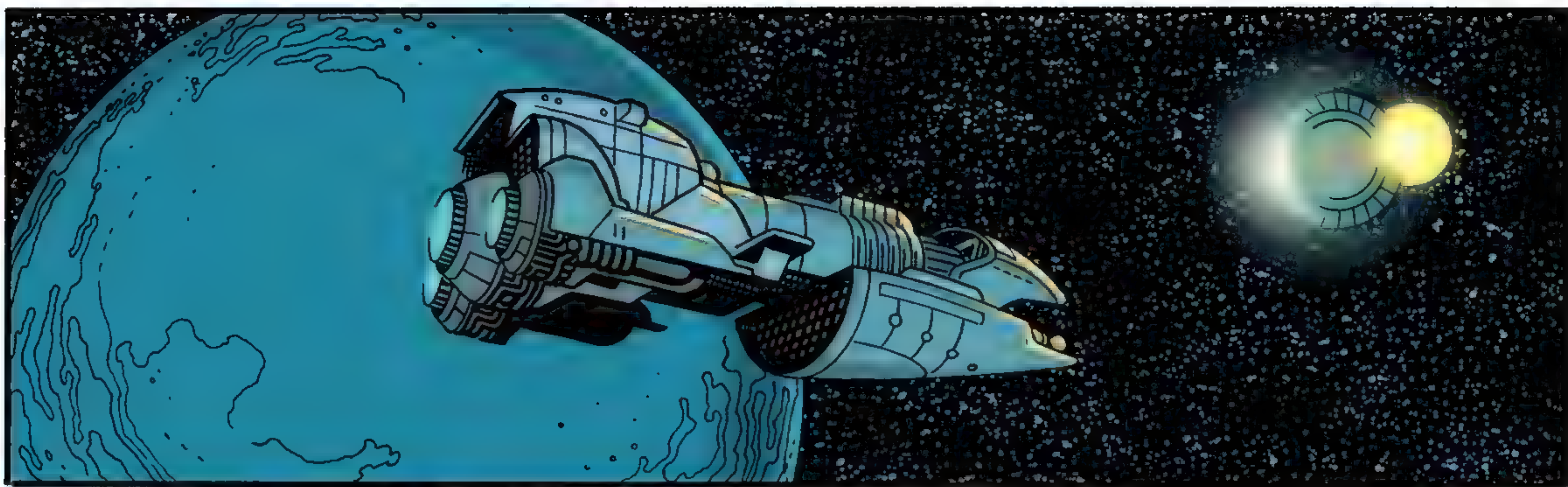
I WILL ALERT YOU BOTH AS SOON AS WE'RE READY TO GO.



WHERE SHOULD I--?

ARE YOU KIDDING? YOU'RE CRASHING AT MY PLACE, BUDDY!





THE ROGNARR ARE VICIOUS, WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL. WHEN THE VILTRUMITES DISCOVERED THIS RACE OF MONSTERS, THEY SENT A FEW TEAMS HERE TO TRY AND DESTROY THEM-- TO **DISASTROUS** RESULTS. THESE THINGS ARE INDESTRUCTIBLE.

WITH ALL THIS ICE-- HOW ARE WE GOING TO FIND THEM?

FINALLY, I CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF USING A SOLAR DISK TO BLOCK THEIR SUN-- FREEZING THEM. IF THESE THINGS THAW OUT WHILE WE'RE HERE-- WE'RE IN TROUBLE.



YOU'RE RIGHT.

NOLAN TO BRIDGE. WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO PREPARE A TEAM TO TRANSPORT THESE THINGS TO THE CARGO HOLD BEFORE THEY **COMPLETELY** THAW OUT. THE ONLY WAY WE'RE GOING TO FIND THEM IS BY REMOVING THE SOLAR DISK.

WE CAN HANDLE THAT ON OUR OWN, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
DOWNLOAD, FIRE AT WILL.



No!!

WHAT?
WHAT IS
IT?

MORONS!

THIS ICE WILL BE
MELTED IN A MATTER
OF MINUTES... WE
NEEDED TO MOVE
THE DISK--NOT
COMPLETELY
DESTROY IT!

WE'VE
GOT
TO WORK
FAST!

THERE! WE NEED
TO GET THAT ONE
UP TO THE SHIP
BEFORE IT
COMPLETELY
THAWS OUT!

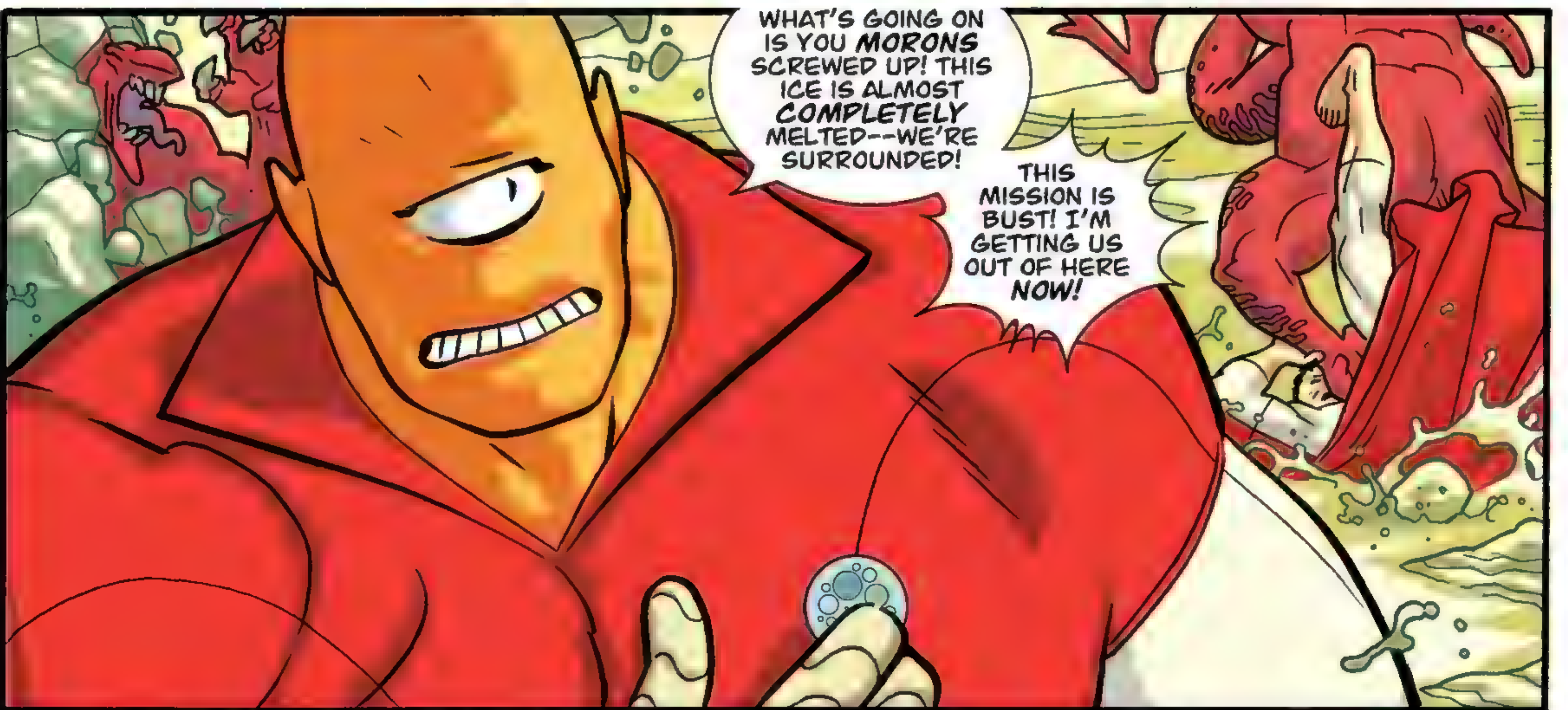
WE'RE ONLY
GOING TO GET
ONE SHOT
AT THIS!

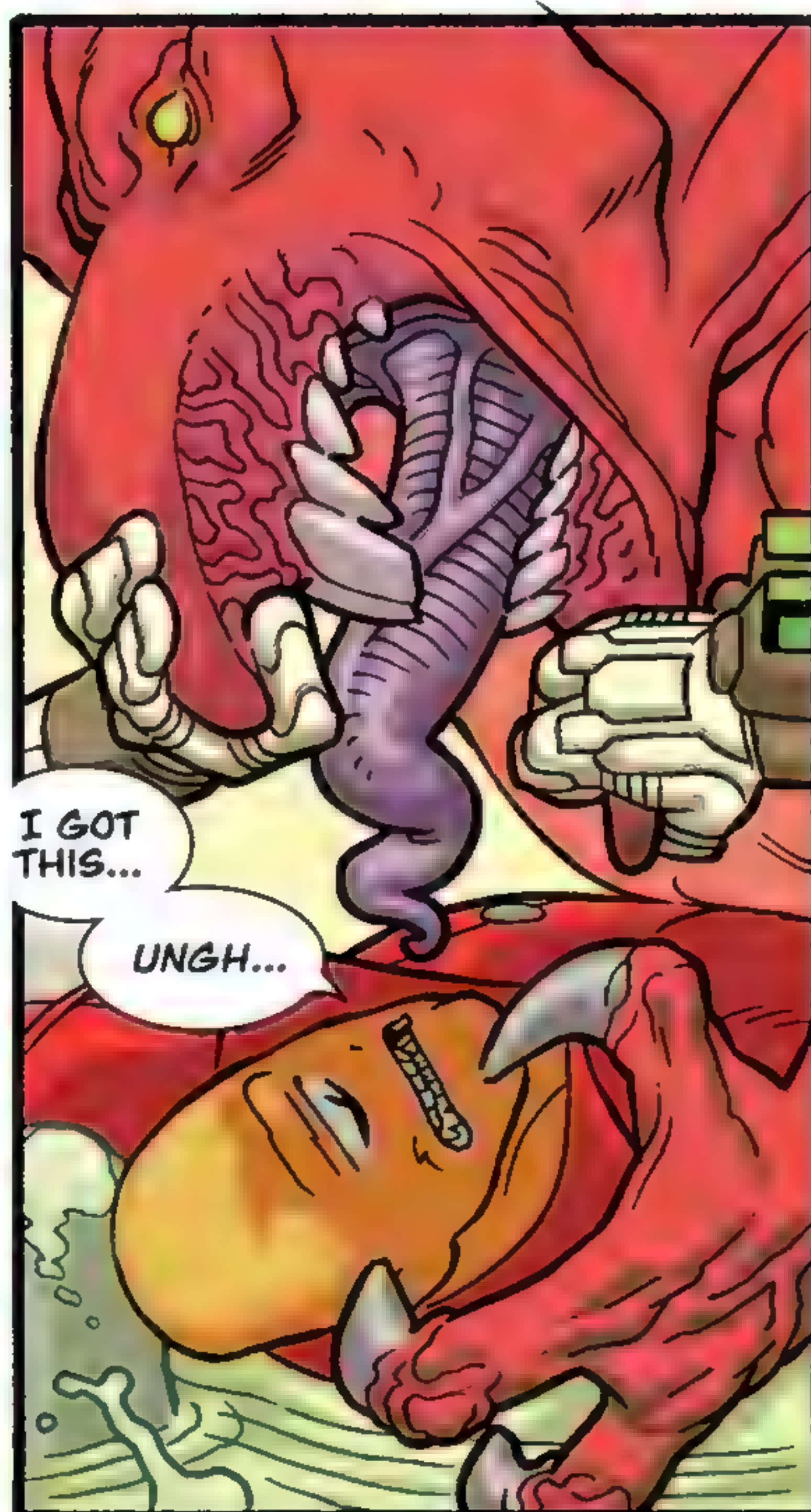
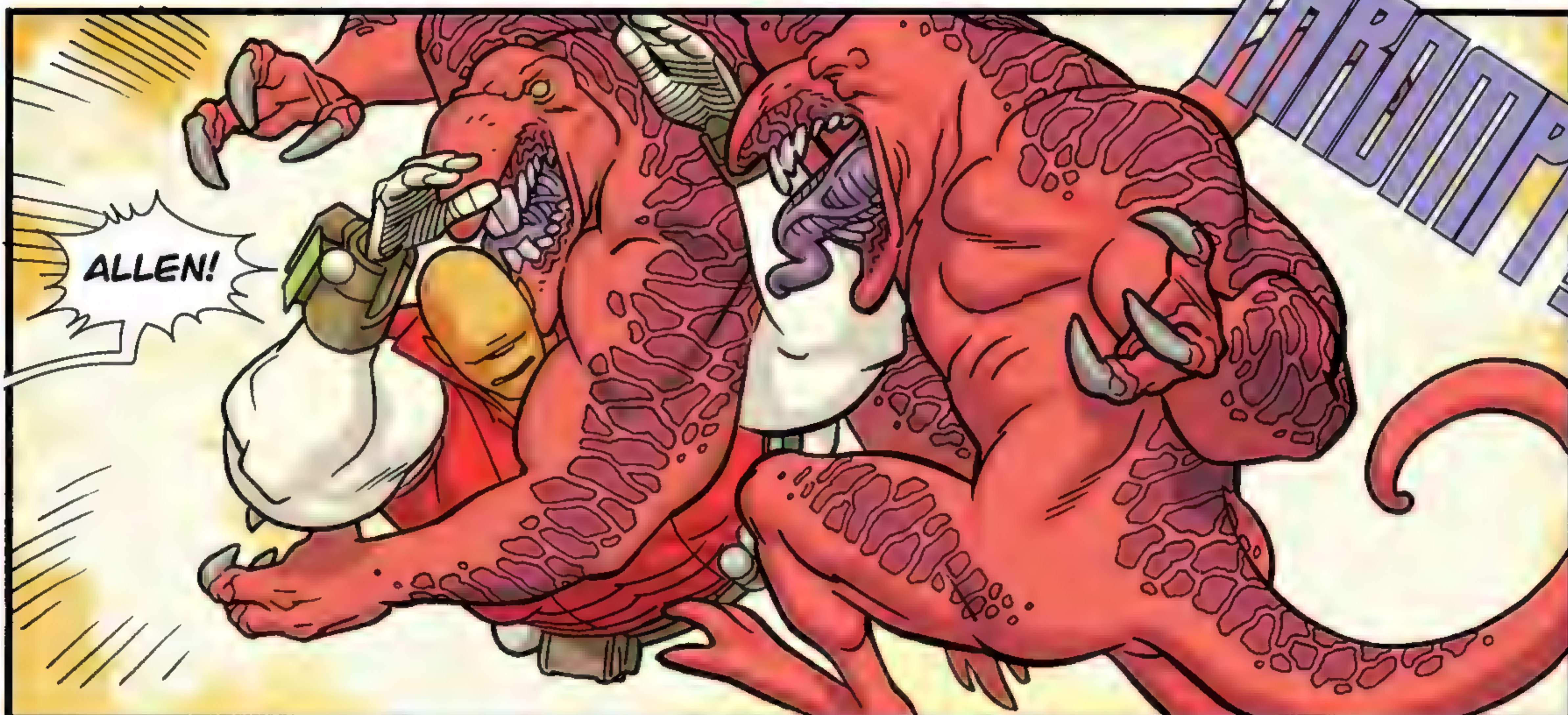
C'MON!

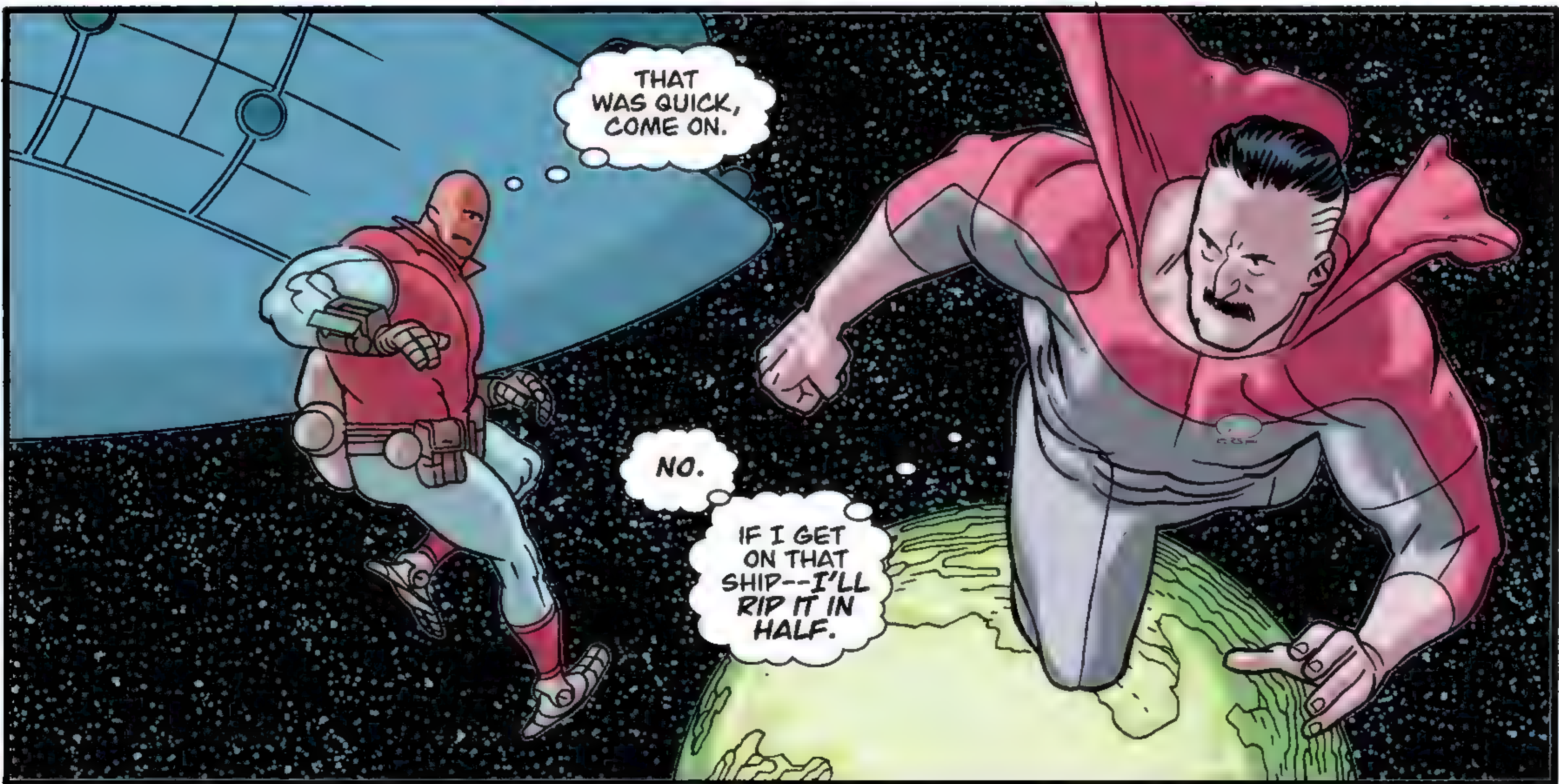
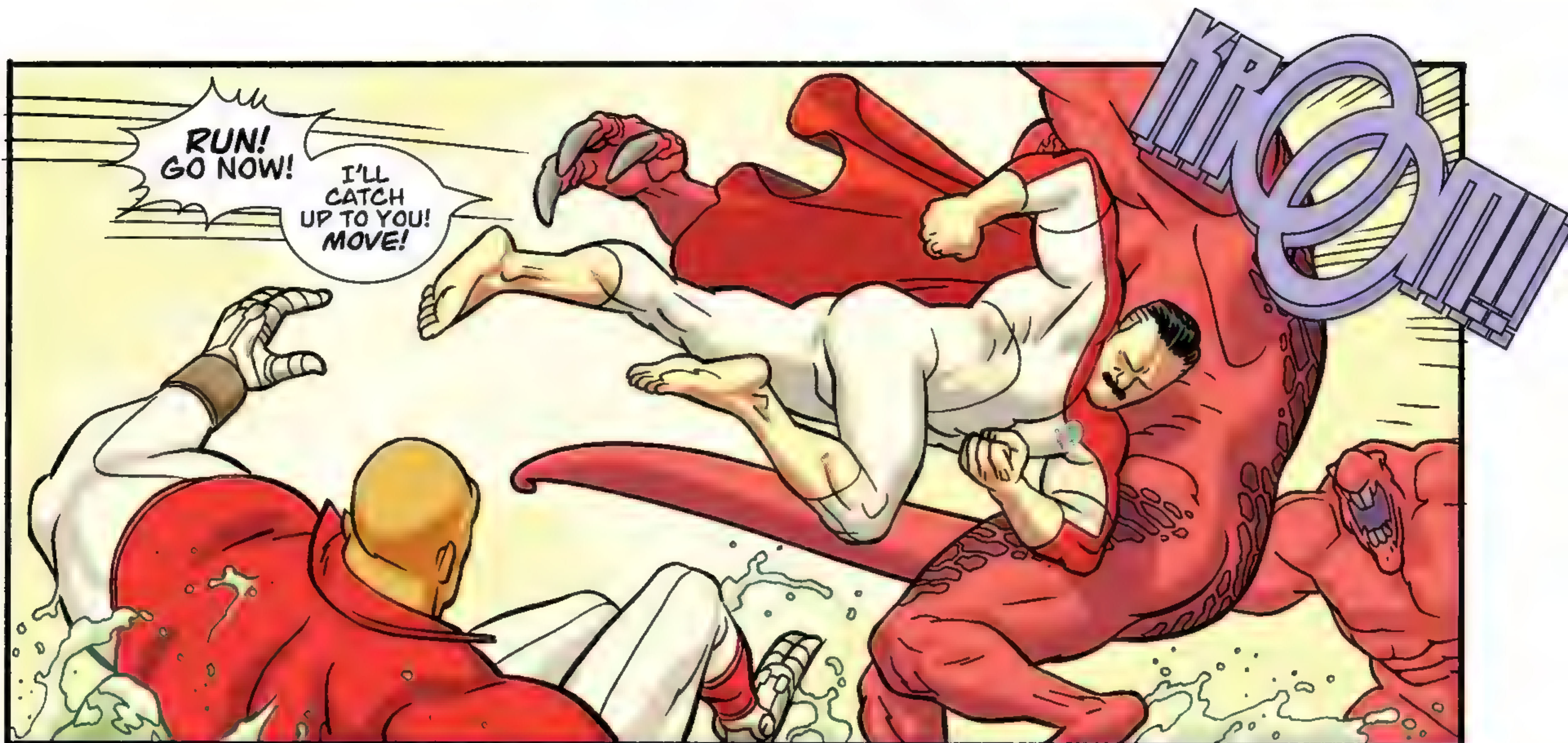
KRAKKA!

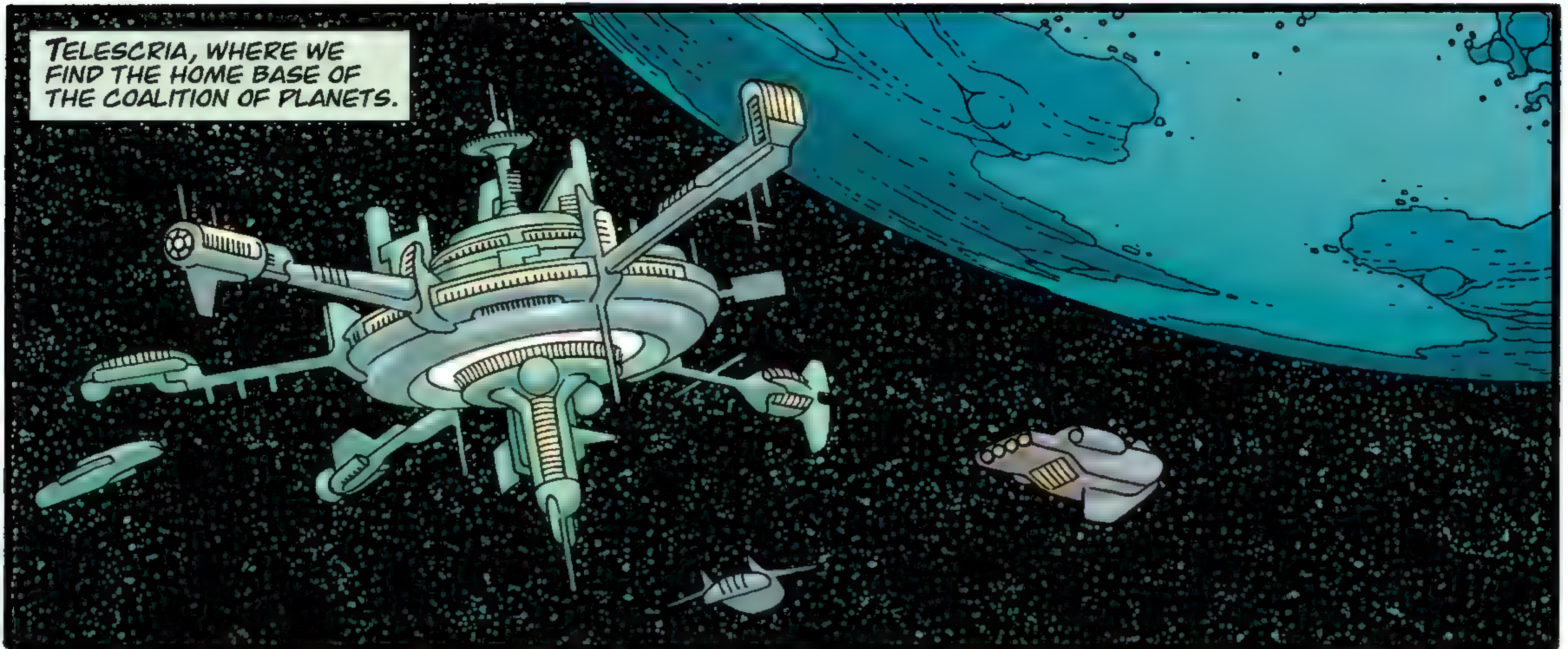
I'M TAKING THIS ONE
TO THE SHIP! SEE IF
YOU CAN FIND MORE.
ONCE THEY THAW
COMPLETELY--WE'RE
FINISHED!

THE
ROGNARR ARE
TOO STRONG TO
TRANSPORT.









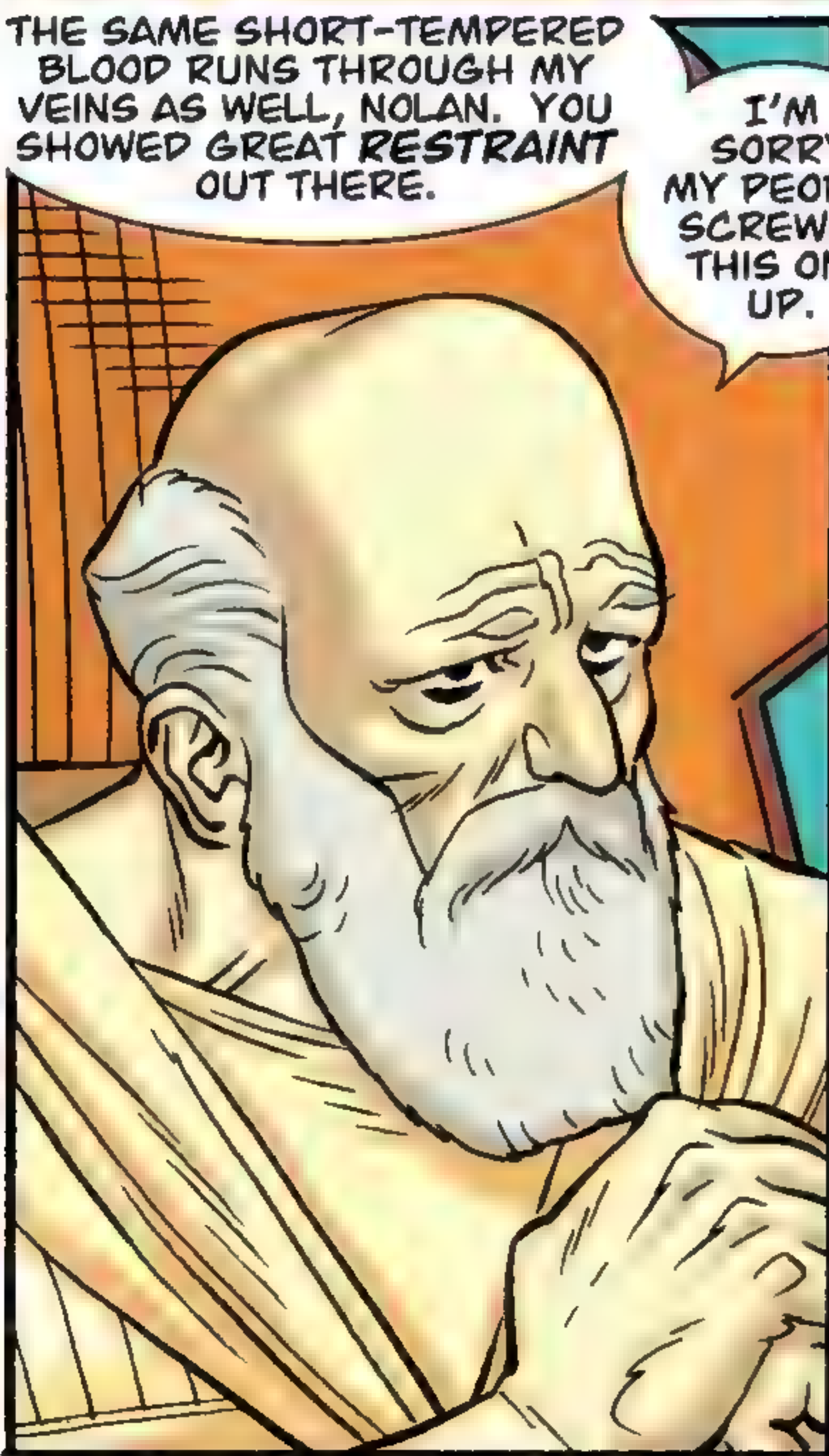
TELESCRIA, WHERE WE FIND THE HOME BASE OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS.



IT'S NOT A TOTAL LOSS. WE KNOW WHERE THEY ARE--AND THEY'RE ACTIVE AGAIN. WE COULD DISTRACT A SQUAD OF VILTRUMITES BY SENDING THEM THERE... AND I'M NOT COMPLETELY RULING OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CAPTURING SOME TO TRAIN IN SOME WAY.

WE'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO SUCCEED EVERY SINGLE TIME.



THE SAME SHORT-TEMPERED BLOOD RUNS THROUGH MY VEINS AS WELL, NOLAN. YOU SHOWED GREAT RESTRAINT OUT THERE.

I'M SORRY MY PEOPLE SCREWED THIS ONE UP.



BEST NOT TO BRING IT UP.

SERIOUSLY.



THANKFULLY, THERE ARE FAR MORE POTENTIAL WEAPONS LISTED IN YOUR BOOKS... AND A FEW THINGS I'D LIKE YOU TO LOOK INTO THAT YOU DIDN'T WRITE ABOUT.

YOU HAVE A LONG ROAD AHEAD OF YOU.

THE KLAXUS PLANT IS **POISONOUS** TO VILTRUMITES. IT CAN'T KILL US--BUT IT WOULD MAKE US PRETTY EASY TO DEFEAT IN AN OTHERWISE EVENLY MATCHED FIGHT.

THE PROBLEM IS THE PLANT IS **IMPOSSIBLE** TO KEEP FROM GROWING. IT NEEDS VERY LITTLE WATER OR SUNLIGHT AND GROWS AT AN INSANELY RAPID RATE.

SO... WE INFESTED THIS PLANET WITH THESE SINLAK BEETLES, WHICH EAT THE PLANT FASTER THAN IT CAN GROW--AND ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO EXTERMINATE.

MAYBE WE CAN EXTRACT SOME OF THE POISON FROM PLANT MATERIAL INGESTED BY THE BEETLE...

IT IS TRUE, WE WERE ABLE TO FEND OFF THE VILTRUMITE SPONSORED KRESH INVASION OF GELDARIA.

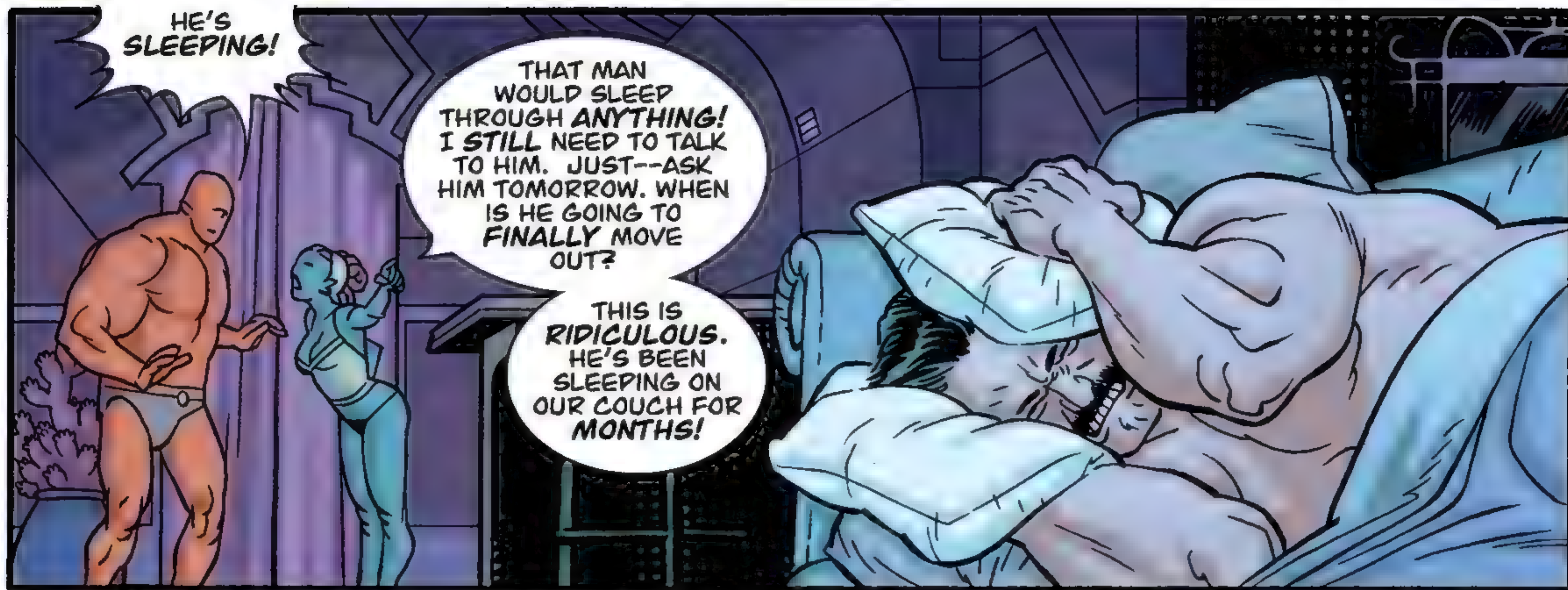
THERE IS ONE THAT MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE TO YOU.*

*HOLY CRAP! HE'S TALKING ABOUT TECH JACKET! YOU SHOULD TOTALLY ORDER THAT TRADE PAPERBACK, DUDE.

THEIR OLD MIGRATION PATHS CAME RIGHT THROUGH THIS SPOT ON THE STARMAPS.

IF WE COULD CATCH ONE OF THESE IT WOULD BE A HUGE HELP. **SPACE SHARKS** ARE BAD NEWS.





HE'S SLEEPING!

THAT MAN WOULD SLEEP THROUGH ANYTHING! I STILL NEED TO TALK TO HIM. JUST--ASK HIM TOMORROW. WHEN IS HE GOING TO FINALLY MOVE OUT?

THIS IS RIDICULOUS. HE'S BEEN SLEEPING ON OUR COUCH FOR MONTHS!



YOU COULD HAVE ASKED ME INSTEAD OF LAUNCHING INTO THIS TIRADE. HE'S MOVING OUT NEXT WEEK.

WE'VE BEEN WORKING SO MUCH, IT'S BEEN DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO FIND A PLACE.

OH. I HAD NO IDEA.

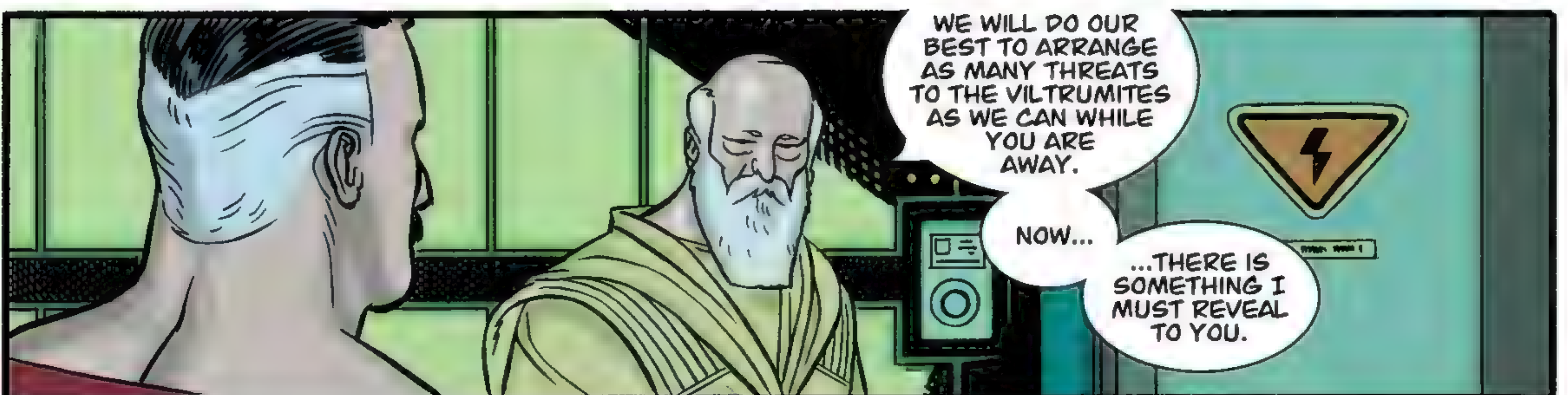
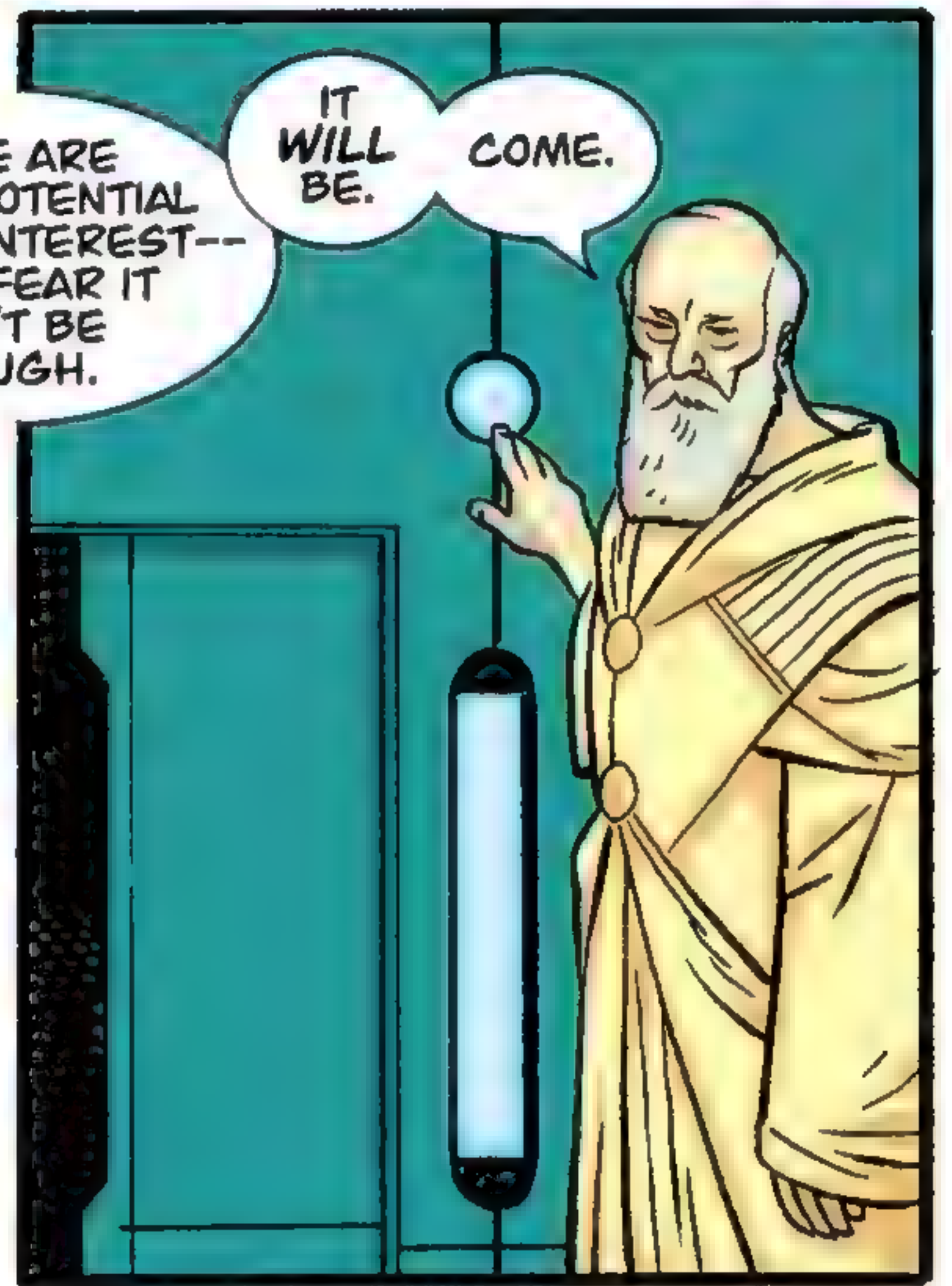
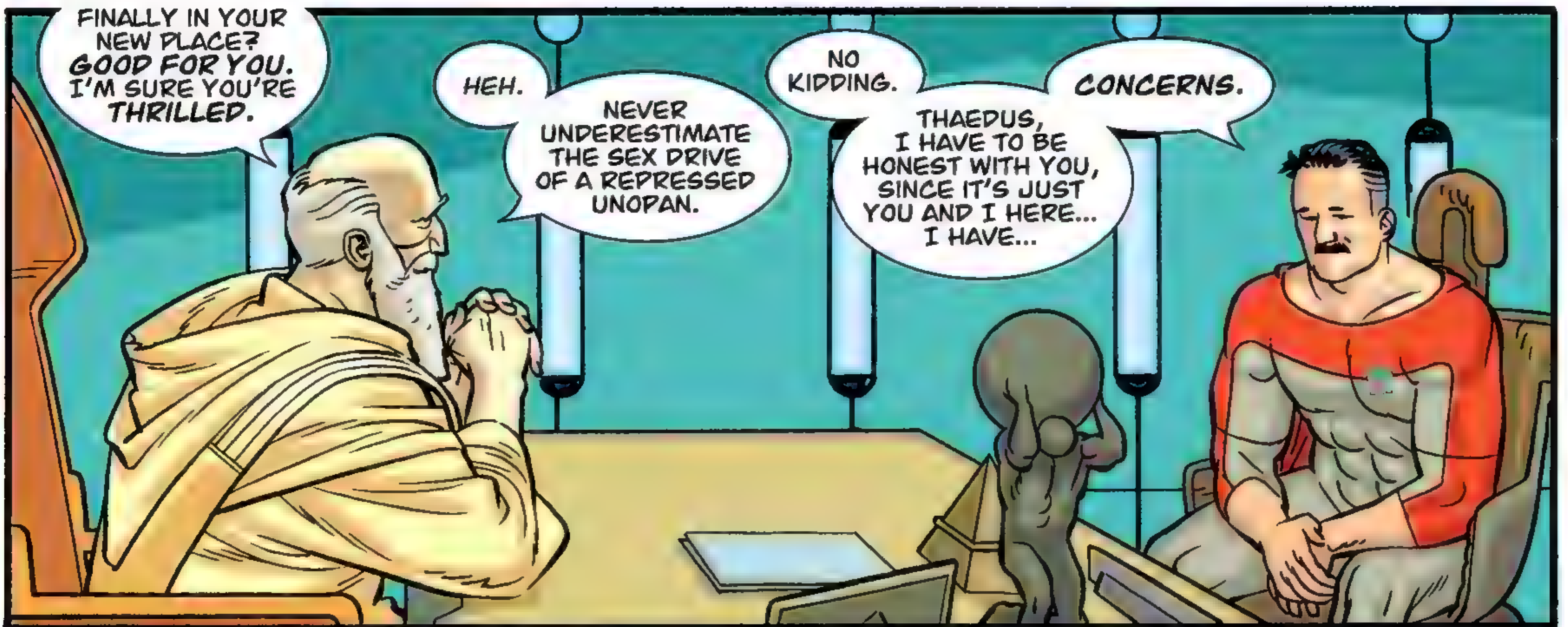
OKAY.




NOW, CAN WE JUST GO TO BED?

AGAIN? OH, ALLEN-- YOU'RE SPOILING ME.







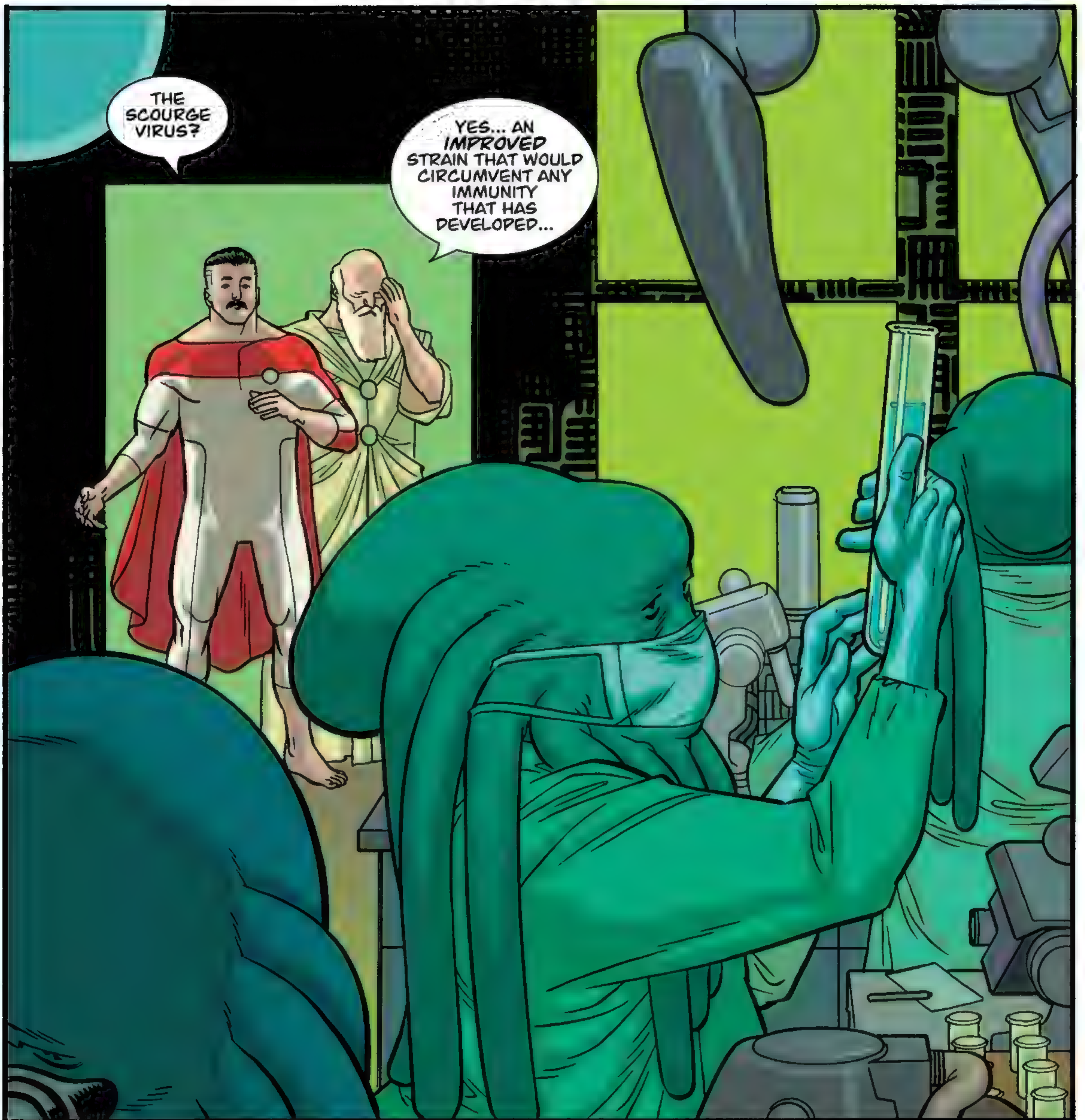
WHEN YOU
TOLD ME OF
OUR PEOPLE'S
GENOCIDE... I WASN'T
COMPLETELY
UNAWARE OF
WHAT HAD
TRANSPIRED.

I TURNED
MY BACK ON MY
PEOPLE BECAUSE I
GREW TO BELIEVE
THEIR ACTIONS TO BE,
FOR LACK OF A BETTER
WORD... **EVIL**. I HAVE
DEDICATED MY LIFE
TO BRINGING AN
END TO THEIR
TYRANNY.

I WILL STOP
AT NOTHING TO
BRING AN END
TO THIS AGE OF
VIOLENCE AND FEAR.
BUT I NEVER KNEW...
I WAS UNAWARE OF
THE **EXTENT** OF THE
DAMAGE I'D
BROUGHT TO THE
VILTRUMITES.

STEP
THROUGH
THIS
DOOR.

THE WORST
THING TO EVER
HAPPEN TO OUR
PEOPLE... IT WAS
MY GENETIC
SIGNATURE
THAT MADE IT
POSSIBLE...



THE
SCOURGE
VIRUS?

YES... AN
IMPROVED
STRAIN THAT WOULD
CIRCUMVENT ANY
IMMUNITY
THAT HAS
DEVELOPED...



AND ALTHOUGH IT
COULD MEAN **SUICIDE**
FOR US AND THE
POTENTIAL EXTINCTION
OF OUR PEOPLE...

...IF I BELIEVE
OUR CAUSE TO
BE LOST, I WON'T
HESITATE TO
USE IT AGAIN.



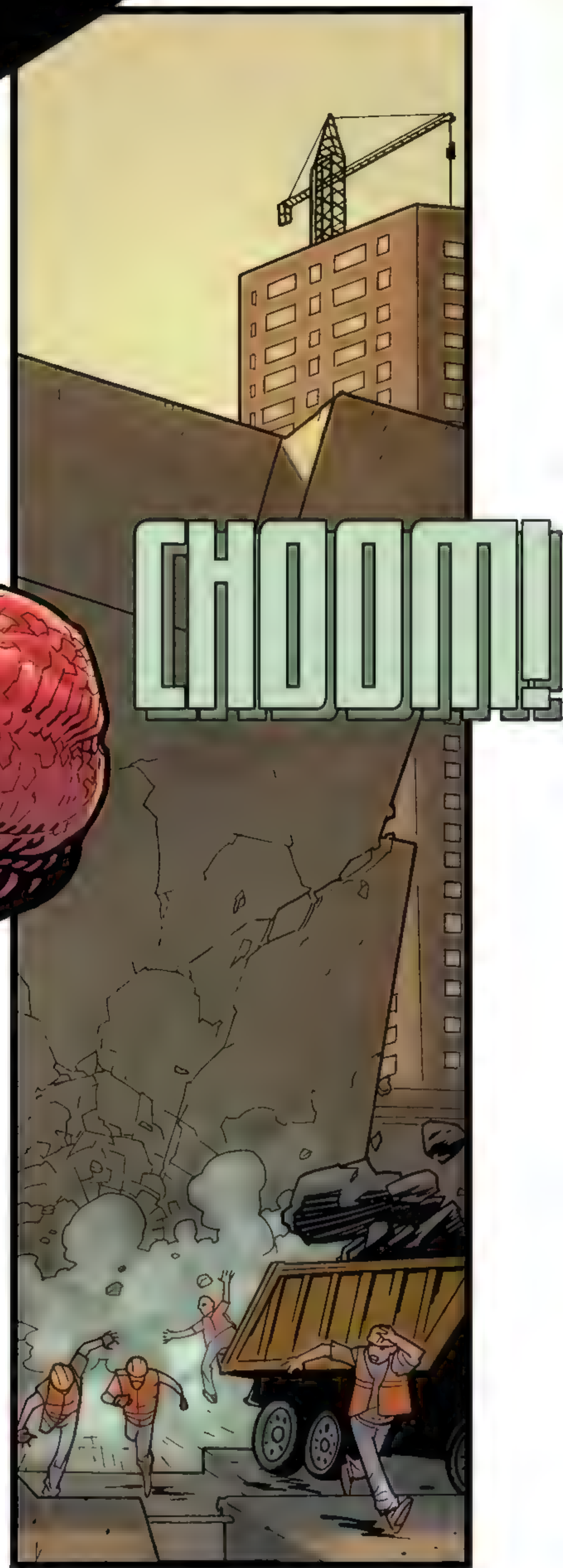
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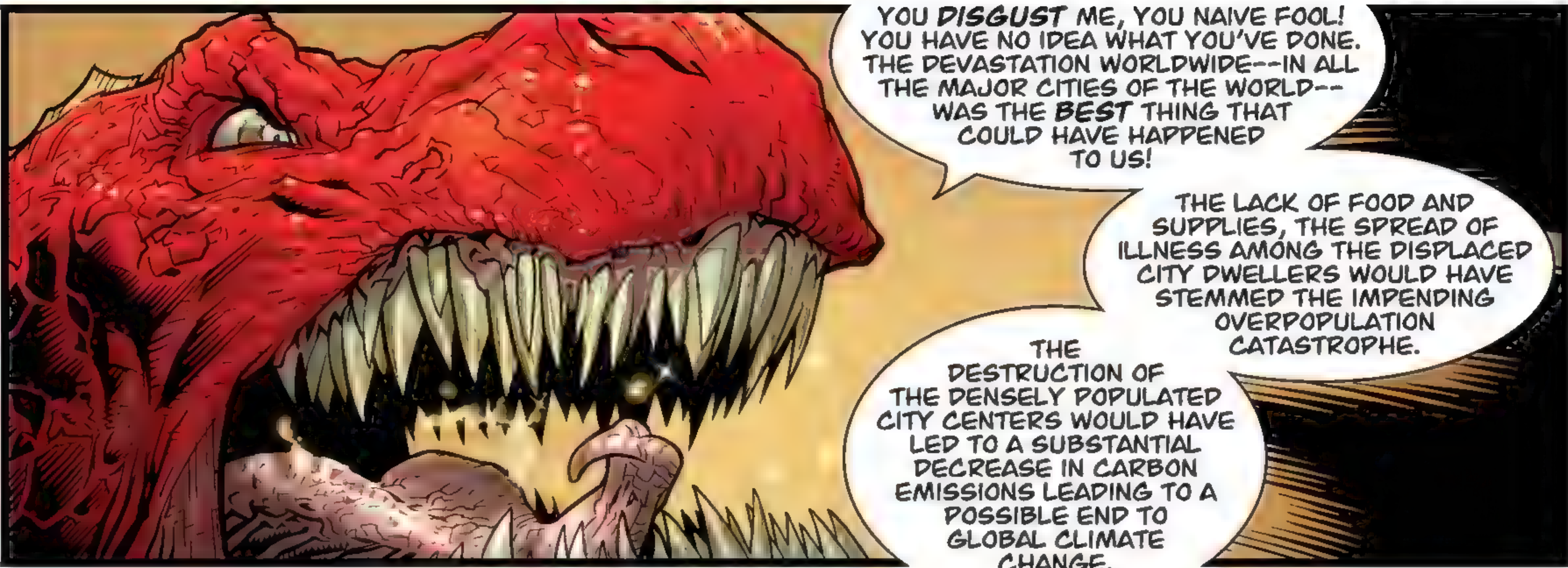




UNGH.

ALMOST
THERE.

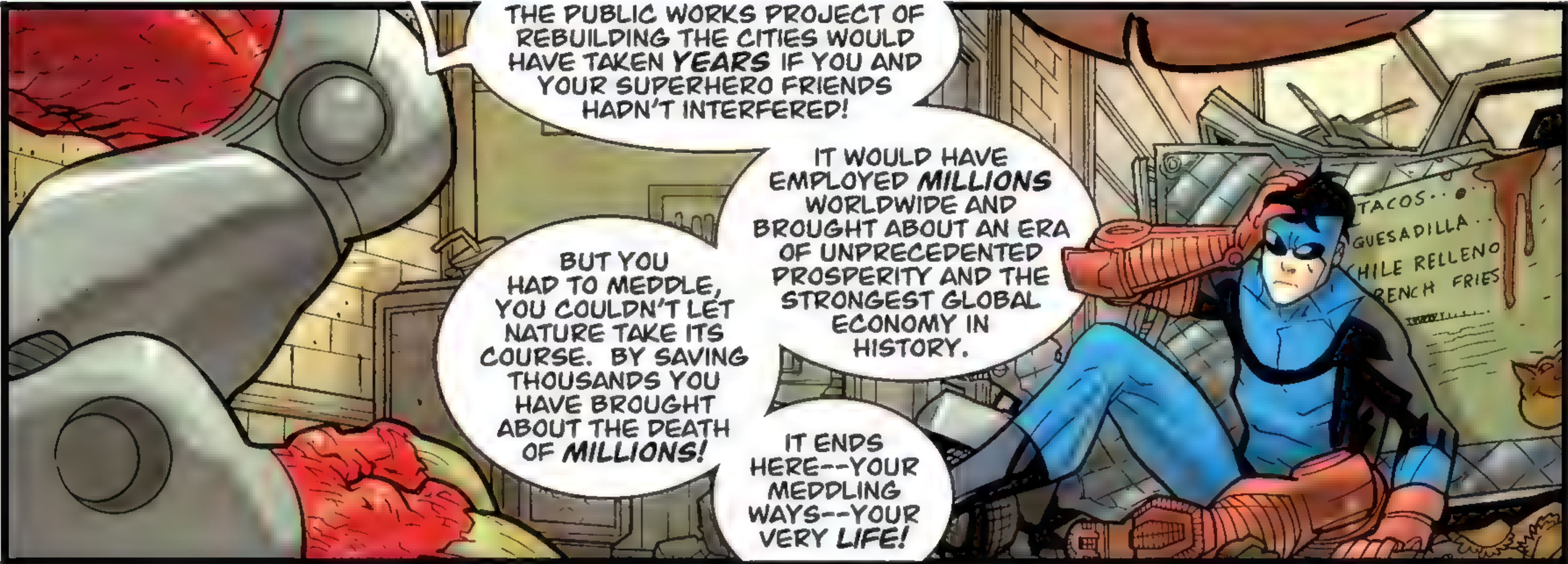




YOU DISGUST ME, YOU NAIVE FOOL! YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'VE DONE. THE DEVASTATION WORLDWIDE--IN ALL THE MAJOR CITIES OF THE WORLD-- WAS THE **BEST** THING THAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO US!

THE LACK OF FOOD AND SUPPLIES, THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS AMONG THE DISPLACED CITY DWELLERS WOULD HAVE STEMMED THE IMPENDING OVERPOPULATION CATASTROPHE.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DENSELY POPULATED CITY CENTERS WOULD HAVE LED TO A SUBSTANTIAL DECREASE IN CARBON EMISSIONS LEADING TO A POSSIBLE END TO GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE.

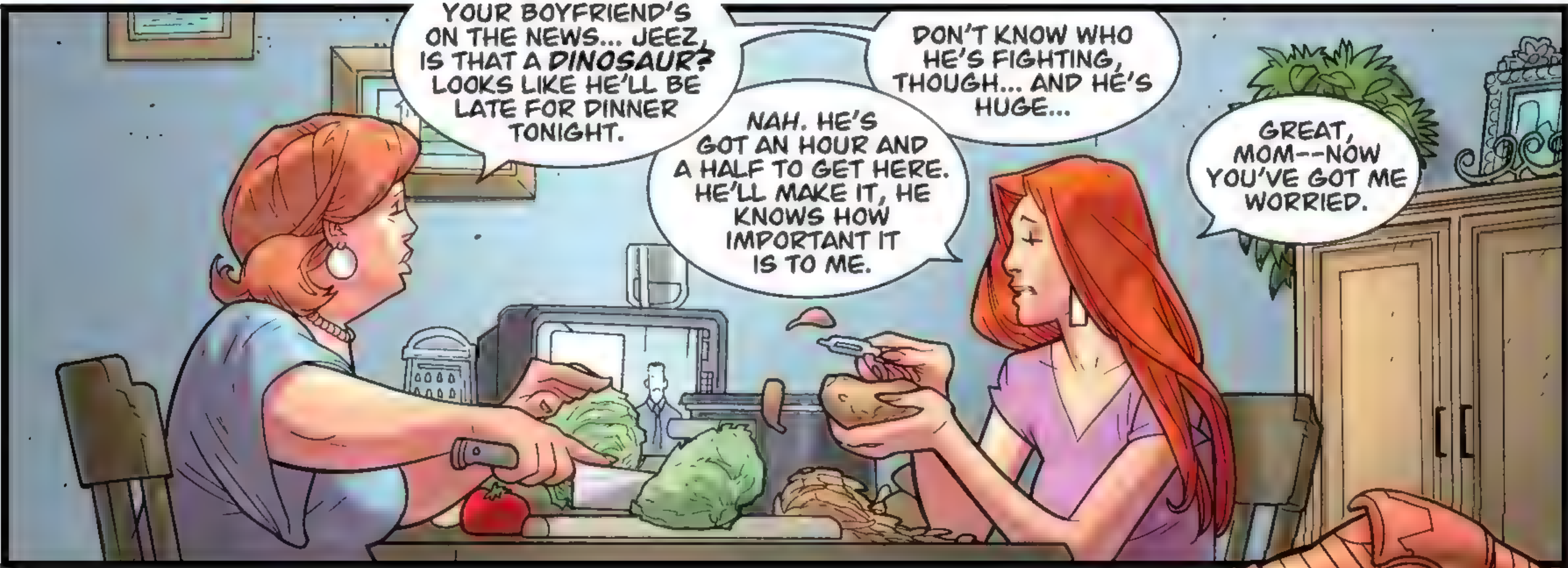


THE PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT OF REBUILDING THE CITIES WOULD HAVE TAKEN YEARS IF YOU AND YOUR SUPERHERO FRIENDS HADN'T INTERFERED!

BUT YOU HAD TO MEDDLER, YOU COULDN'T LET NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE. BY SAVING THOUSANDS YOU HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT THE DEATH OF **MILLIONS!**

IT WOULD HAVE EMPLOYED **MILLIONS** WORLDWIDE AND BROUGHT ABOUT AN ERA OF UNPRECEDENTED PROSPERITY AND THE STRONGEST GLOBAL ECONOMY IN HISTORY.

IT ENDS HERE--YOUR MEDDLING WAYS--YOUR VERY LIFE!



YOUR BOYFRIEND'S ON THE NEWS... JEEZ, IS THAT A **DINOSAUR?** LOOKS LIKE HE'LL BE LATE FOR DINNER TONIGHT.

NAH. HE'S GOT AN HOUR AND A HALF TO GET HERE. HE'LL MAKE IT, HE KNOWS HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO ME.

DON'T KNOW WHO HE'S FIGHTING, THOUGH... AND HE'S HUGE...

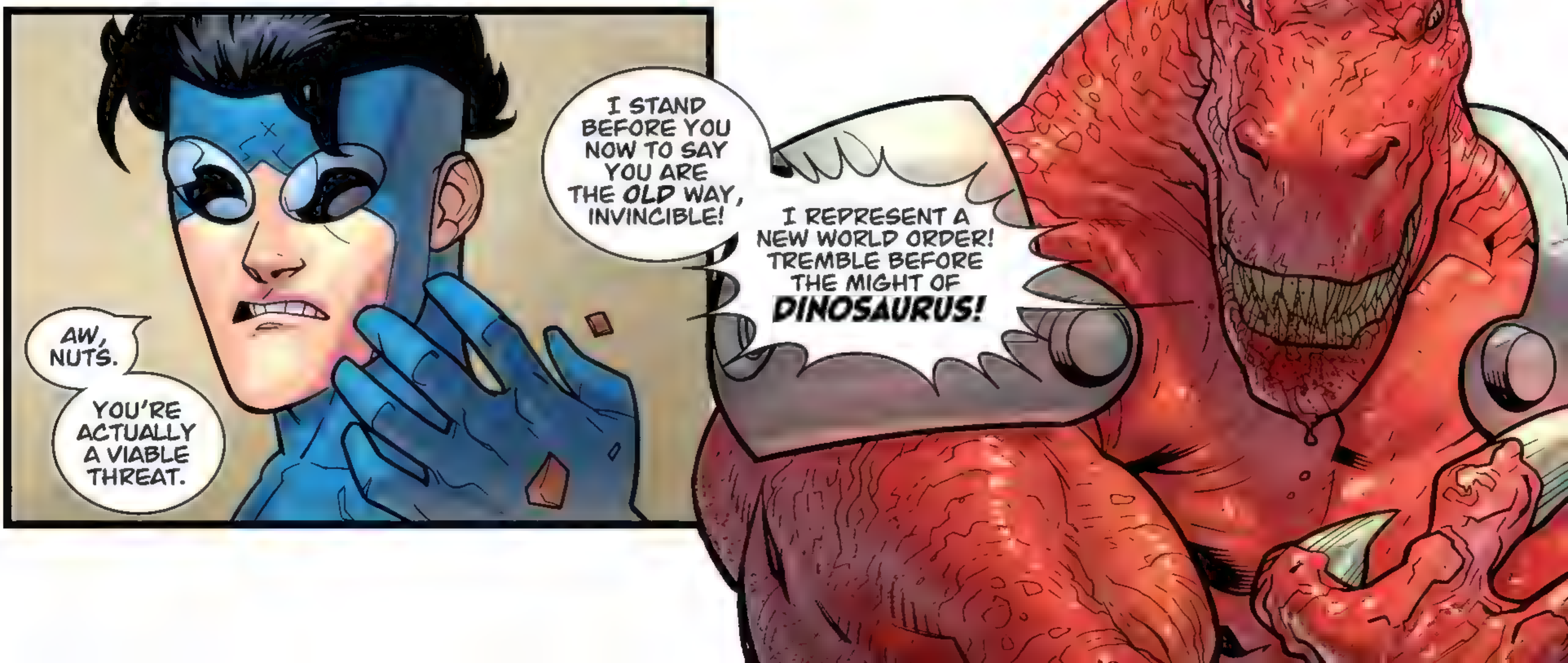
GREAT, MOM--NOW YOU'VE GOT ME WORRIED.

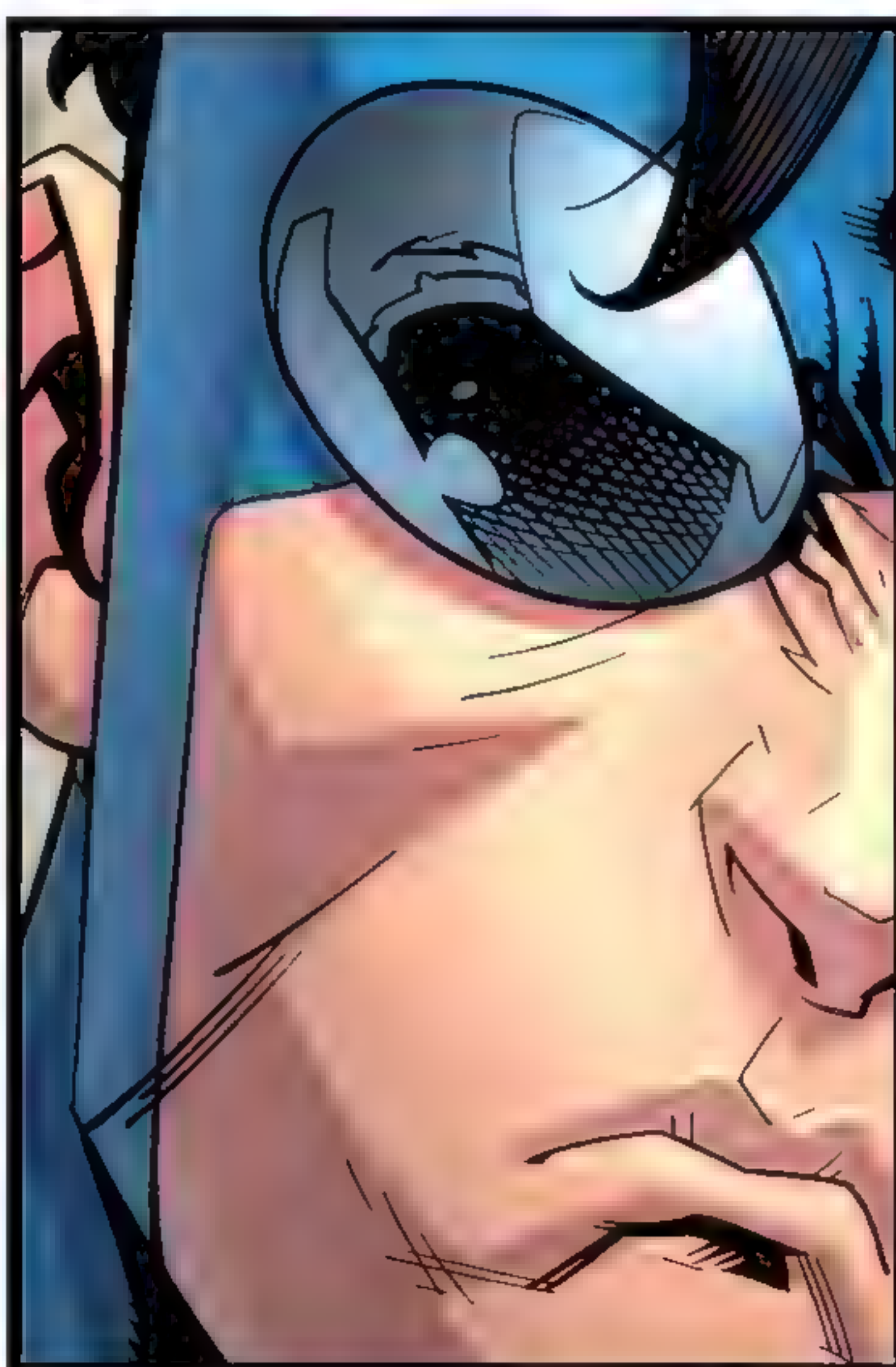
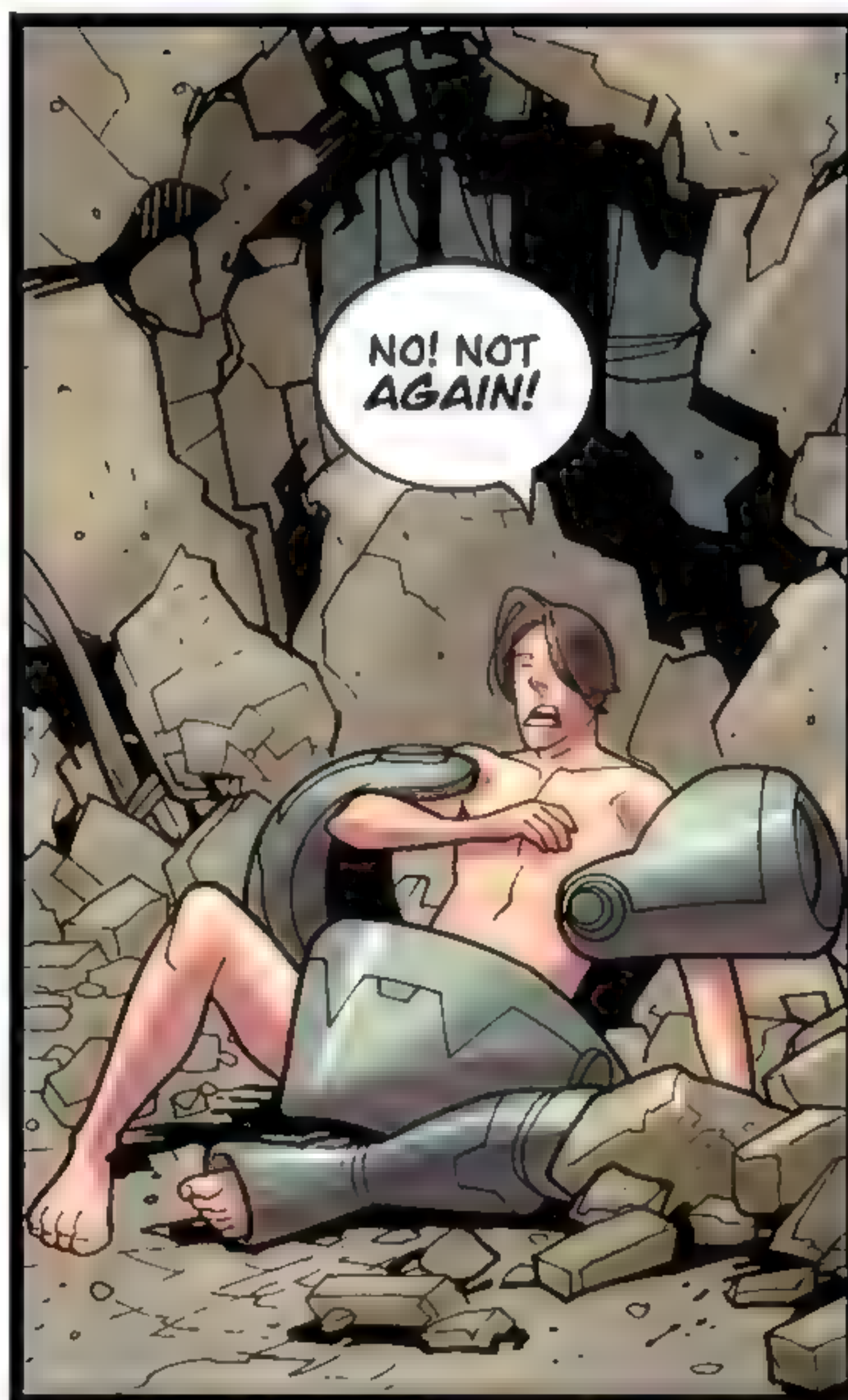


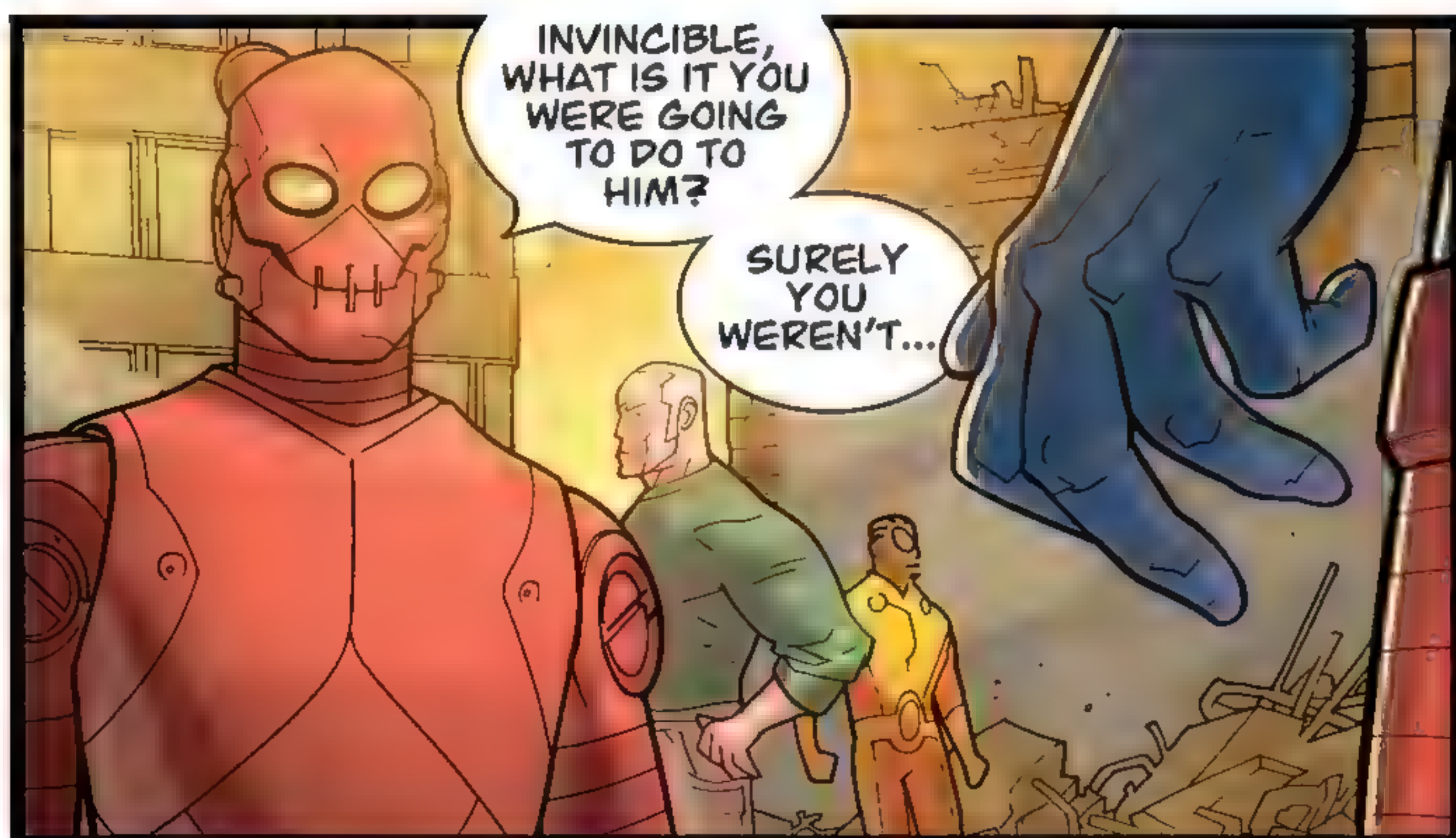
FINALLY!

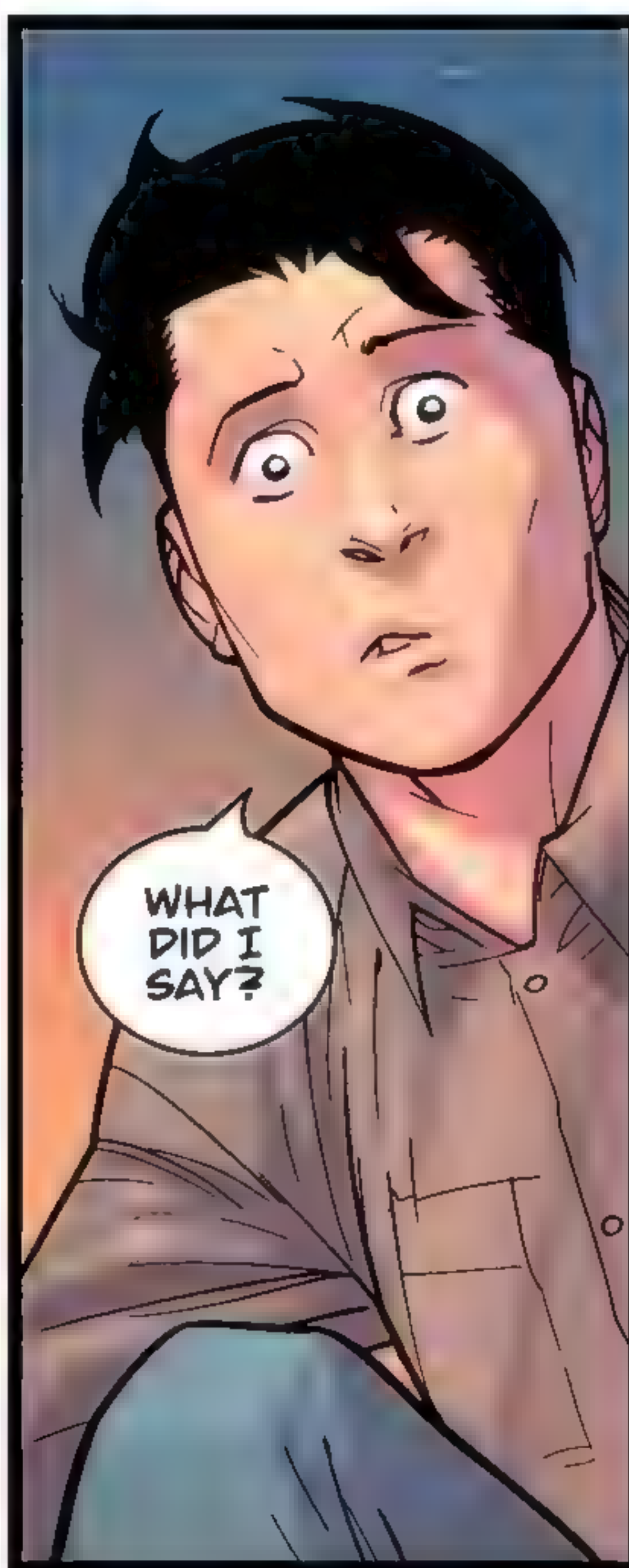
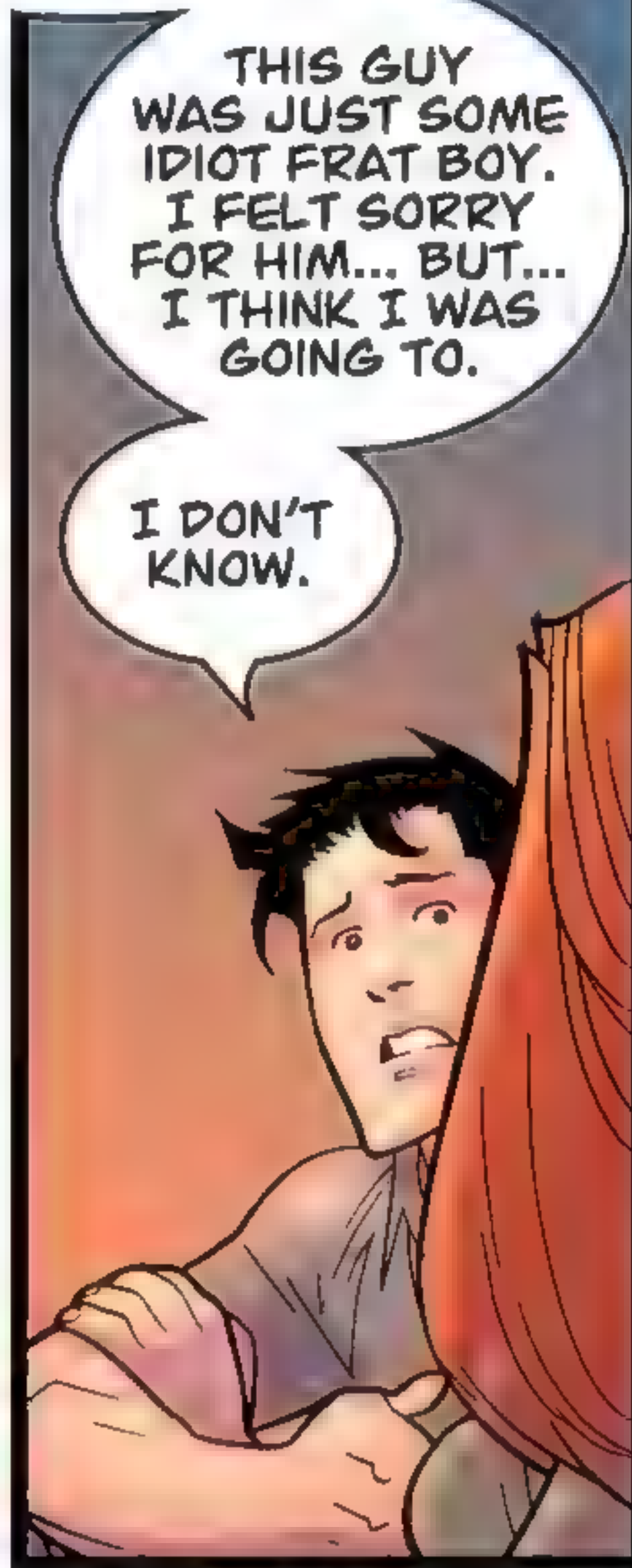
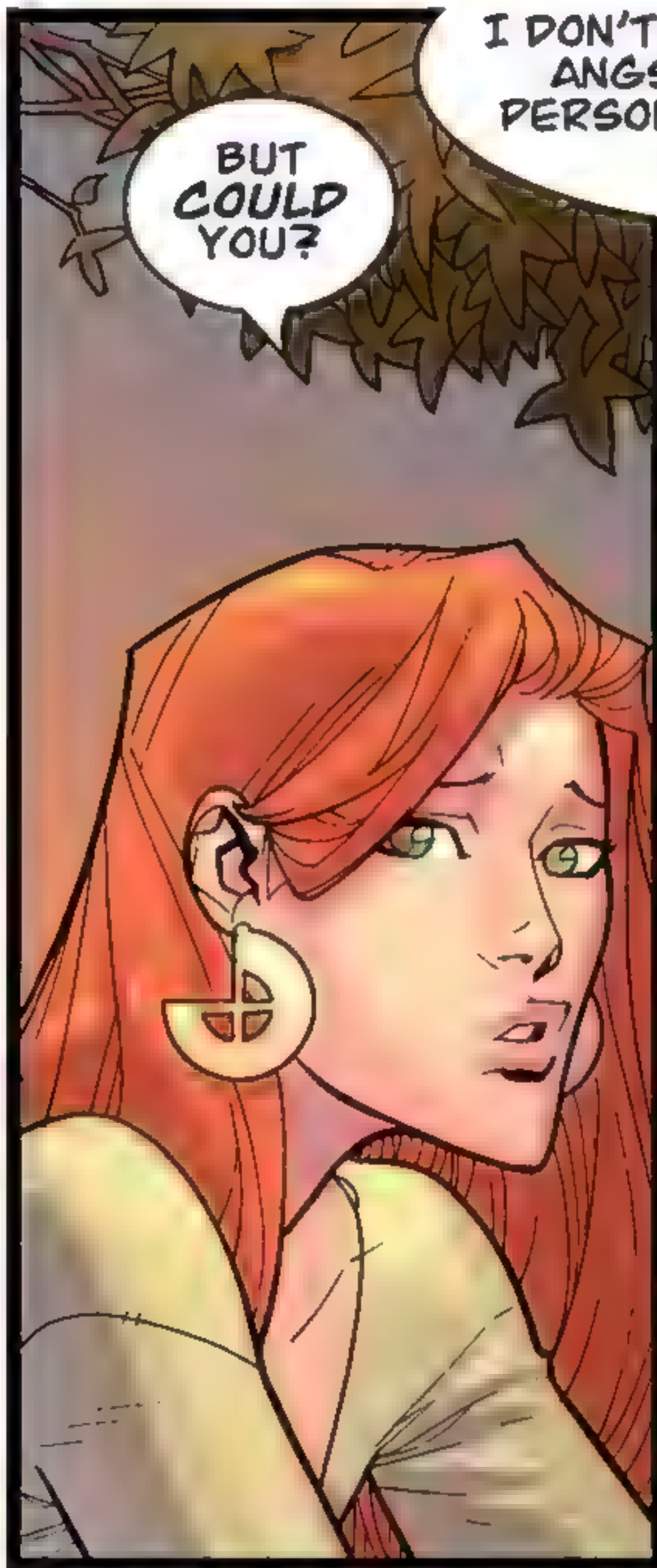
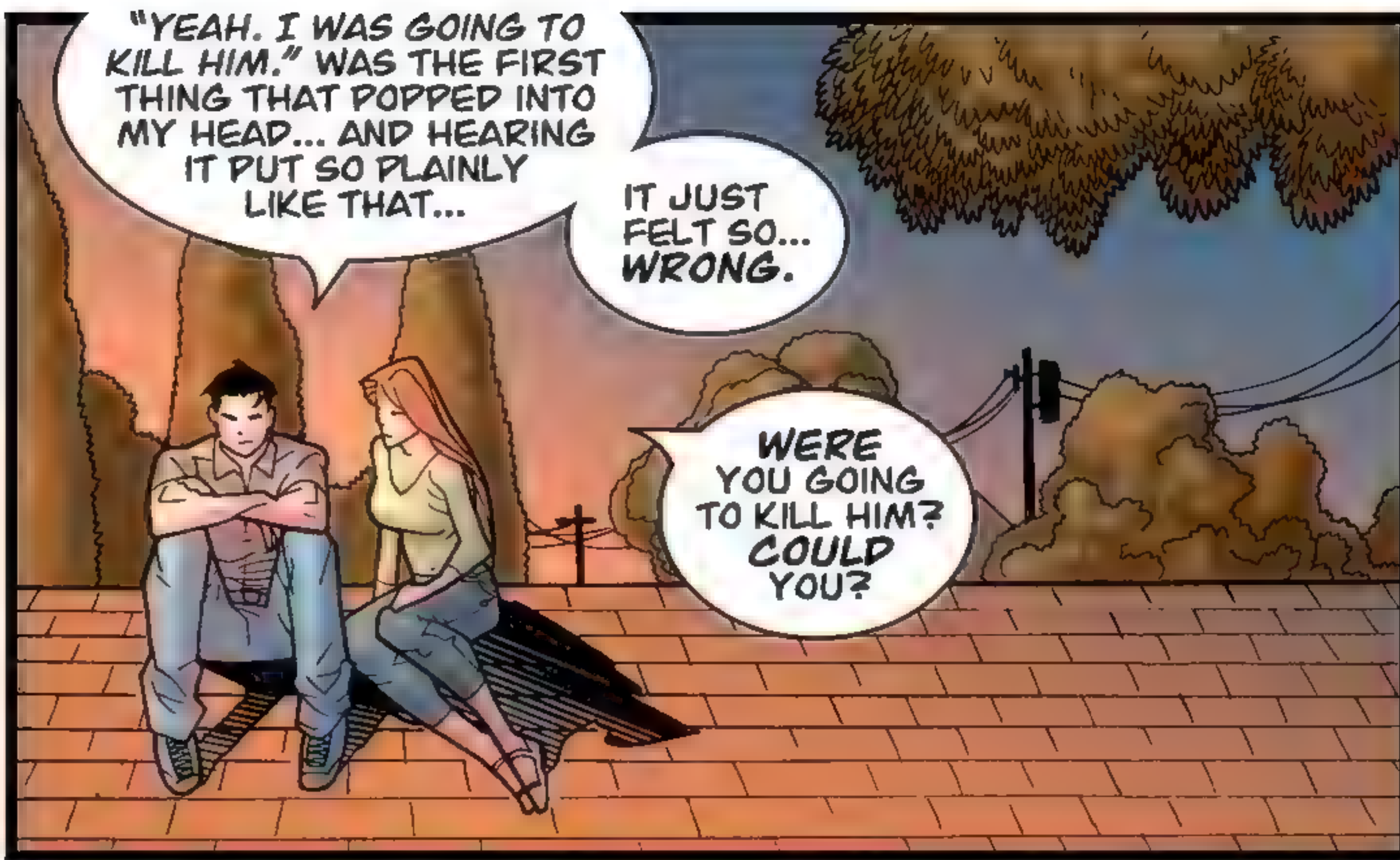
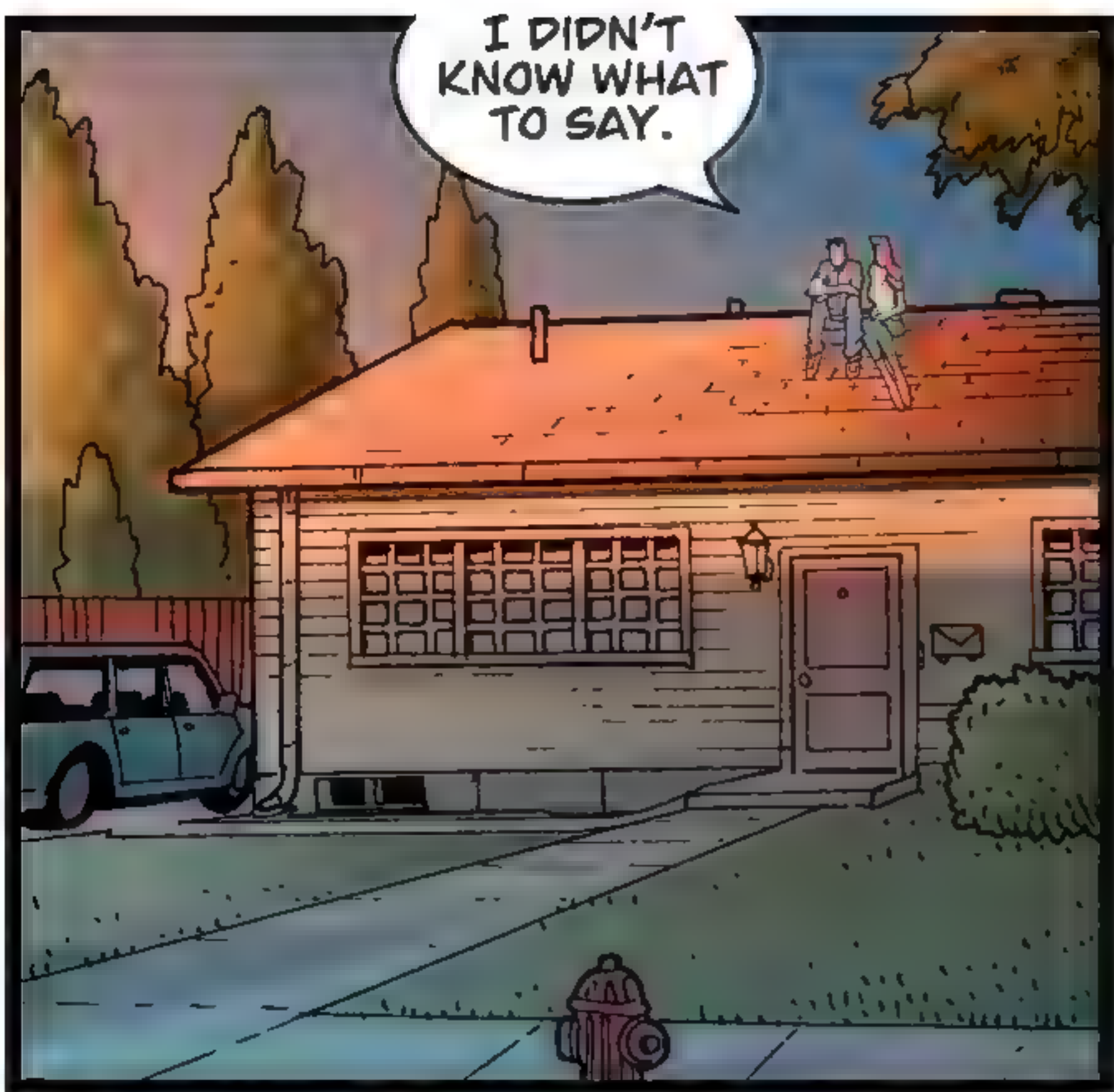
I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER SHUT UP!

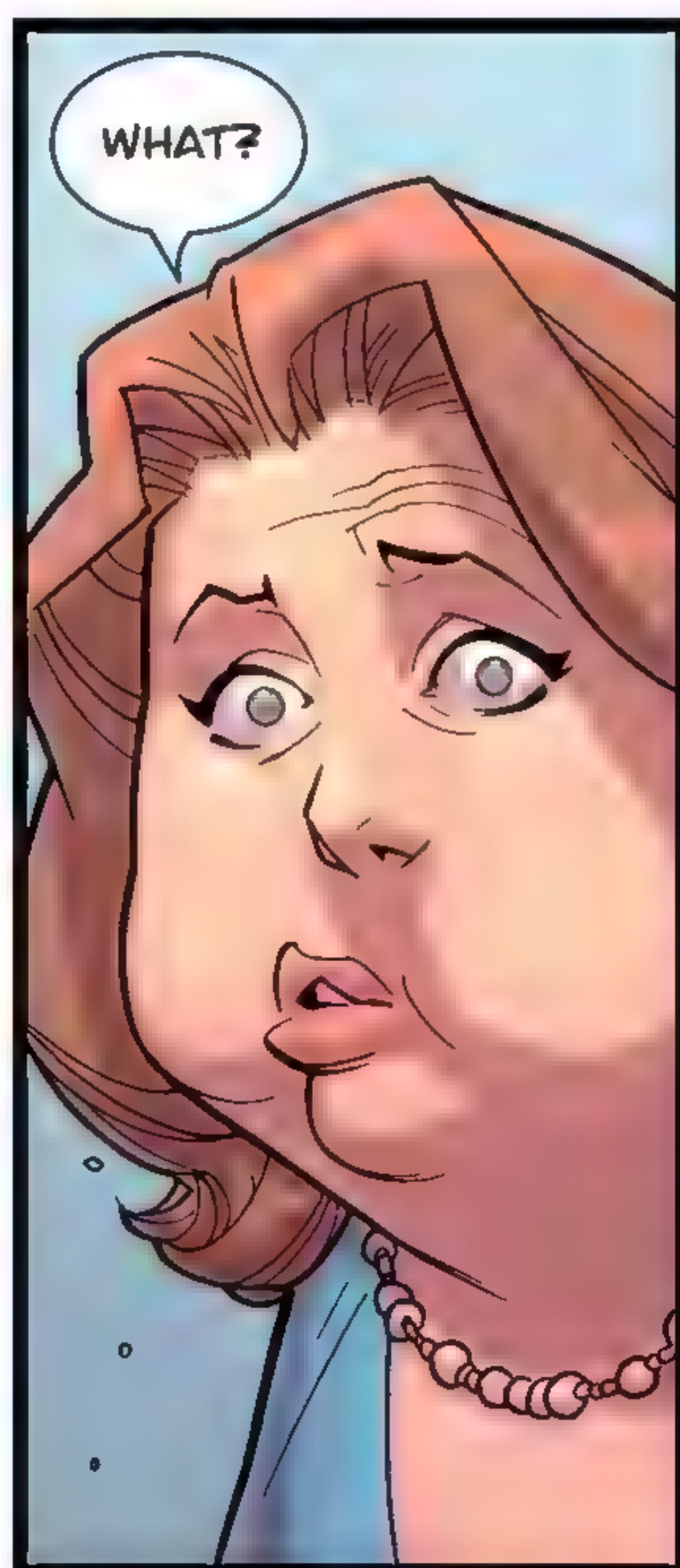
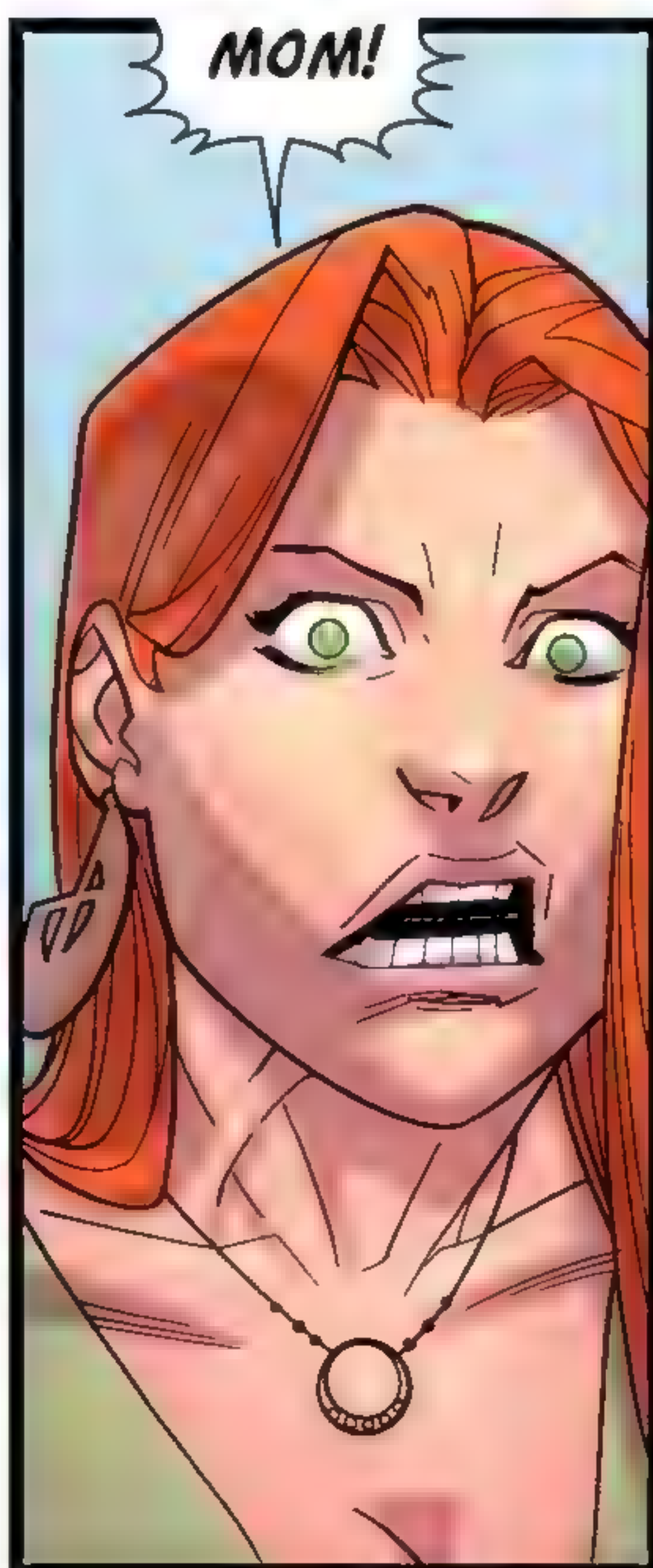
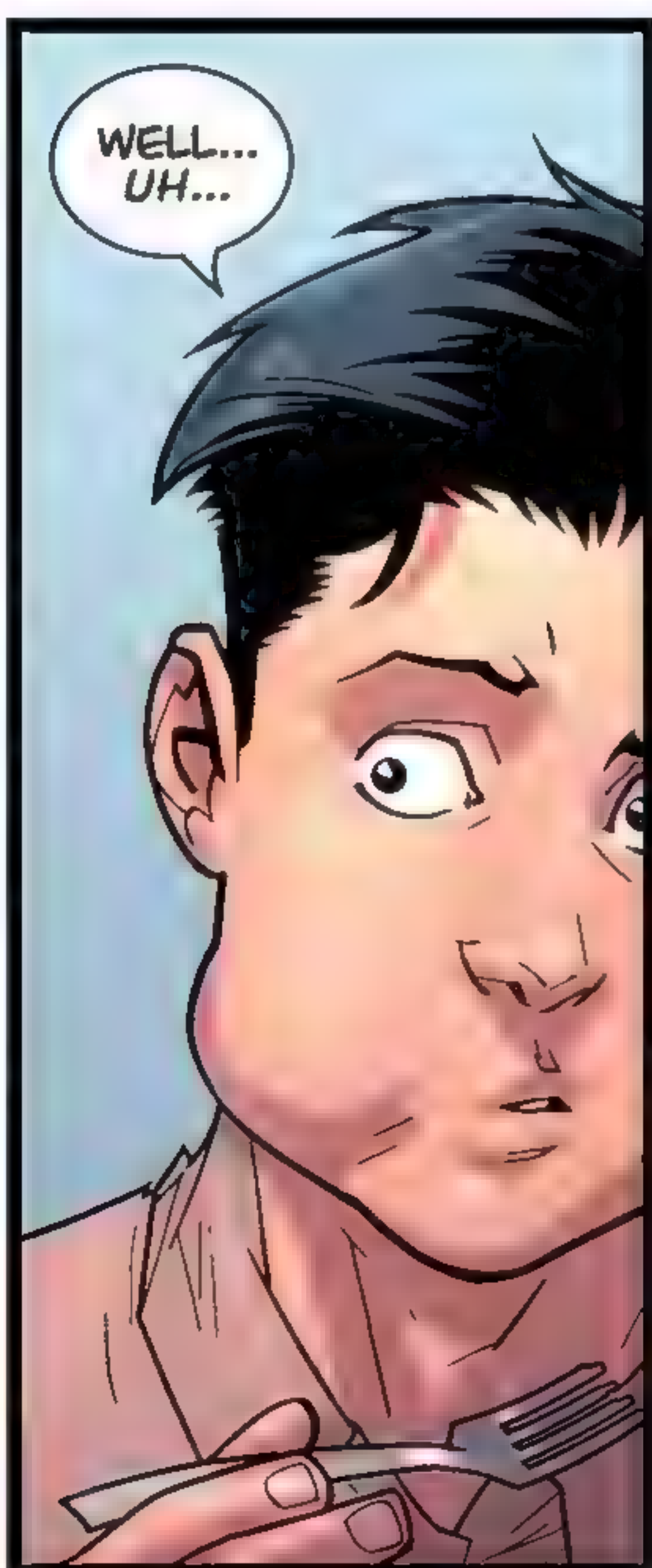
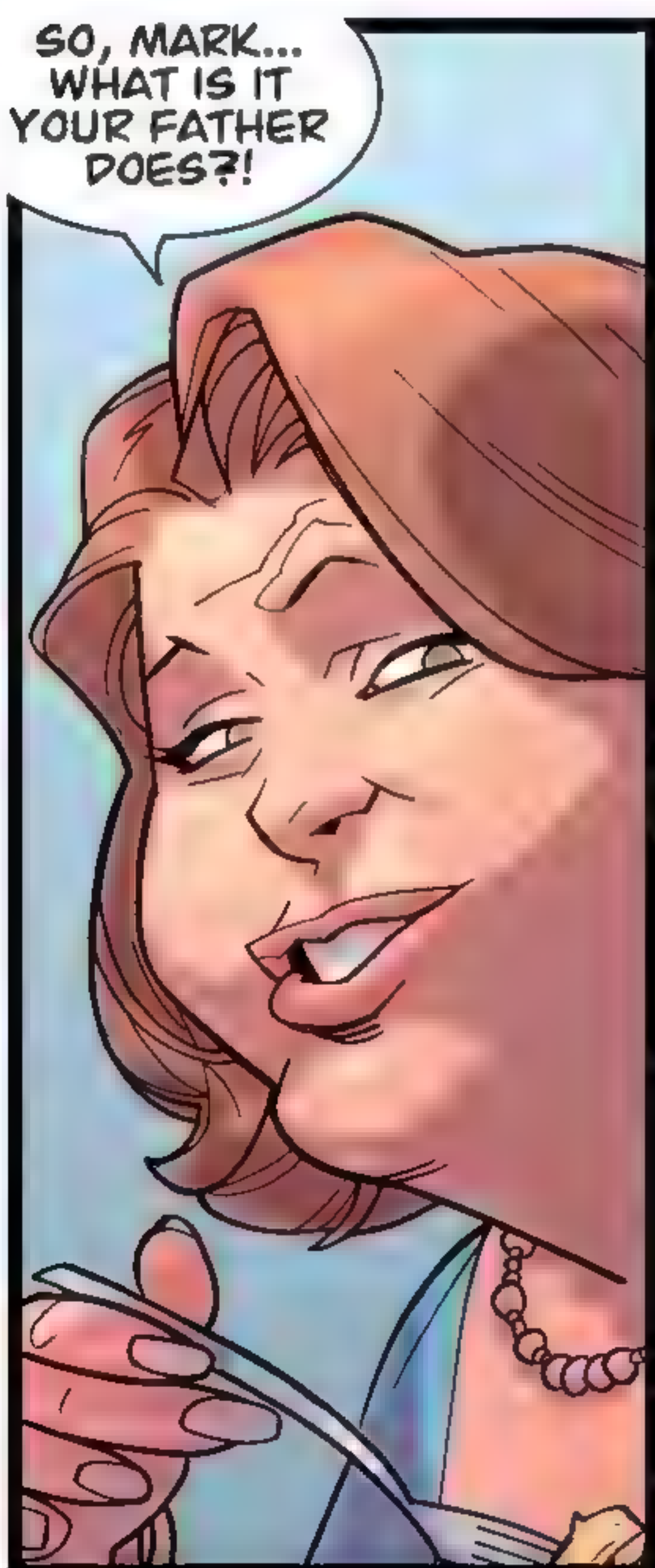
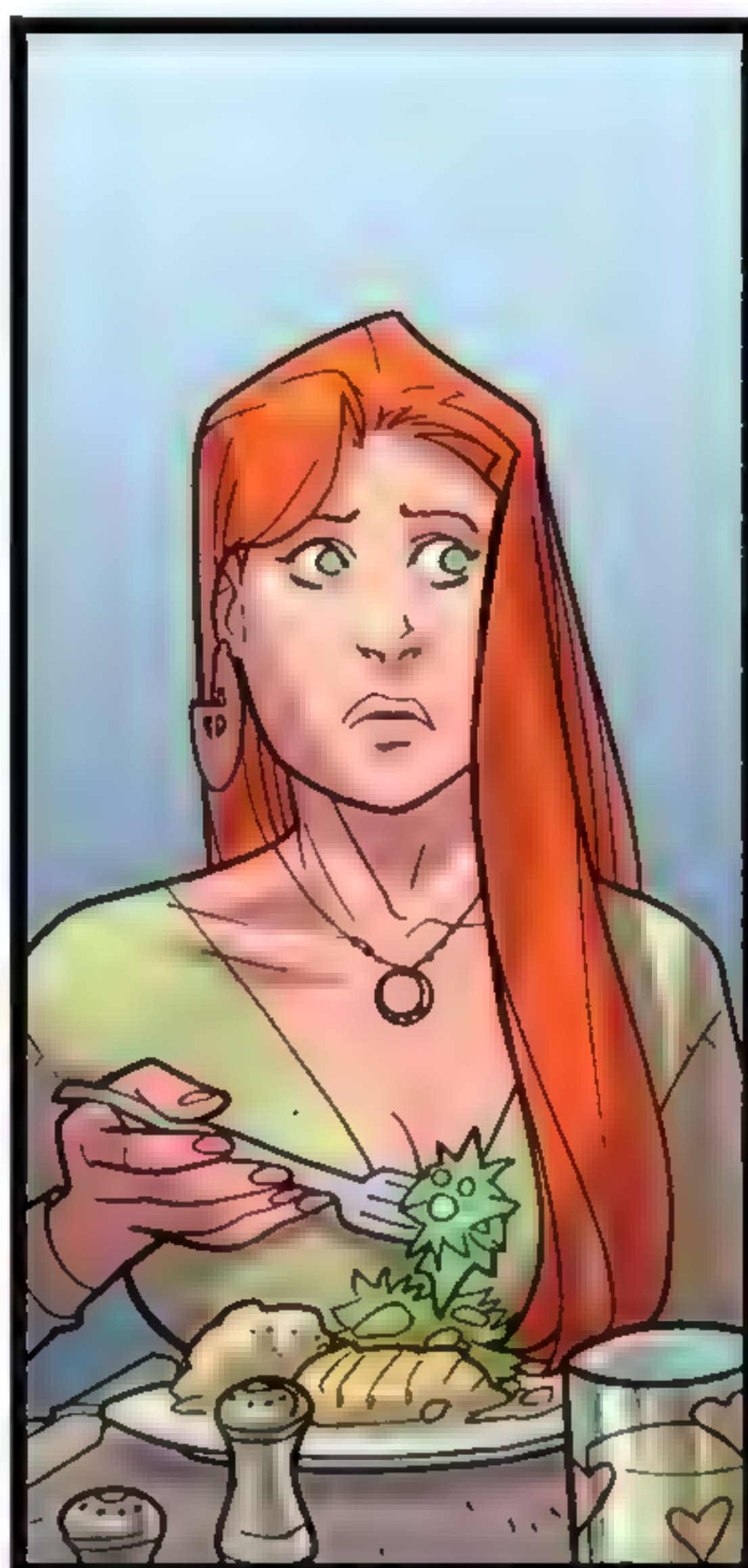
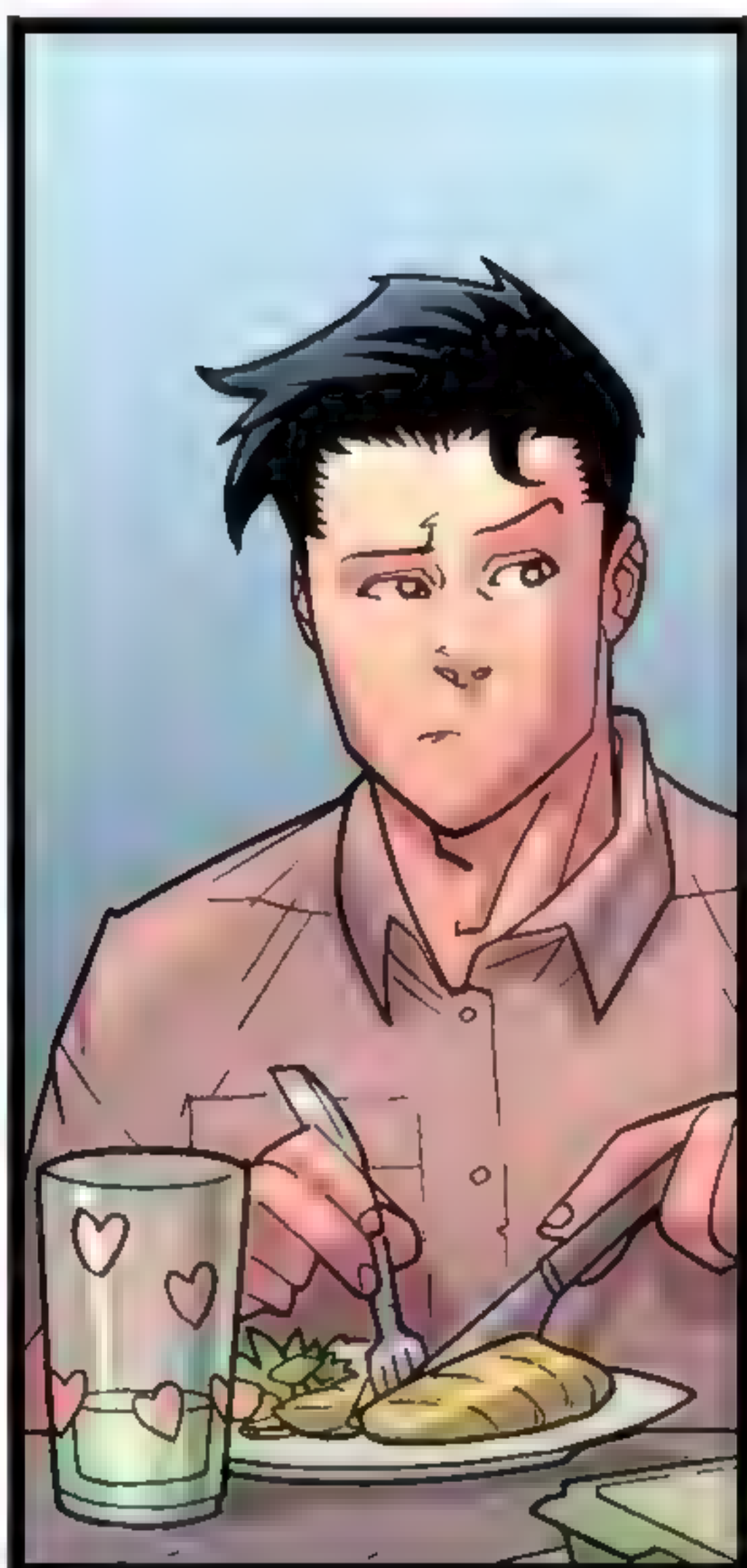
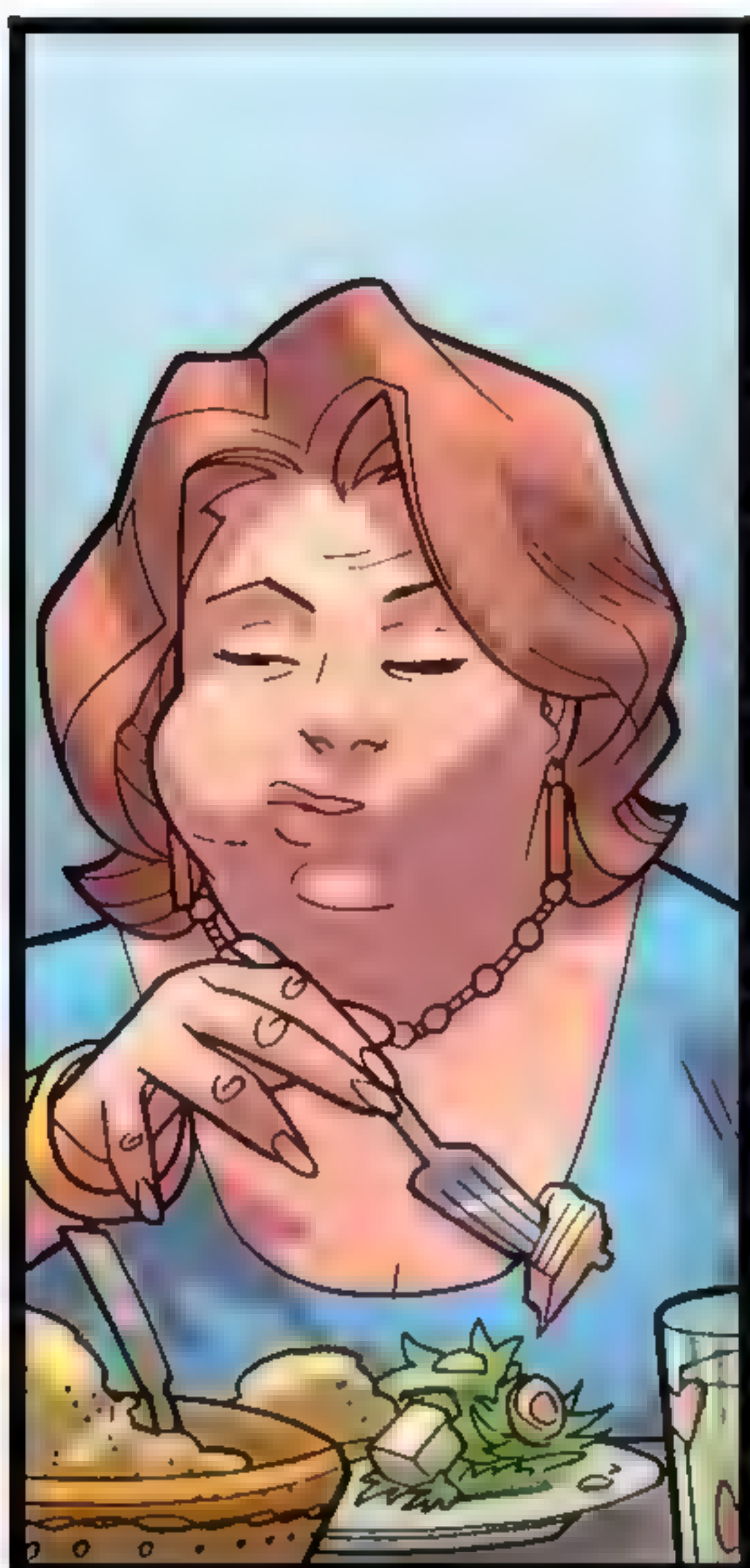
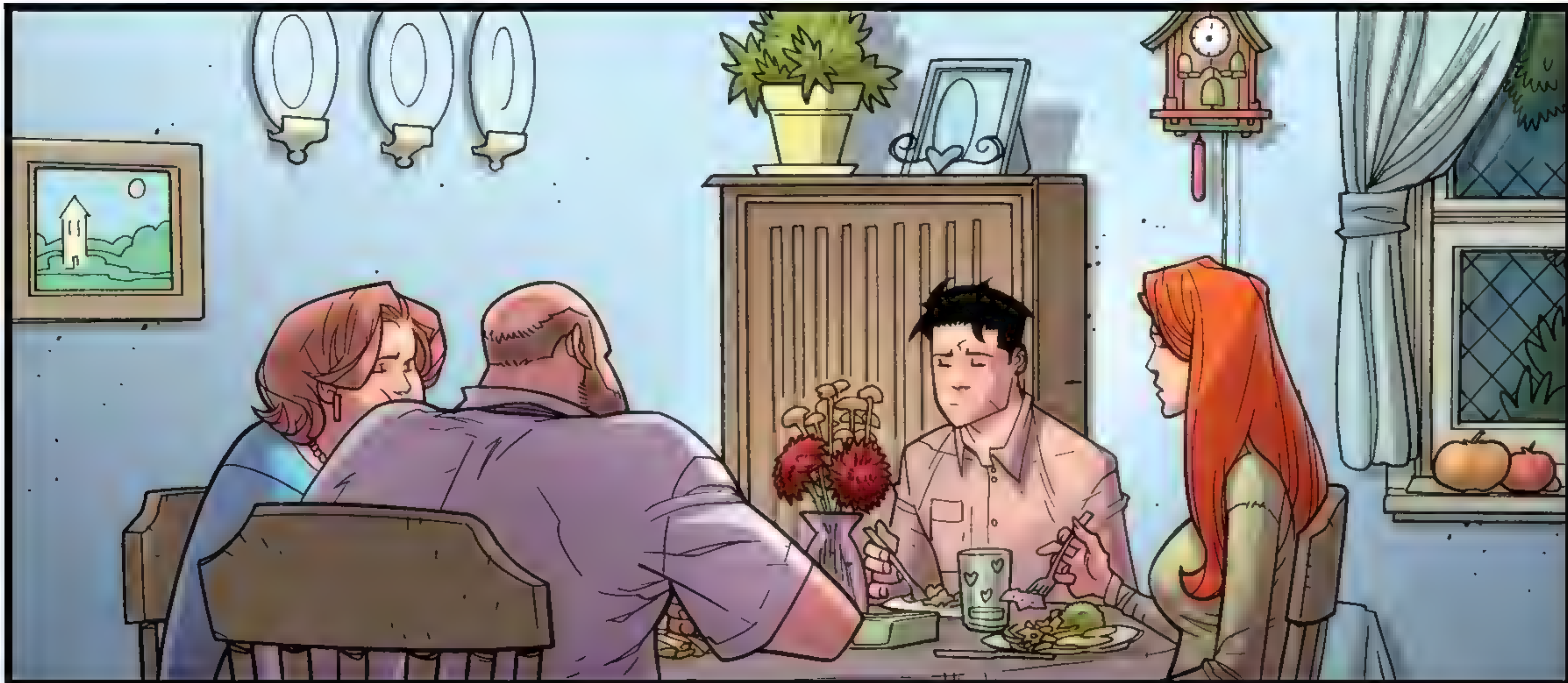
KROOM!













DAMN IT, BETSY! HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND?!

THE BOY'S FATHER IS THE PSYCHO WHO TRIED TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD! DON'T YOU REMEMBER?!

OMNI-MAN!

THE BOY HAD TO FIGHT HIM--HIS OWN FATHER--TO SAVE THE PLANET! PROBABLY NOT HIS FAVORITE DINNER CONVERSATION, YOU DITZ!!



DAD!

STOP!



NO, IT'S OKAY. YOUR FATHER IS RIGHT. I WAS JUST TRYING TO MAKE CONVERSATION--BUT IT WAS A STUPID MISTAKE TO MAKE.

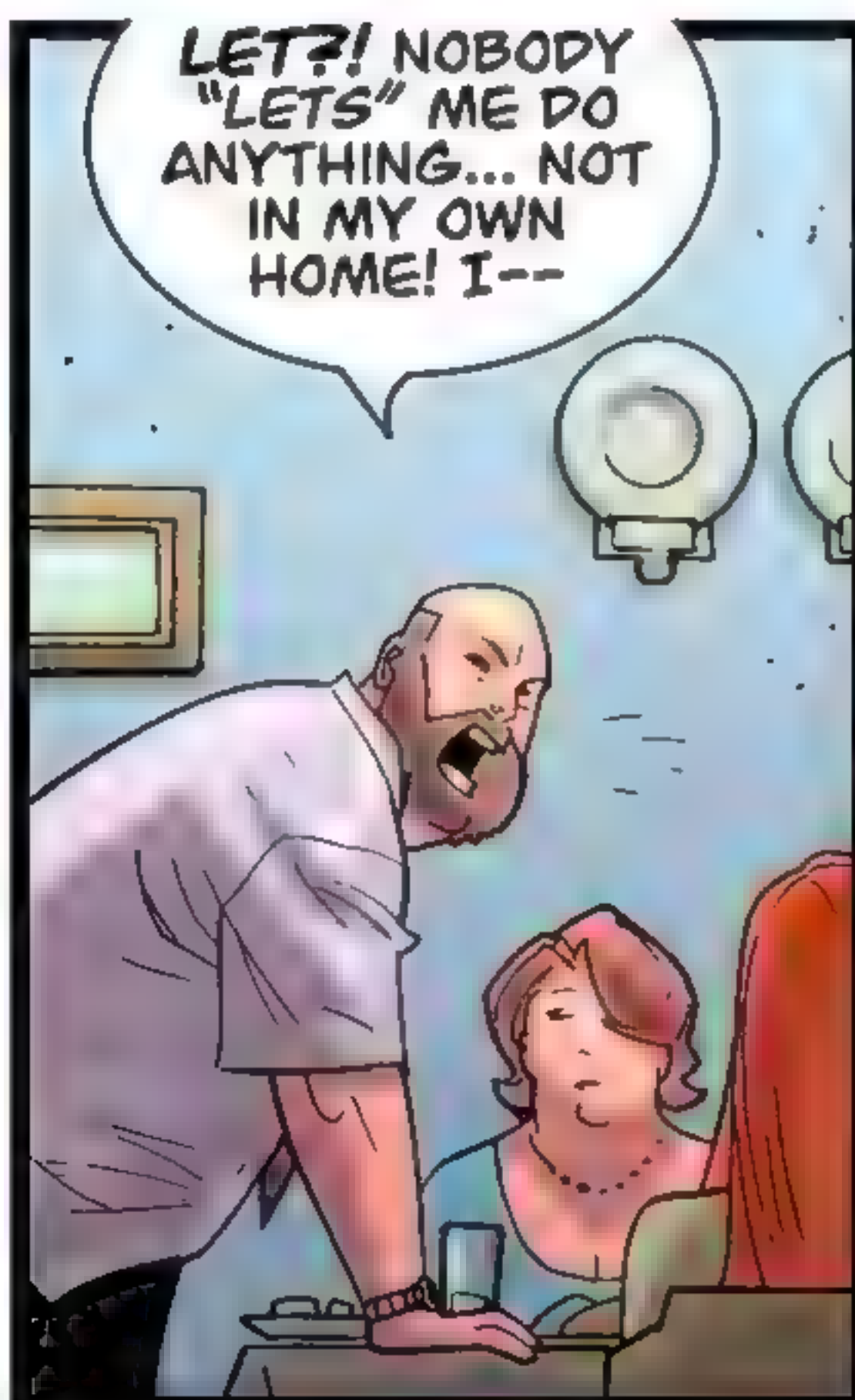
I'M VERY SORRY, MARK.



IT'S TOTALLY OKAY, REALLY.



WHY DO YOU LET HIM TREAT YOU LIKE THIS?

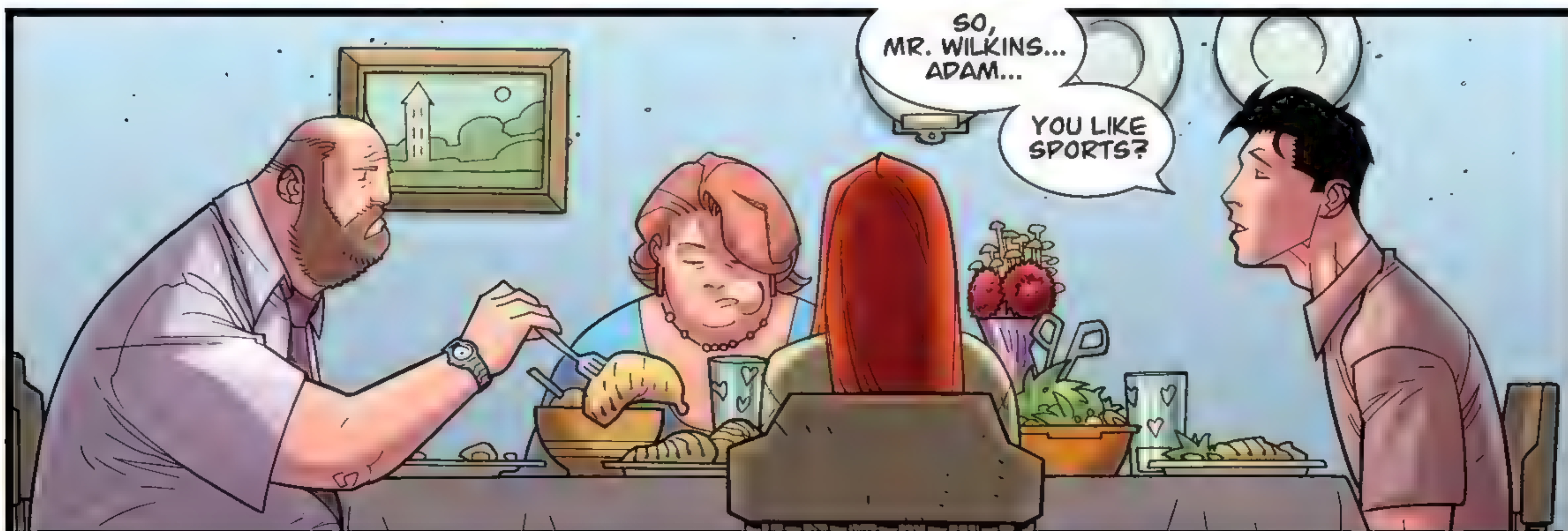


LET?! NOBODY "LETS" ME DO ANYTHING... NOT IN MY OWN HOME! I--



UM.

NEVER MIND.



SO, MR. WILKINS... ADAM...

YOU LIKE SPORTS?



JUST GOING TO LEAVE THEM WITH THE DISHES?

THEY LIKE IT. BONDING TIME. CIGAR?

NO, NO THANKS. WHAT DID YOU WANT TO TALK TO ME ABOUT?



I WANTED TO THANK YOU.

I KNOW THAT MY LITTLE ANGEL IS NO ANGEL. I CAUGHT HER ONE TIME, WITH THAT LONG-HAIRED BOY. THE ONE THAT DIED.

YOU KNOW SHE HAD HIM LIVING HERE FOR A WHILE? WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW.

ANYWAY, I APPRECIATE YOU GIVING HER A CHANCE... KNOWING YOU'RE NOT HER FIRST.



SHE NEVER REALLY GOT JUST HOW IMPORTANT VIRGINITY IS TO A WOMAN.

MEN LIKE TO FEEL LIKE THEY'RE BREAKING NEW GROUND. THEY WANT TO BE THE TEACHERS... THEY WANT TO BE IN CHARGE.

HARD TO DO THAT IF THERE'S NO CORNERS LEFT UNEXPLORED, RIGHT?

BETSY WAS A VIRGIN WHEN WE GOT TOGETHER.

YOU CAN ALWAYS TELL WHEN YOU'RE WITH A VIRGIN. THEY JUST ACT DIFFERENTLY, THINK DIFFERENTLY... LESS CONFIDENCE. IT'S ATTRACTIVE.

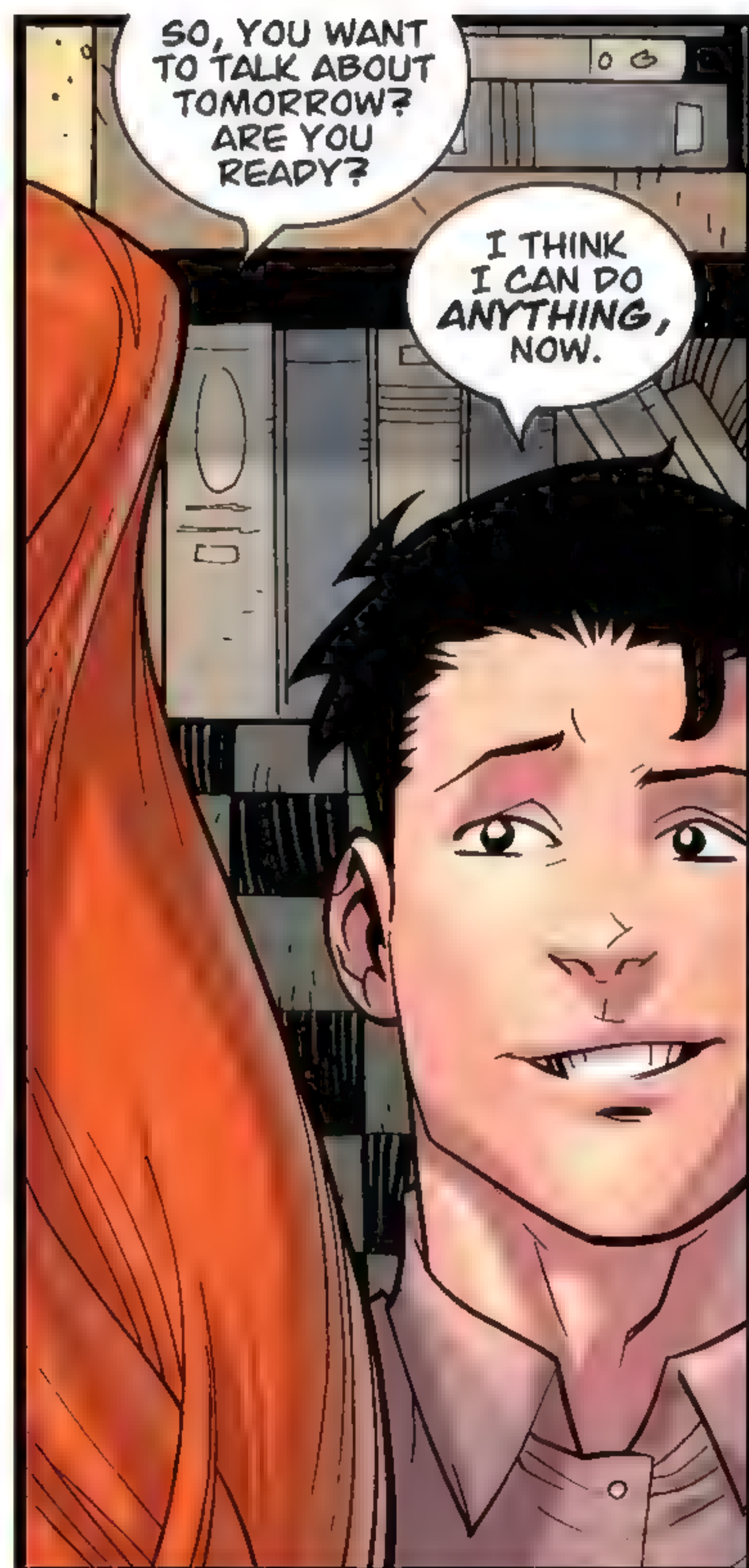
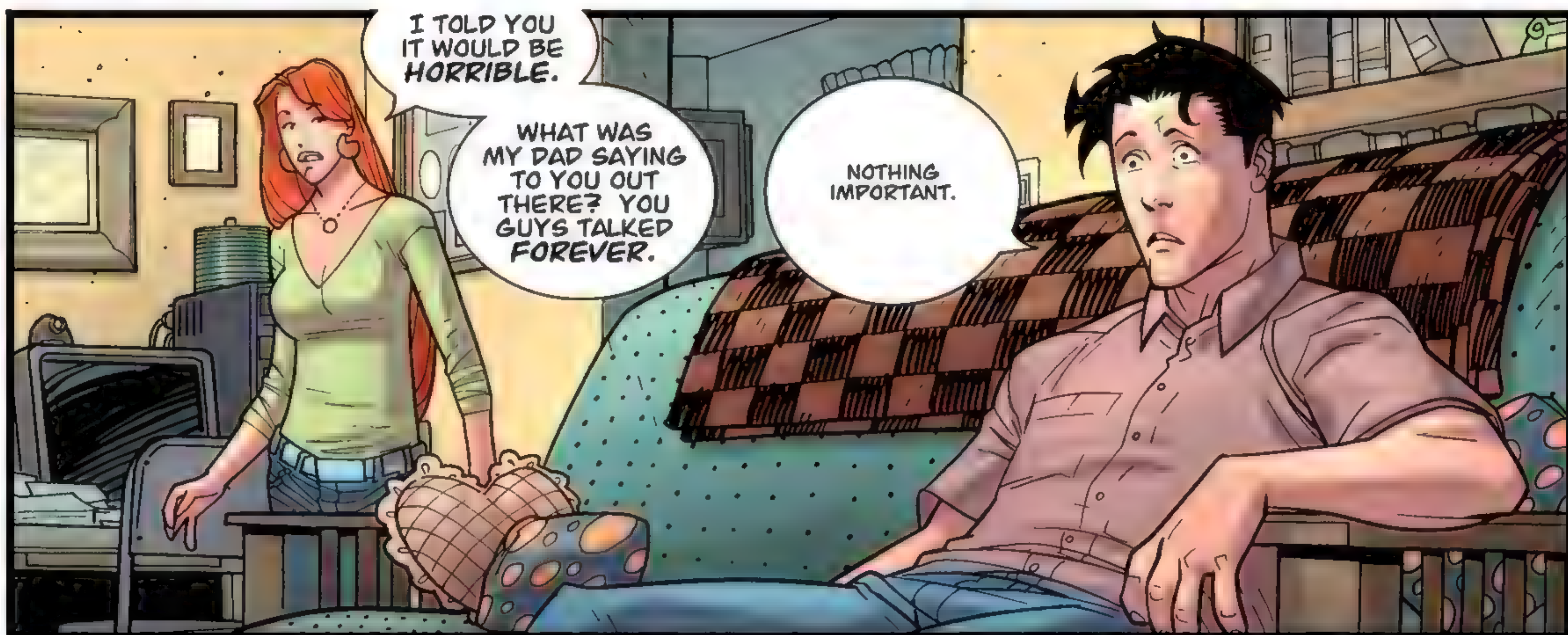
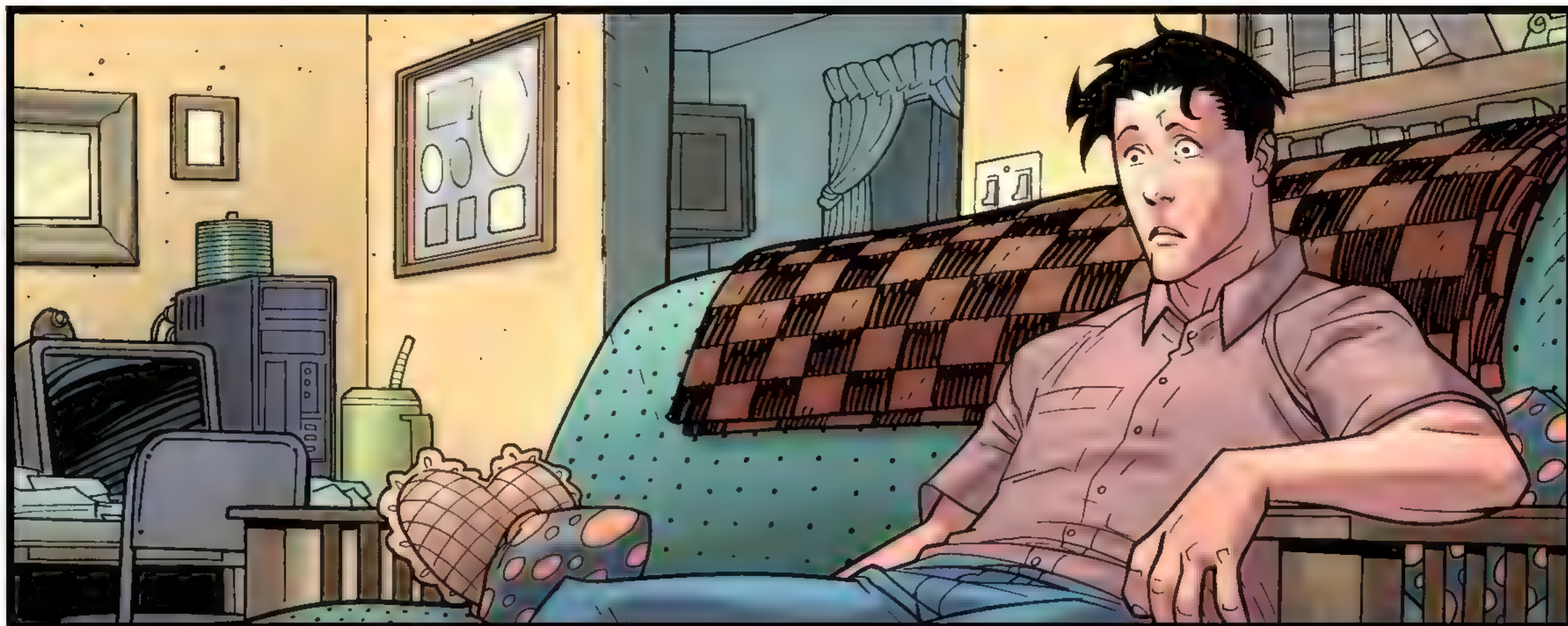


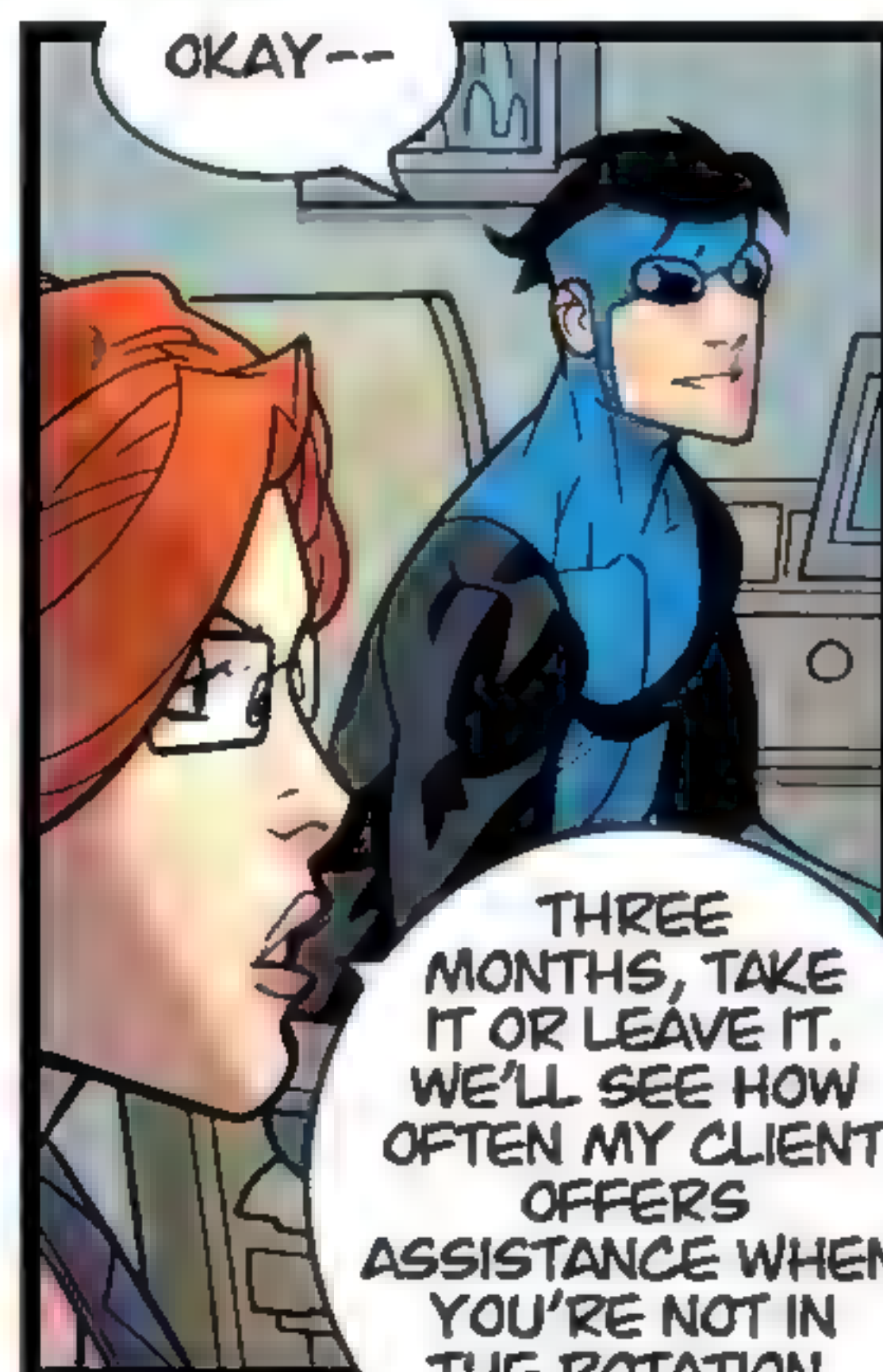
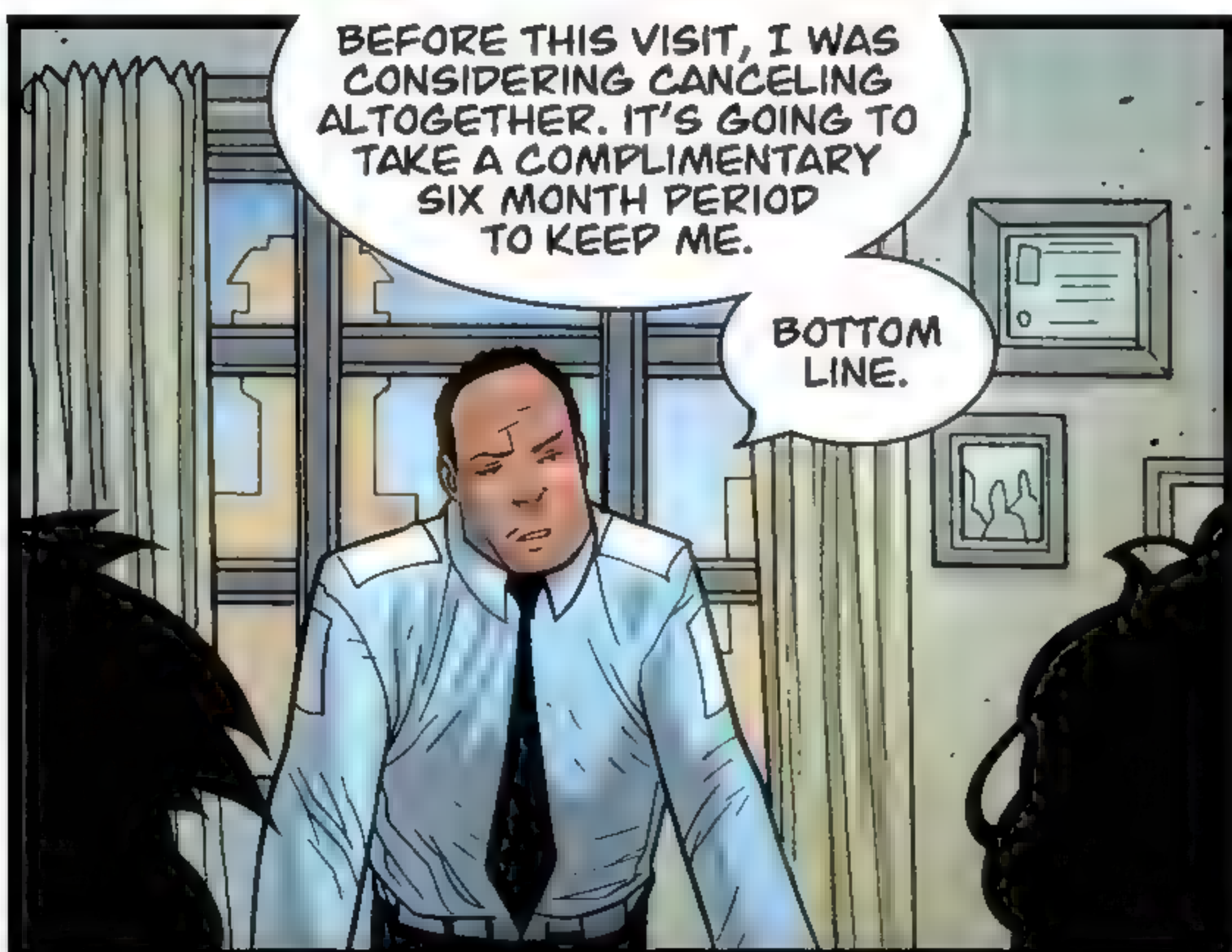
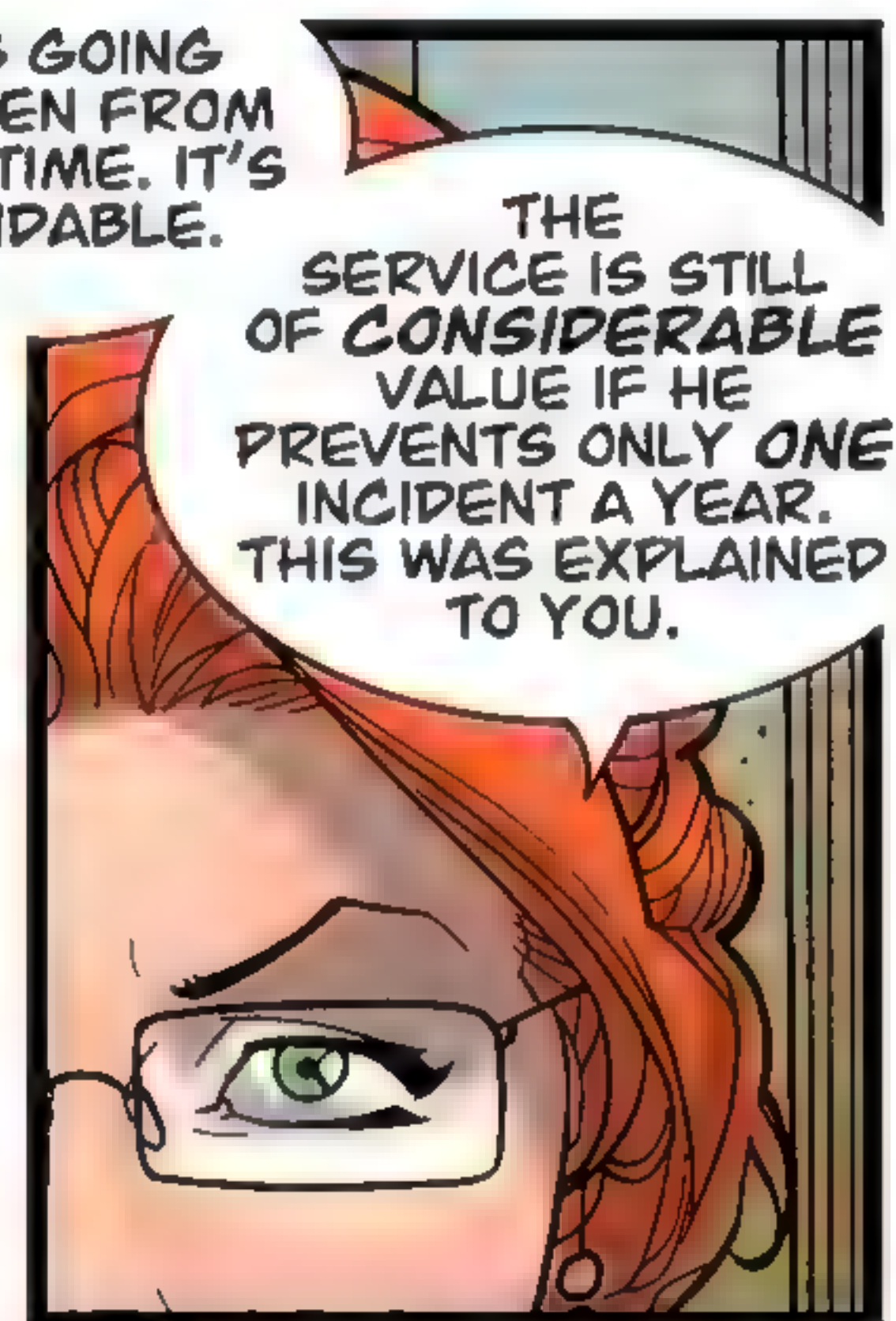
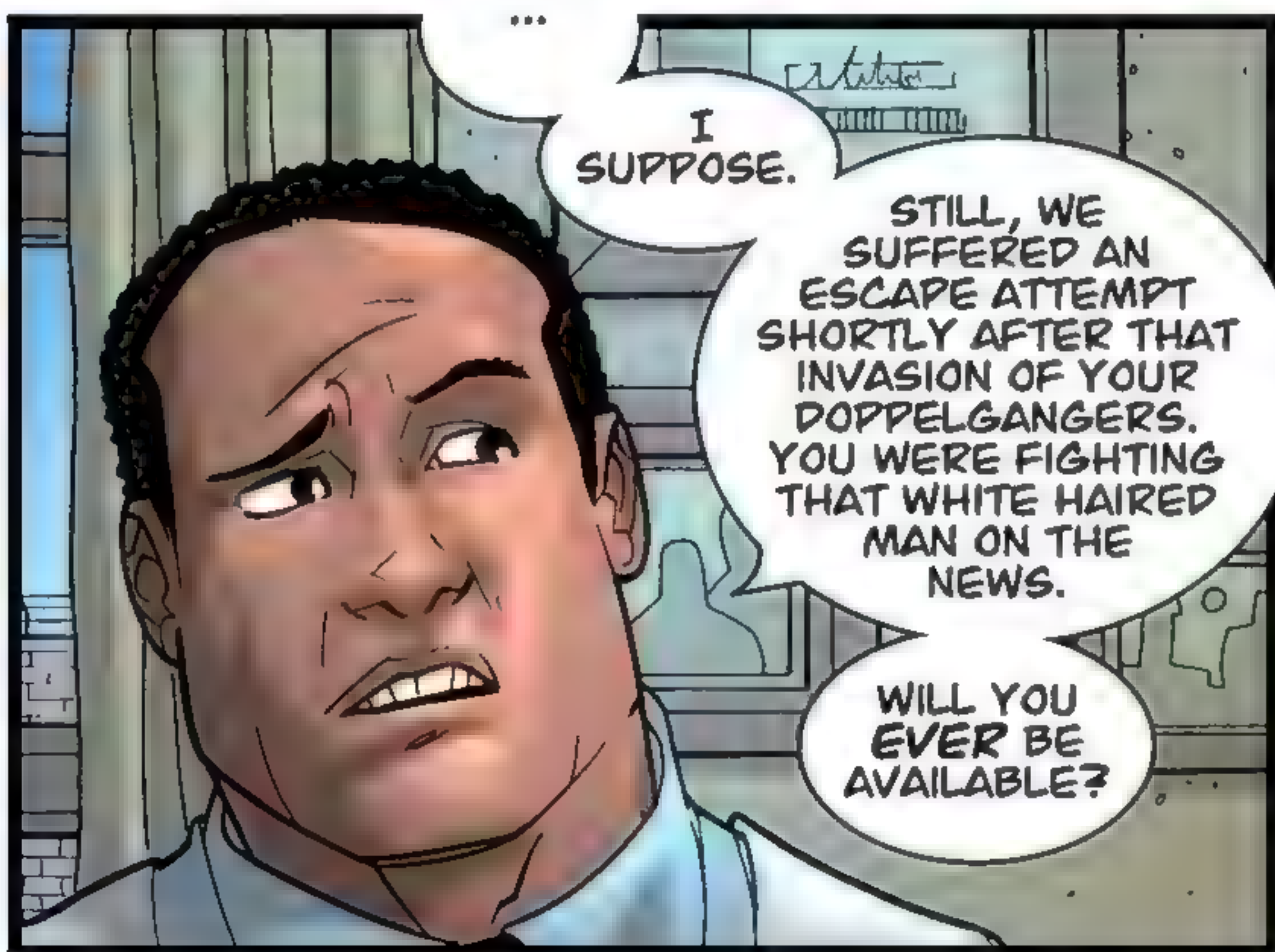
DON'T KNOW IF I WOULD HAVE MARRIED BETSY, HAD THINGS BEEN... DIFFERENT.

I DON'T LIKE COMING IN SECOND... OR THIRD... OR... WHATEVER THE CASE MAY BE.

IT'S GOOD OF YOU TO LOOK PAST MY DAUGHTER'S OBVIOUS FLAWS. SHOWS CHARACTER. I RESPECT THAT.

OF COURSE, IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD WHEN A WOMAN KNOWS A THING OR TWO, RIGHT? SO I GUESS THERE ARE POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES...







OH, WOW!
THAT WAS
AWESOME! YOU
WERE **AMAZING**
IN THERE!

SOMEONE
HAD TO BE. LORD,
MARK--YOU'RE
SUCH A PUSH OVER.
YOU GIVE HIM SIX
FREE MONTHS AND
WE'LL **NEVER**
HAVE OUR OWN
PLACE!



SORRY.
YOU OKAY
TO FLY? I
MEAN, YOUR
POWERS---



I WOULDN'T
BE FLYING SO
HIGH IF YOU
WEREN'T RIGHT
HERE. I DON'T
KNOW--THEY
HAVEN'T ACTED
UP IN A FEW
DAYS... MAYBE
THAT'S
OVER.
ONE
CAN ONLY
HOPE...



SORRY I
BROUGHT IT
UP. DIDN'T
MEAN TO
UPSET
YOU.

IT'S
OKAY.

THE GOOD
NEWS IS THAT
I'VE GOTTEN SOME
CALLS FROM A FEW
POWER PLANTS
INQUIRING ABOUT
OUR SERVICE.
THIS COULD BE
HUGE.

DO YOU
REALIZE HOW
MUCH WE'LL BE
MAKING IF WE
GET SO MUCH AS
SIX REGULAR
CLIENTS?

NOPE...
BUT AS LONG
AS YOU KNOW,
I'M COOL.



MIGHT NOT
BE A BAD IDEA
TO EXPAND OUR
ROSTER A LITTLE...
HAVE AT LEAST
ONE RESERVE
FOR WHEN
YOU'RE TIED UP
SOMEWHERE
ELSE.

HOW DO YOU
FEEL ABOUT
MAYBE OLIVER
HELPING OUT?
I'M SURE
HE NEEDS
MONEY.



SPEAK
OF THE
DEVIL...



HEY GUYS--
YOU HEADED
BACK TO THE
HOUSE?

MOM'S OUT
WITH PAUL
TONIGHT. FIGURED
YOU MIGHT... WELL...
WANT TO KNOW
YOU HAVE THE
HOUSE ALL TO
YOURSELF.

Y'KNOW...
SEX.



CUTE.

WHOA,
MAN--NICE
COSTUME. I
LIKE IT. WHAT
BROUGHT
THAT ON?



I JUST WENT A
FEW ROUNDS WITH
THE ELEPHANT.
HE RIPPED MY
COSTUME
UP.

YOU
FOUGHT
HIM BEFORE,
RIGHT?



SEEMS LIKE I HAVE...
I DON'T REALLY
REMEMBER. MAYBE
ONCE.



WELL, ANYWAY, MY
COSTUME GOT ALL
RIPPED UP. I WENT
TO ART FOR A FIX AND
HE SAID "YOU'RE
GETTING A LITTLE
OLD FOR THE
EXPOSED LEG
BIT."

I
AGREED--
AND THEN
PRESTO
CHANGO--



--YOUNG
OMNI-MAN
IS BORN!



WELL, I'M GOING
BACK OUT ON
PATROL--YOU GUYS
HAVE FUN BACK AT
THE HOUSE.

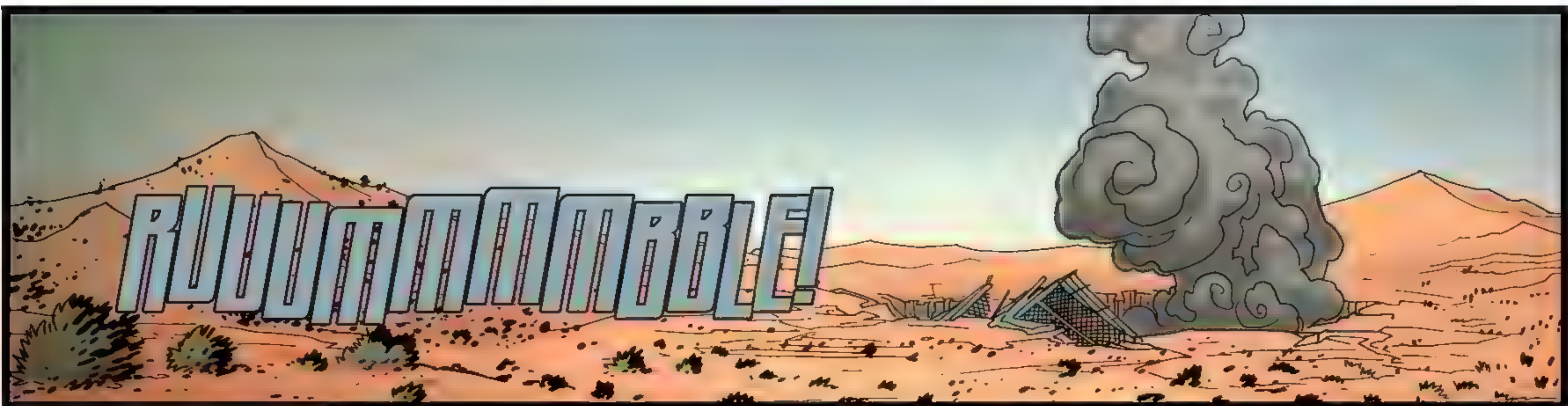
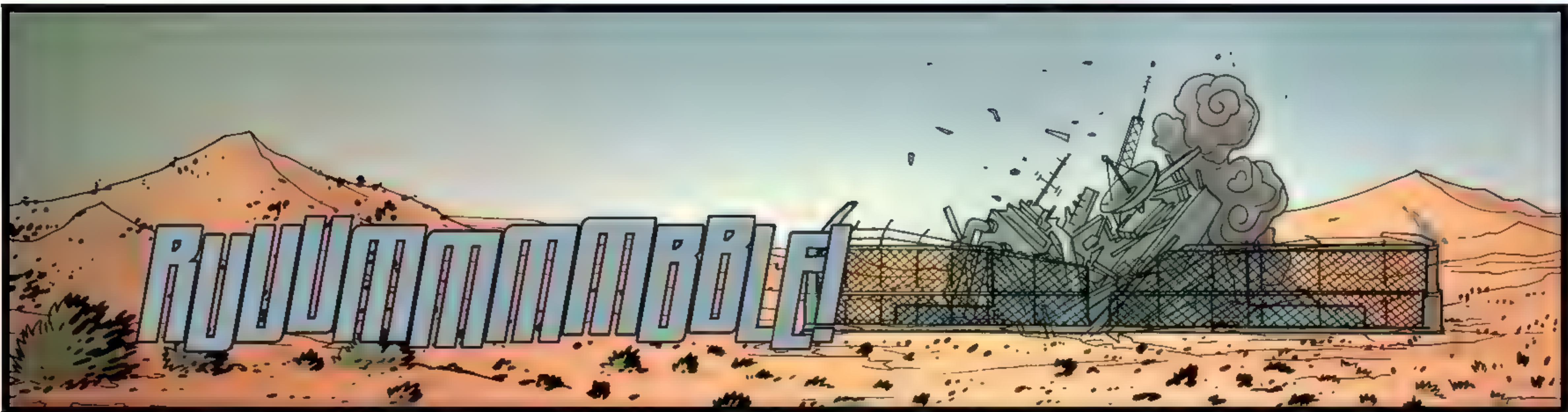
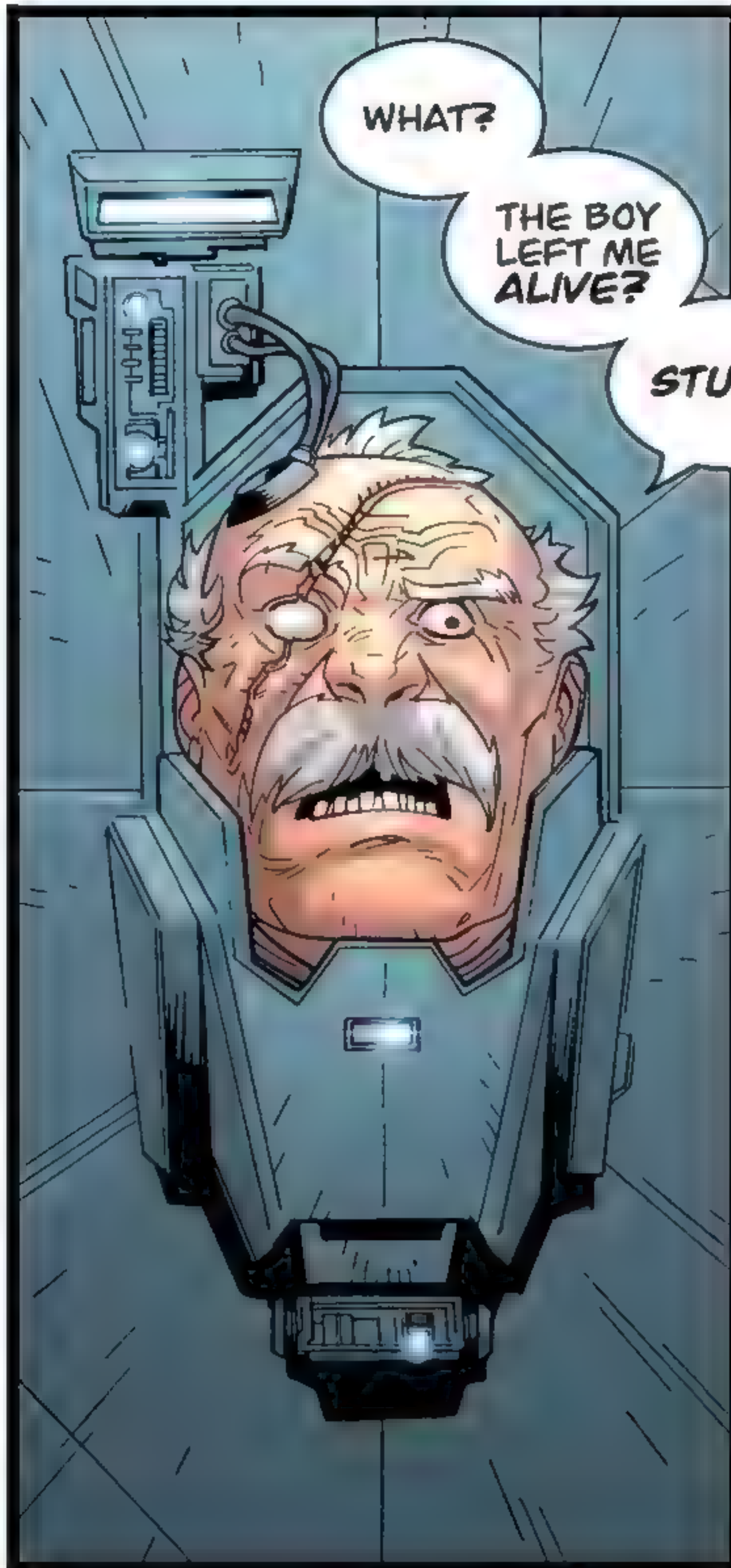
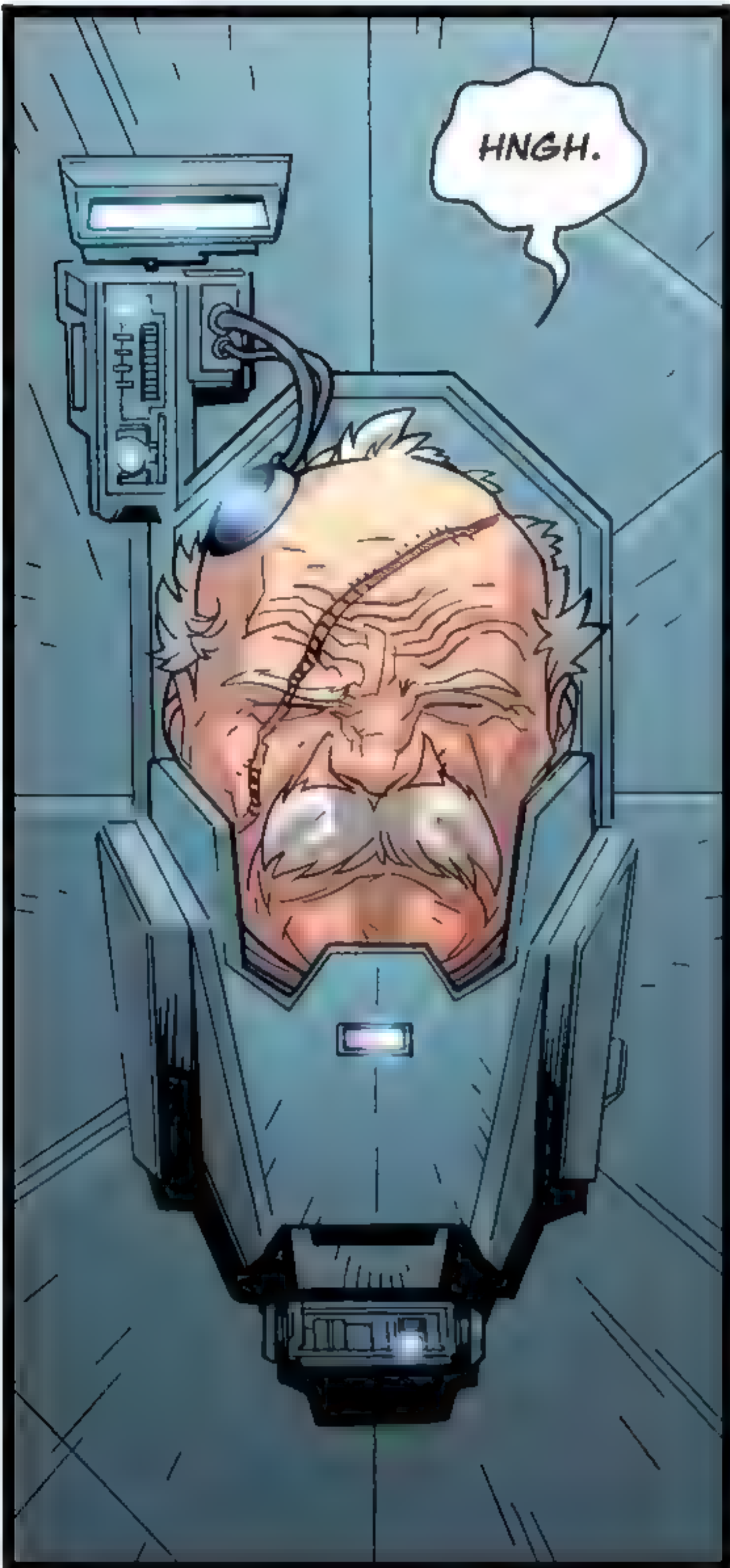

WINK.

RUDE.

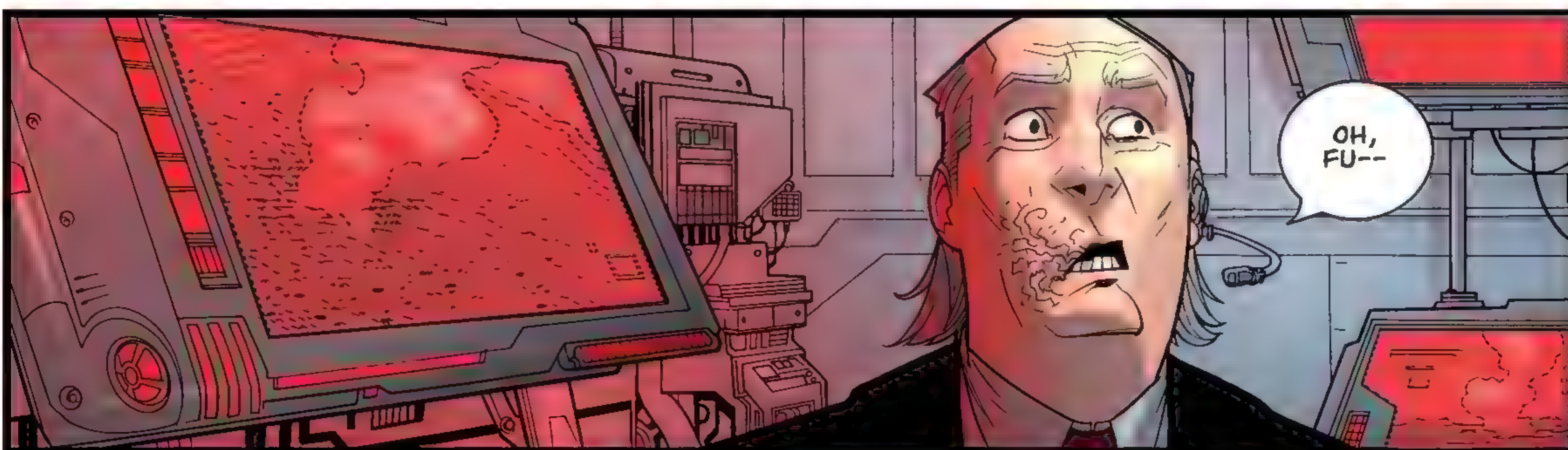
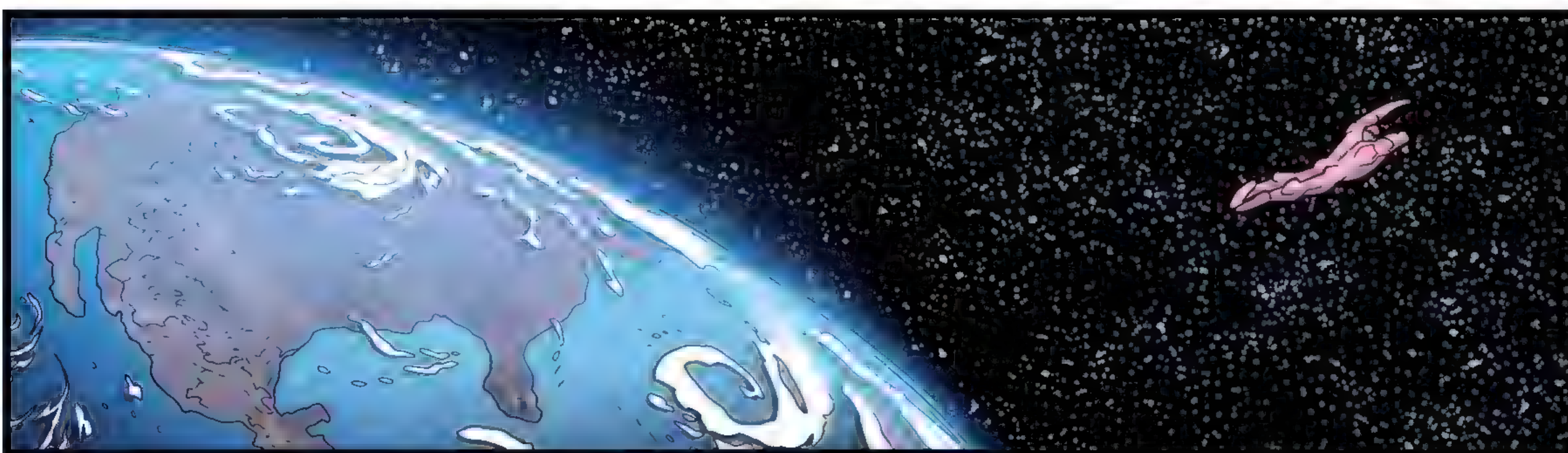
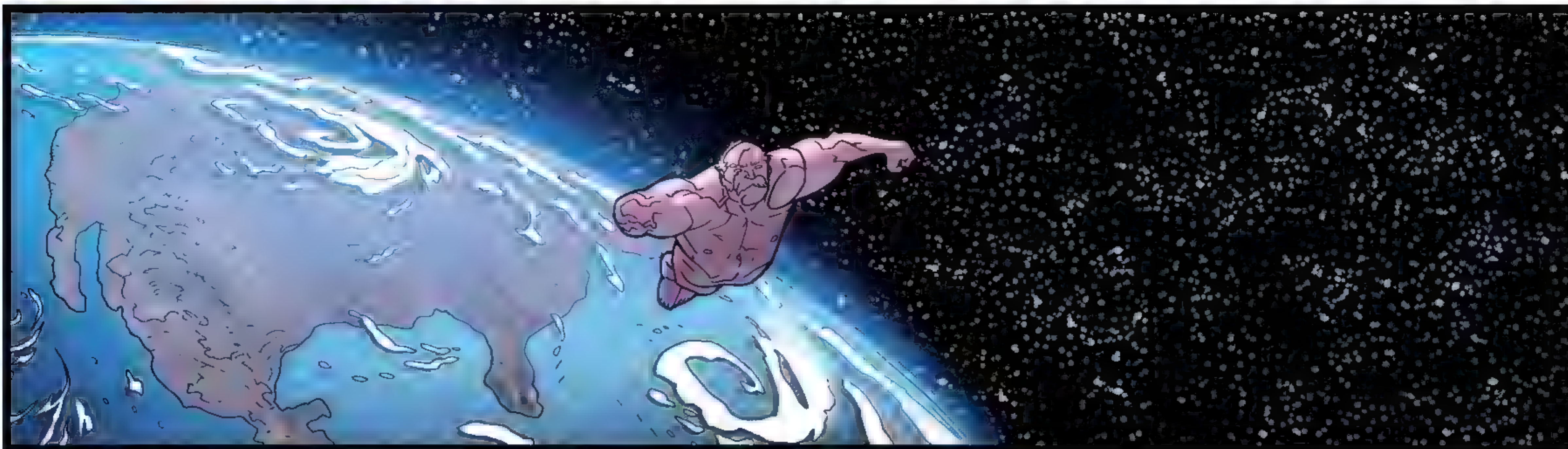
EH... HE'S
NOT WRONG,
THOUGH.

HOUSE
ALL TO
OURSELVES--
WEE!

THE BLOCK. REMOTE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY OUTPOST IN THE MOJAVE DESERT.







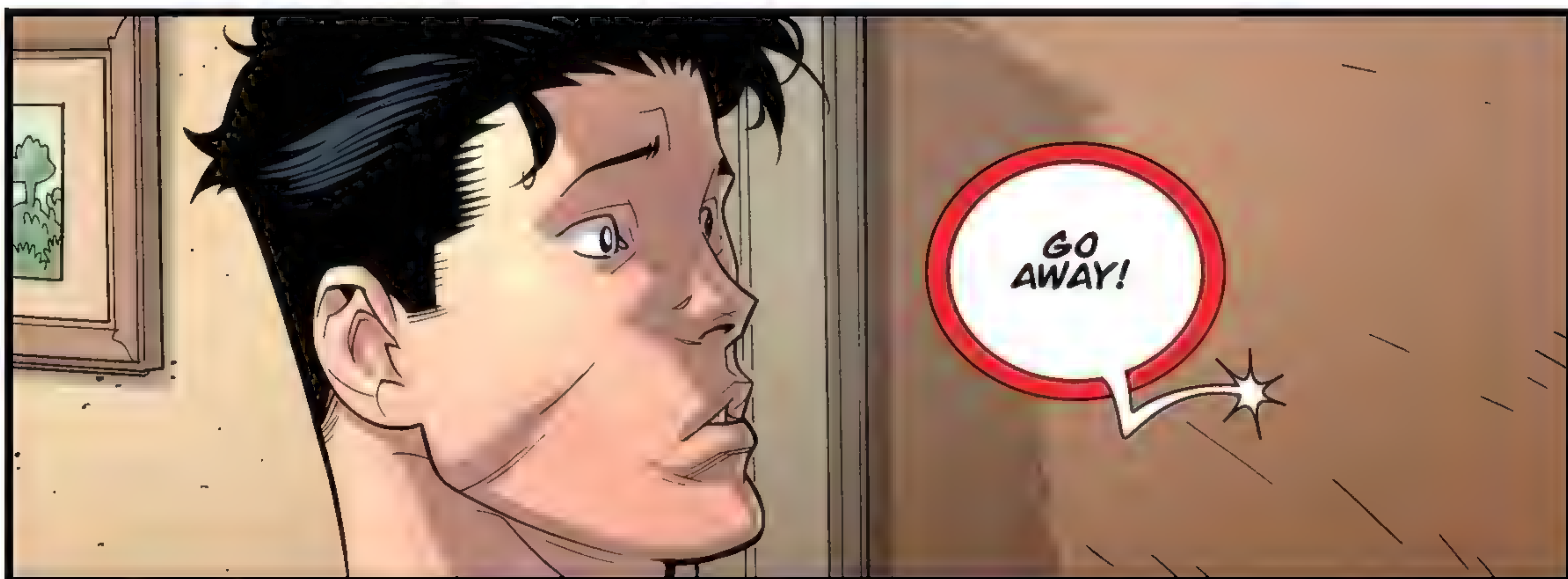
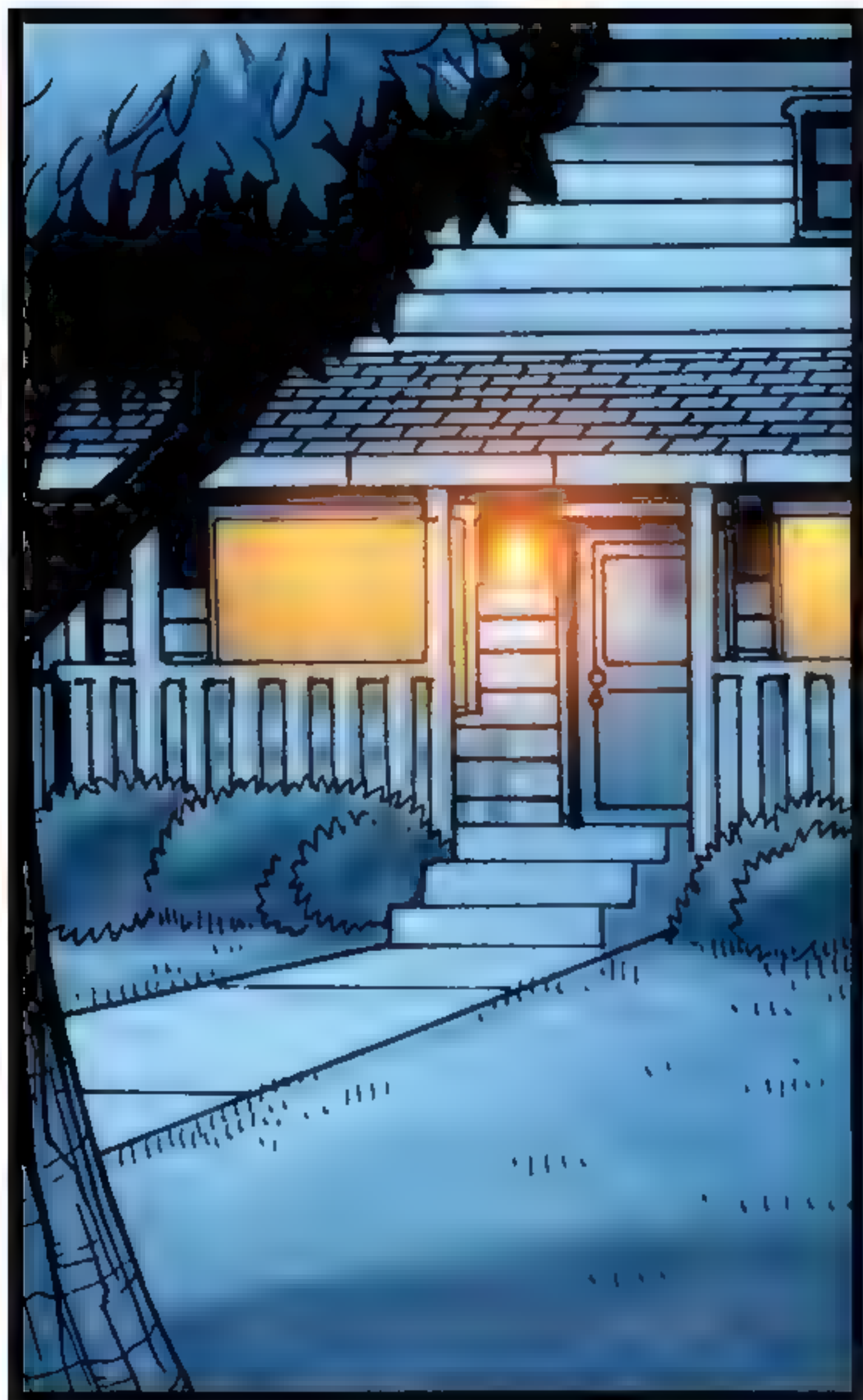


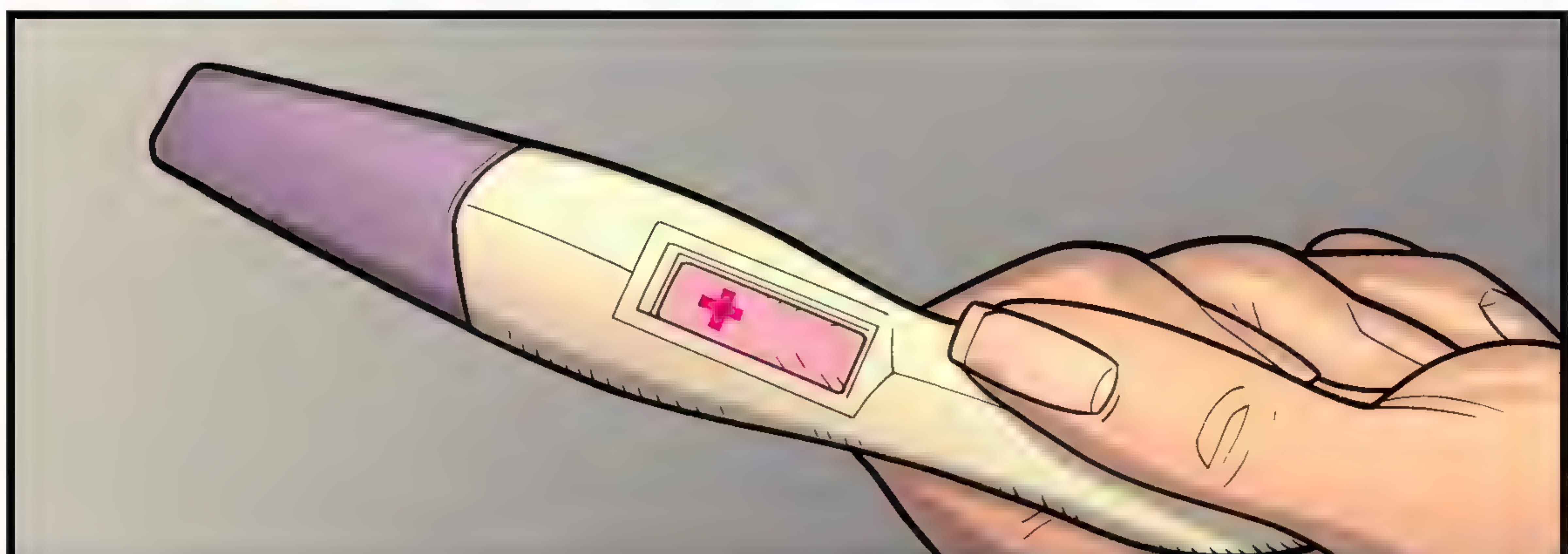
OUR
ARMY IS
COMPLETE.

OUR
GENERALS
ARE IN
PLACE.

THE SEQUID
INVASION OF
EARTH BEGINS
NOW!









CHAPTER 69

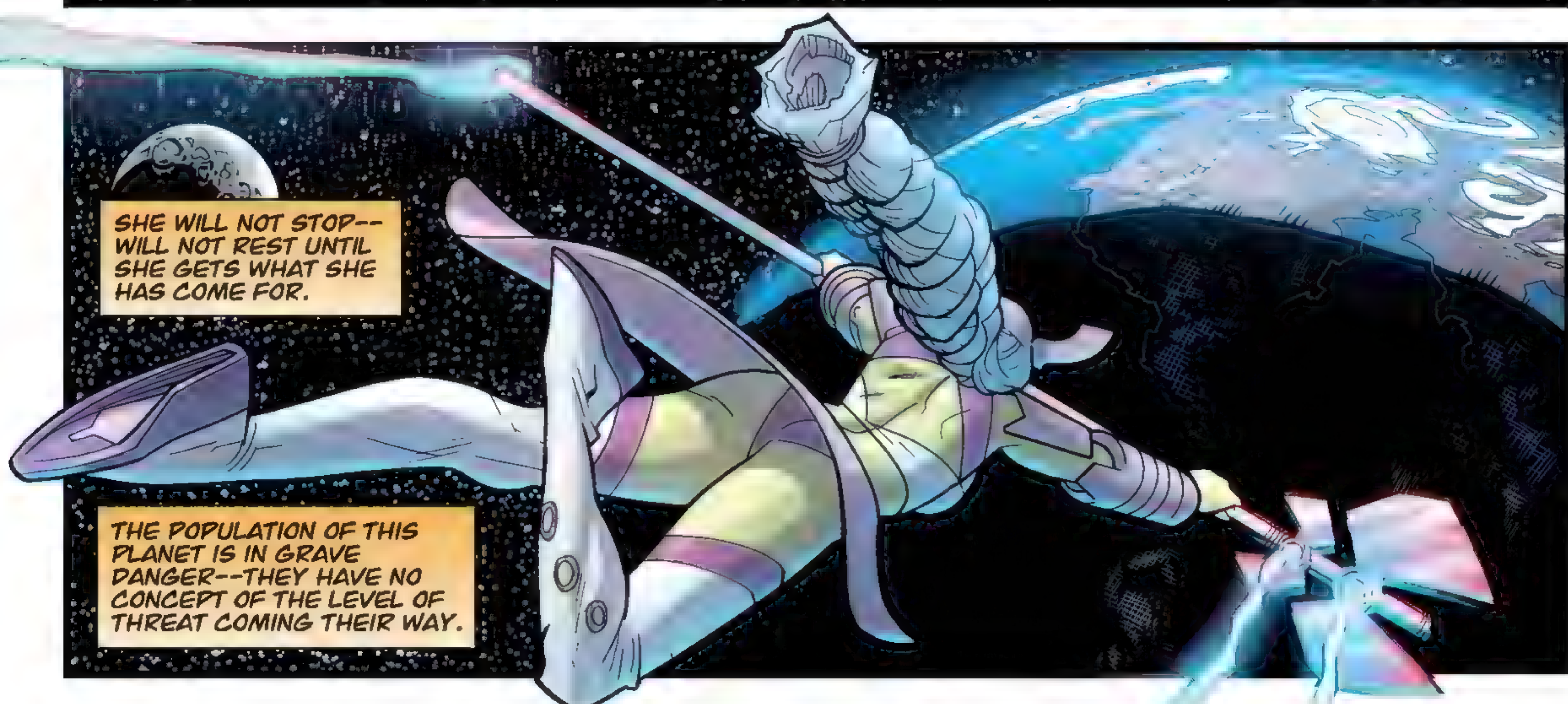




**SHE IS UNIVERSA,
WARRIOR QUEEN TO
A FAR OFF WORLD.**

**SHE HAS TRAVELED COUNTLESS
MILES TO THE PLANET EARTH.
HER REASONS FOR DOING SO
WILL PUT THE ENTIRE PLANET
IN JEOPARDY.**

**SHE IS AS DEADLY AS
SHE IS RELENTLESS.**



**SHE WILL NOT STOP--
WILL NOT REST UNTIL
SHE GETS WHAT SHE
HAS COME FOR.**

**THE POPULATION OF THIS
PLANET IS IN GRAVE
DANGER--THEY HAVE NO
CONCEPT OF THE LEVEL OF
THREAT COMING THEIR WAY.**

BECAUSE THE PEOPLE OF EARTH HAVE FAR MORE PRESSING CONCERNS AT THE MOMENT.

KR000M!

WR00M!

HEAR ME, HUMAN RACE!
IT IS TIME TO MEET YOUR NEW MASTERS!

TOGETHER WE WILL FORM A NEW RACE--A NEW CIVILIZATION. WE WILL LIVE TOGETHER AS ONE--A NEW COMBINED RACE OF HUMAN AND SEQUID!

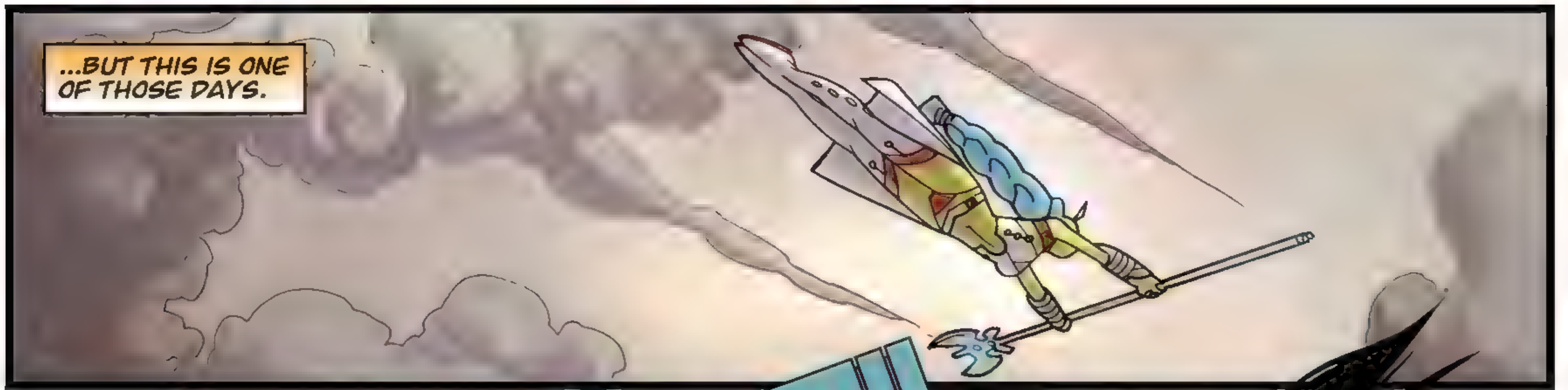
EMBRACE US OR DIE!

THE PEOPLE OF EARTH DO NOT LIVE IN A CONSTANT STATE OF FEAR. WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN ALIEN INVASIONS, ENTIRE CITIES LEVELED AND VILLAINS WHO THREATEN ALL LIFE ON EARTH...

THESE ATTACKS ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN. THERE ARE DAYS, WEEKS, EVEN MONTHS OF PEACE.

AND EVEN ON DAYS WHEN THERE IS AN ATTACK OF SOME KIND, ON SOME LARGE SCALE, IT IS MOST OFTEN AN ISOLATED EVENT, AFFECTING ONE AREA, EASILY HANDLED BY ONE COSTUMED HERO.

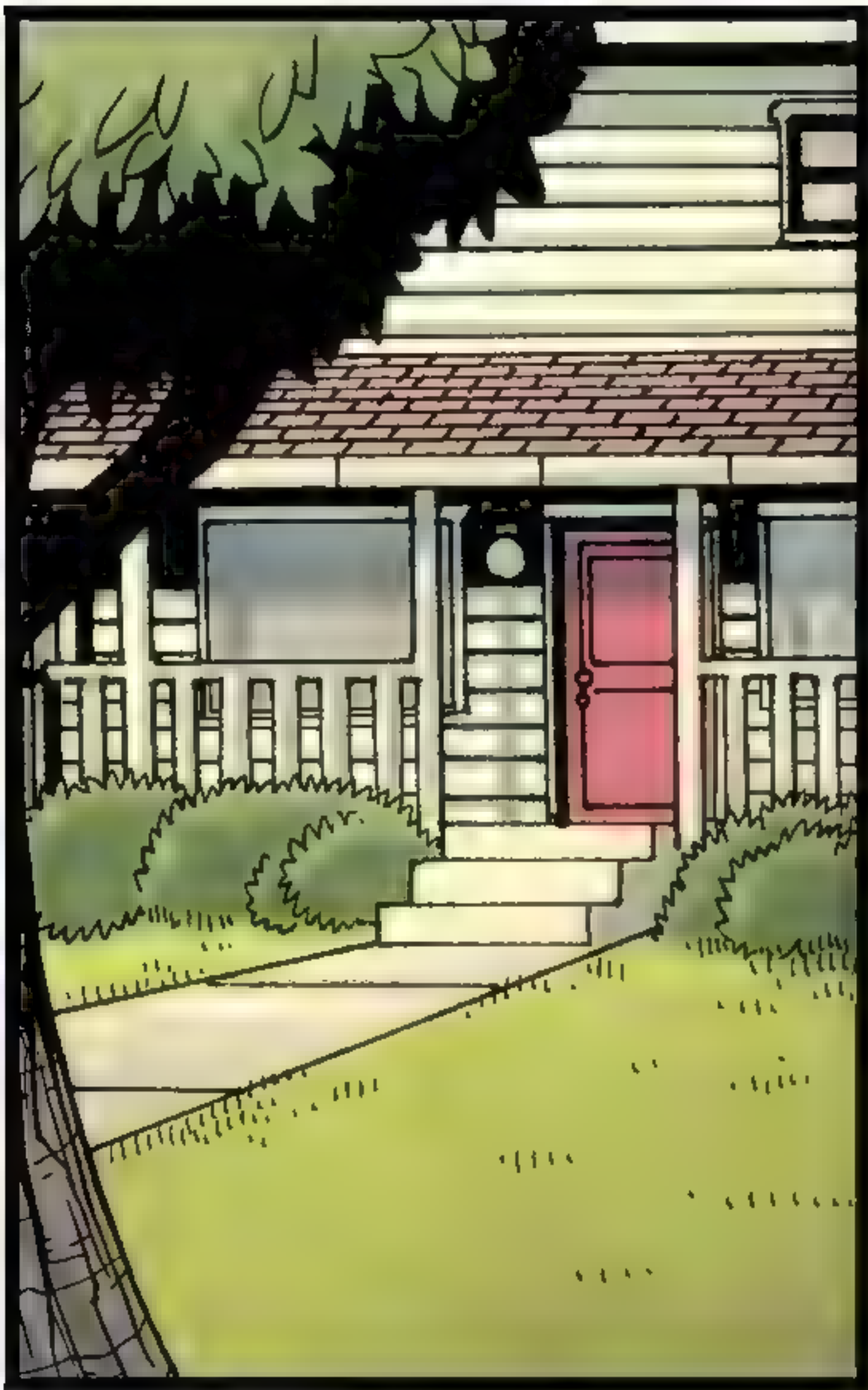
IT IS A RARE OCCASION THAT TWO THREATS, OF SIMILAR MAGNITUDE, WOULD SOMEHOW OCCUR ON THE SAME DAY...



...BUT THIS IS ONE
OF THOSE DAYS.



THERE.



ARE YOU OKAY? YOU'VE BEEN ACTING... DISTANT SINCE LAST NIGHT. I SWEAR MY MOM HAS NO CLUE YOU SPENT THE NIGHT.

SHE WAS OUT SUPER-LATE--PROBABLY STILL ASLEEP. IT'S COOL ANYWAY, I DOUBT SHE'D CARE.

EVE?

I'M OKAY.

I'M JUST TIRED... UM...

...AND WORRIED ABOUT MY POWERS.



BUT YOU HAVEN'T HAD ANY MORE PROBLEMS WITH THEM, RIGHT? I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE A ONE TIME THING.

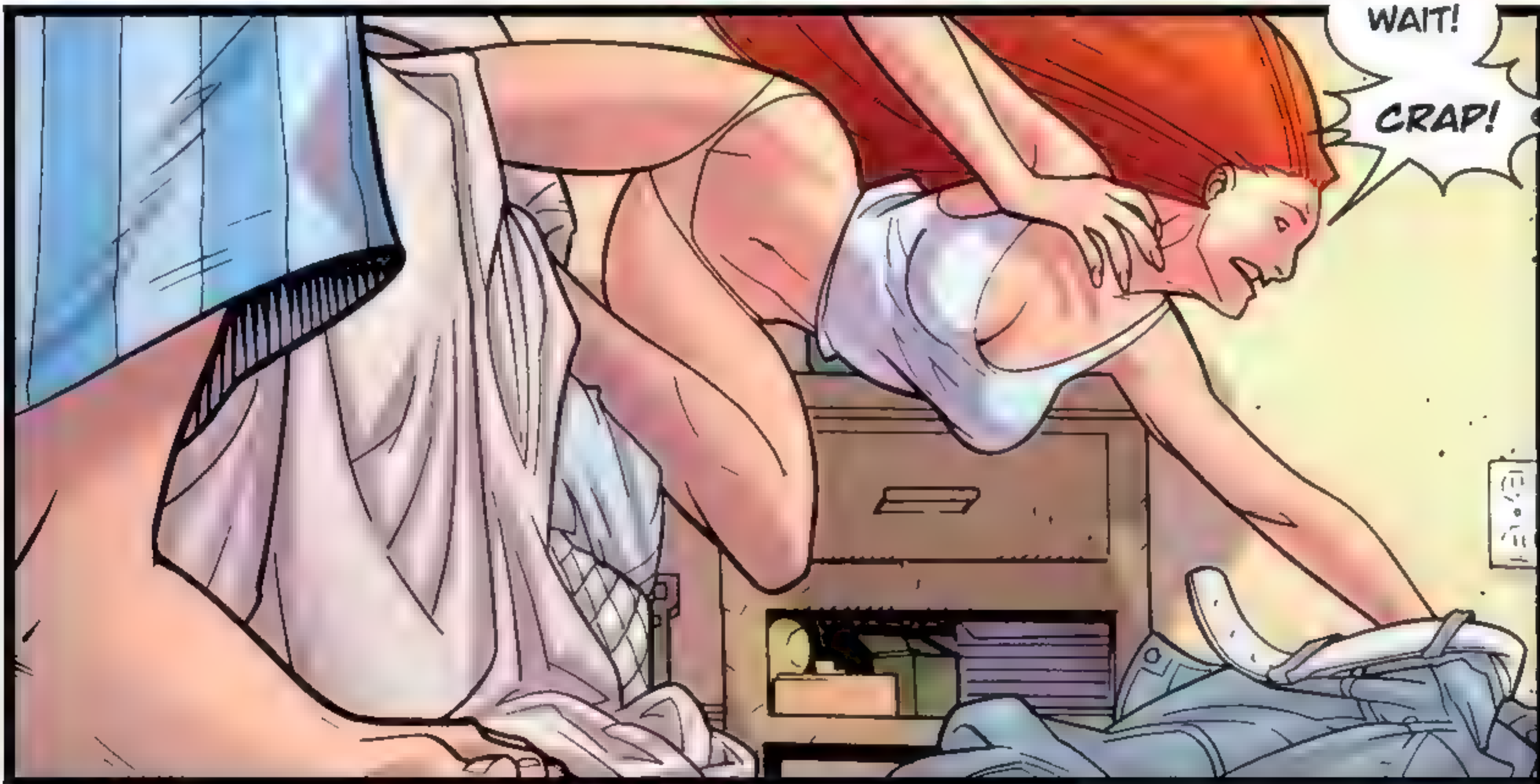
DID SOMETHING ELSE--



BREET! BREET!

WHAT IS THAT?

I DON'T KNOW. WHERE IS IT COMING FROM?



WAIT! CRAP!



CRAP! CRAP!

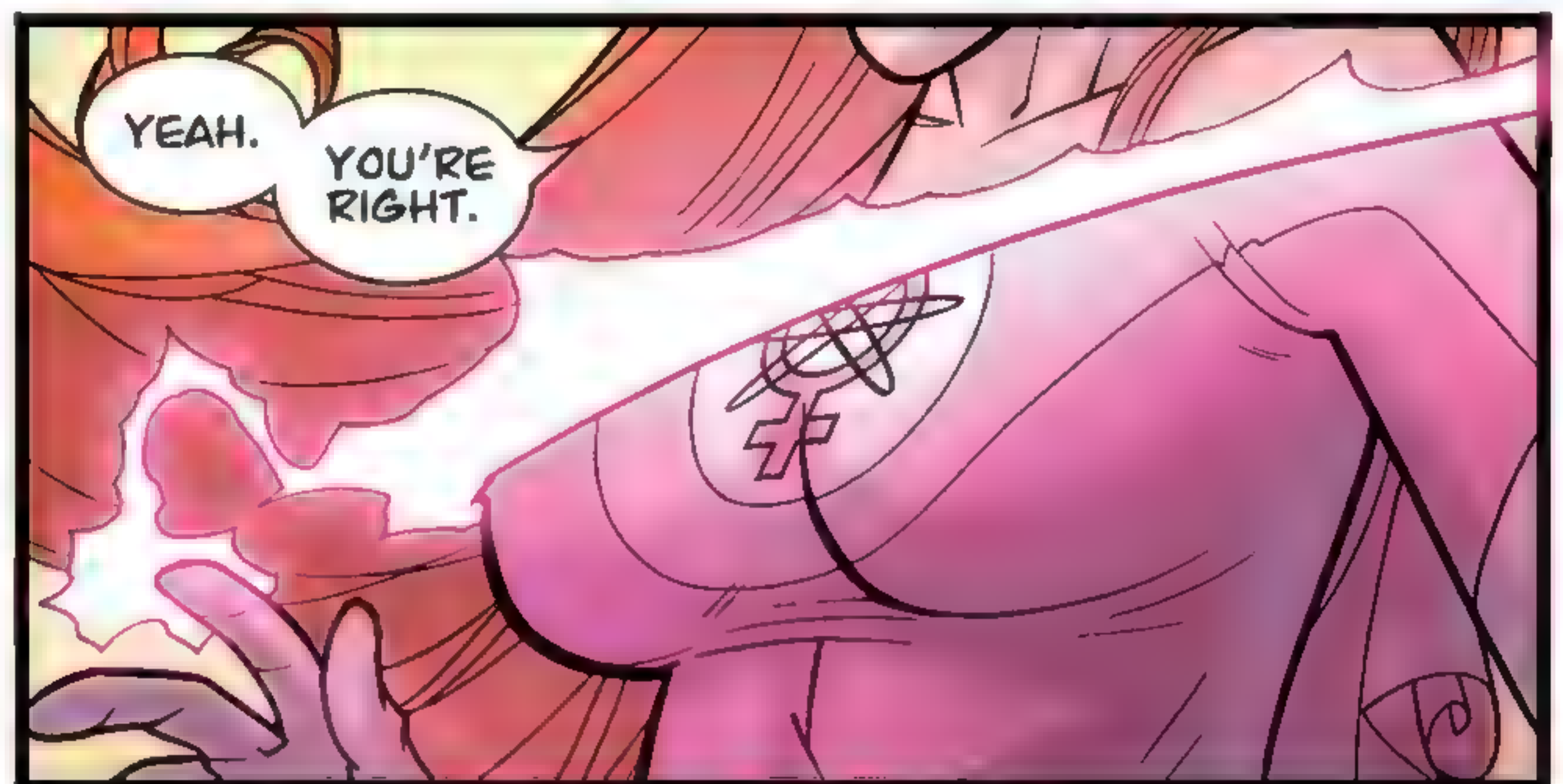
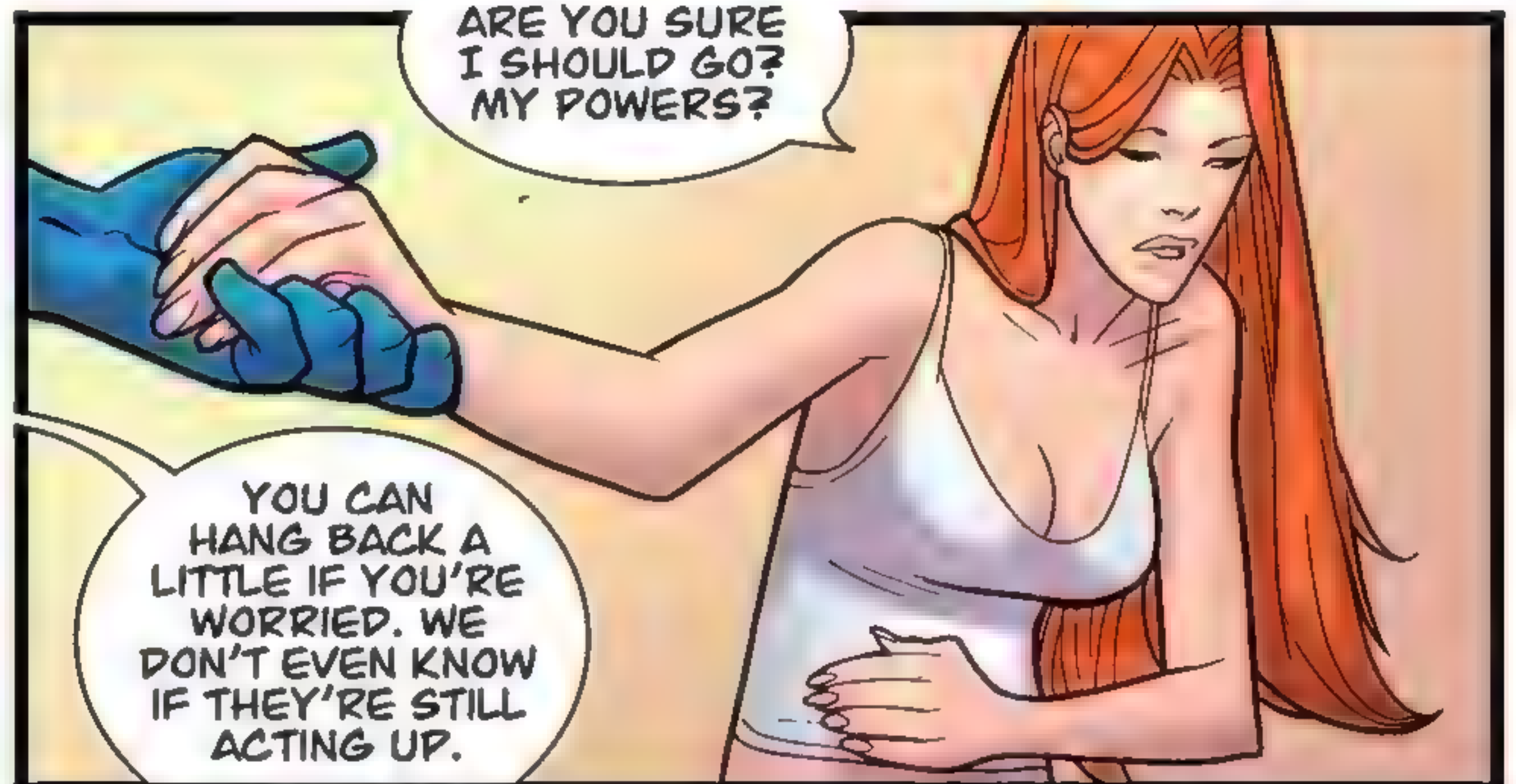
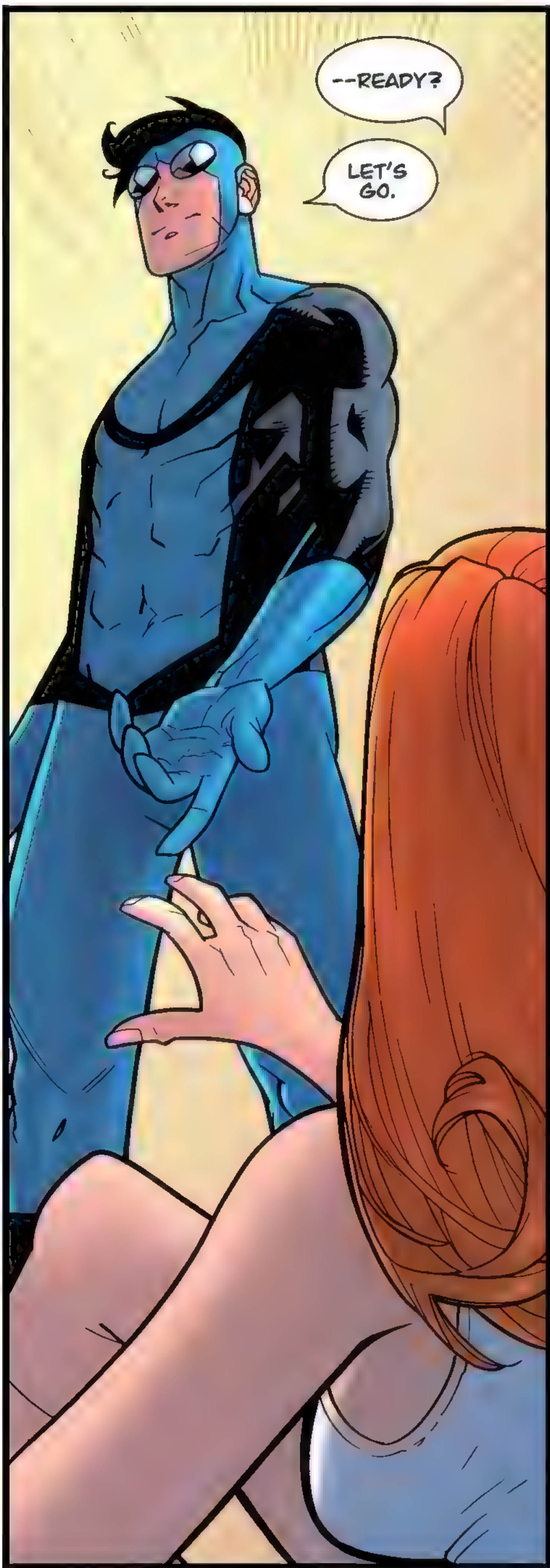
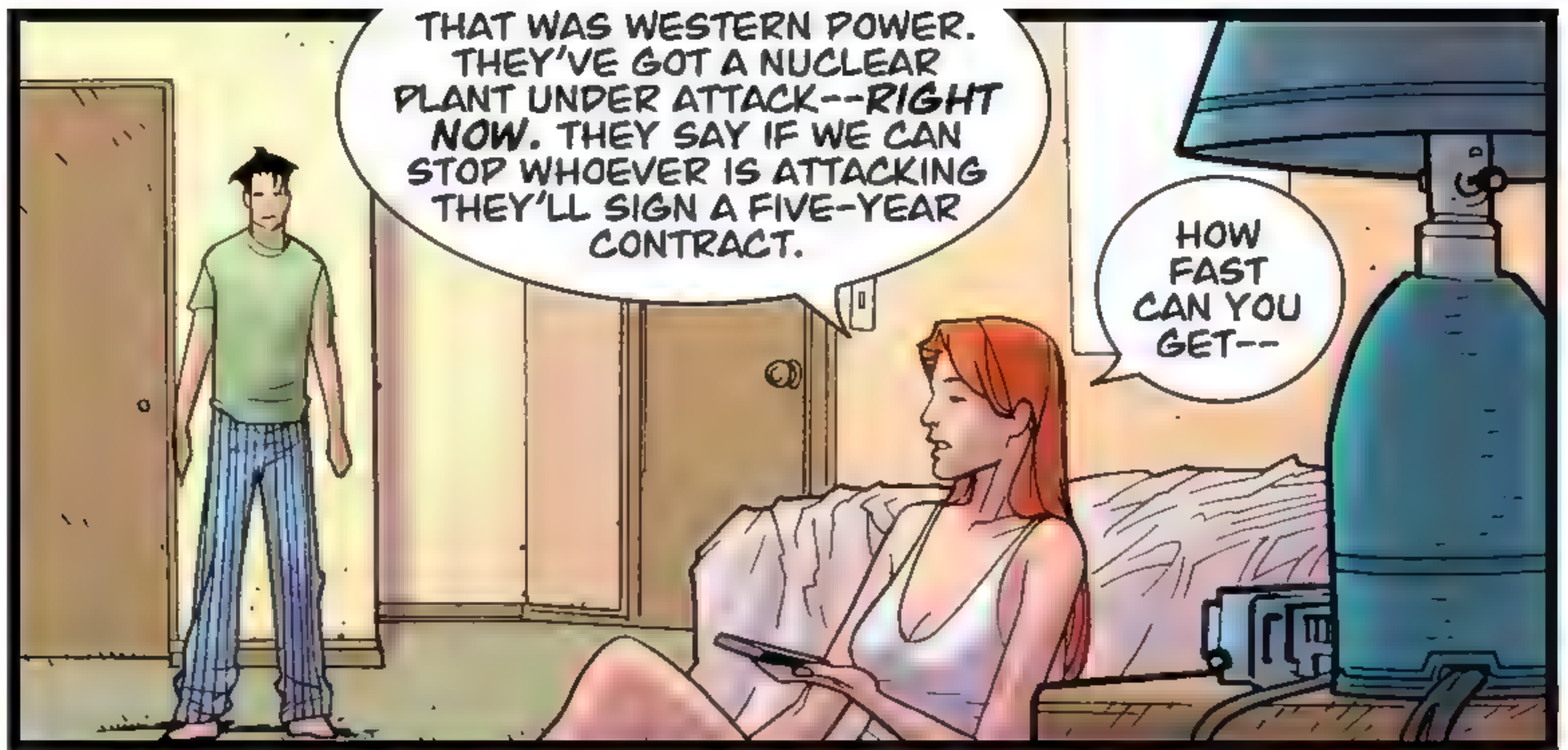
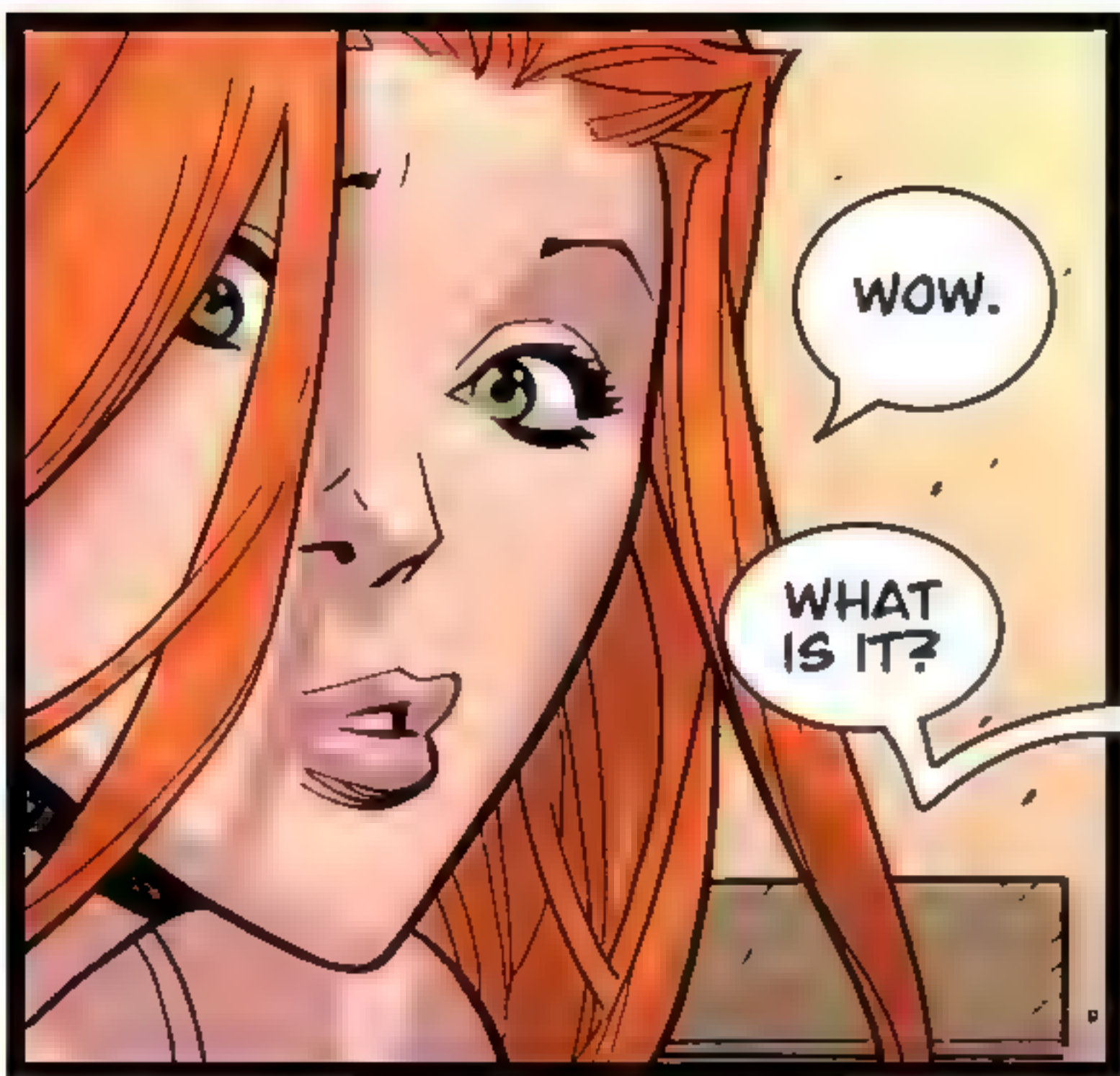


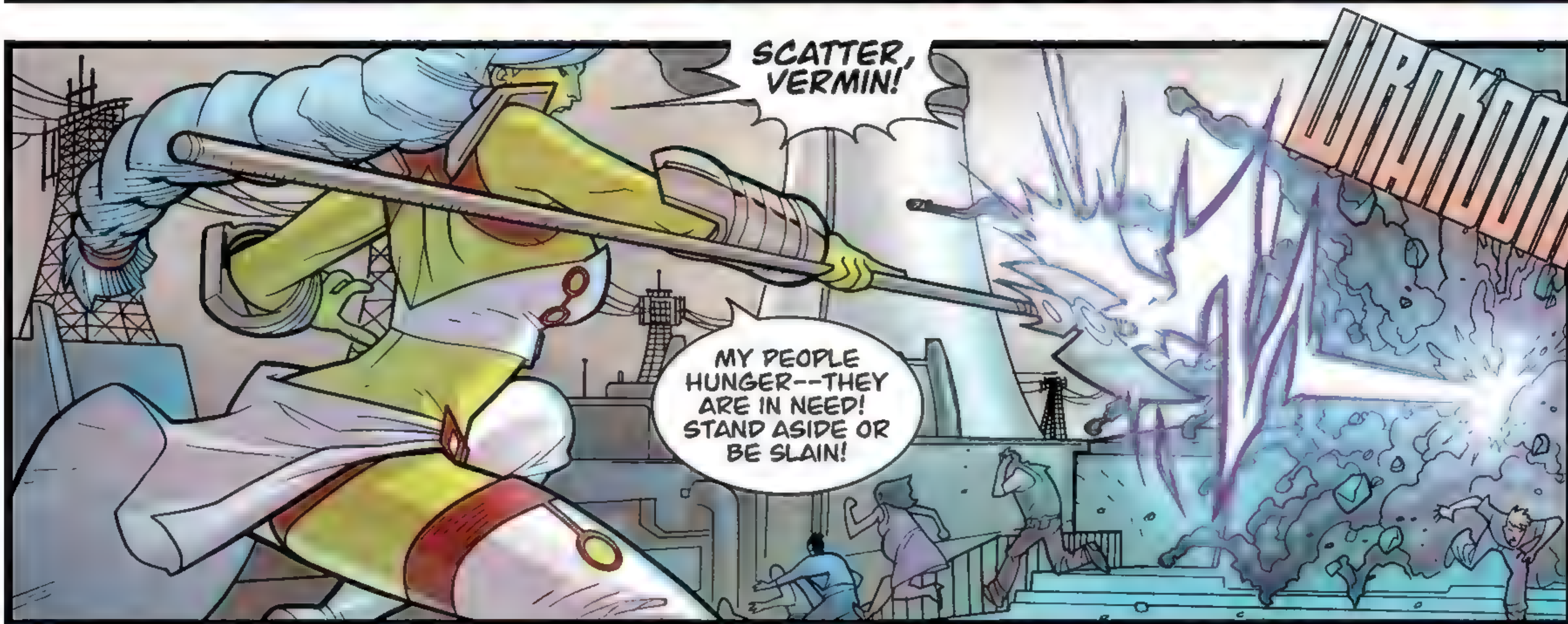
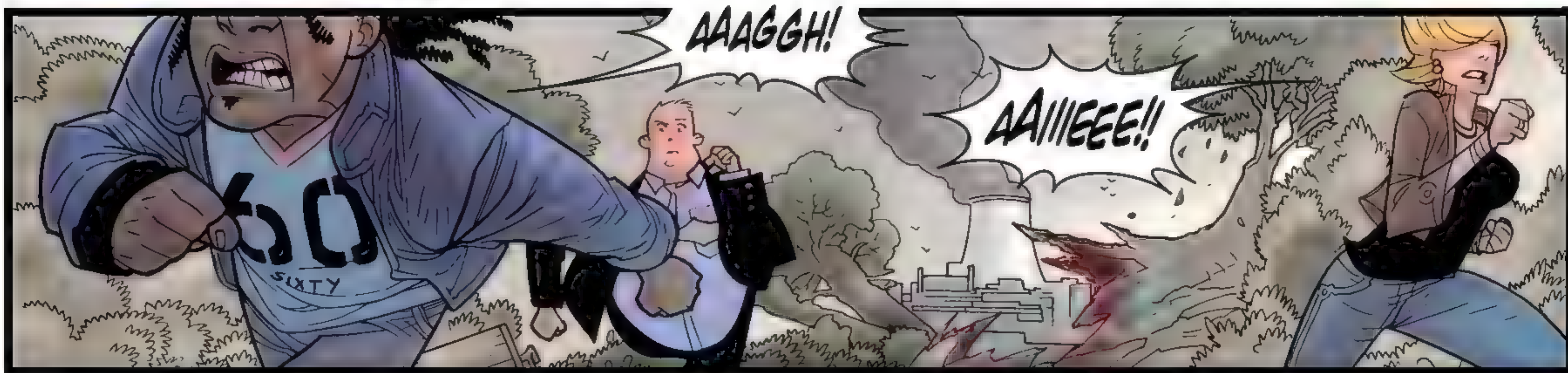
HI--INVINCIBLE INCORPORATED. HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

RIGHT NOW?

OKAY. NO, WE CAN HANDLE THAT.

WE'RE ON OUR WAY.







CAN I PRESUME TO TELL UNIVERSA TO BE A LITTLE KINDER TO THE NATIVES?

SERIOUSLY.

UNCOOL.

I'LL CLEAR THE AREA--YOU DEAL WITH THE PRETTY, PRETTY PRINCESS.



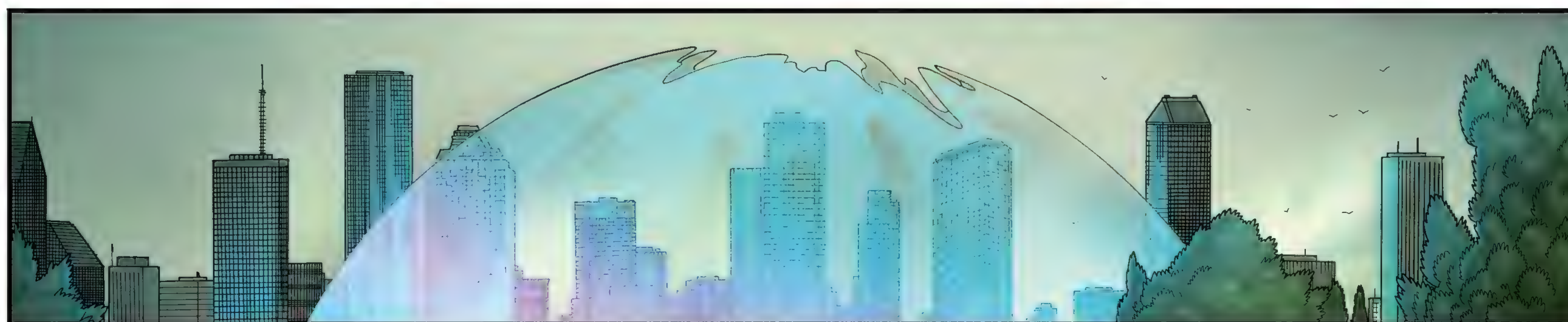
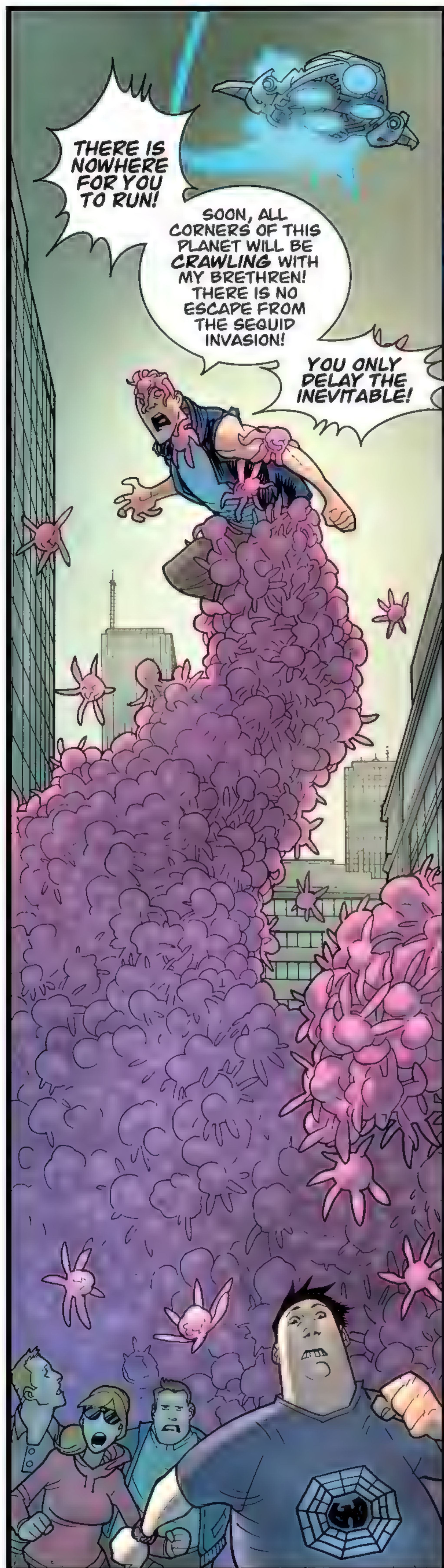
I WILL LET NO ONE STAND IN MY WAY!

THRAKDOOM!

OKAY, COOL-- LET'S DIVE RIGHT IN.

TALKING IS OVERRATED.





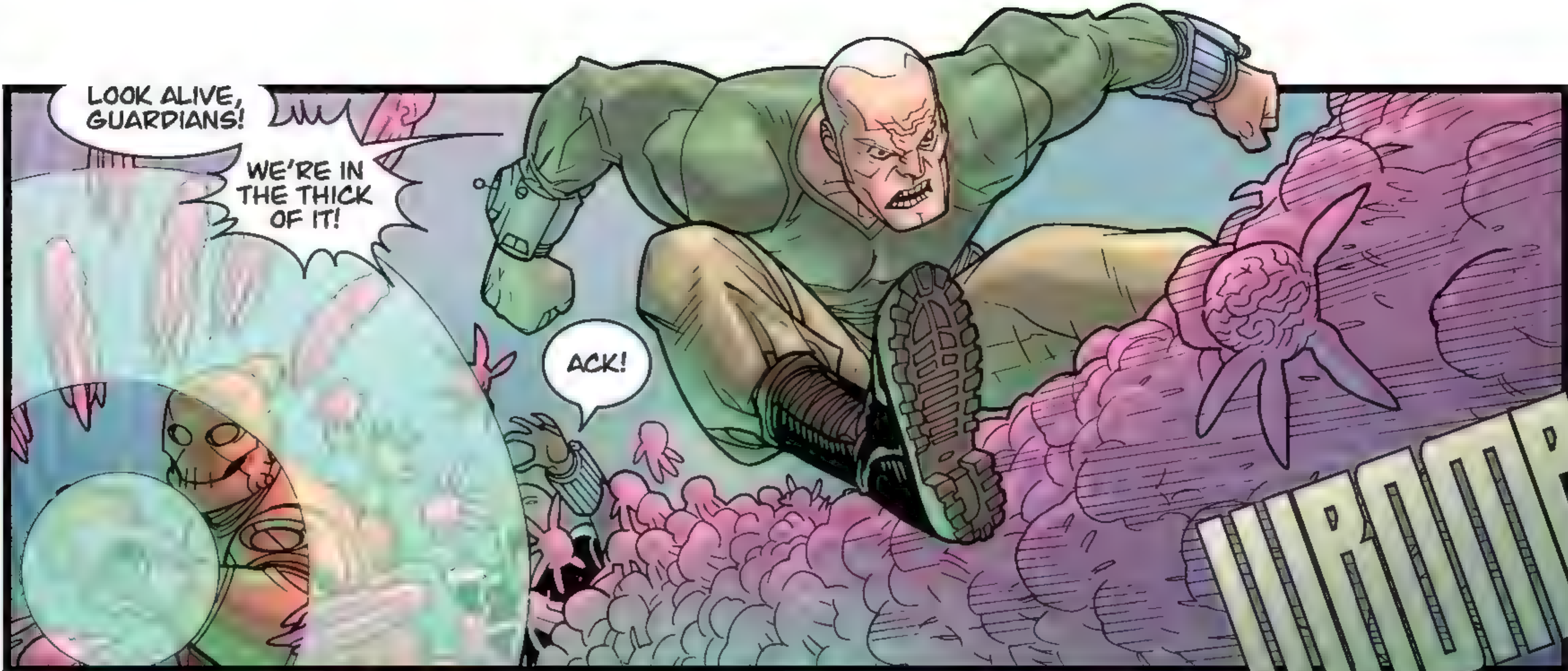


WE HAVE
TO WORK
FAST,
PEOPLE!

PRIORITY
ONE IS REMOVING
PEOPLE FROM THE
CONTAINMENT ZONE.
HIT THEM WITH THE
DARTS AND THEY'RE
TELEPORTED AWAY. THERE
ARE **THOUSANDS** OF
PEOPLE LEFT UNDER
THIS DOME--WE DON'T
GET THEM ALL--THE
SEQUIDS REMAIN
LINKED.

AS LONG
AS THEY HAVE
AT LEAST **ONE**
HOST TO ATTACH
THEMSELVES TO
THEIR MINDS
REMAIN LINKED--
NO HOST,
AND THEY'RE
MINDLESS
DRONES.

I DON'T
THINK I
HAVE TO TELL
YOU WHAT
HAPPENS IF
WE FAIL.



LOOK ALIVE, GUARDIANS!
WE'RE IN THE THICK OF IT!

ACK!

WRAMP!



YOU'RE TOO LATE!

THERE ARE TOO MANY FLESHY HOSTS FOR US TO LATCH ONTO! WITH SO MANY OPTIONS TO LINK OUR MINDS--WE'RE UNSTOPPABLE!

TO BATTLE ME IS ONLY TO DELAY WHAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED! EMBRACE YOUR MASTER AND I WILL SHOW FAVOR TOWARD YOU.

DEFY ME AND I WILL DESTROY YOU!



THOR!
THOR!
THOR!

I HOPE THESE THINGS WORK--



AGH!

MY AR--!



YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME!

YOU'LL NEVER GET THROUGH MY SKIN-- AND YOU'LL NEVER OVERPOWER ME! I'M TOO STRONG FOR YOU!



FOOLS!

YOU HAVE NO CLUE WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST!



WHOOO!!!

WHOOO!!!

OW!

SERIOUSLY...

OW.

SURRENDER
YOUR PLANET'S
ENERGY TO
ME.

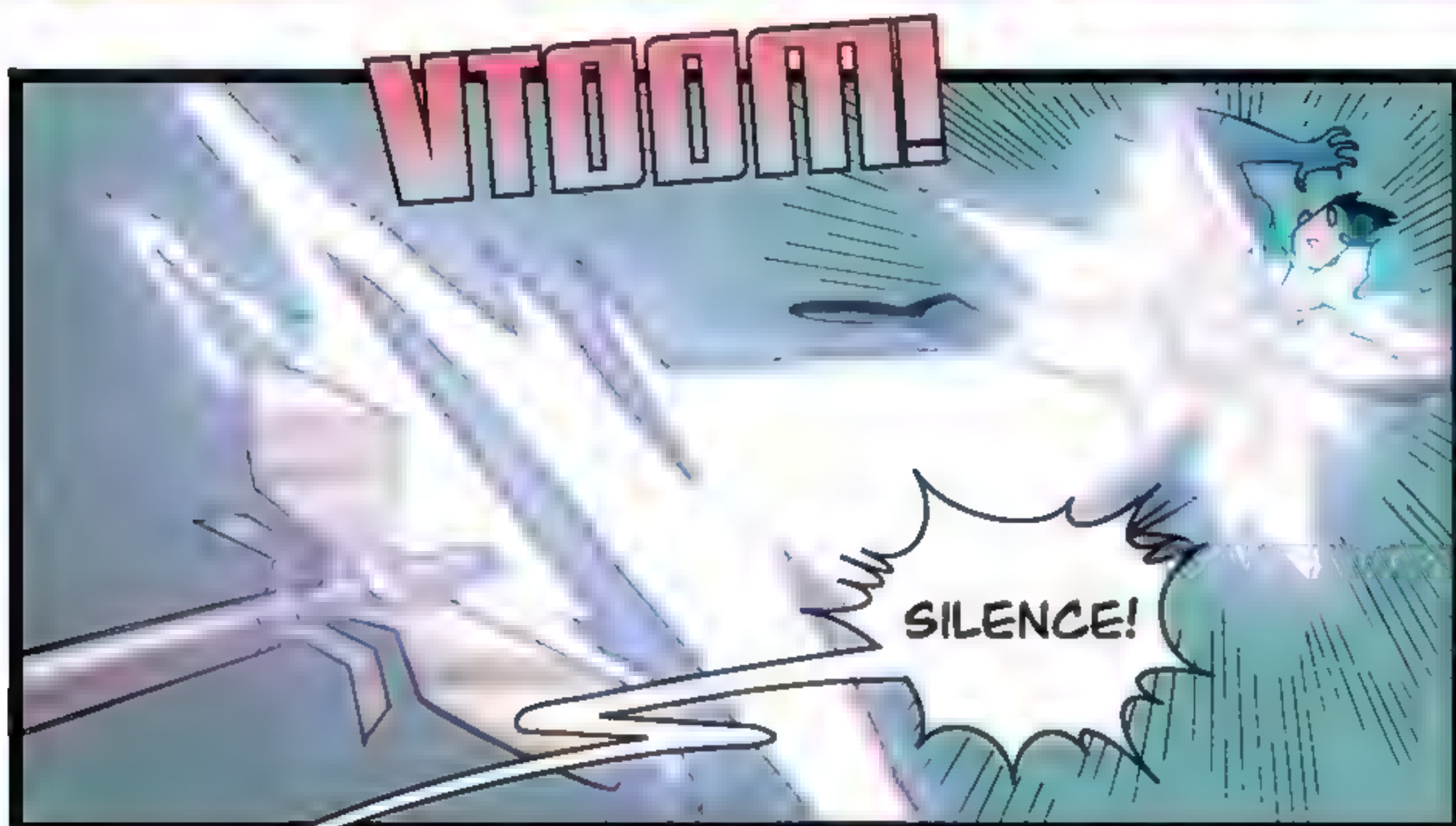
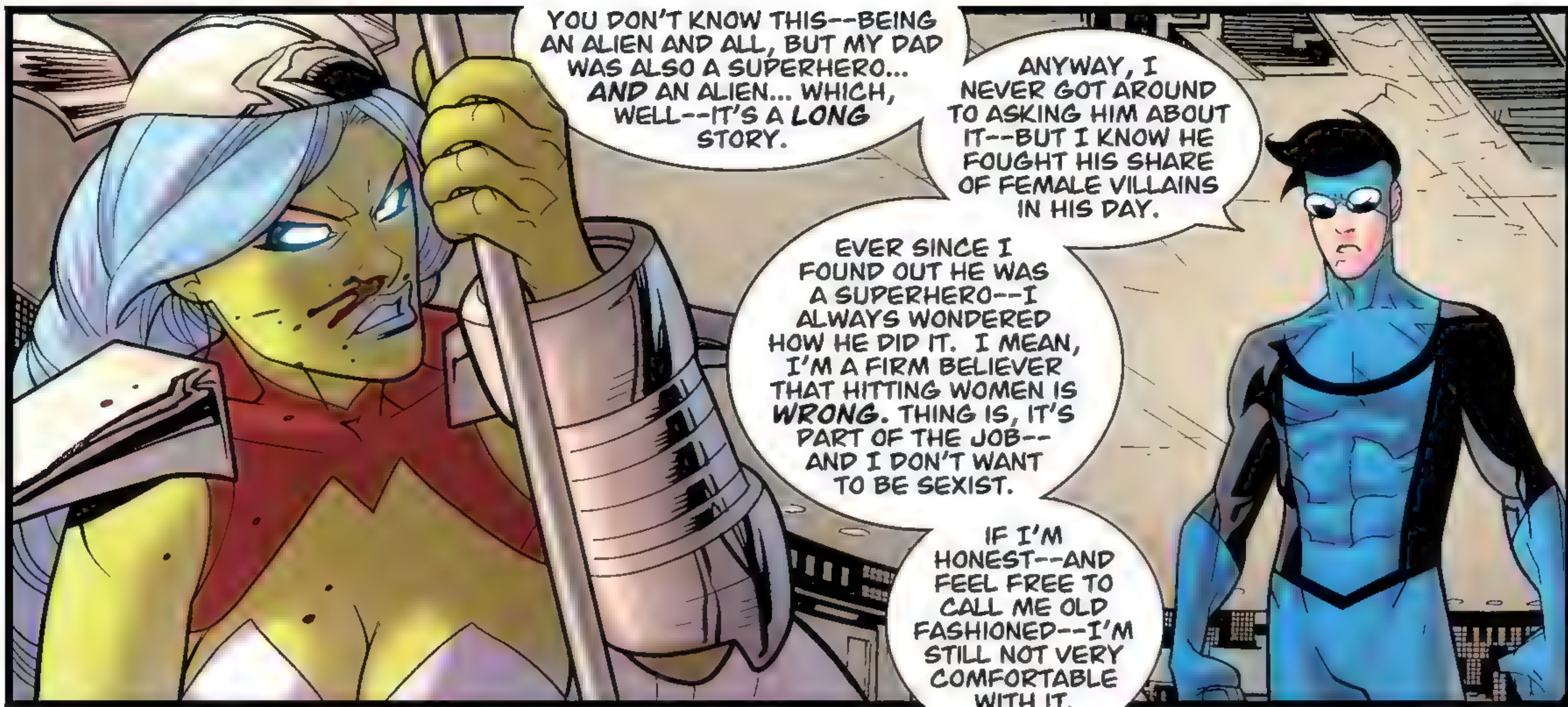
YOU ARE
BEATEN.

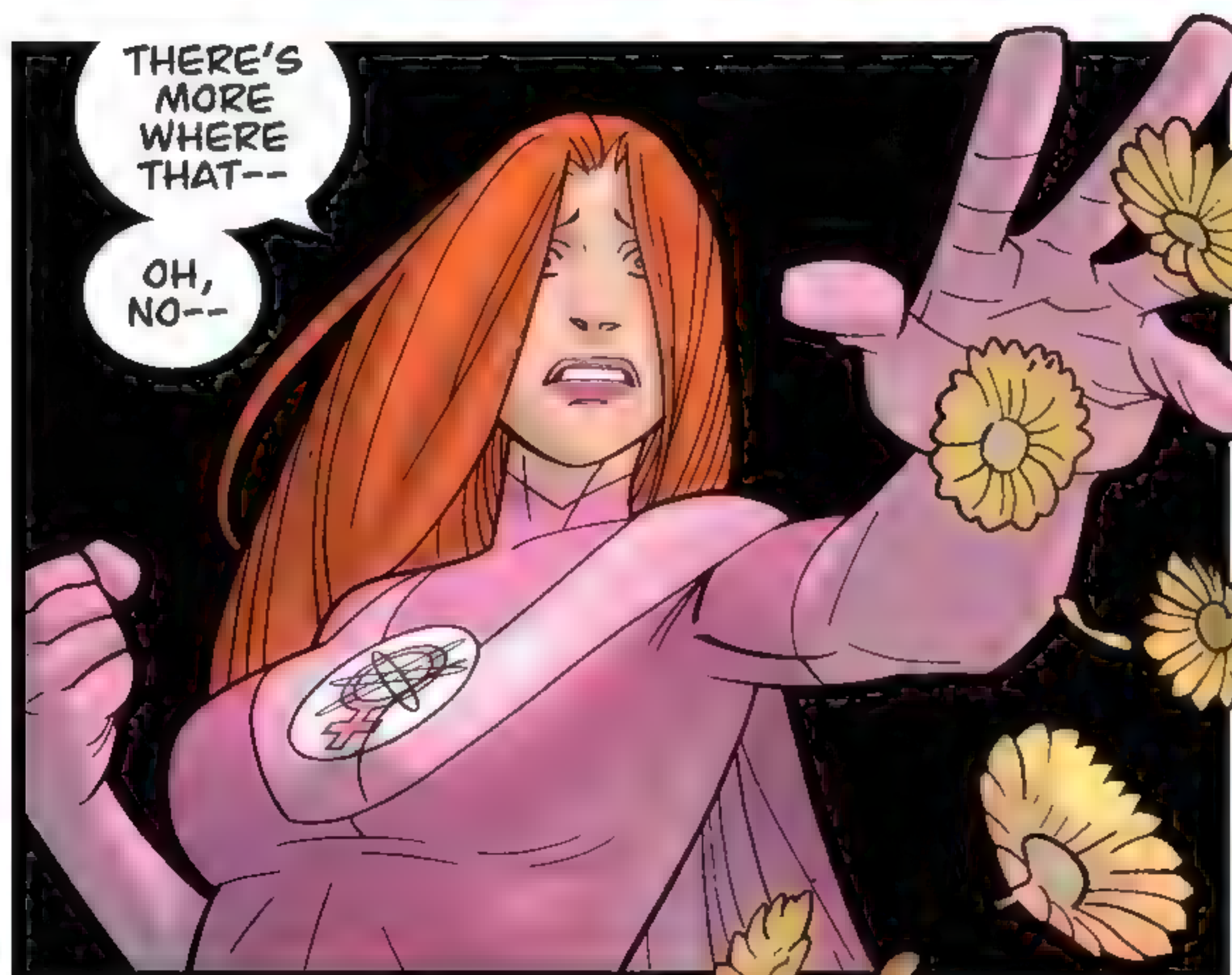
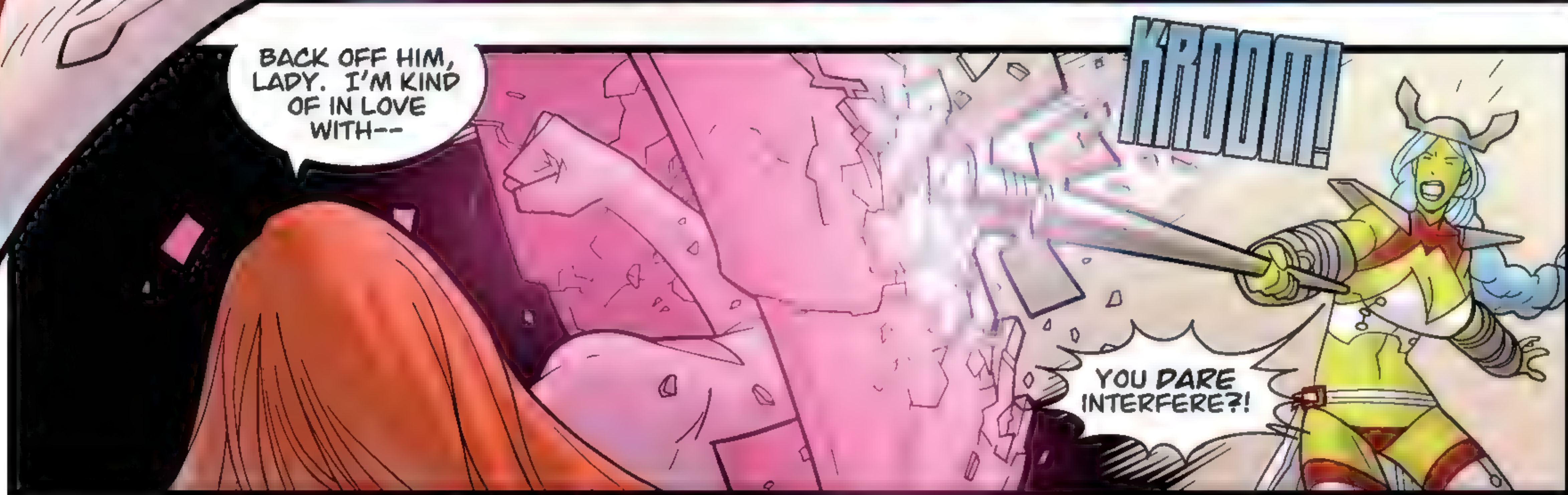
BEATEN?
I SAID
"OW."

I NEVER
SAID ANYTHING
ABOUT BEING
BEATEN.

SEE?

WHOOO!!!







POWERS NOT WORKING!

A LITTLE HELP HERE!

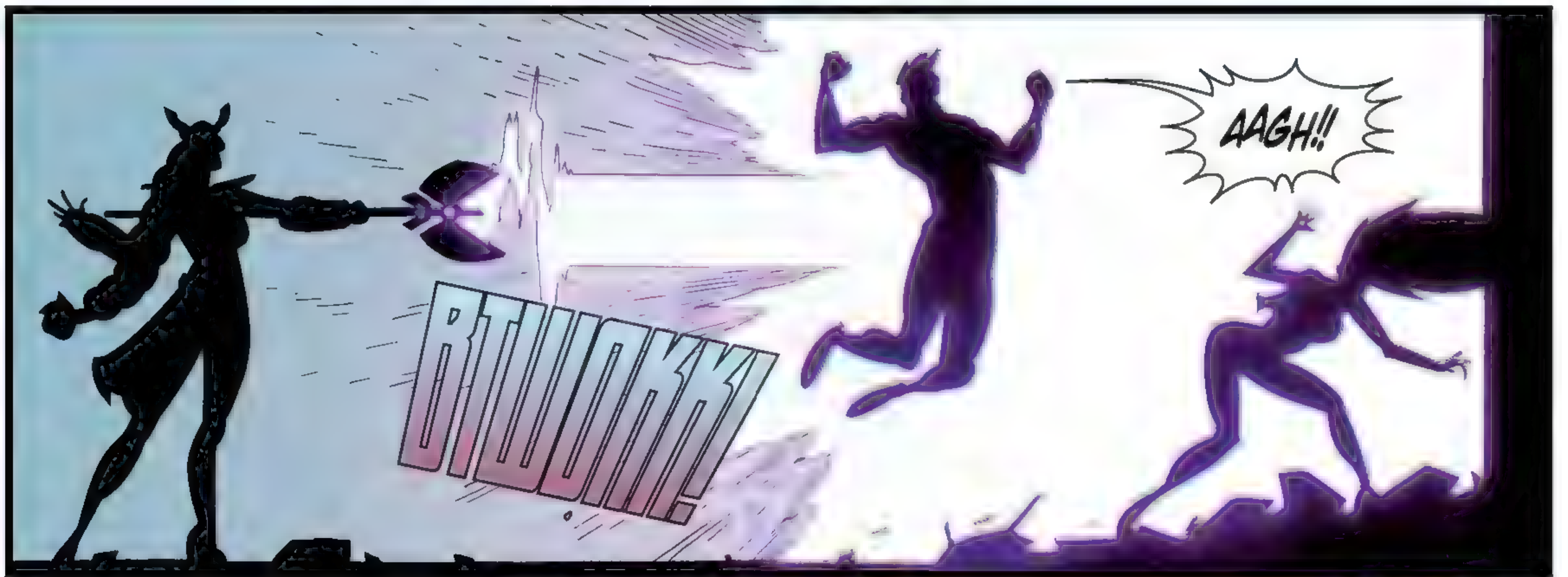
PLEASE!!



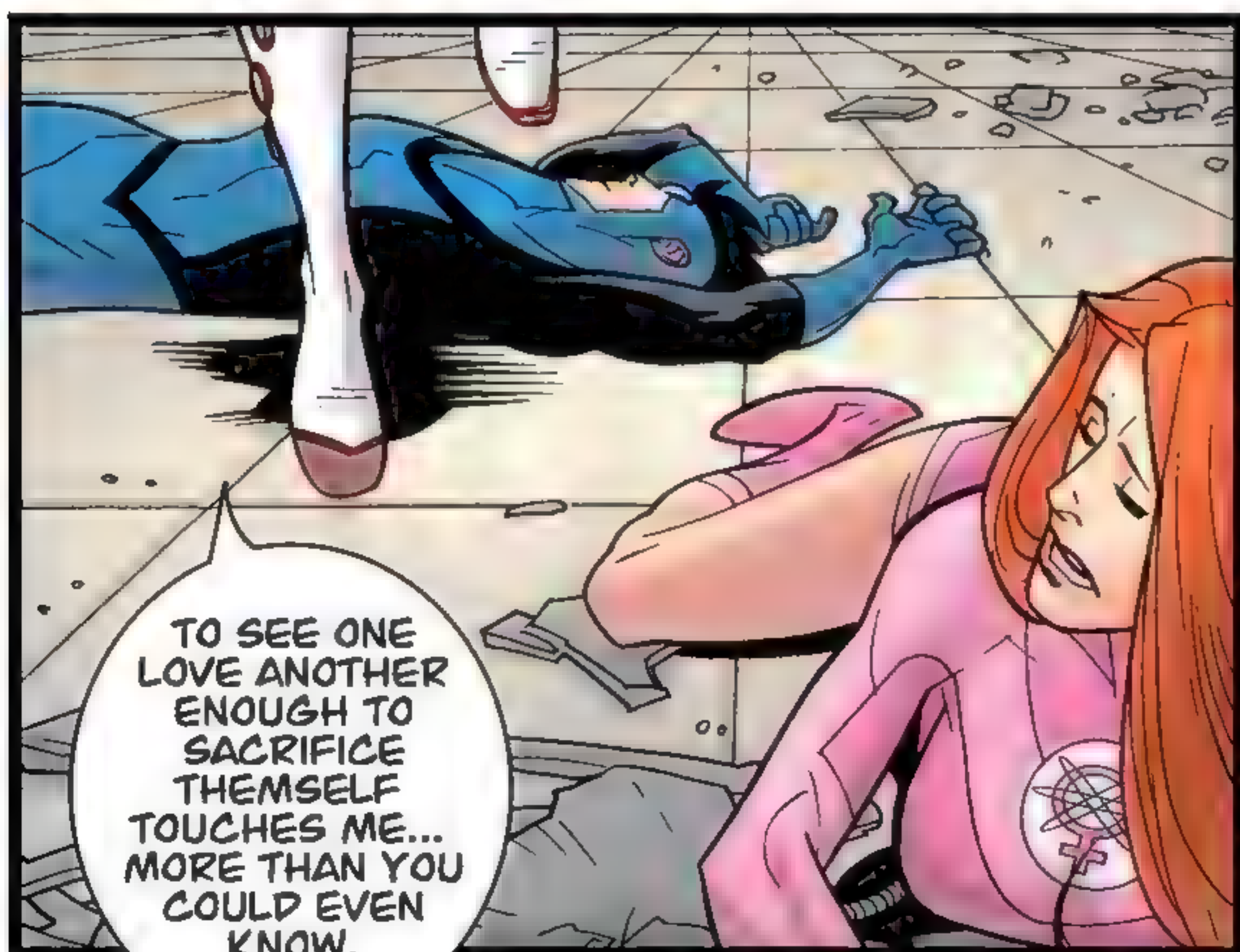
EVE?



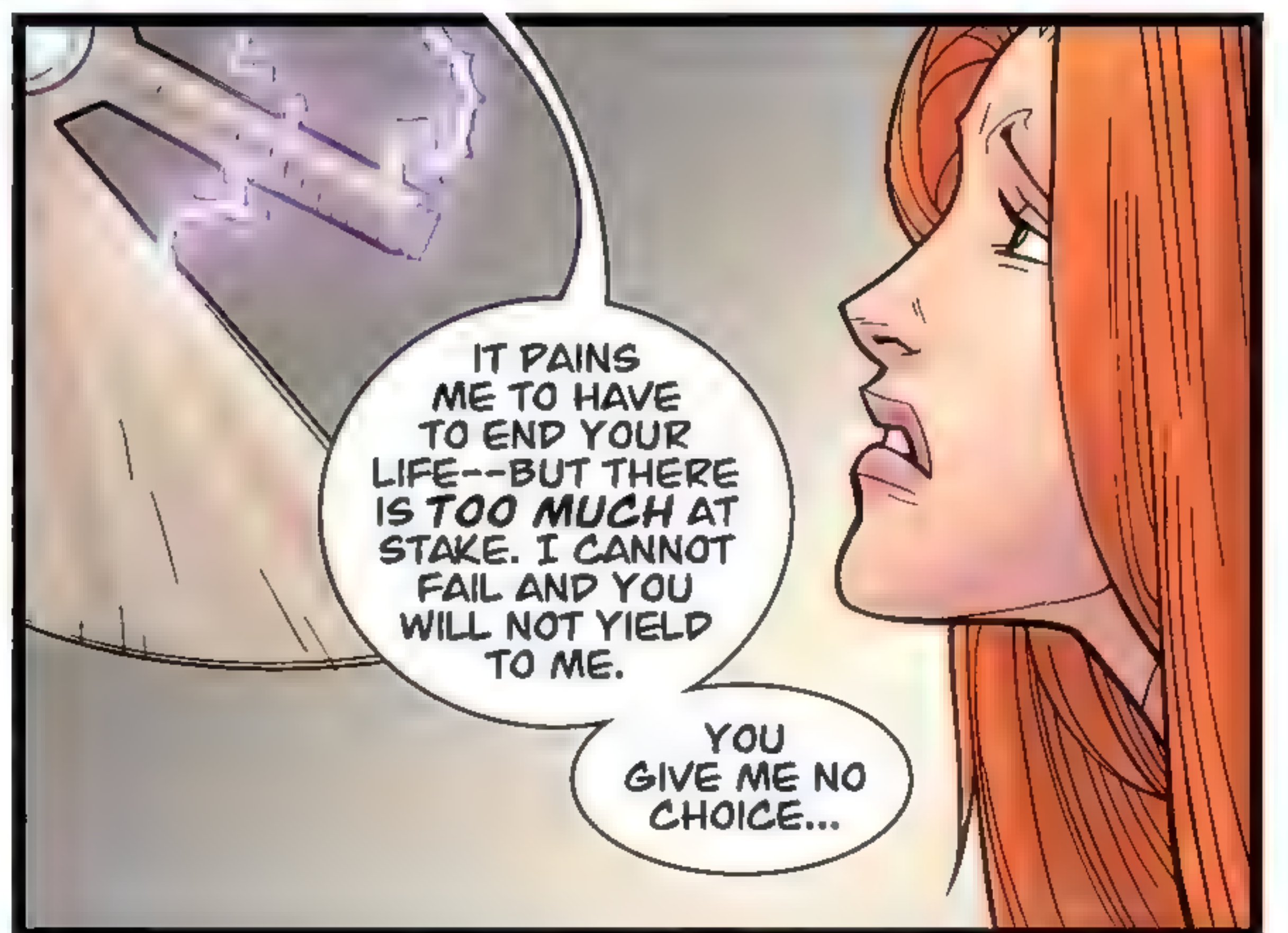
EVE!



AAGH!!

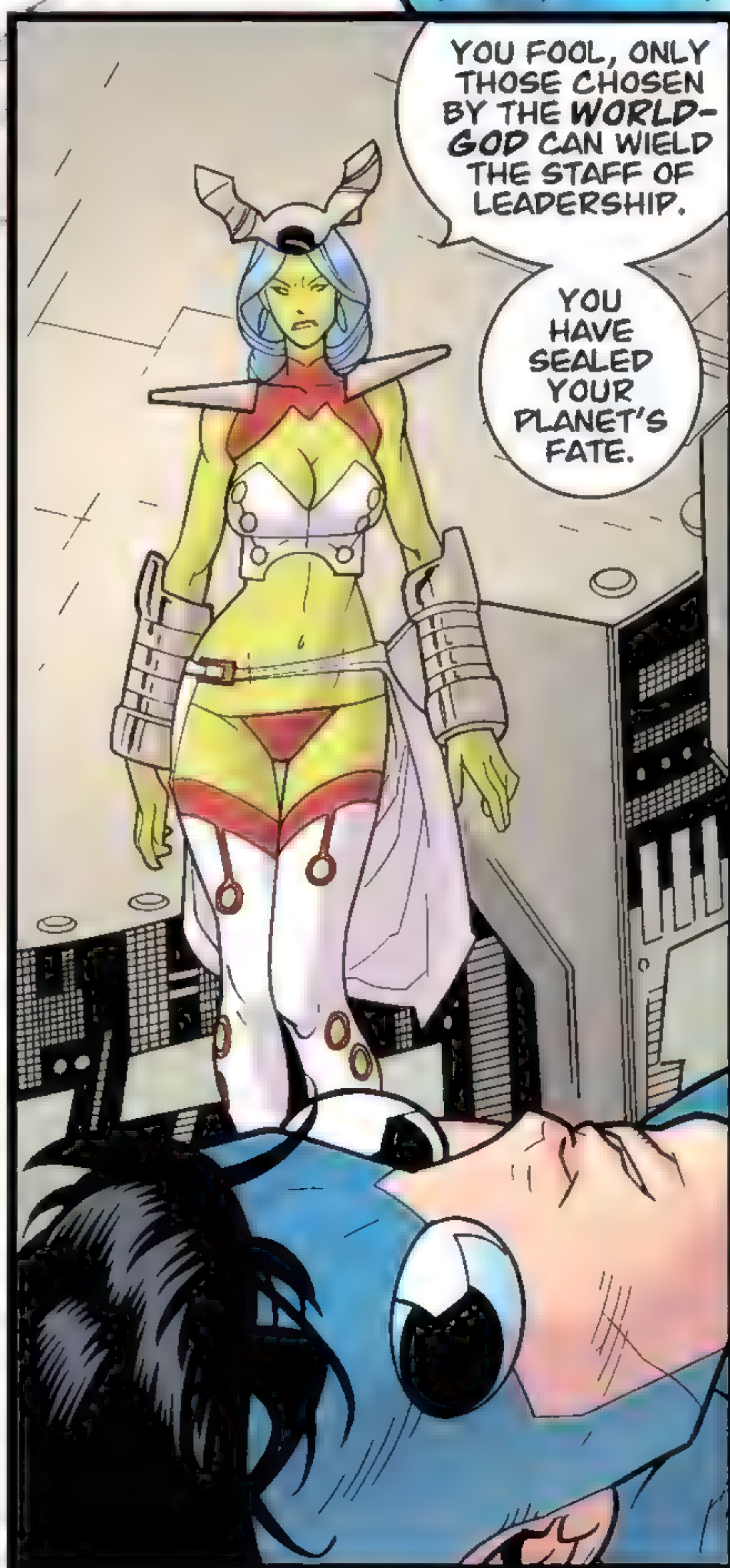


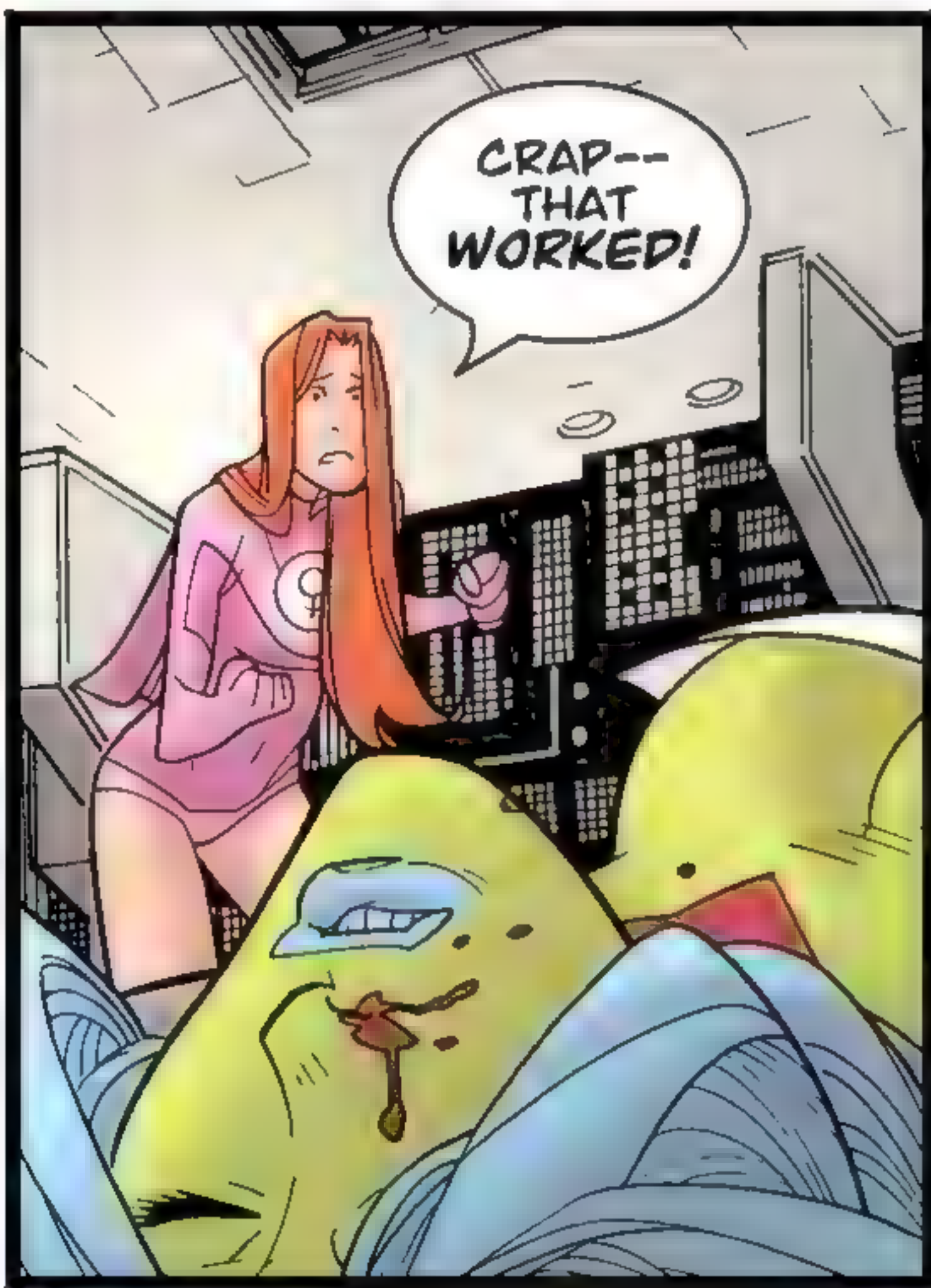
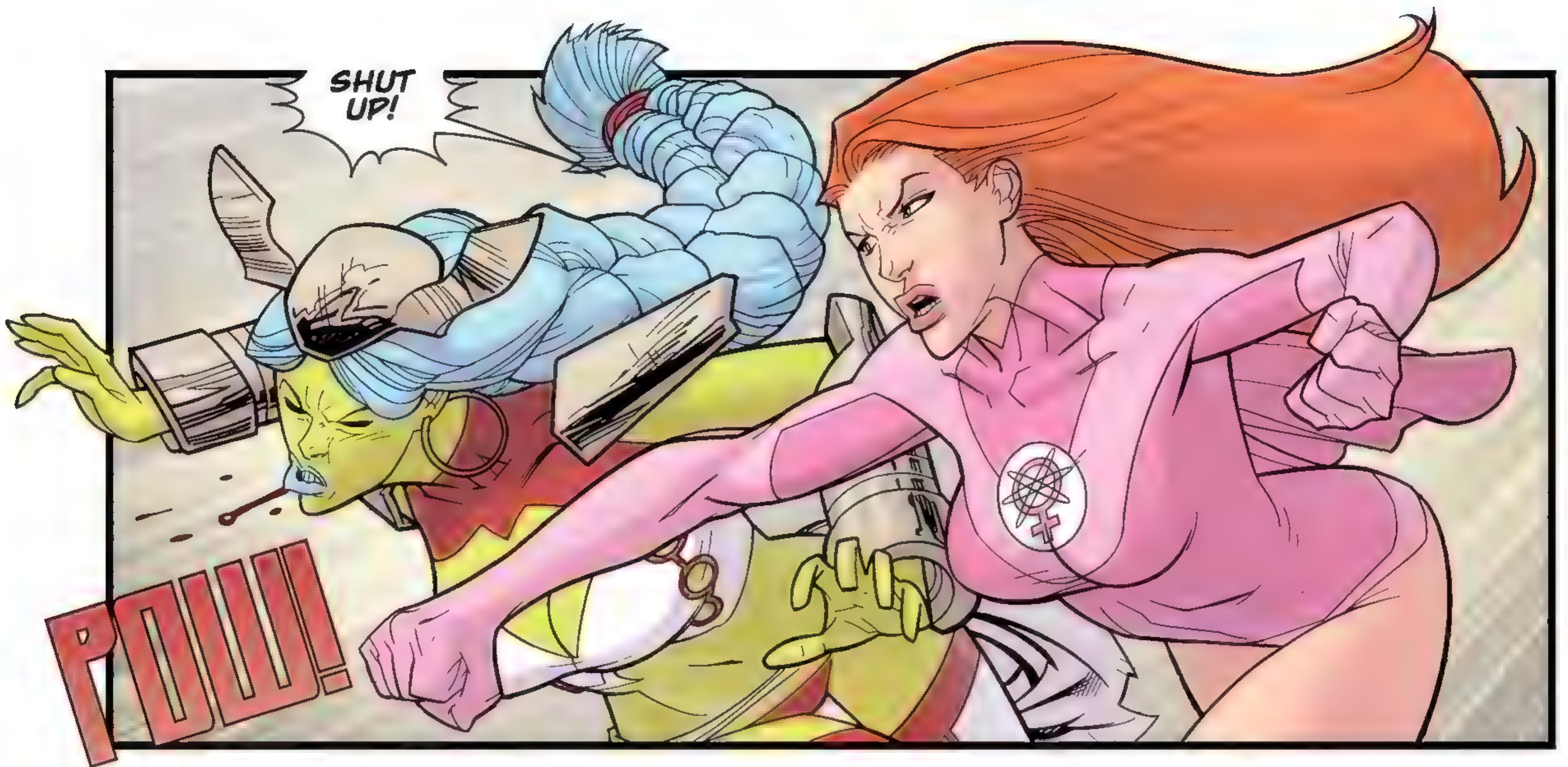
TO SEE ONE LOVE ANOTHER ENOUGH TO SACRIFICE THEMSELF TOUCHES ME... MORE THAN YOU COULD EVEN KNOW.



IT PAINS ME TO HAVE TO END YOUR LIFE--BUT THERE IS TOO MUCH AT STAKE. I CANNOT FAIL AND YOU WILL NOT YIELD TO ME.

YOU GIVE ME NO CHOICE...





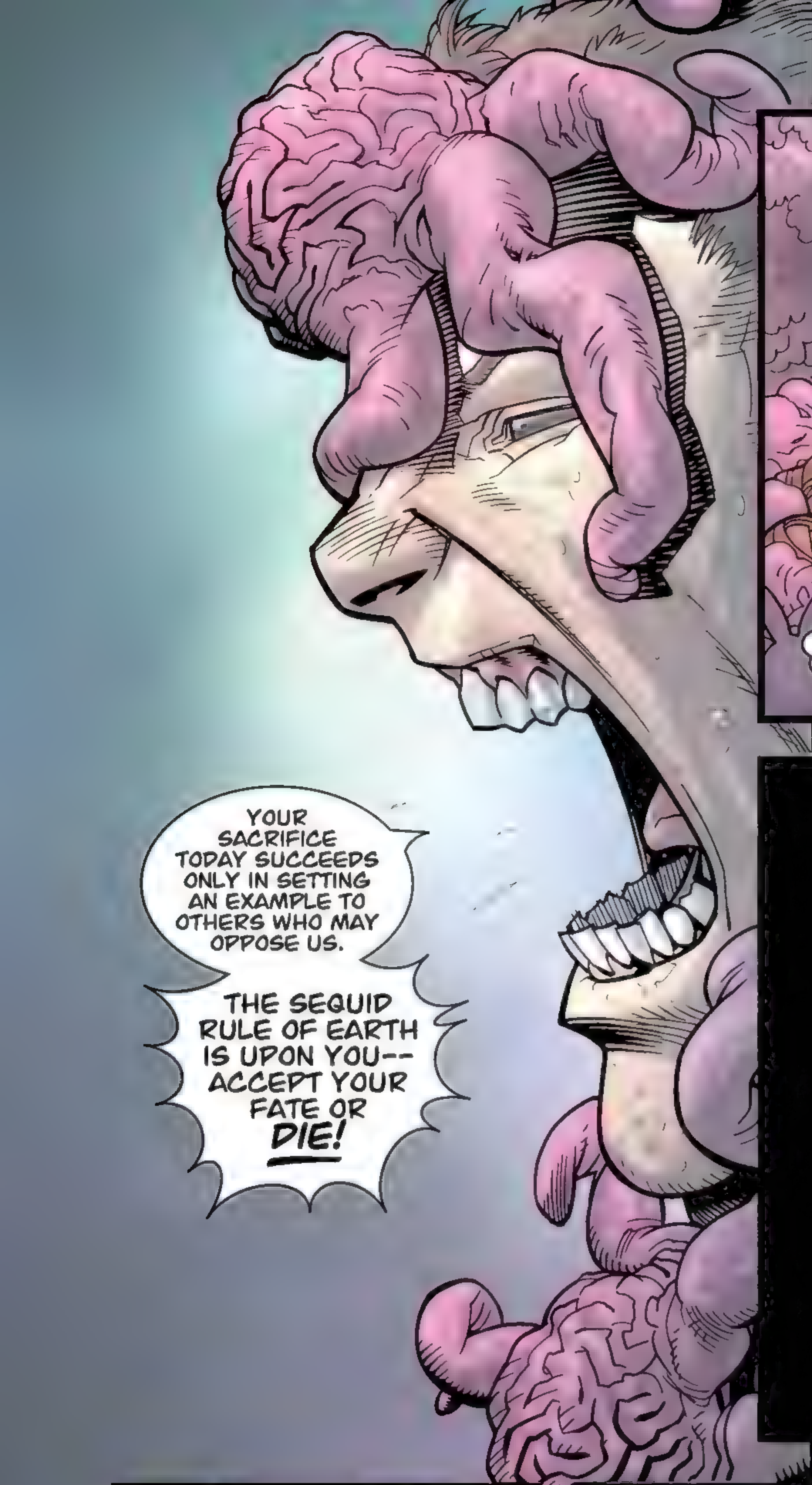


ALL
TOO
EASY!



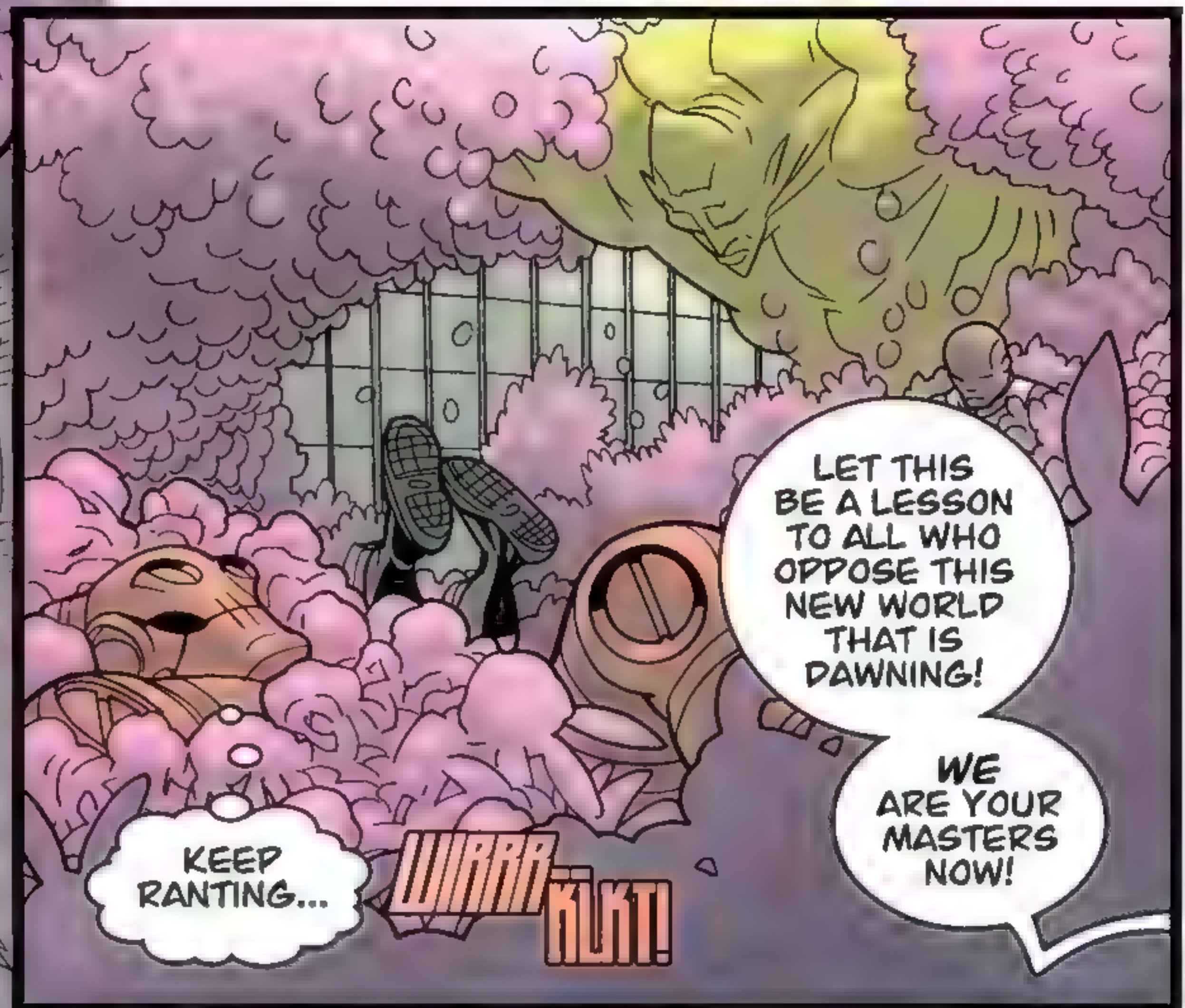
CHAPTER 70





YOUR SACRIFICE TODAY SUCCEEDS ONLY IN SETTING AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS WHO MAY OPPOSE US.

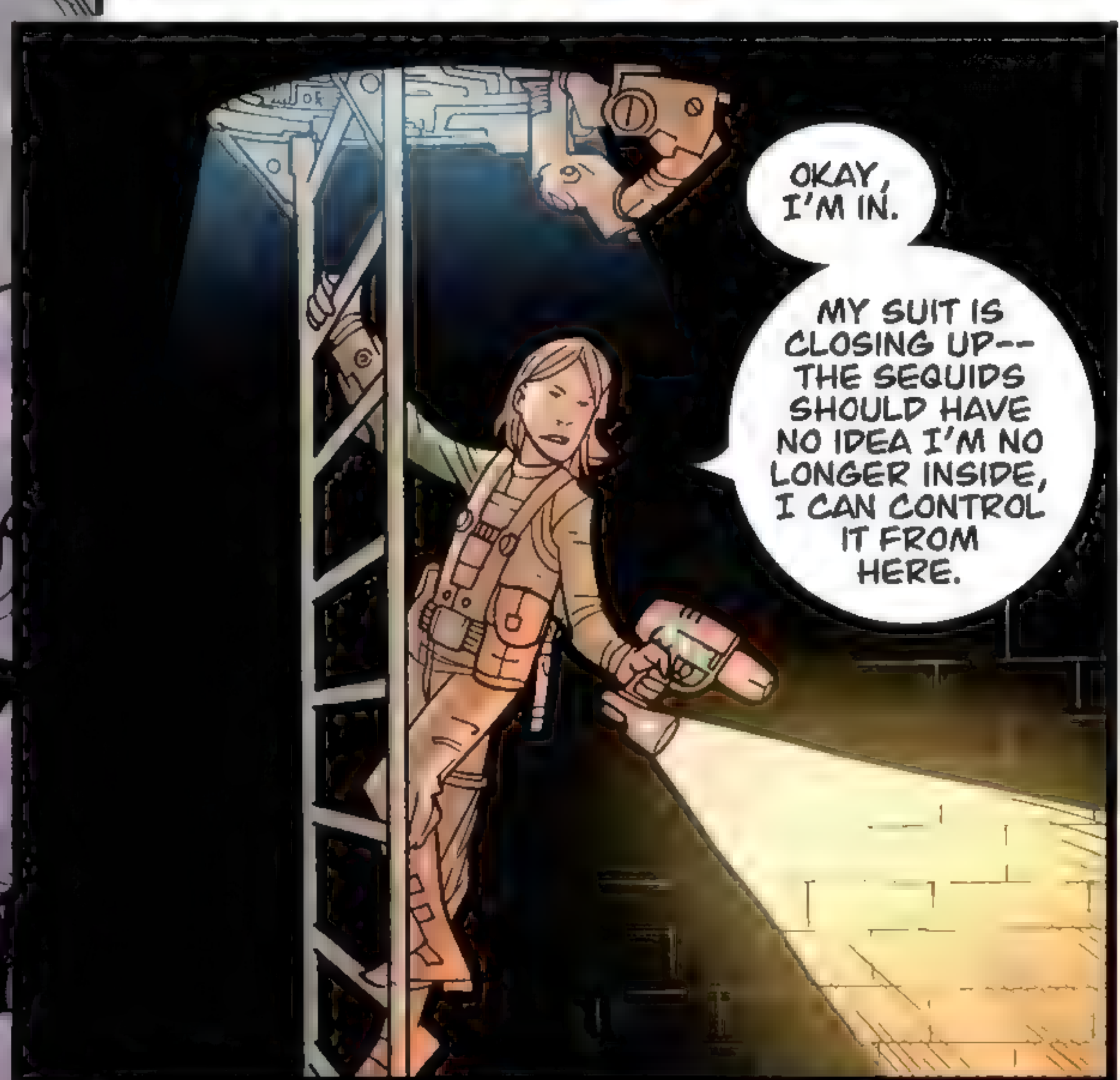
THE SEQUID RULE OF EARTH IS UPON YOU--ACCEPT YOUR FATE OR DIE!



KEEP RANTING...

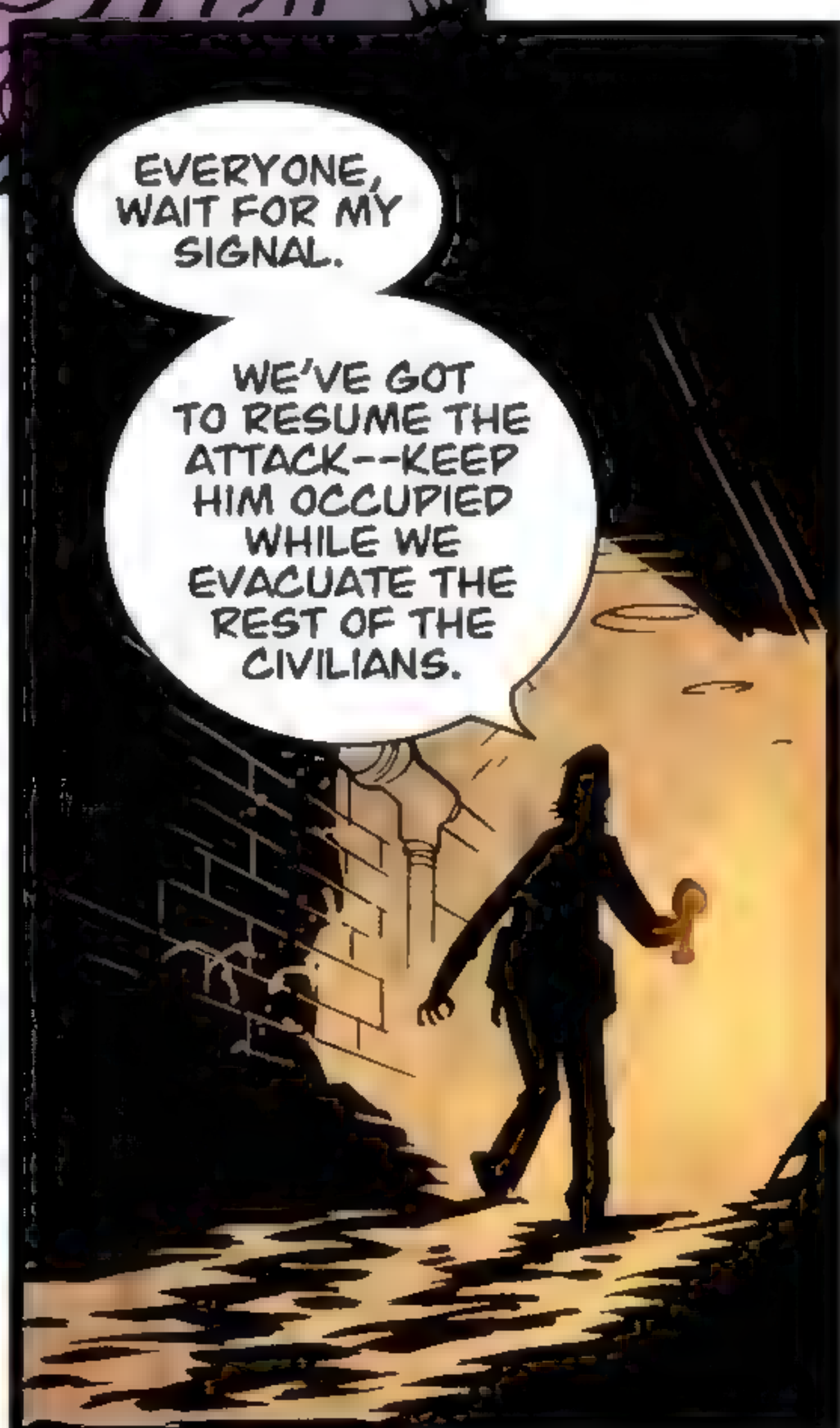
LET THIS BE A LESSON TO ALL WHO OPPOSE THIS NEW WORLD THAT IS DAWNING!

WE ARE YOUR MASTERS NOW!



OKAY, I'M IN.

MY SUIT IS CLOSING UP--THE SEQUIDS SHOULD HAVE NO IDEA I'M NO LONGER INSIDE, I CAN CONTROL IT FROM HERE.



EVERYONE, WAIT FOR MY SIGNAL.

WE'VE GOT TO RESUME THE ATTACK--KEEP HIM OCCUPIED WHILE WE EVACUATE THE REST OF THE CIVILIANS.



BOW BEFORE THE MIGHT OF THE SEQUID EMPI--

HUH?





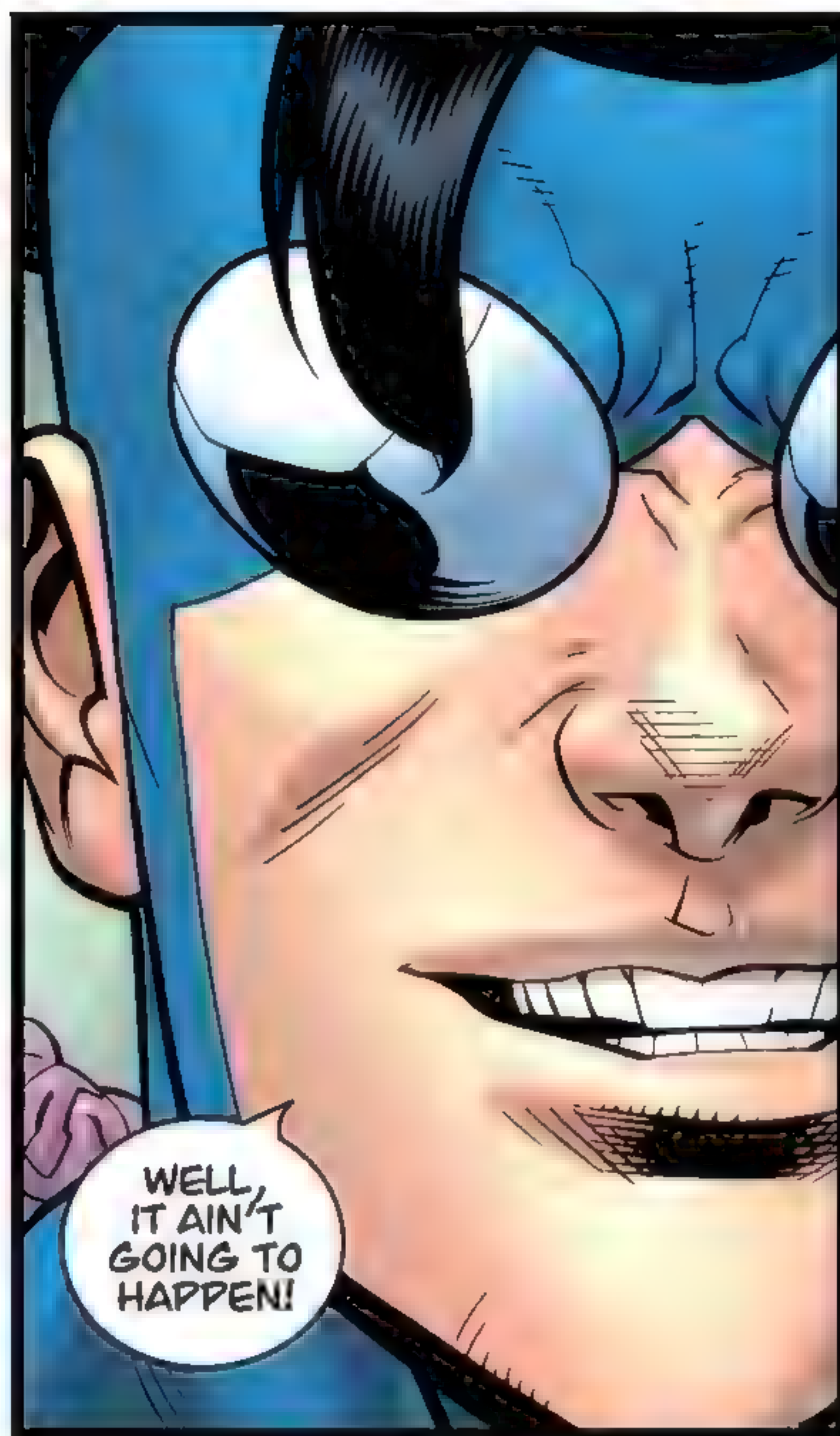
SO YOU'RE WANTING TO TAKE OVER THIS PLANET AND THEN ATTACK MARS... SOME KIND OF REVENGE THING?

COMBINING YOUR RACE WITH OURS--INCREASING YOUR NUMBER OF HOSTS TO A LEVEL THAT WOULD LEAD TO YOU NEVER BEING WITHOUT ONE...

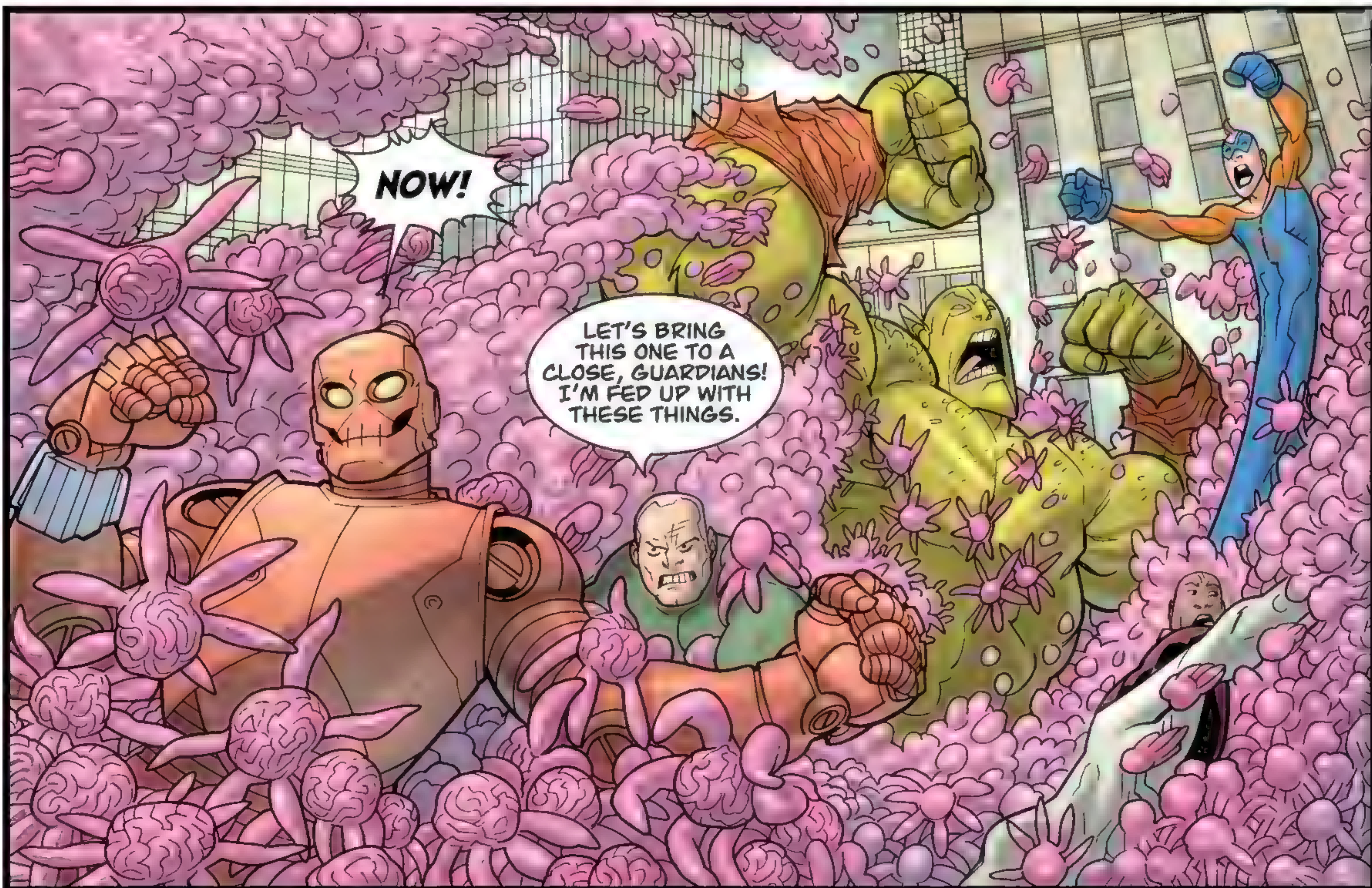
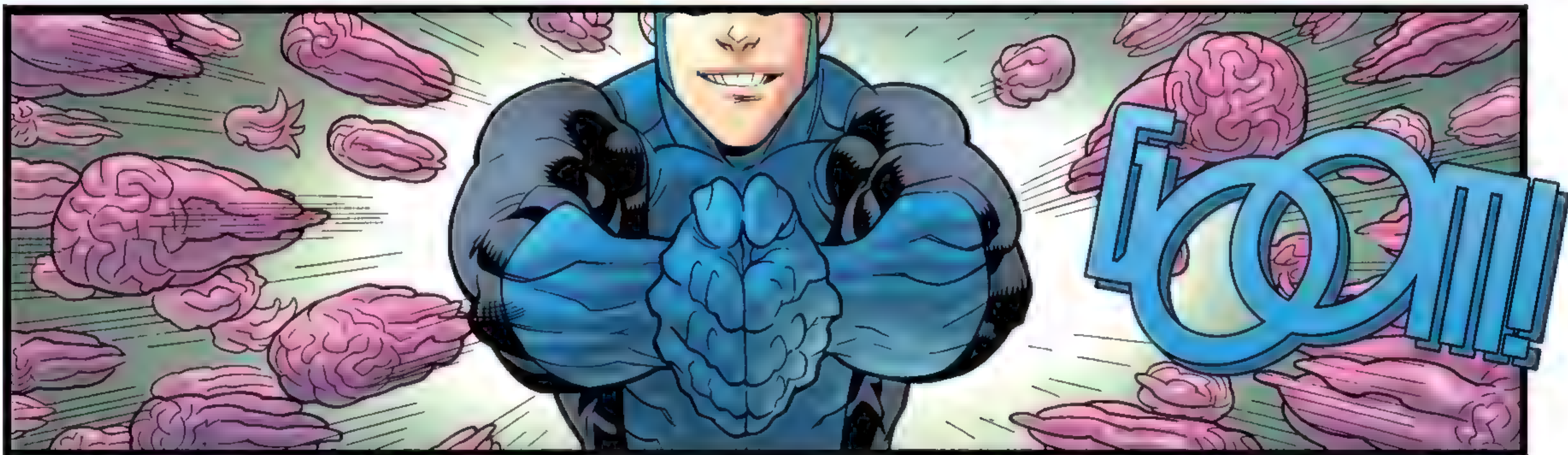
...A NEW SYMBIOTIC RACE, ELIMINATING YOUR WEAKNESS ONCE AND FOR ALL, YOUR NEED TO LINK YOUR MINDS THROUGH THE CONNECTION OF AT LEAST ONE HOST.

VERY GOOD.

THAT IS OUR PLAN EXACTLY.



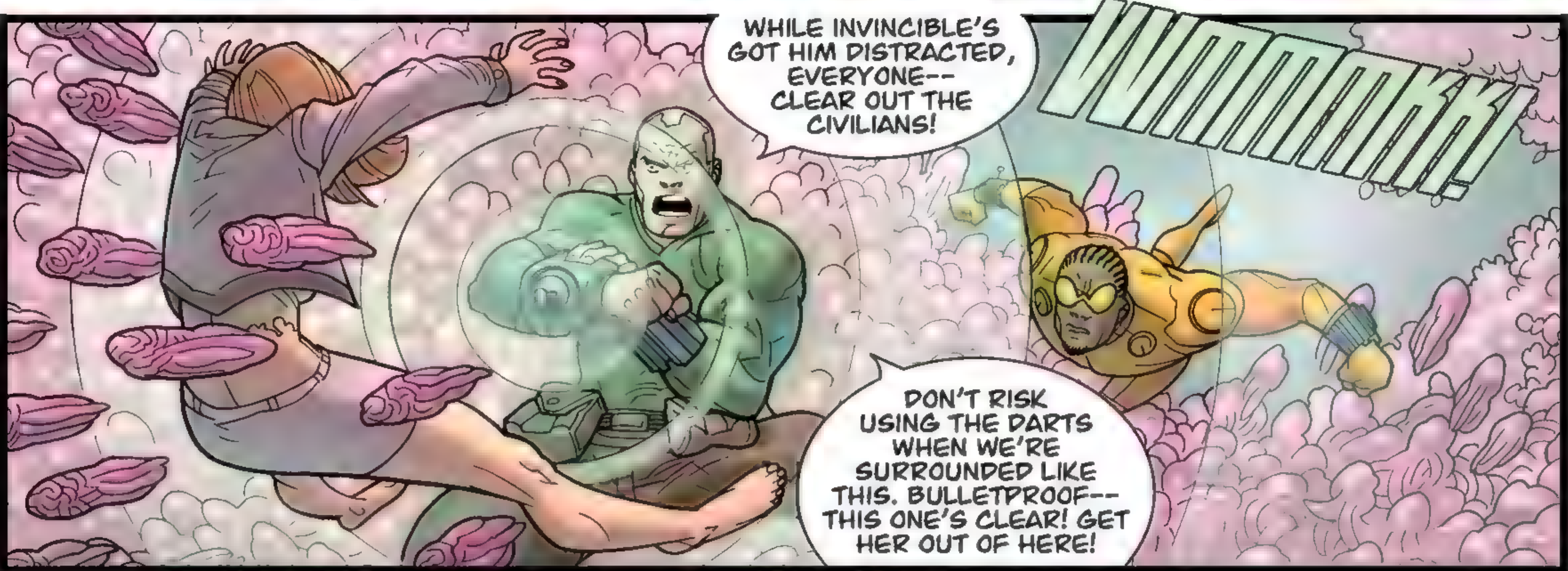
WELL, IT AIN'T GOING TO HAPPEN!





OH,
COOL.

I HAD
NO CLUE
HOW I WAS
GOING TO
DO THIS ON
MY OWN.



WHILE INVINCIBLE'S
GOT HIM DISTRACTED,
EVERYONE--
CLEAR OUT THE
CIVILIANS!

DON'T RISK
USING THE DARTS
WHEN WE'RE
SURROUNDED LIKE
THIS. BULLETPROOF--
THIS ONE'S CLEAR! GET
HER OUT OF HERE!



WE DEFEATED
YOU ONCE--
WHAT MAKES
YOU THINK WE
CAN'T DO IT
AGAIN?

WHAT DO
YOU THINK I'VE
BEEN DOING ALL
THIS TIME? YOU
THINK I HAVEN'T
PREPARED FOR THIS--
ANTICIPATED EVERY
MOVE YOU COULD
MAKE?

YOUR
CAUSE IS
LOST! THIS
PLANET IS
DOOMED!

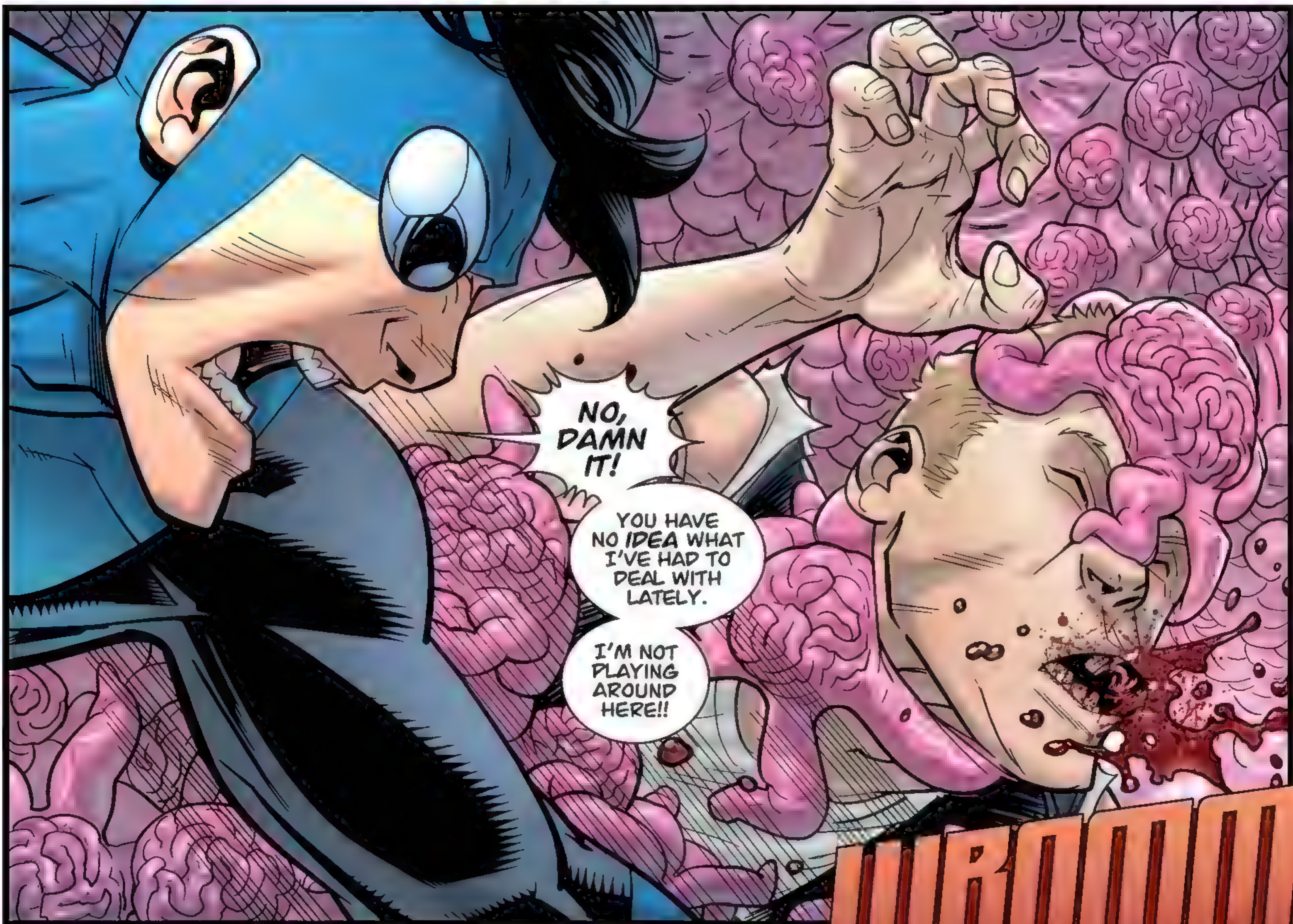
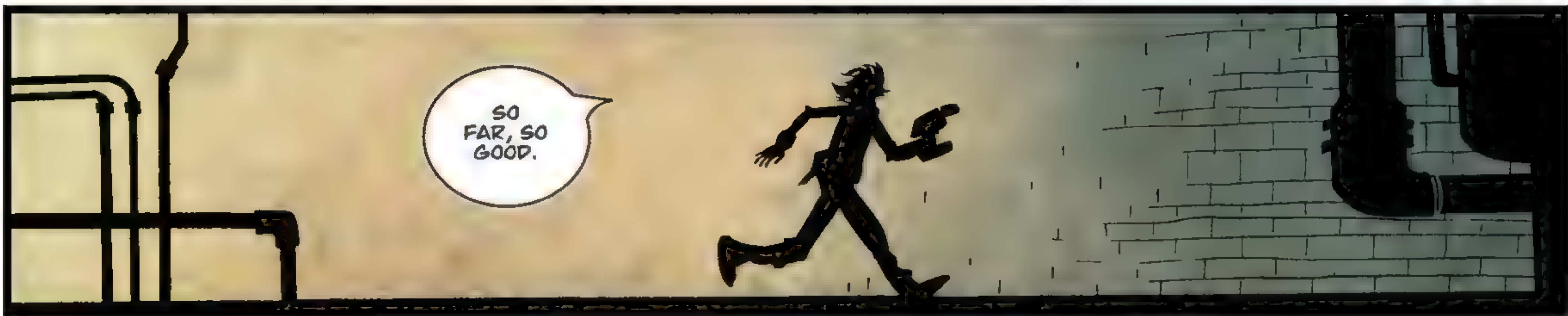
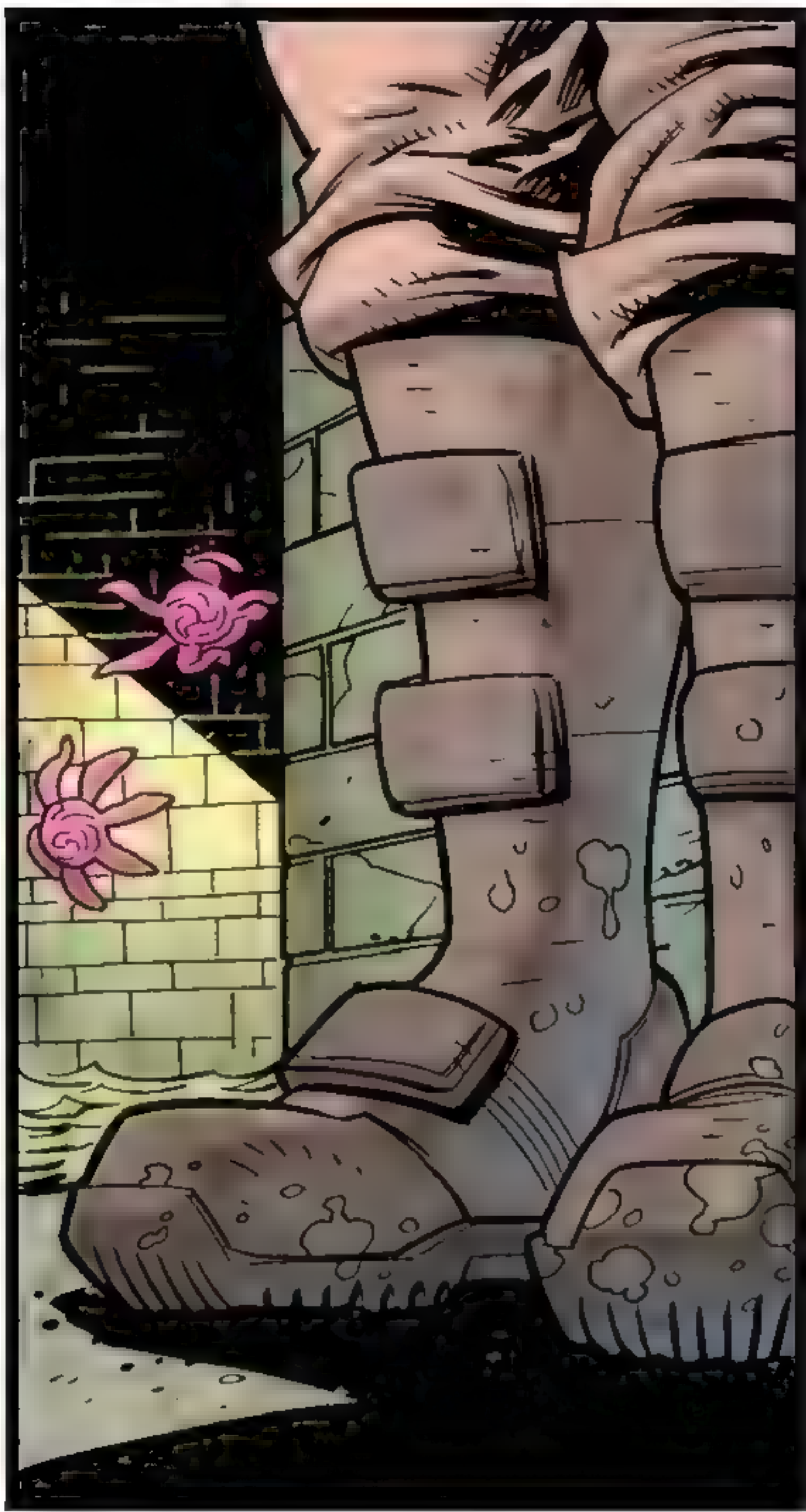


IN A WAY--THIS IS
ALL MY FAULT. I
WAS PART OF A
GROUP OF MARTIANS
SYMPATHETIC TO
THE SEQUIDS
ENSLAVED ON
MY PLANET.

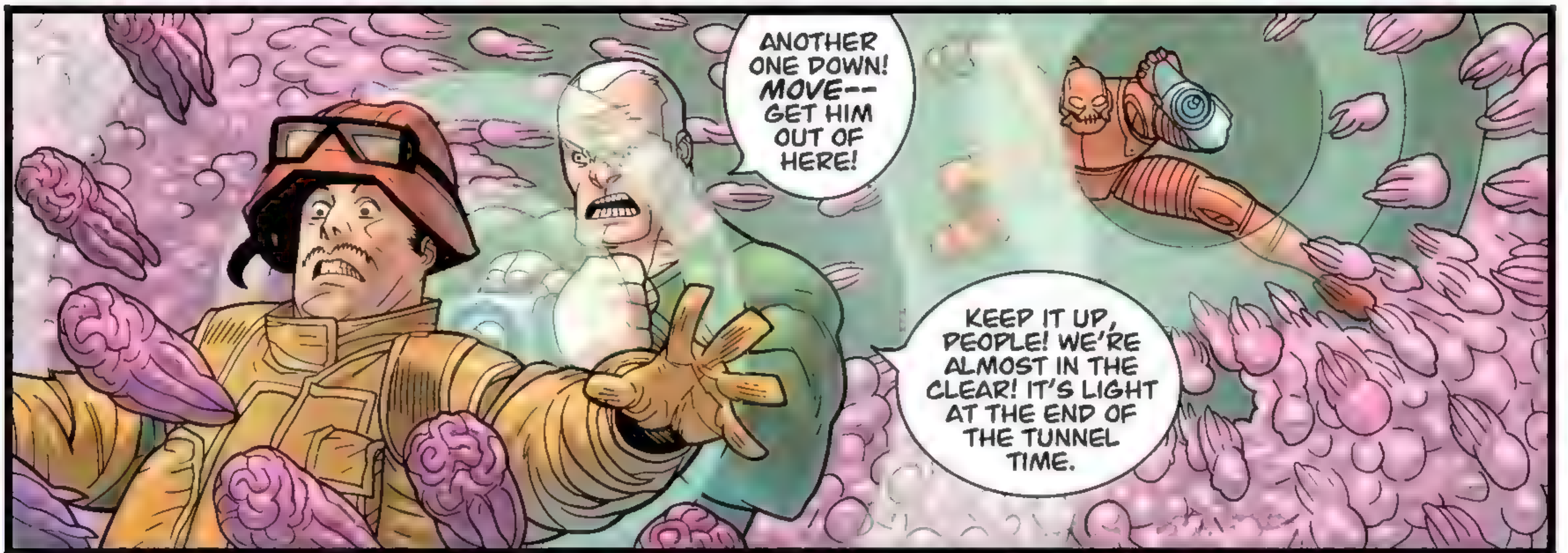
I CAN'T
BELIEVE HOW
FOOLISH WE
WERE TO PITY
THEM.

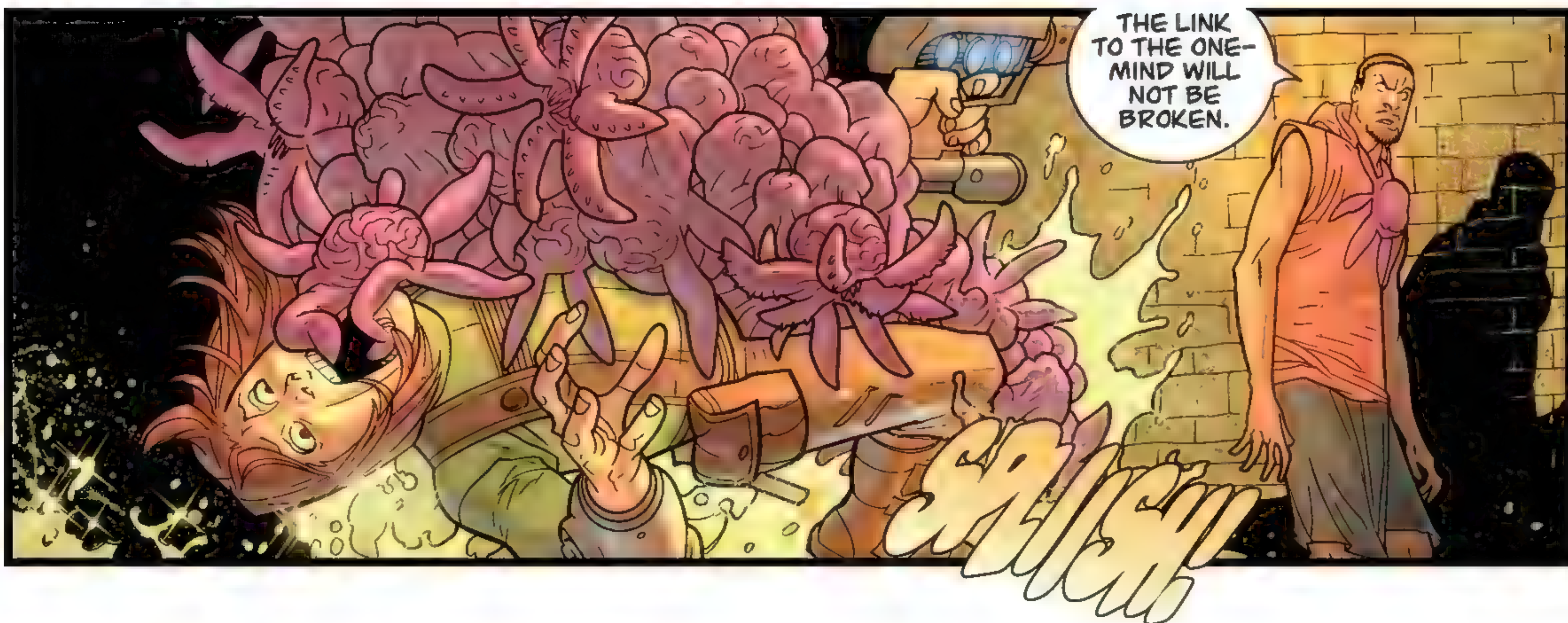
I
CAUSED
THIS.

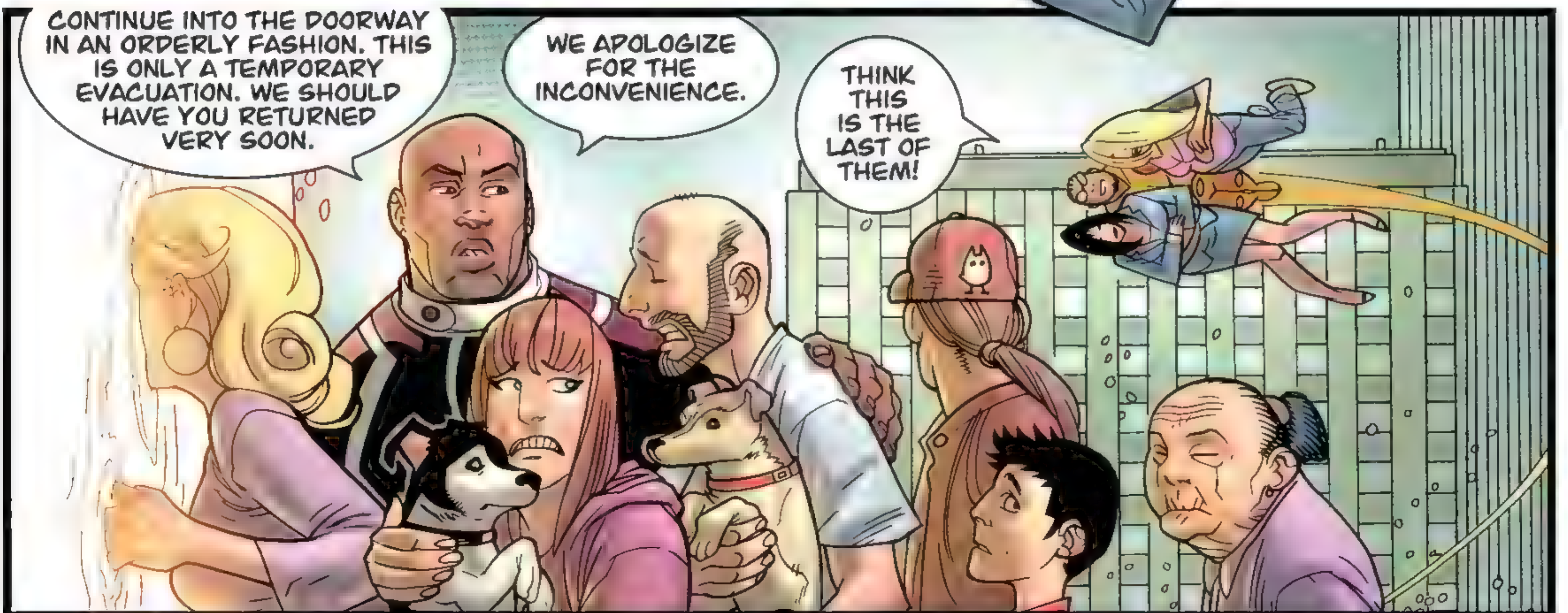
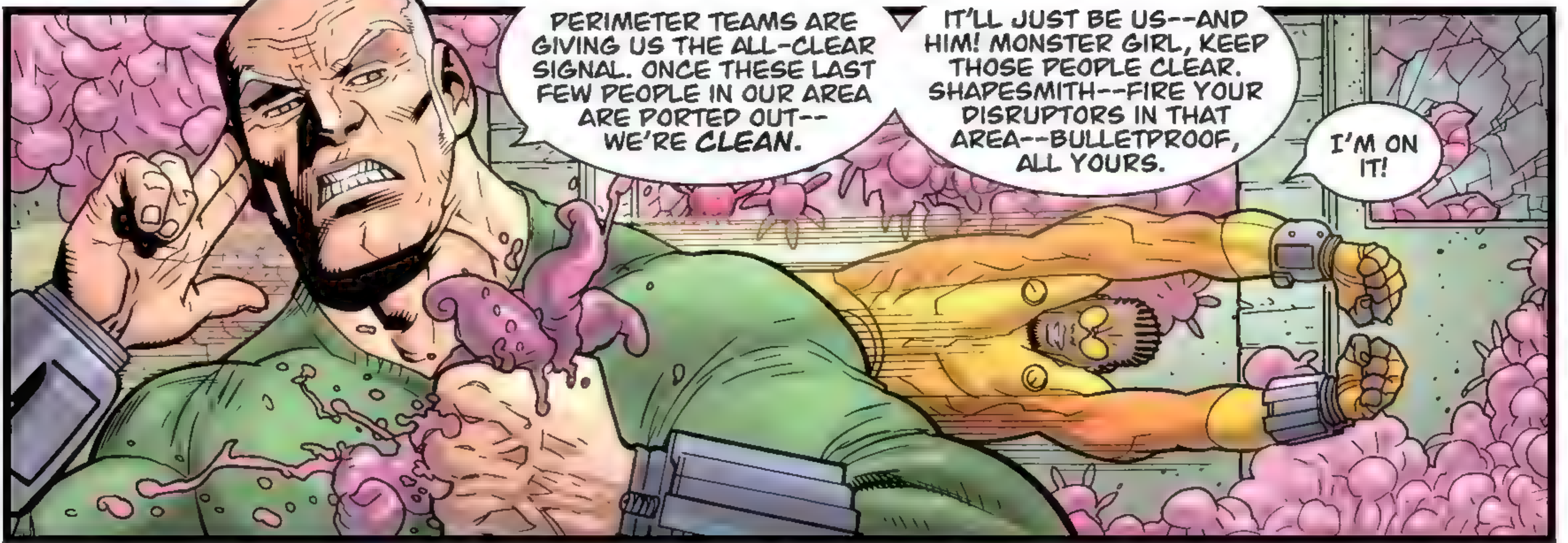
REGARDLESS
OF HOW THIS
SHAKES DOWN--
YOU'RE PROBABLY
GOING TO WANT TO
START KEEPING
THAT TO YOURSELF.

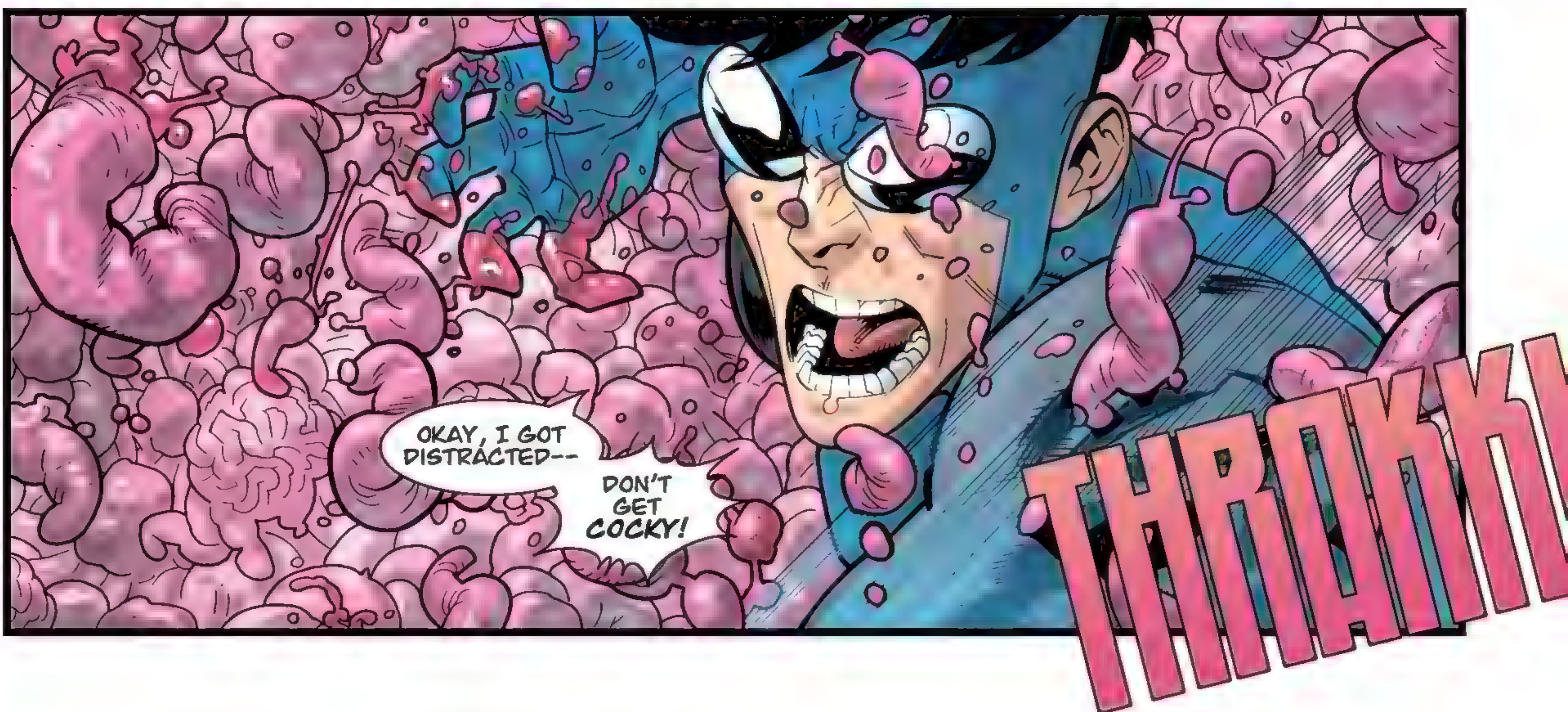
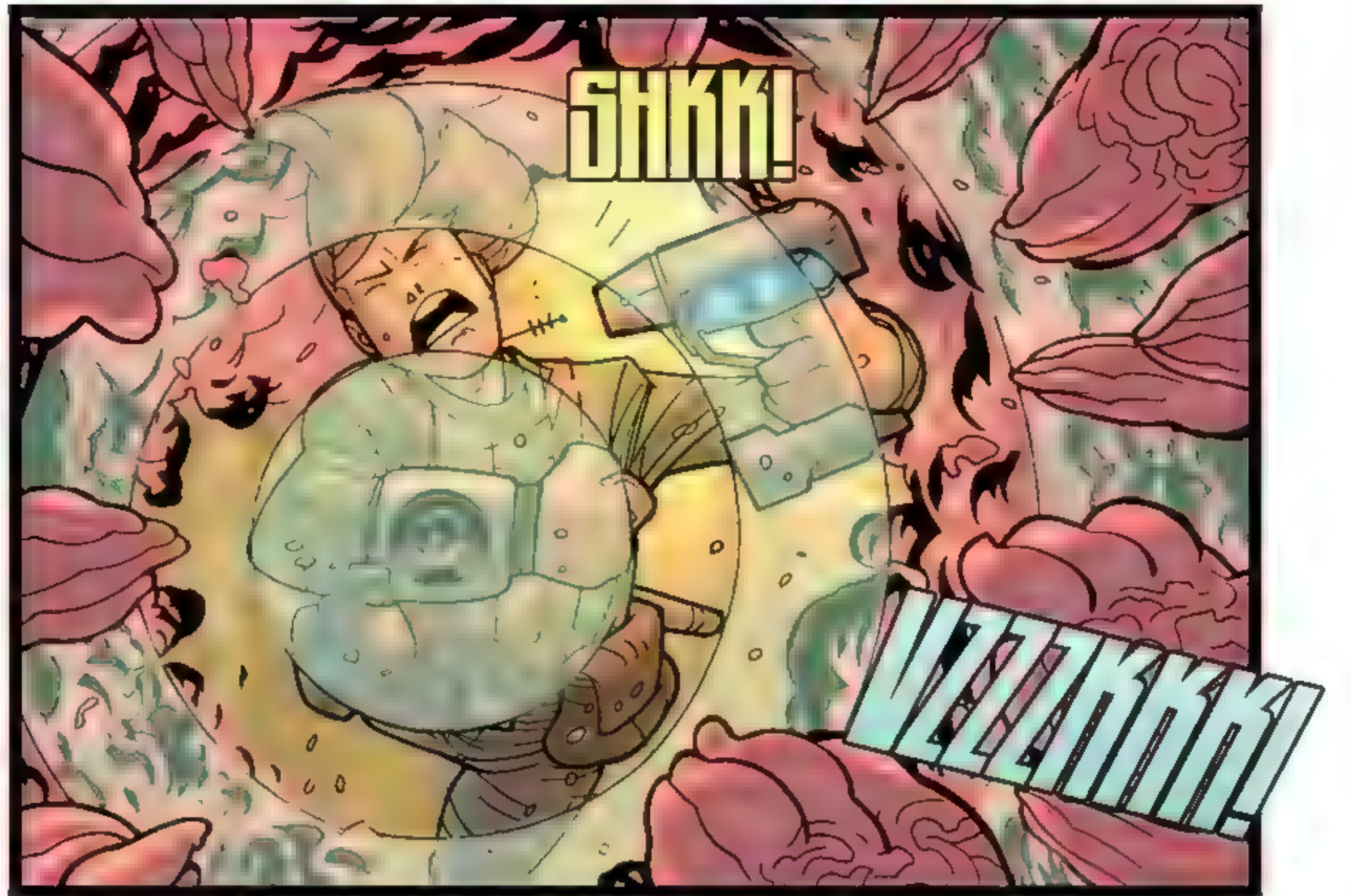
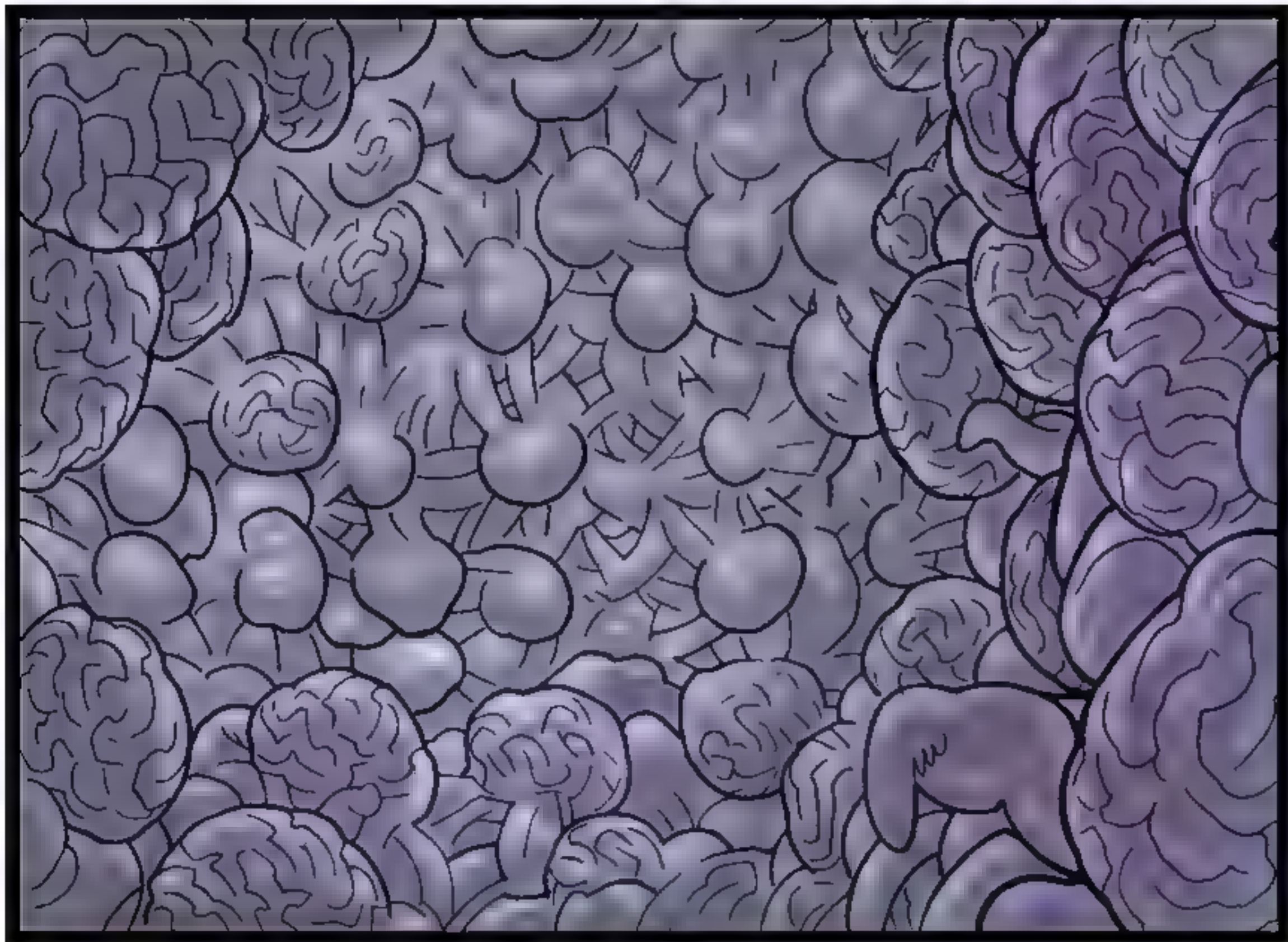


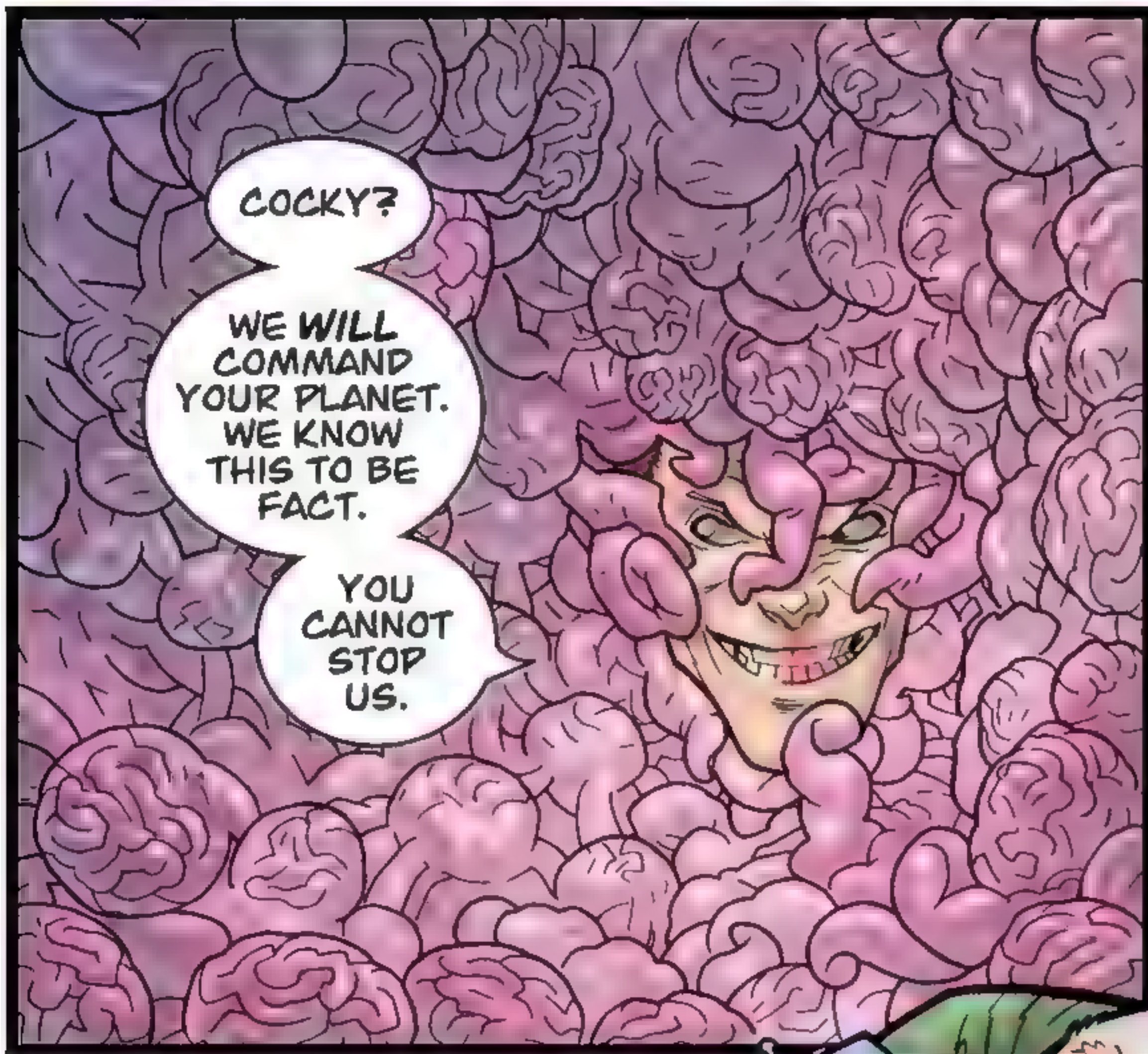
WRAMMM!











COCKY?

WE WILL
COMMAND
YOUR PLANET.
WE KNOW
THIS TO BE
FACT.

YOU
CANNOT
STOP
US.



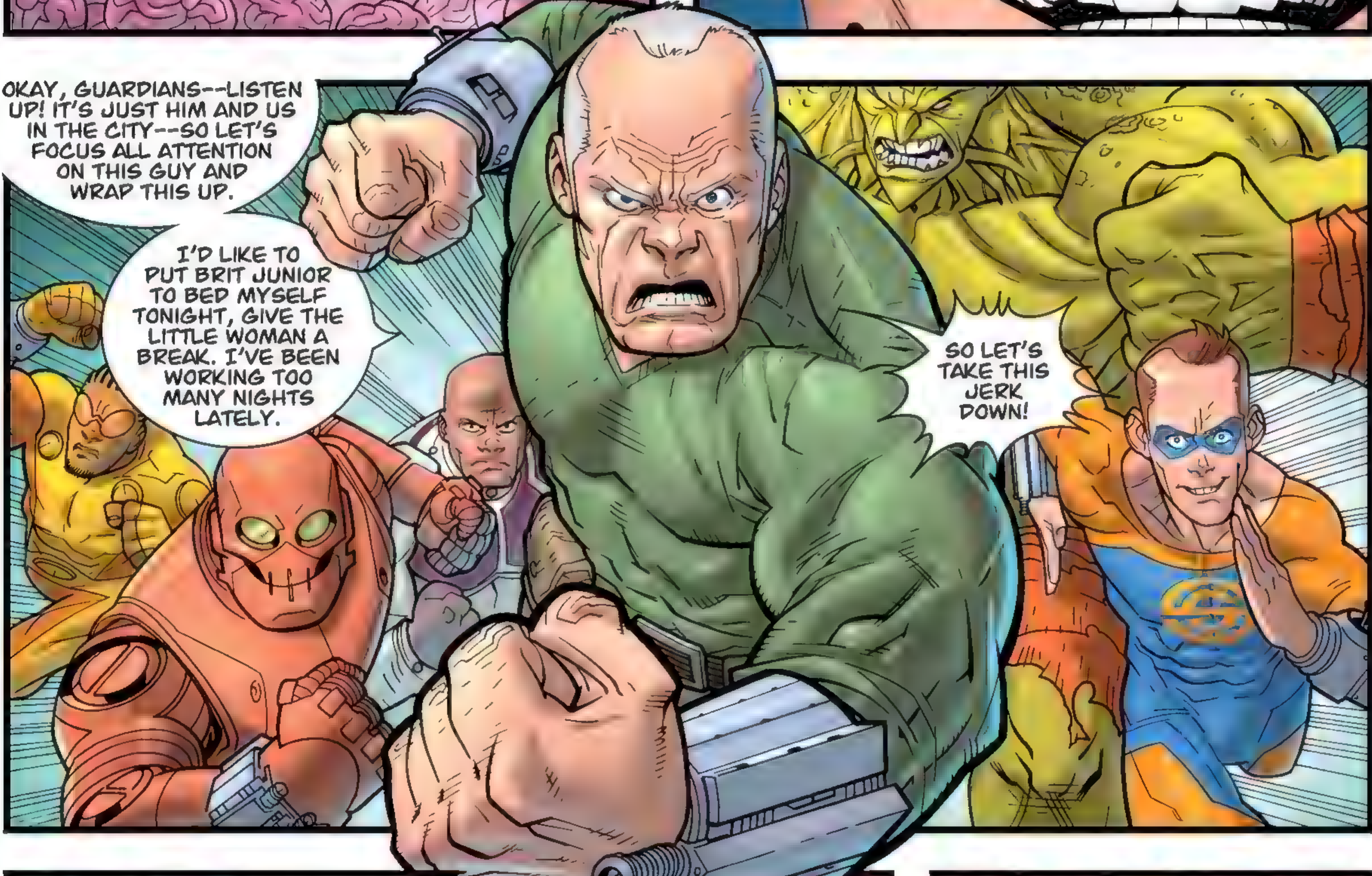
REALLY?
HAH!

I DON'T
THINK YOU'VE
BEEN PAYING
ATTENTION.

OKAY, GUARDIANS--LISTEN
UP! IT'S JUST HIM AND US
IN THE CITY--SO LET'S
FOCUS ALL ATTENTION
ON THIS GUY AND
WRAP THIS UP.

I'D LIKE TO
PUT BRIT JUNIOR
TO BED MYSELF
TONIGHT, GIVE THE
LITTLE WOMAN A
BREAK. I'VE BEEN
WORKING TOO
MANY NIGHTS
LATELY.

SO LET'S
TAKE THIS
JERK
DOWN!



HE HAD A HOST
HIDDEN IN THE
SEWERS, BUT I
TOOK CARE OF
HIM--I'M BACK
AT THE HOLDING
AREA NOW
WITH THE
REST OF THE
REFUGEES.

LET'S
BRING
THESE
PEOPLE
HOME.



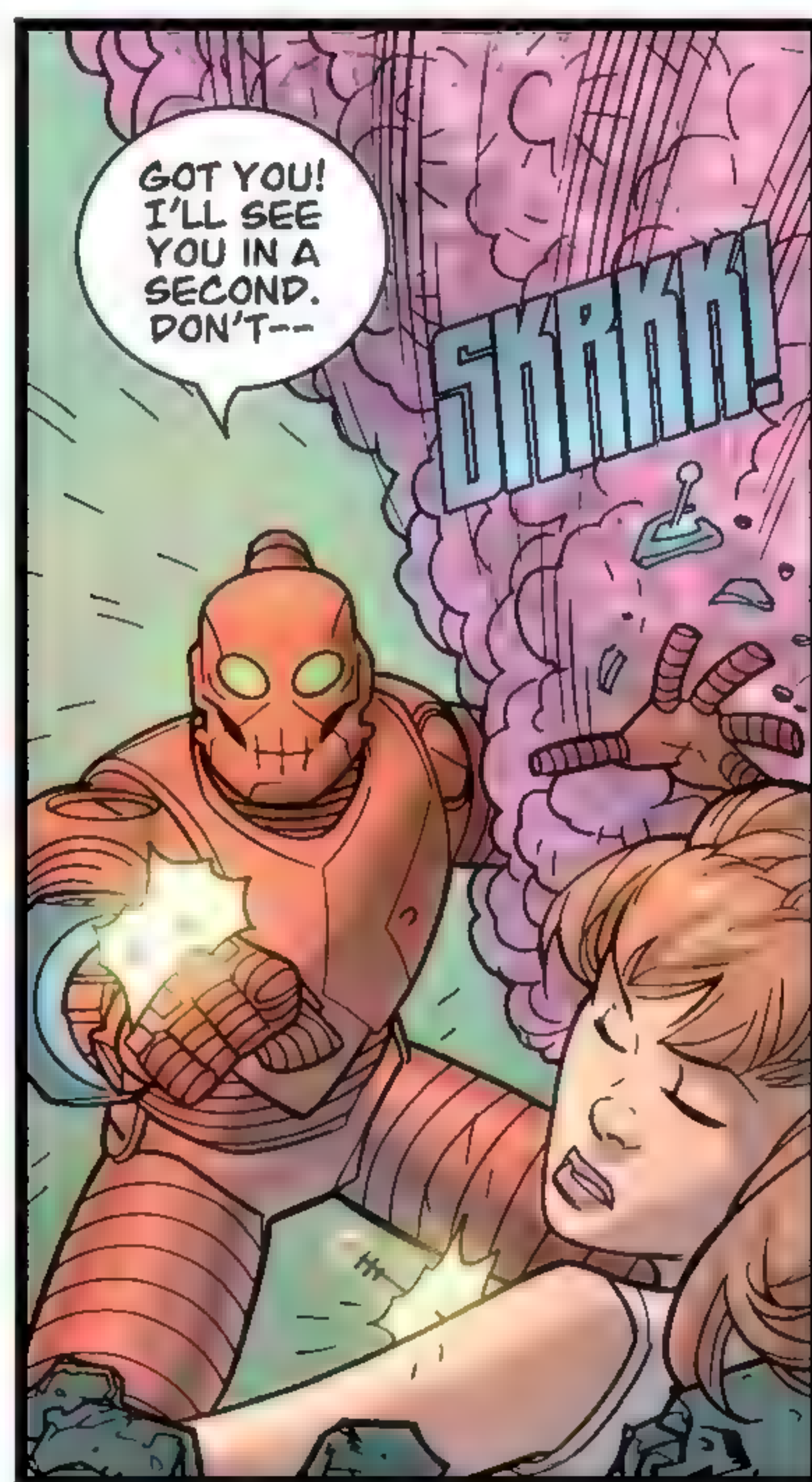
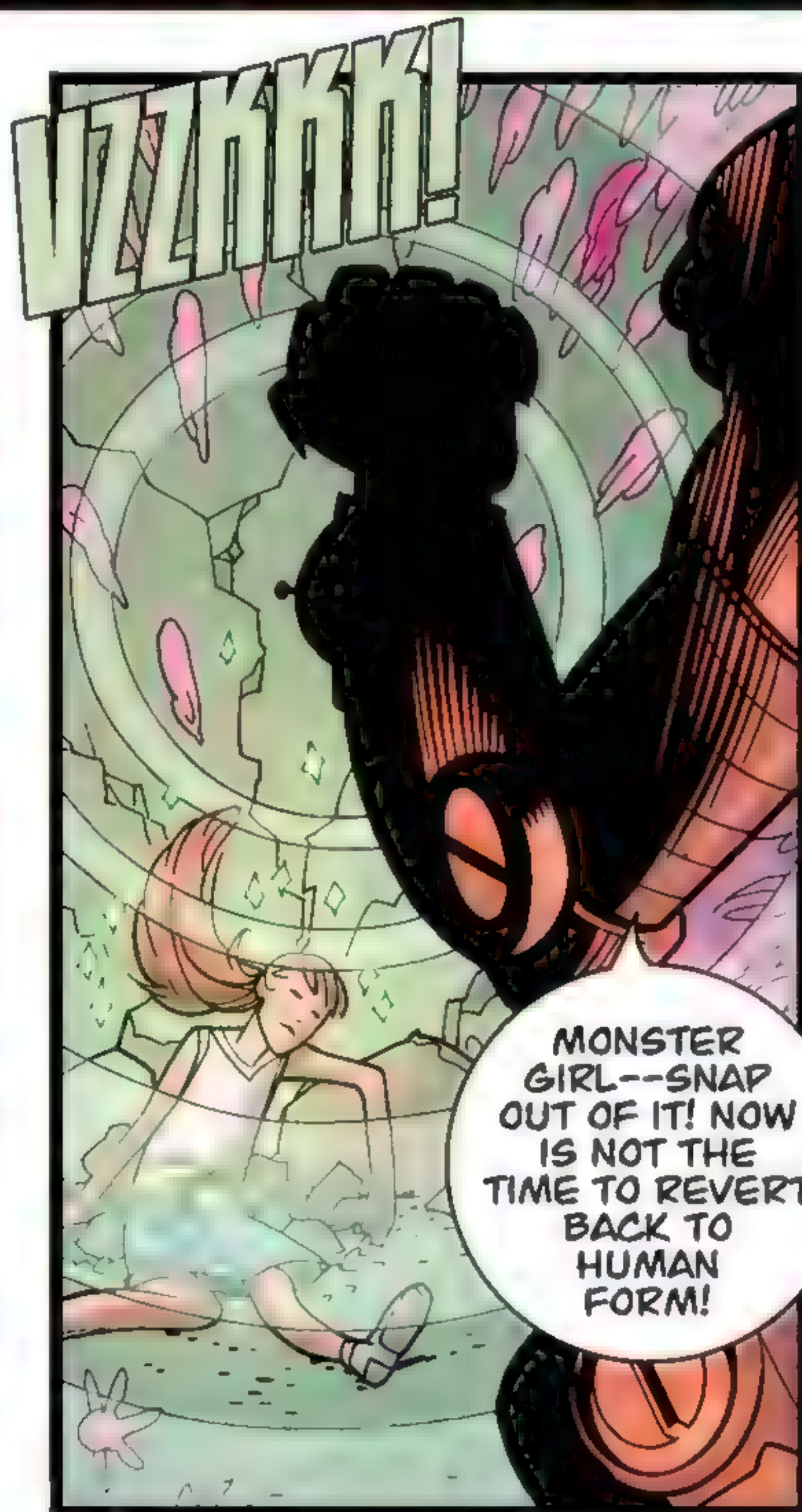
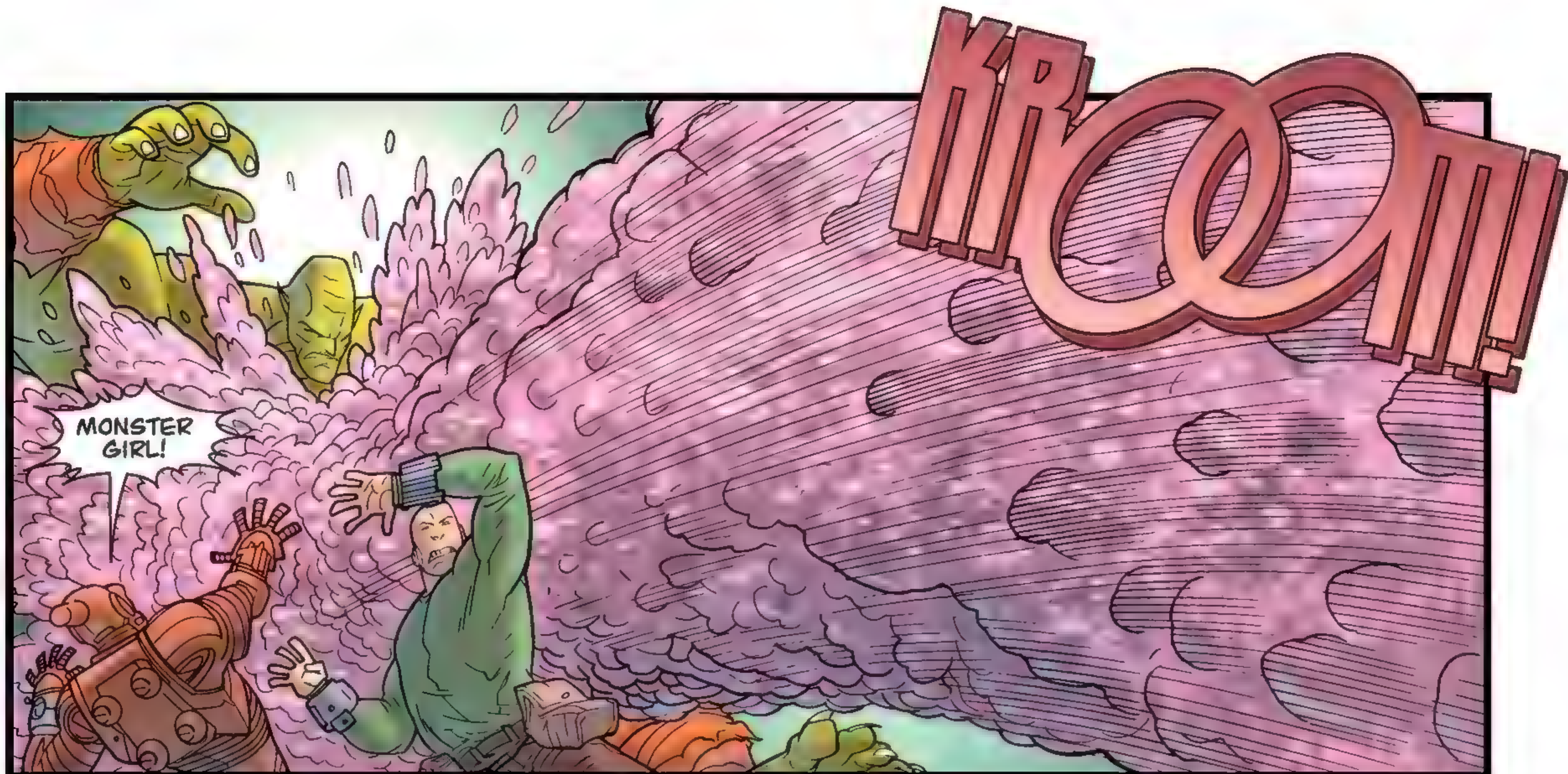
HEAR THAT,
SEGUID MAN--
OR WHATEVER
YOU'RE
CALLING
YOURSELF...

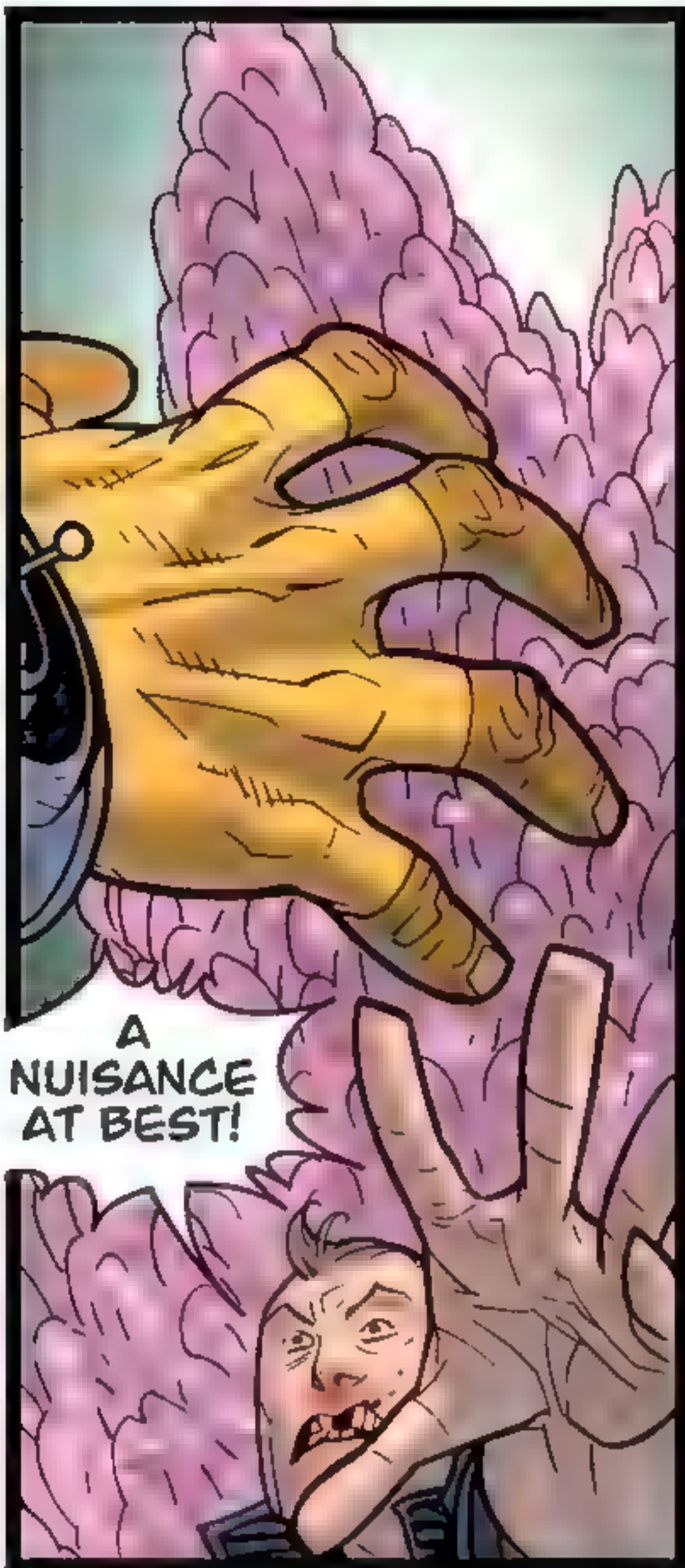
...IT'S
ONLY A
MATTER
OF TIME.

SHRADD!



NOW
WHO'S
BEING
COCKY?





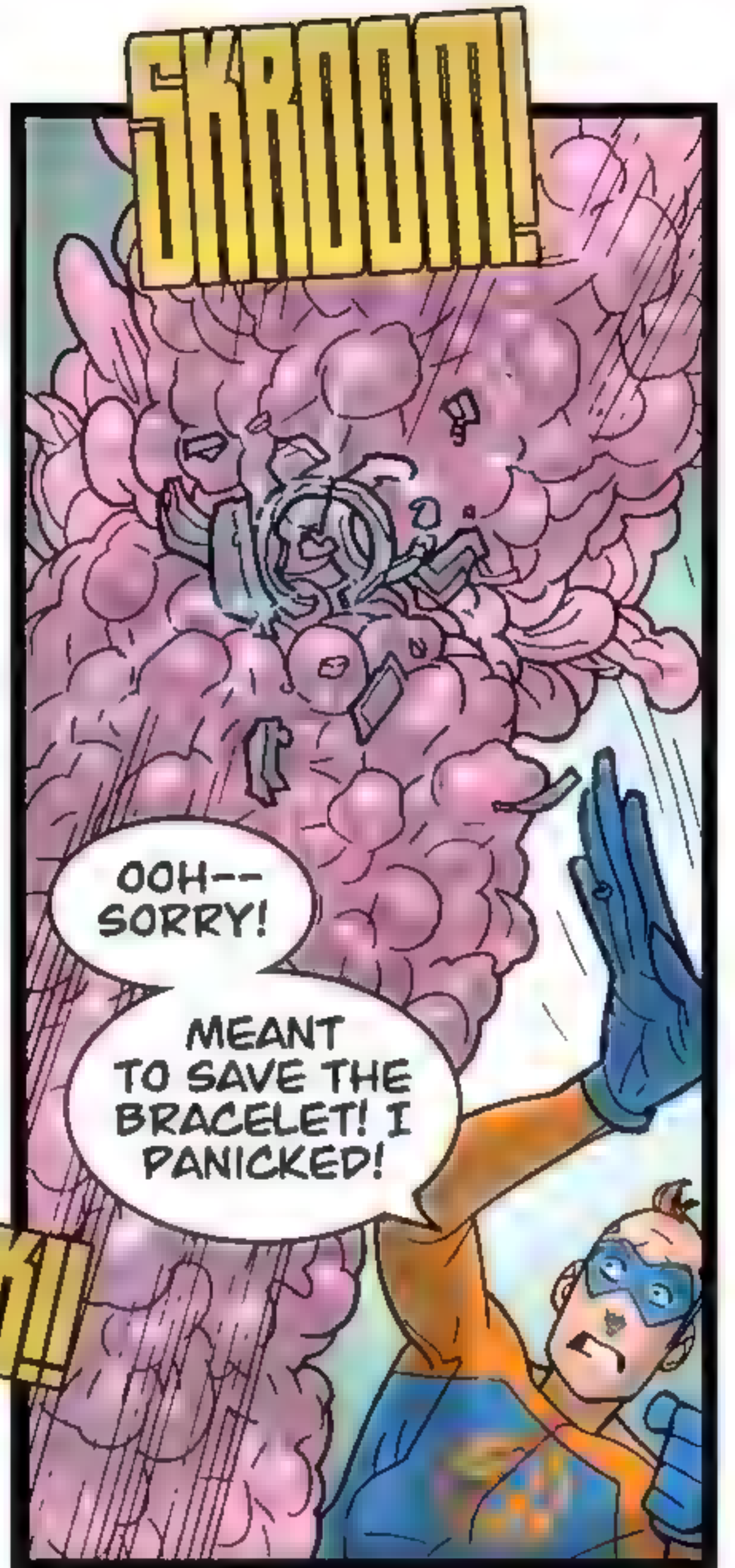
A
NUISANCE
AT BEST!



NO
MORE!
KROOM!



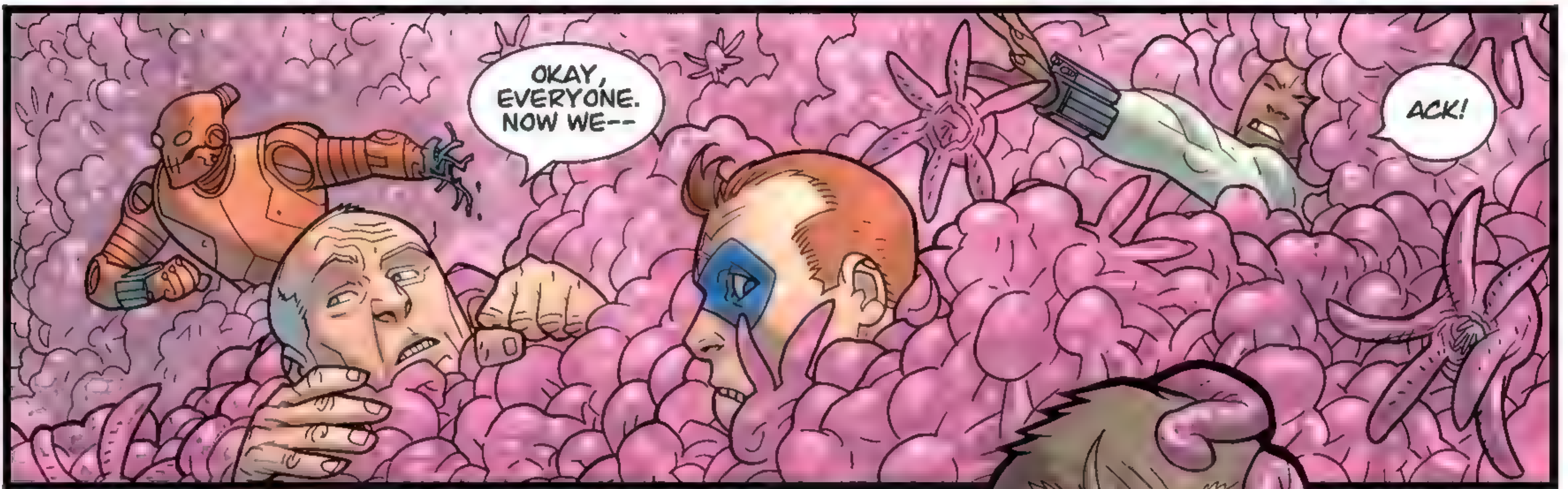
CRAP!



SKROOM!

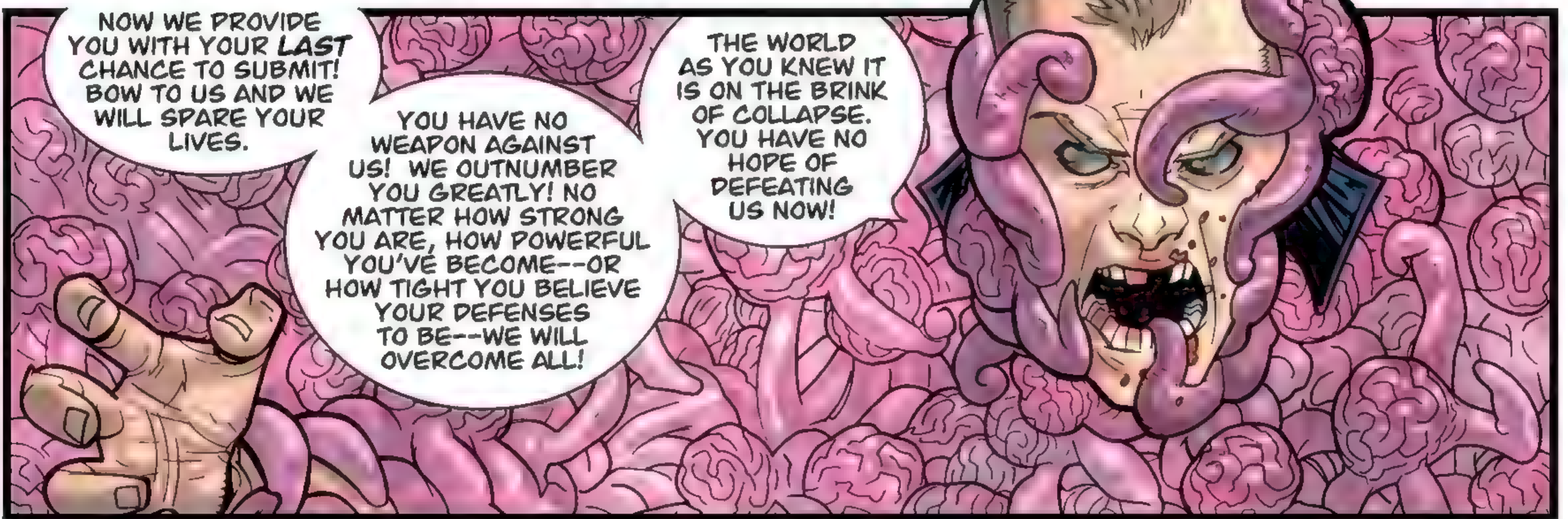
OOH--
SORRY!

MEANT
TO SAVE THE
BRACELET! I
PANICKED!



OKAY,
EVERYONE.
NOW WE--

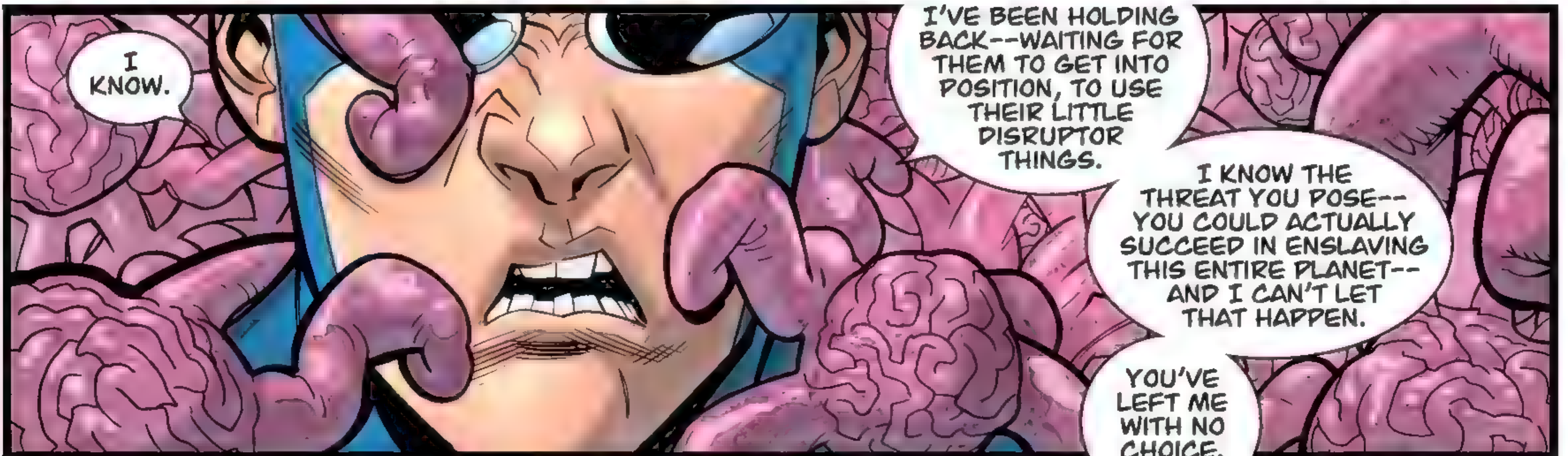
ACK!



NOW WE PROVIDE
YOU WITH YOUR **LAST**
CHANCE TO SUBMIT!
BOW TO US AND WE
WILL SPARE YOUR
LIVES.

YOU HAVE NO
WEAPON AGAINST
US! WE OUTNUMBER
YOU GREATLY! NO
MATTER HOW STRONG
YOU ARE, HOW POWERFUL
YOU'VE BECOME--OR
HOW TIGHT YOU BELIEVE
YOUR DEFENSES
TO BE--WE WILL
OVERCOME ALL!

THE WORLD
AS YOU KNEW IT
IS ON THE BRINK
OF COLLAPSE.
YOU HAVE NO
HOPE OF
DEFEATING
US NOW!

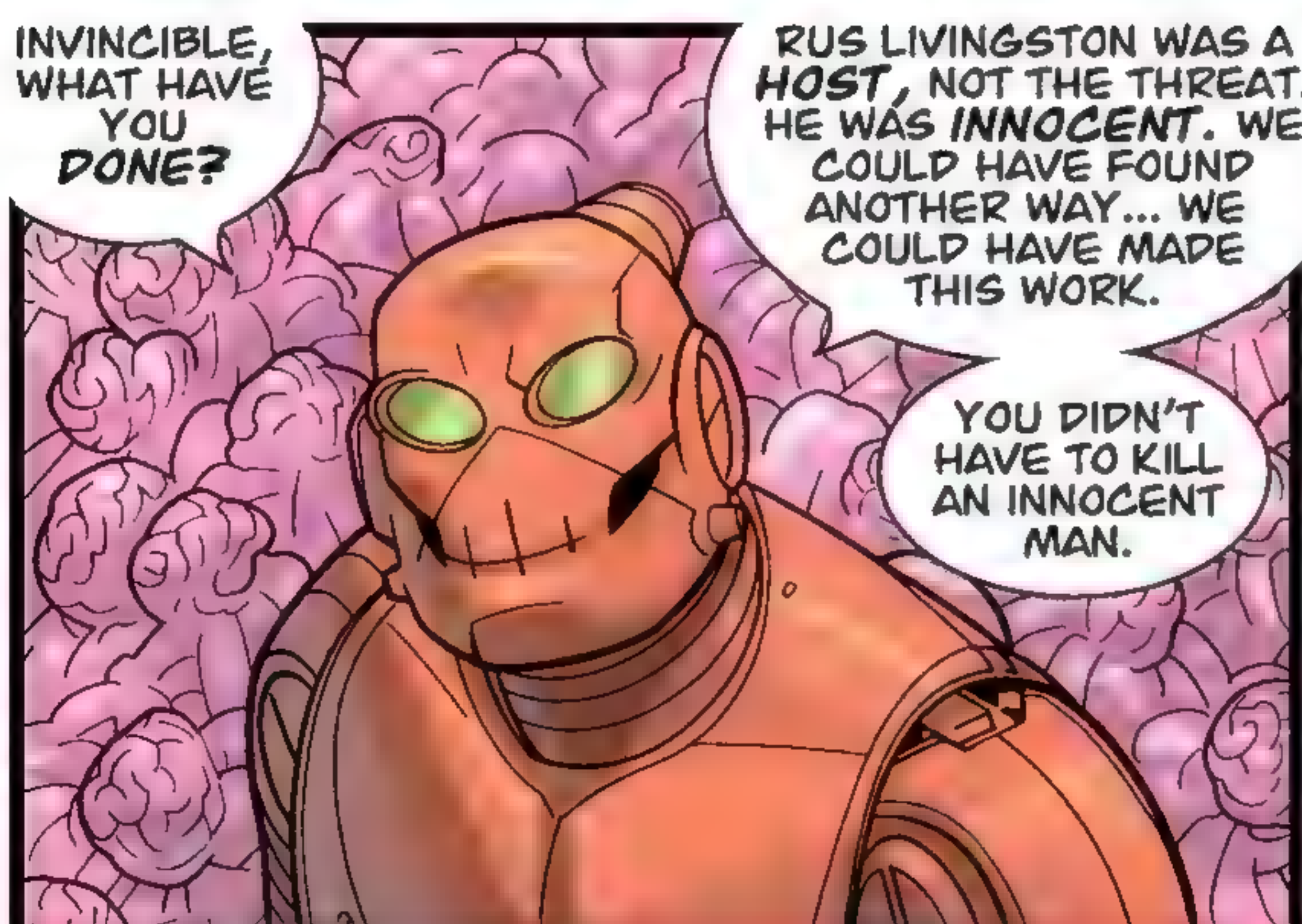
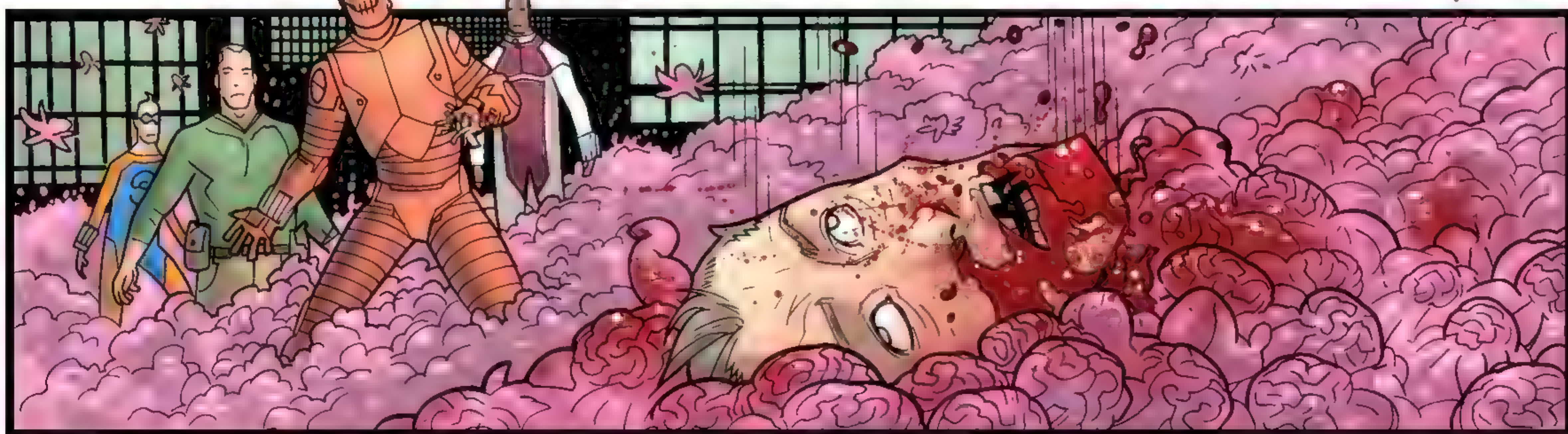


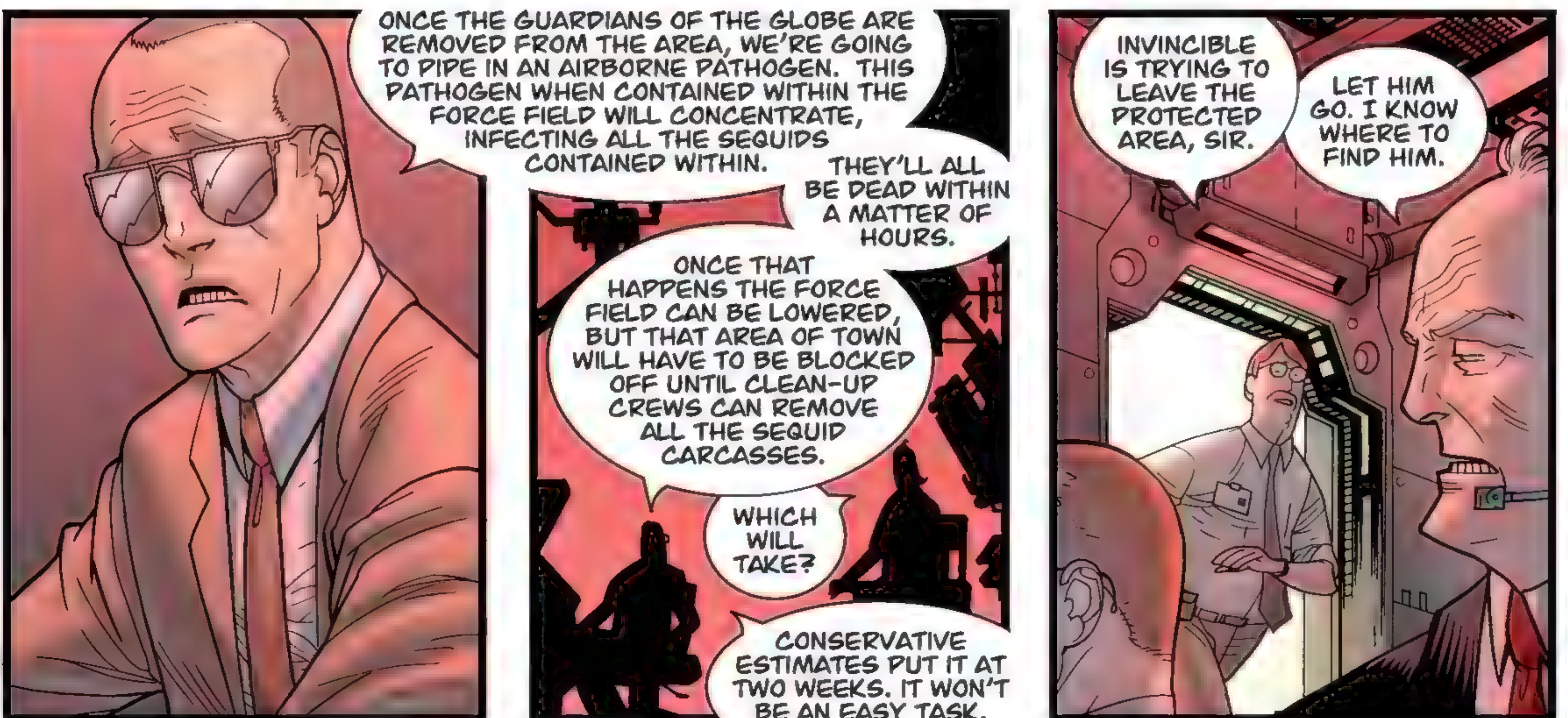
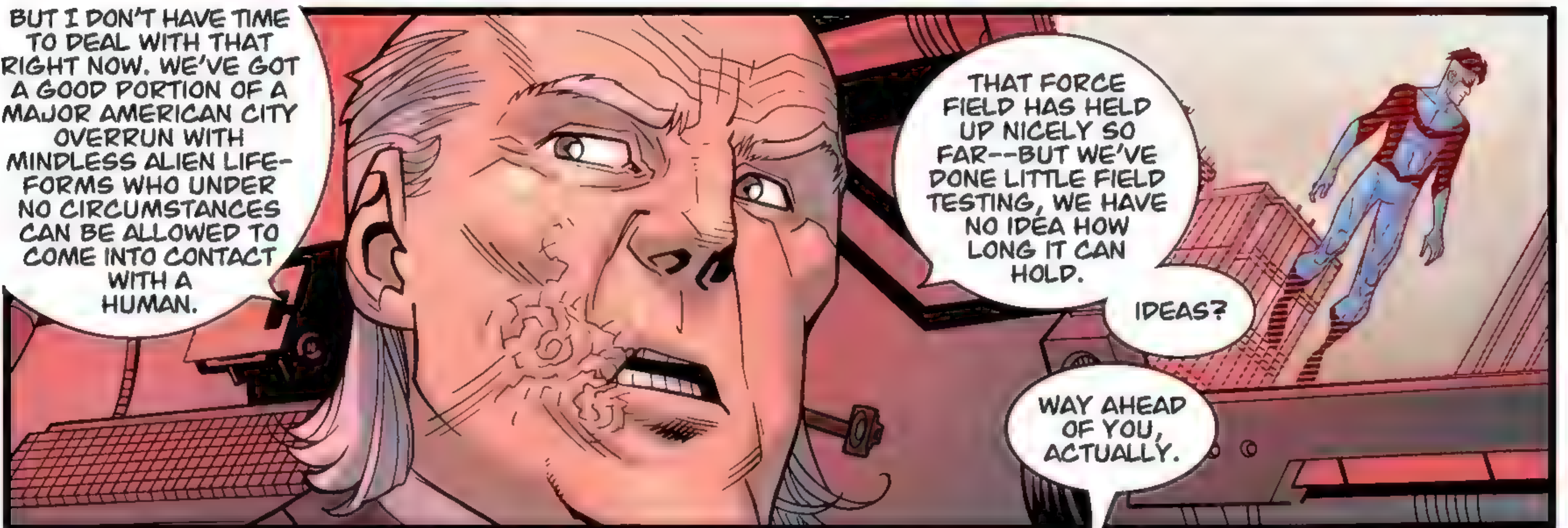
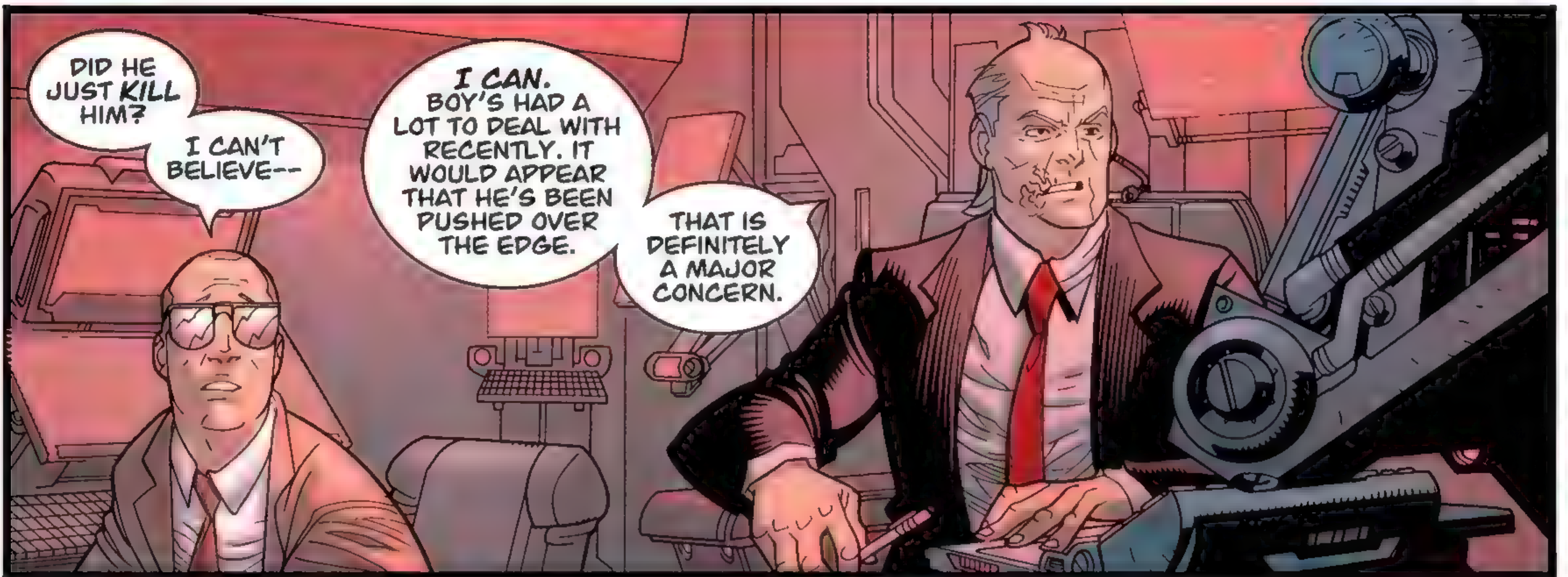
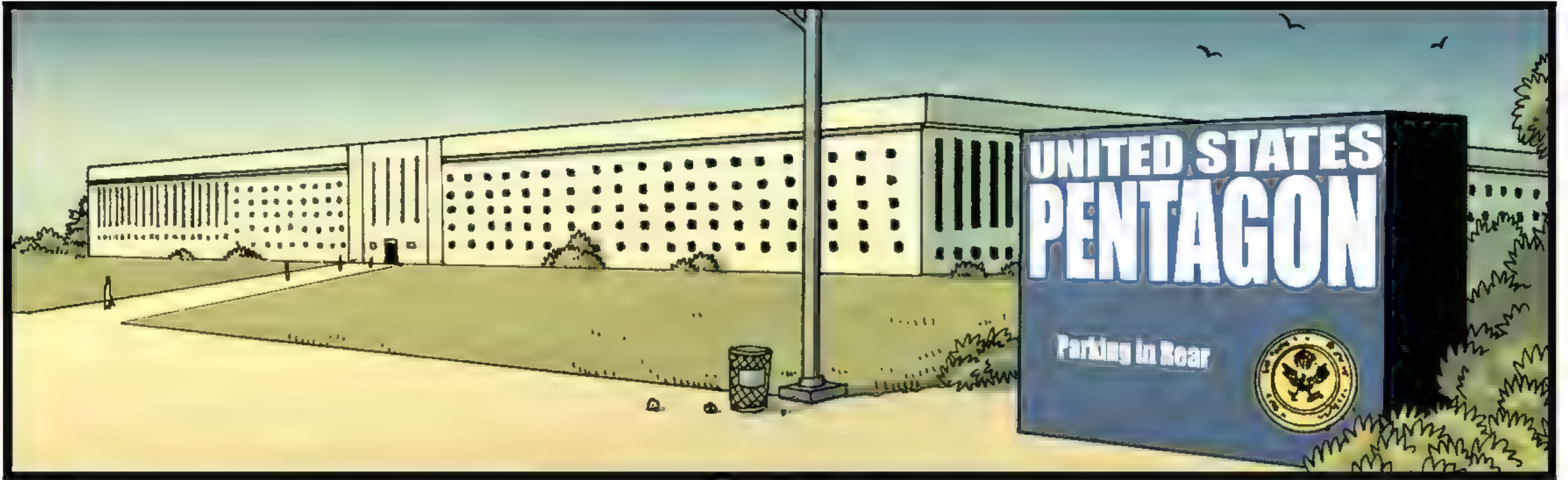
I
KNOW.

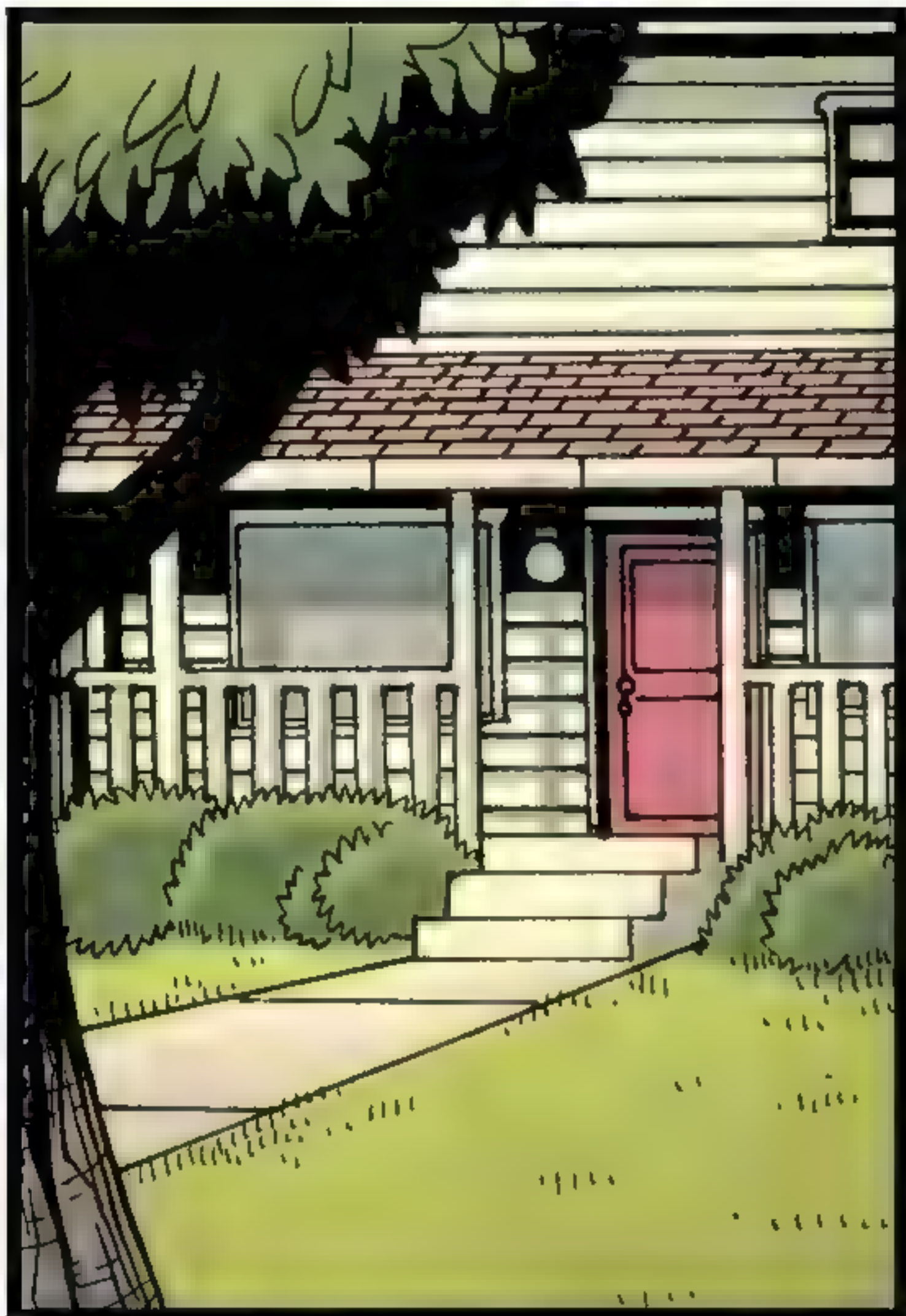
I'VE BEEN HOLDING
BACK--WAITING FOR
THEM TO GET INTO
POSITION, TO USE
THEIR LITTLE
DISRUPTOR
THINGS.

I KNOW THE
THREAT YOU POSE--
YOU COULD ACTUALLY
SUCCEED IN ENSLAVING
THIS ENTIRE PLANET--
AND I CAN'T LET
THAT HAPPEN.

YOU'VE
LEFT ME
WITH NO
CHOICE.





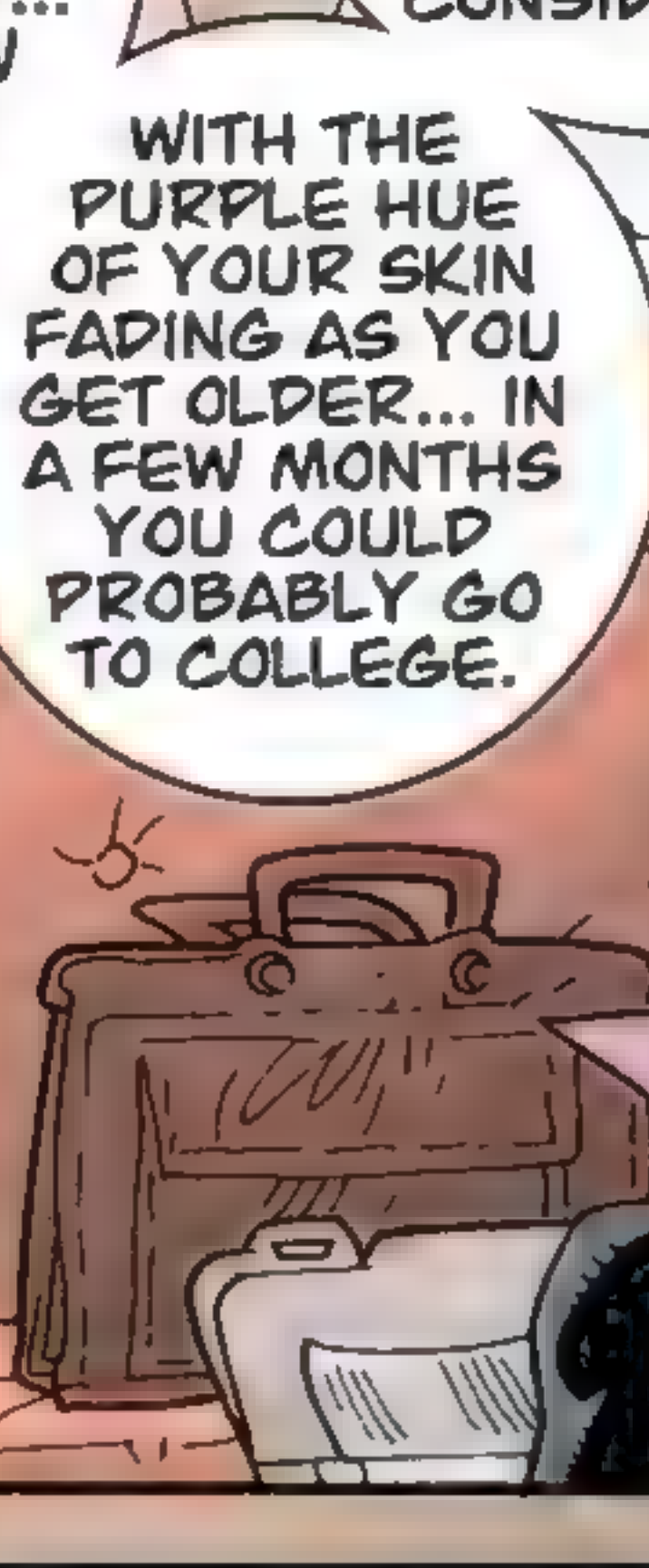


I TOLD YOU, APRIL. I ROCK.

WELL, THERE'S NO DISPUTING THAT NOW, OLIVER. THESE TEST SCORES ARE AMAZING. IT'S JUST... REMARKABLE HOW QUICKLY YOU'VE MASTERED THIS.

POSSIBLY LONGER... YOUR AGING IS SLOWING CONSIDERABLY.

WITH THE PURPLE HUE OF YOUR SKIN FADING AS YOU GET OLDER... IN A FEW MONTHS YOU COULD PROBABLY GO TO COLLEGE.



YOU THINK I'LL BE AN ADULT SOON? I'VE DONE SOME MATH, TRYING TO EXTRAPOLATE THE RATE AT WHICH I'LL HIT CERTAIN AGES, BUT WITH MY PROGRESSION SLOWING AT SUCH AN ABRUPT RATE...

MY DATA IS KIND OF USELESS.

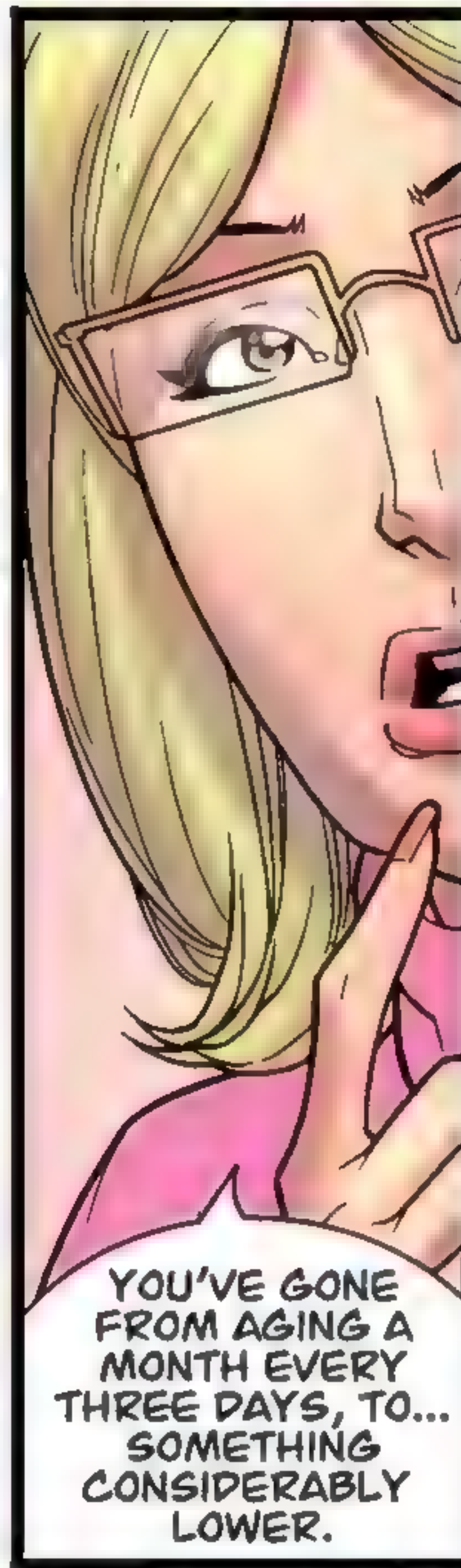
IT'S HARD TO SAY. WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVED, THERE WERE CHANGES DAILY... I COULD LITERALLY WATCH YOU GROWING OLDER.

THEN IT WAS WEEKS BEFORE I'D NOTICE A DIFFERENCE.

NOW MONTHS.

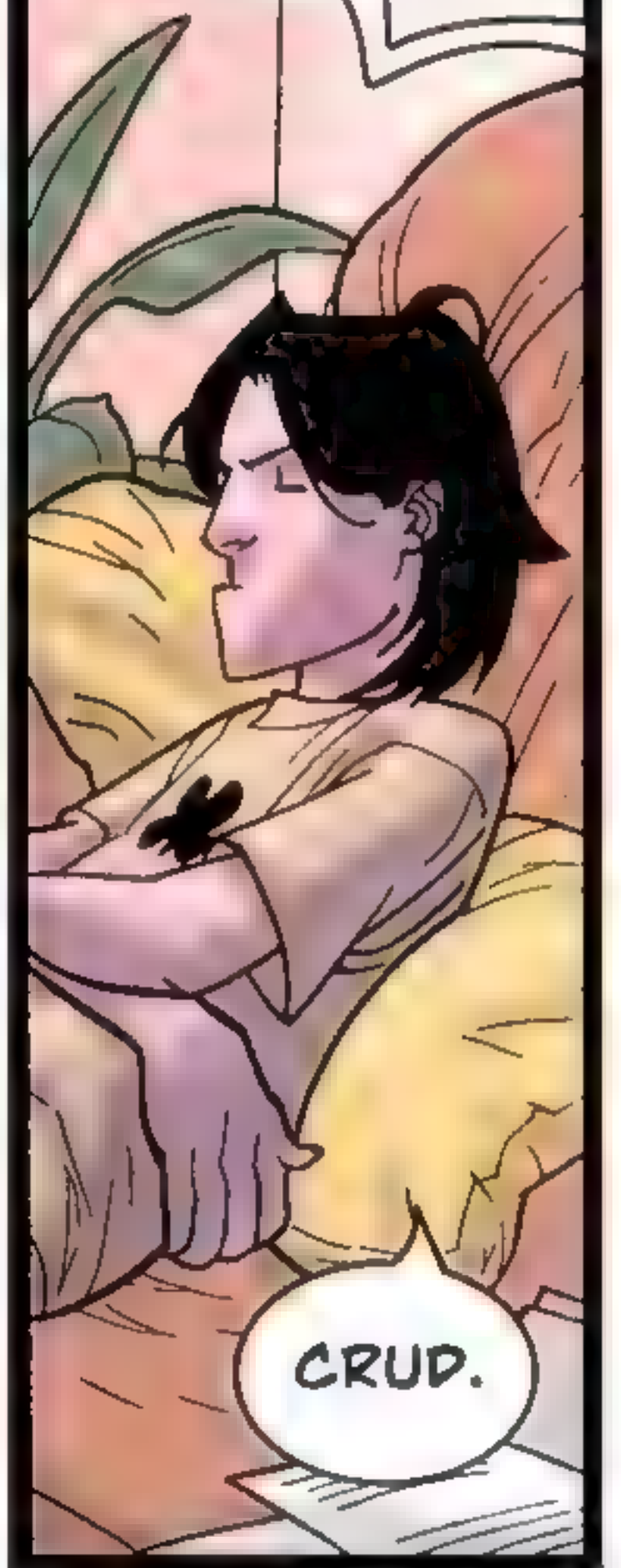
YOUR BROTHER'S POWERS DIDN'T EMERGE UNTIL LATE PUBERTY... MAYBE YOU'RE TRANSITIONING CLOSER TO VILTRUMITE AGE PROGRESSION.

AT BIRTH, YOU WERE AGING AT THE SAME RATE AS YOUR MOTHER'S PEOPLE... I DON'T BELIEVE YOU'LL EVER SLOW TO THE POINT OF VILTRUM AGING RATES... BUT YOU MAY SOON SEE YOURSELF AGING AS SLOW AS HUMANS, OR CLOSE TO IT.



YOU APPEAR TO BE FOURTEEN, MAYBE FIFTEEN NOW. IT COULD BE A YEAR OR EVEN TWO BEFORE YOU REACH ADULTHOOD.

CRUD.



WELL, I GUESS YOU ACTUALLY DIDN'T NEED MY HELP, THEN?

I'LL BE IN MY ROOM.



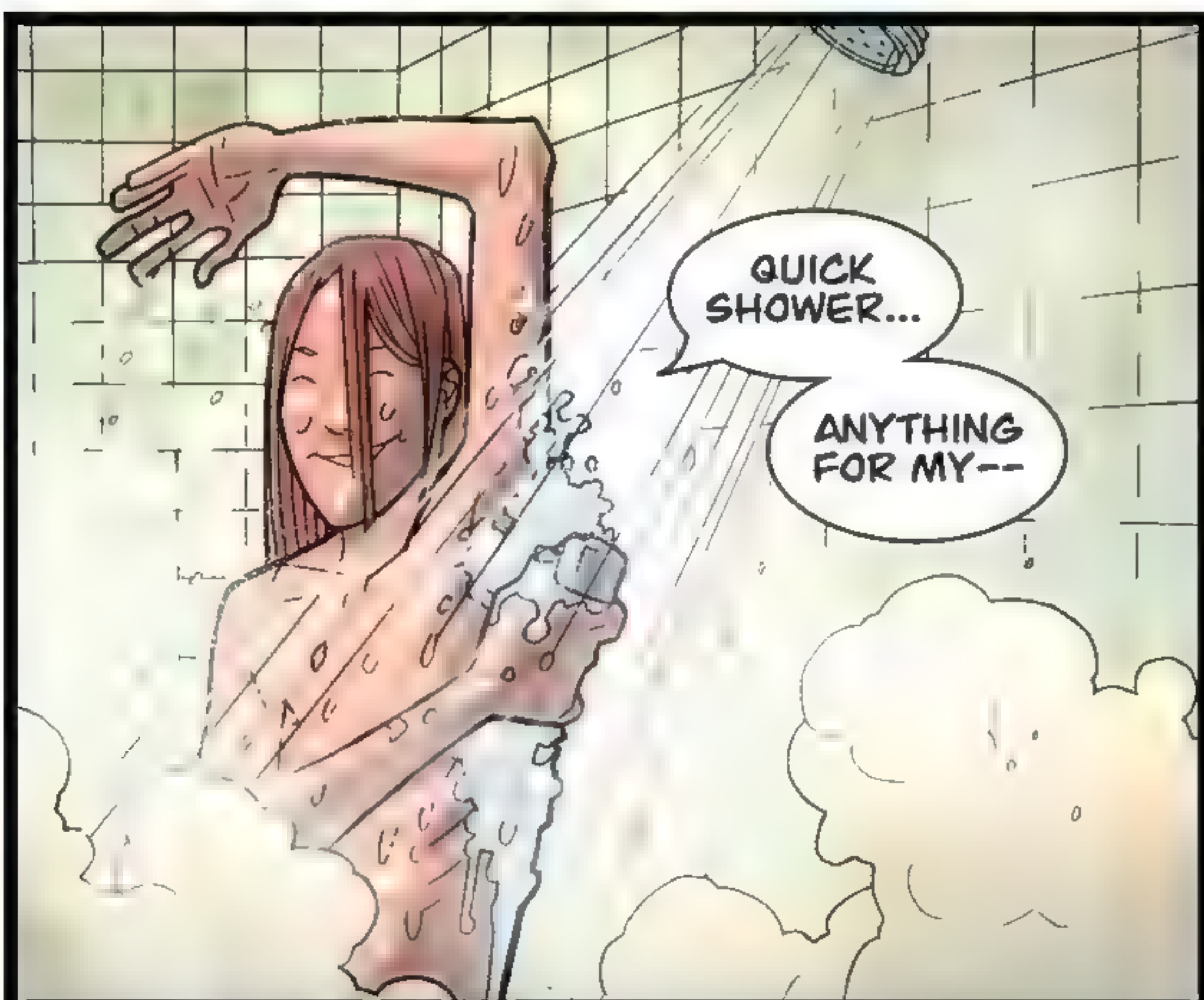
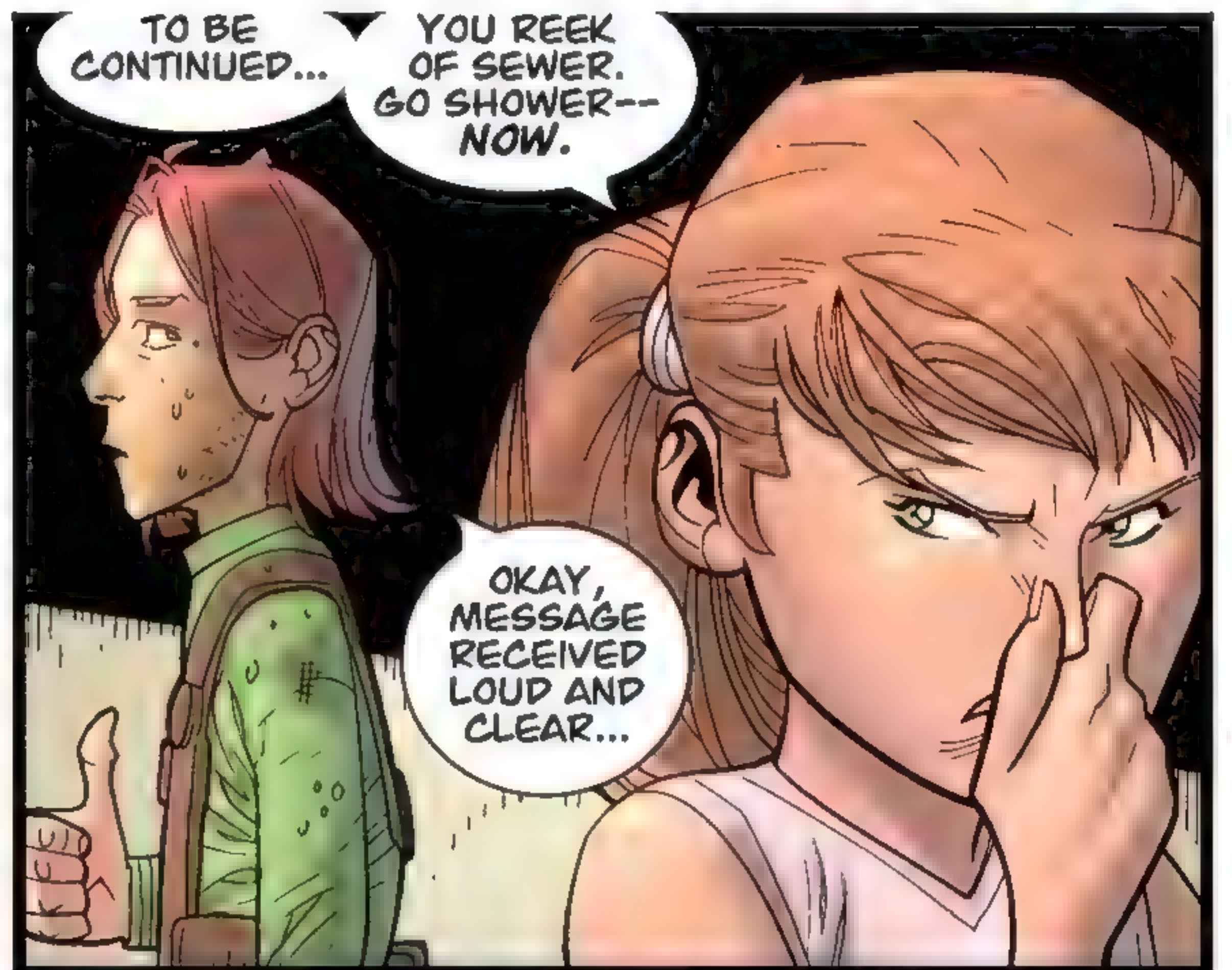
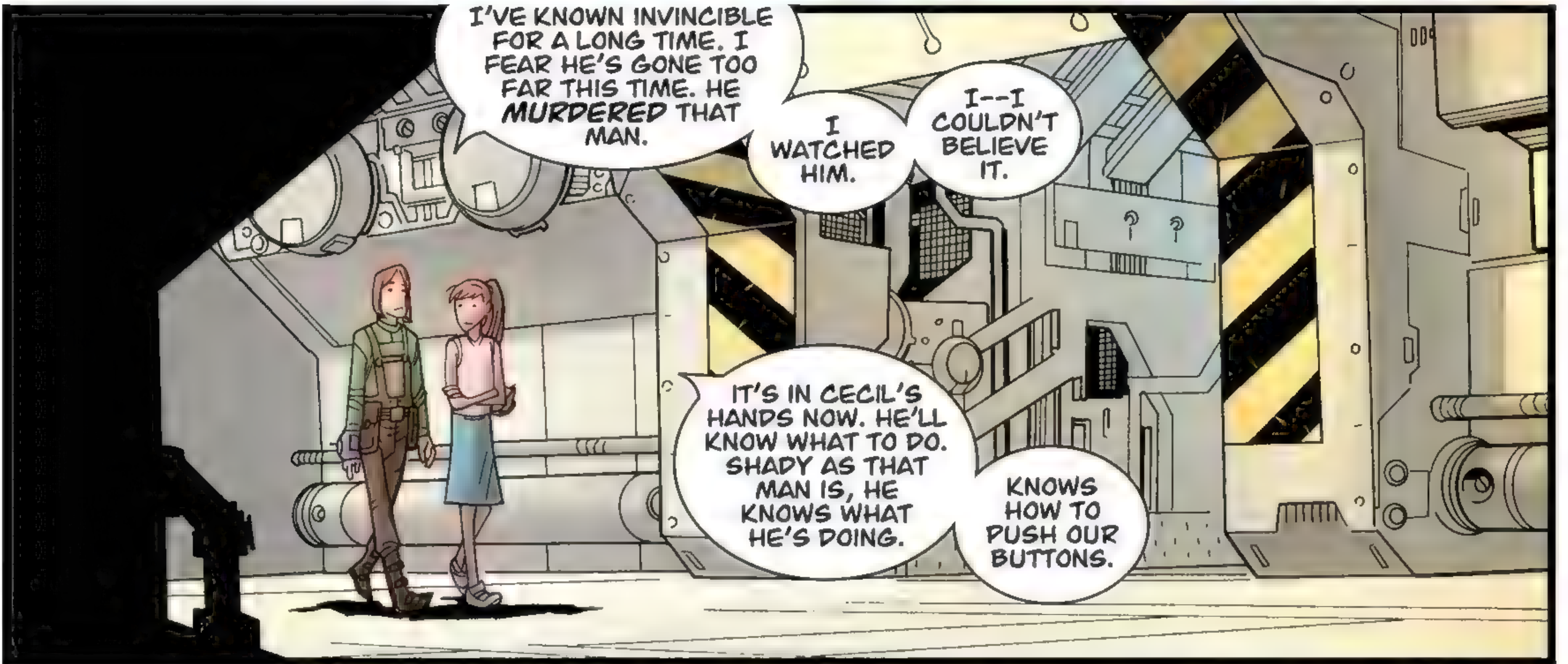
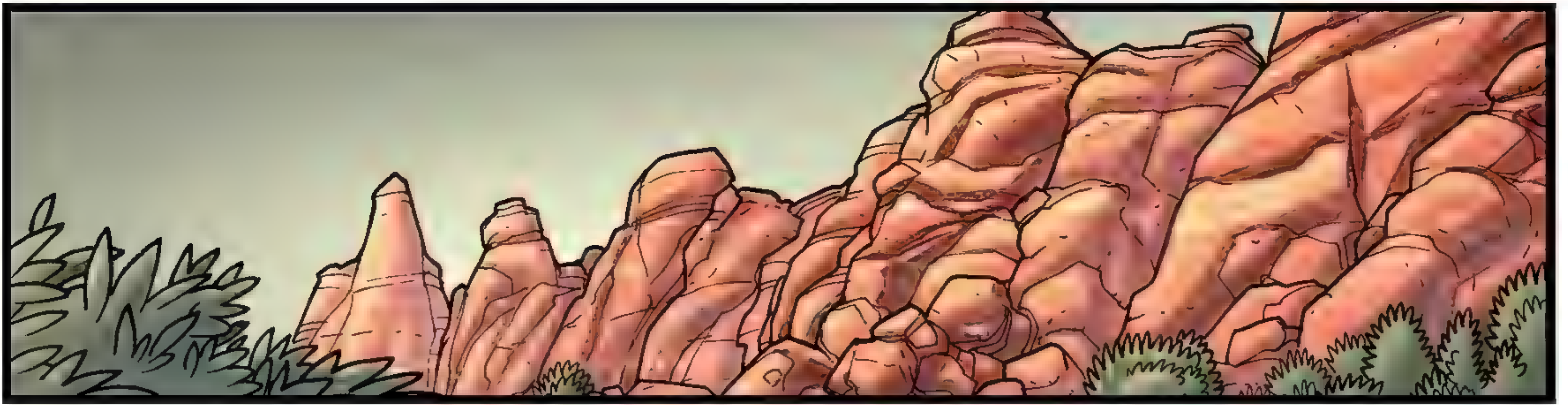
WHAT WAS THAT? YOU GUYS AREN'T FIGHTING AGAIN, ARE YOU?

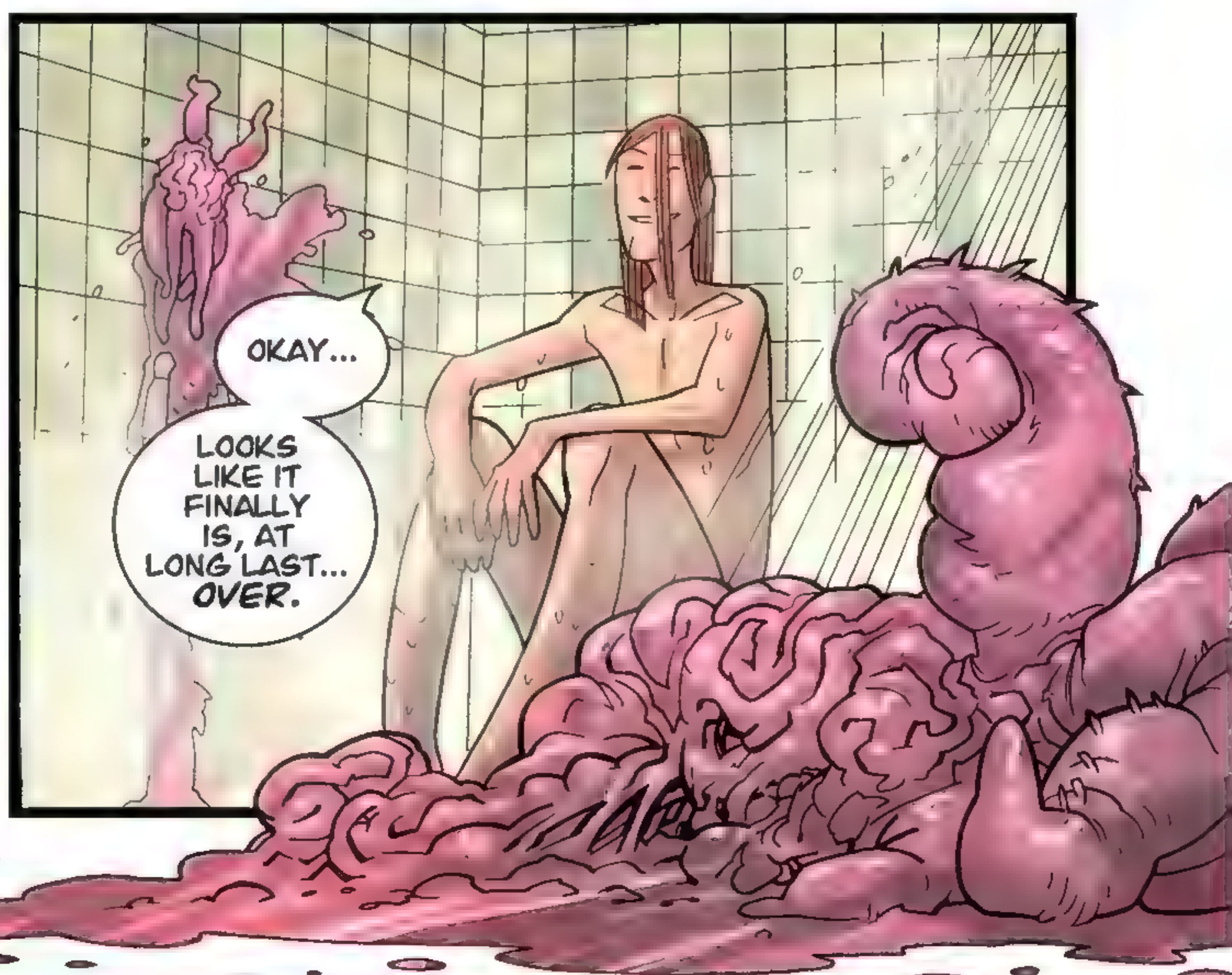
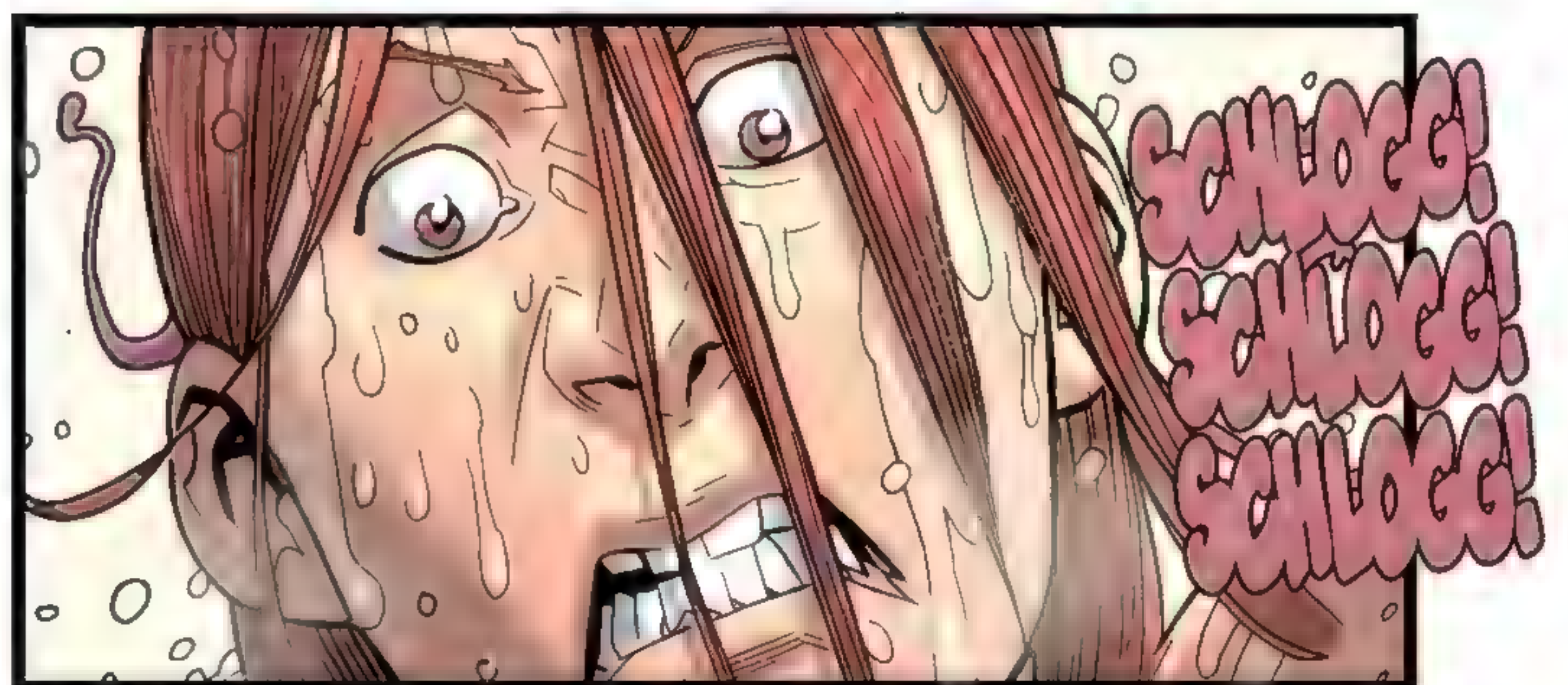
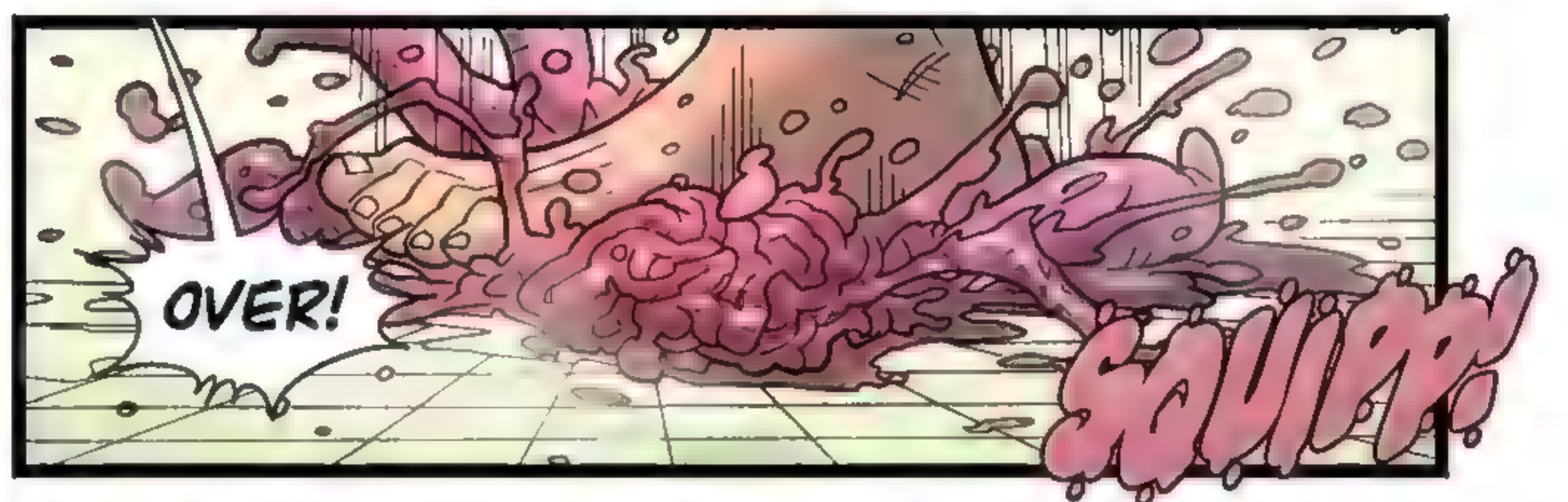
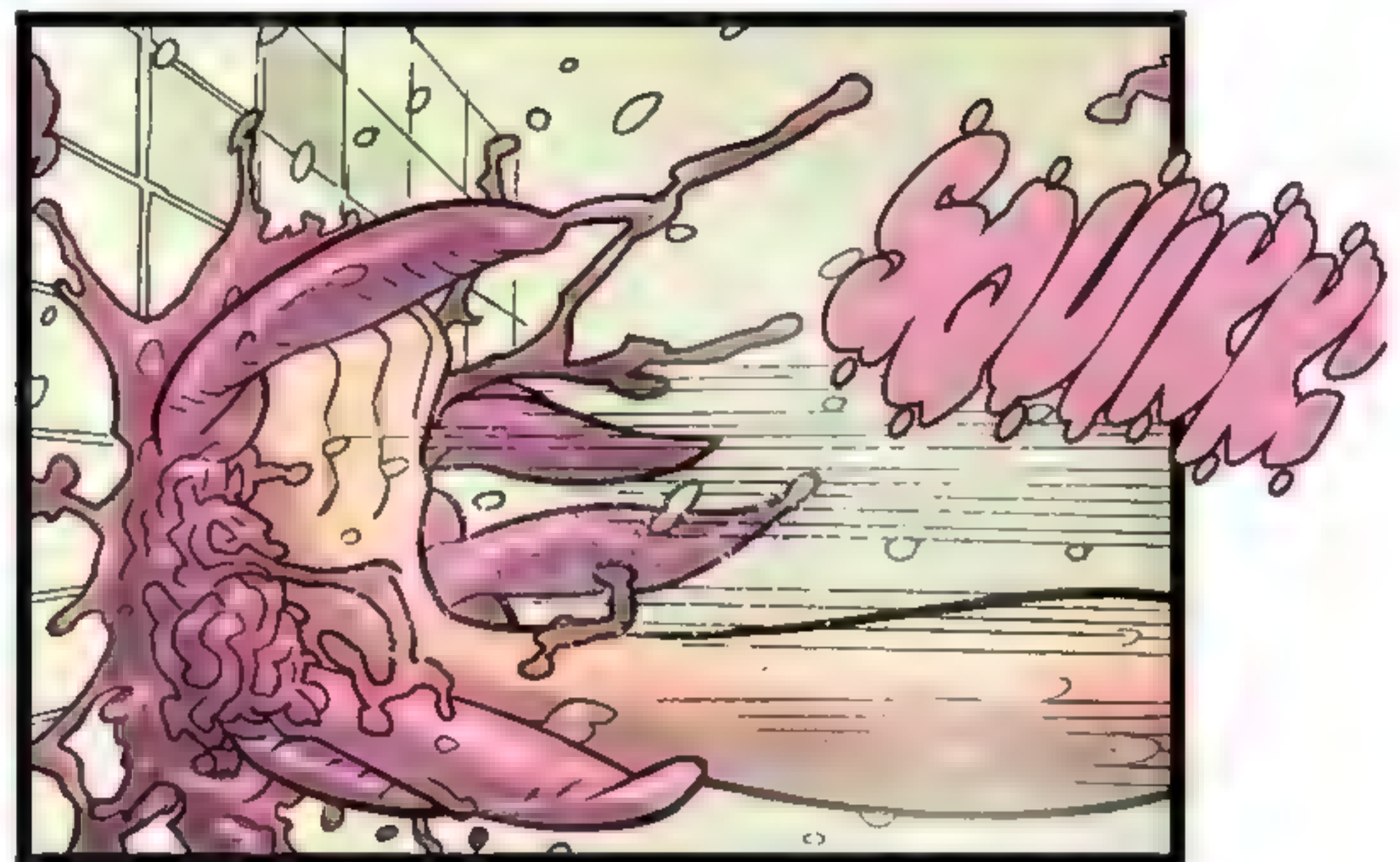
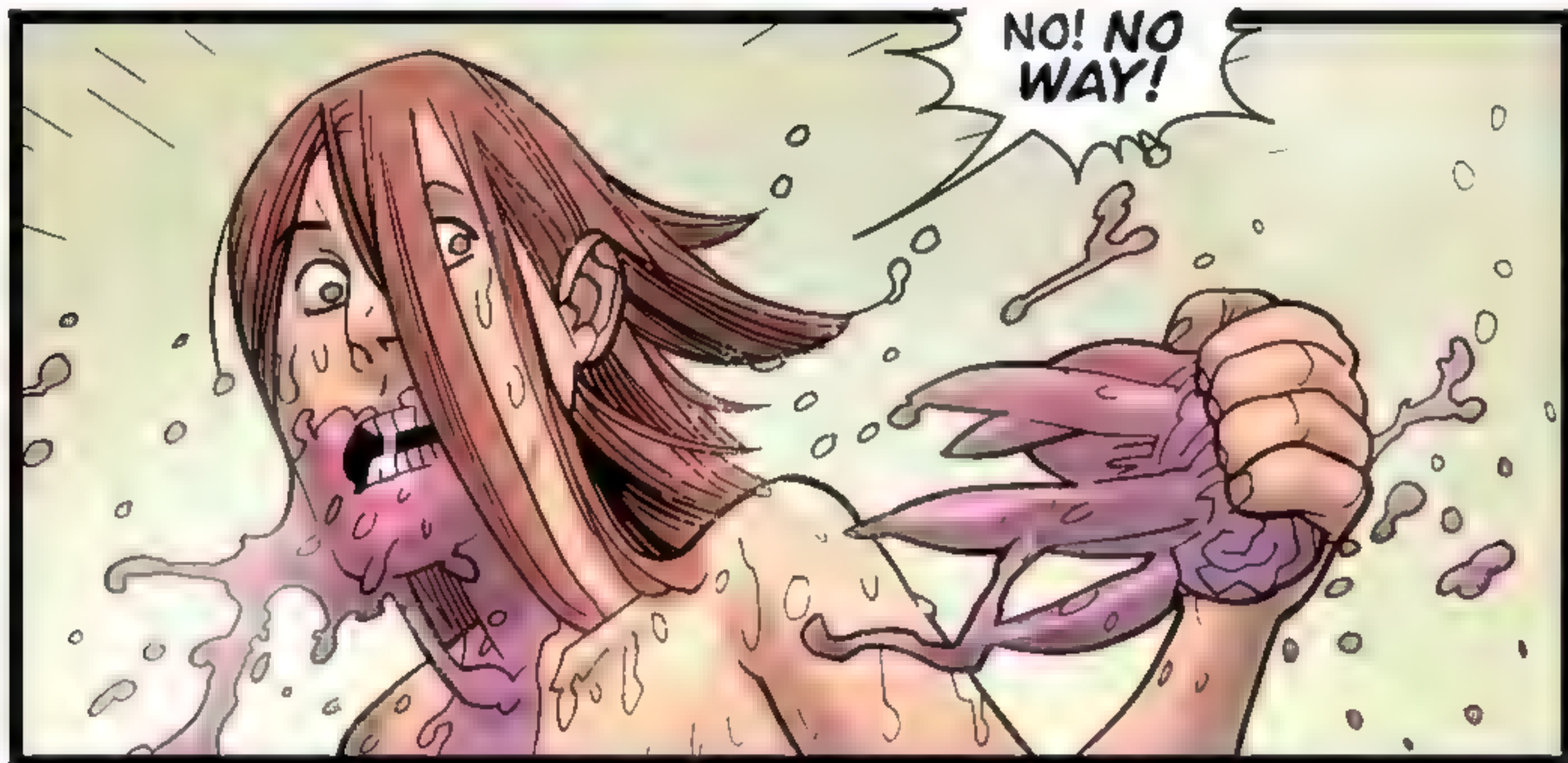


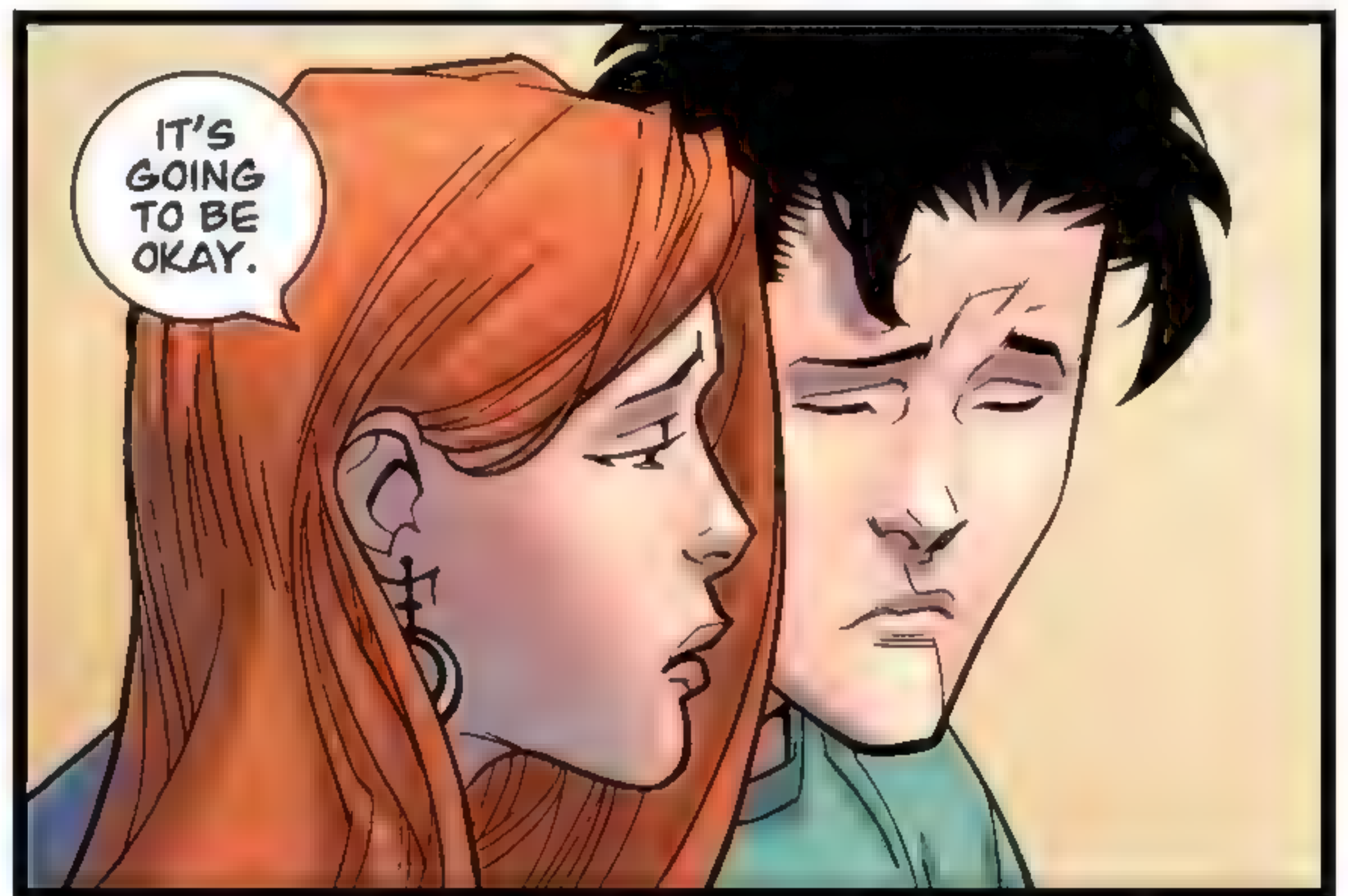
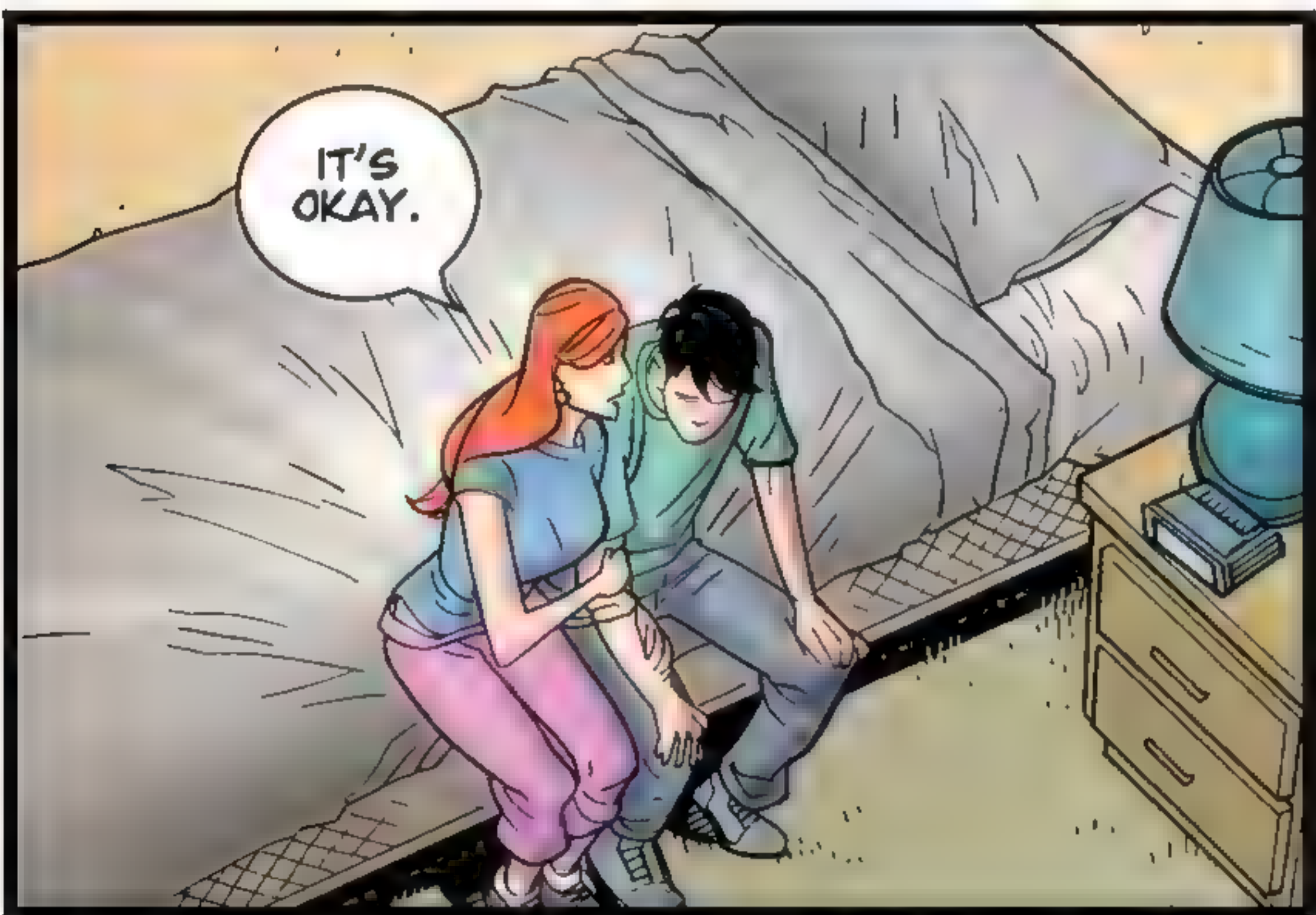
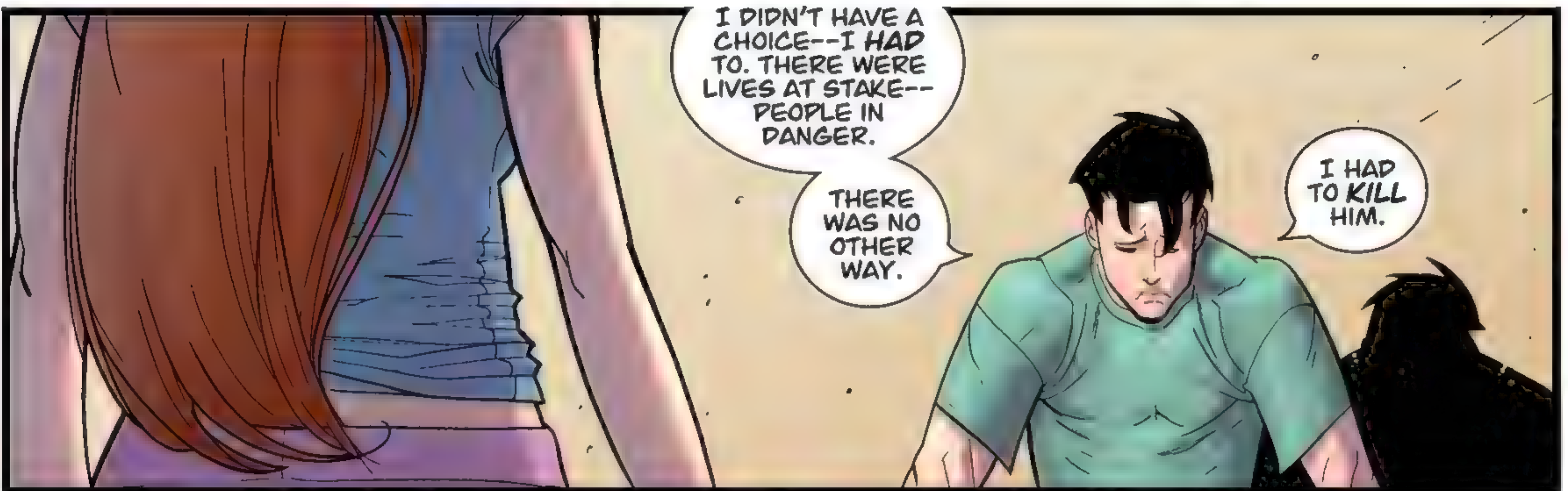
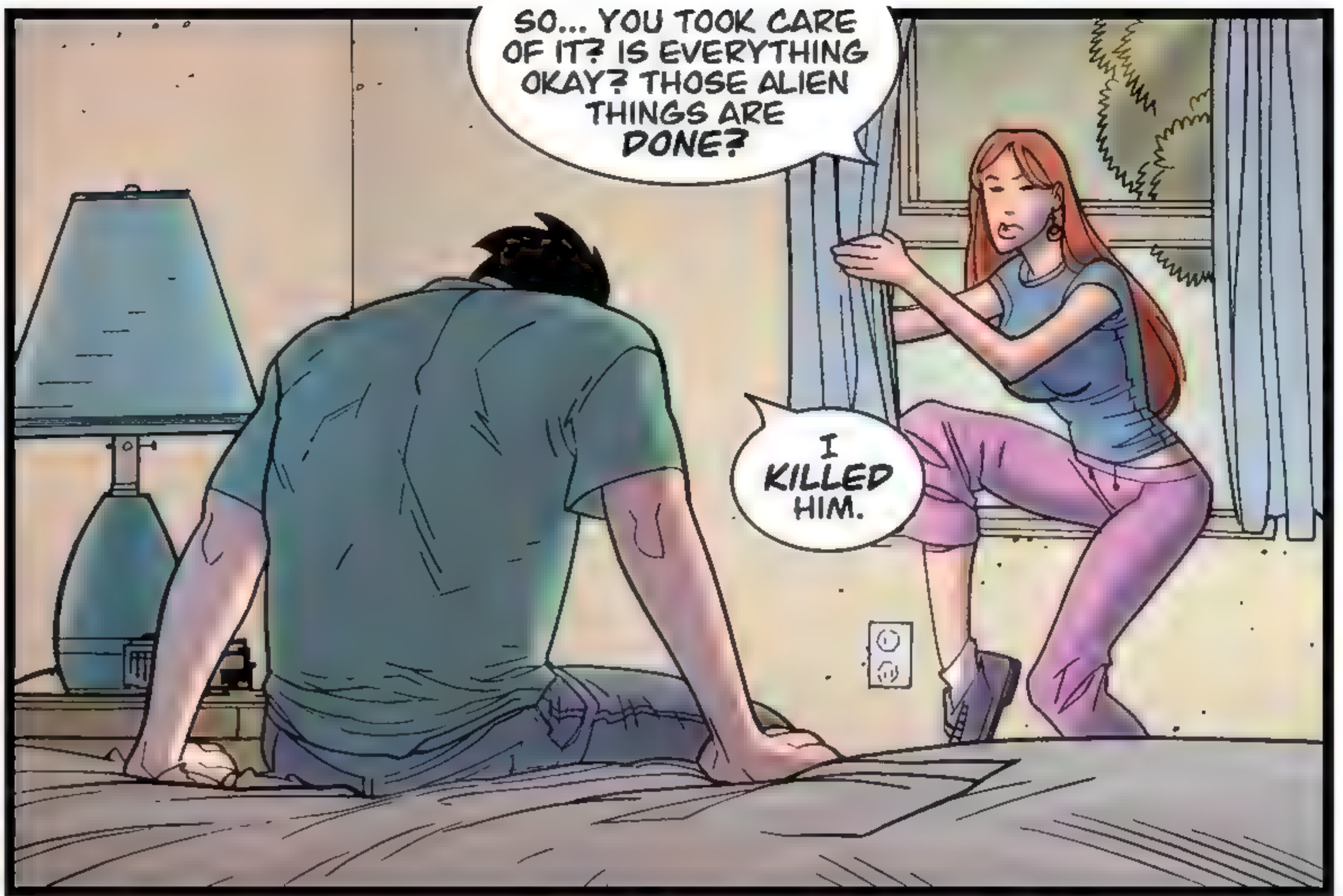
NO. WHO KNOWS WHAT'S WRONG... IT'S ALWAYS SOMETHING WITH HIM.

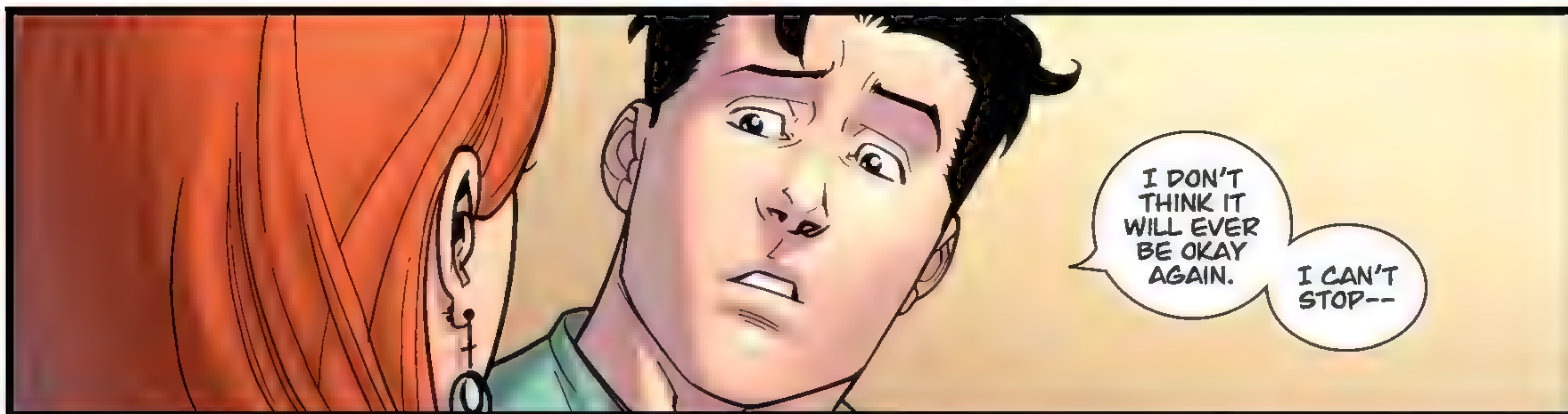
DRAMA, DRAMA, DRAMA.











I DON'T
THINK IT
WILL EVER
BE OKAY
AGAIN.

I CAN'T
STOP--



LOOK,
MARK...

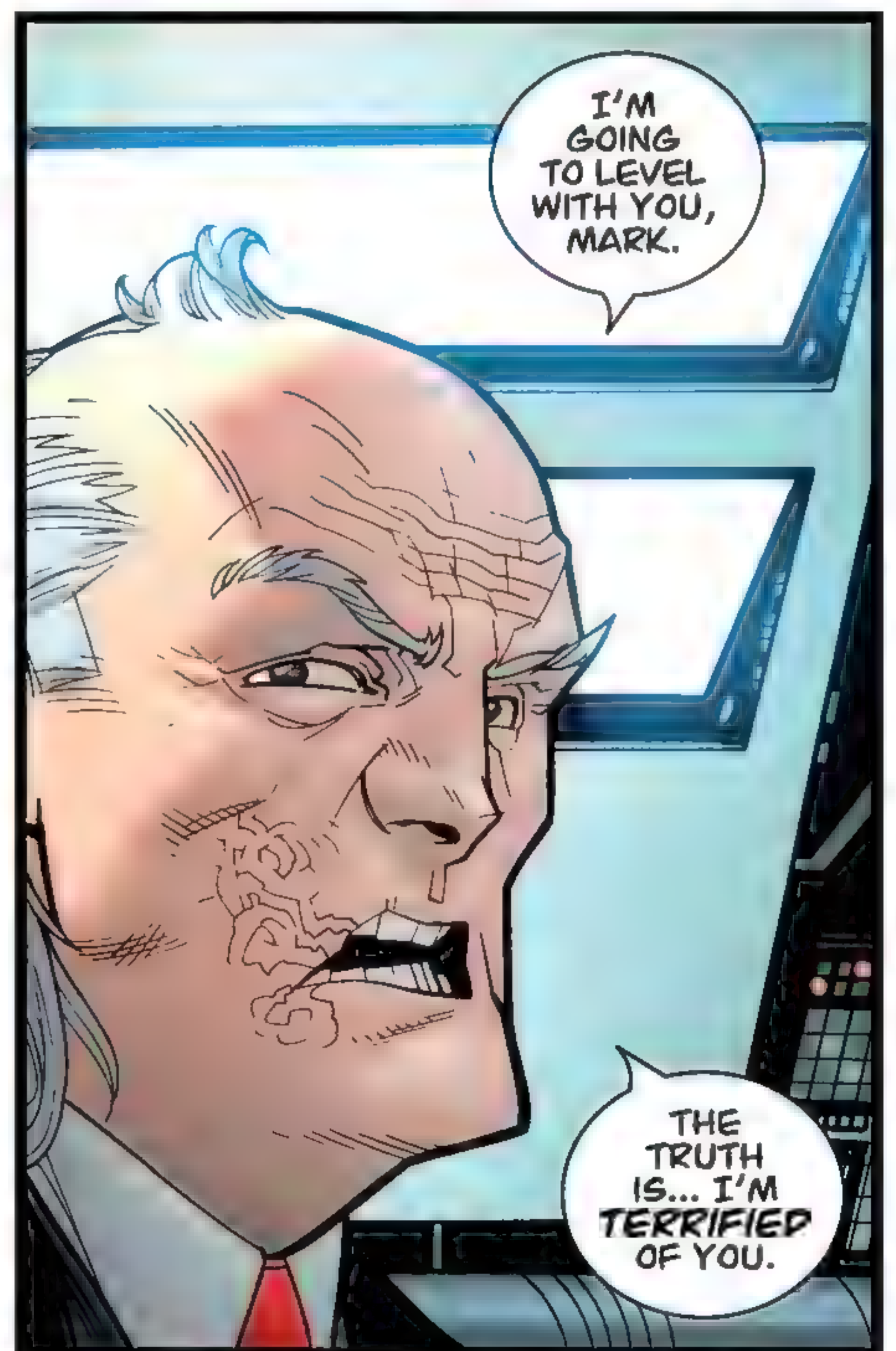
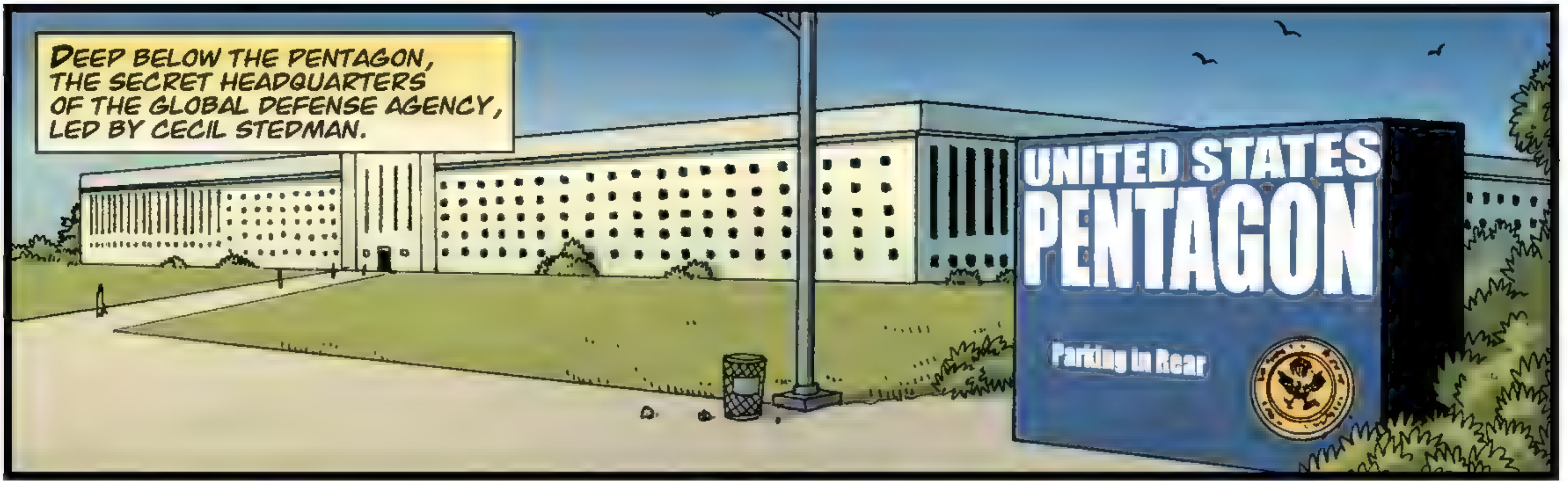
I KNOW
WE'VE HAD OUR
DIFFERENCES IN
THE PAST, BUT IN
LIGHT OF YOUR
RECENT ACTIONS...
WE REALLY NEED
TO TALK.

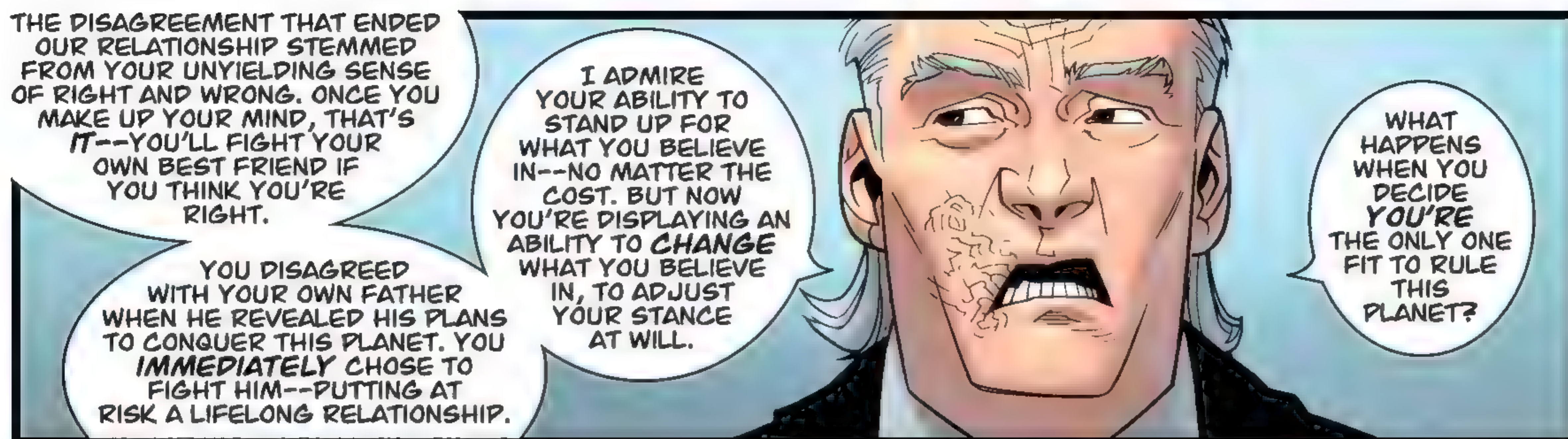


INVINCIBLE RETURNS I



FINCH 2009



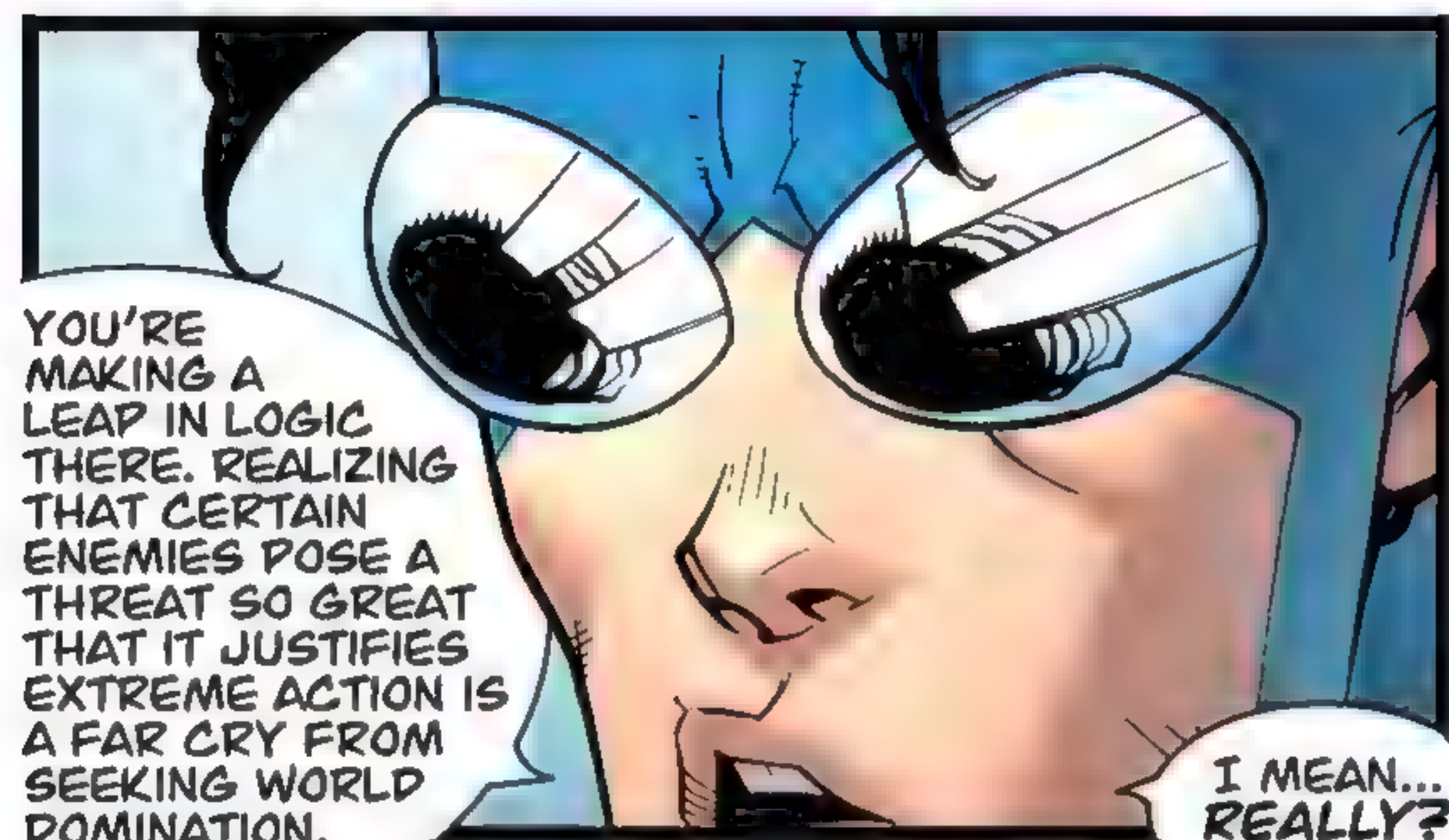


THE DISAGREEMENT THAT ENDED OUR RELATIONSHIP STEMMED FROM YOUR UNYIELDING SENSE OF RIGHT AND WRONG. ONCE YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND, THAT'S IT--YOU'LL FIGHT YOUR OWN BEST FRIEND IF YOU THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.

I ADMIRE YOUR ABILITY TO STAND UP FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN--NO MATTER THE COST. BUT NOW YOU'RE DISPLAYING AN ABILITY TO **CHANGE** WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN, TO ADJUST YOUR STANCE AT WILL.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DECIDE **YOU'RE** THE ONLY ONE FIT TO RULE THIS PLANET?

YOU DISAGREED WITH YOUR OWN FATHER WHEN HE REVEALED HIS PLANS TO CONQUER THIS PLANET. YOU **IMMEDIATELY** CHOSE TO FIGHT HIM--PUTTING AT RISK A LIFELONG RELATIONSHIP.



YOU'RE MAKING A LEAP IN LOGIC THERE. REALIZING THAT CERTAIN ENEMIES POSE A THREAT SO GREAT THAT IT JUSTIFIES EXTREME ACTION IS A FAR CRY FROM SEEKING WORLD DOMINATION.

I MEAN... REALLY?



HOLD THAT THOUGHT. SINCLAIR, ARE YOU READY TO RECEIVE US?



GIVE ME ANOTHER THIRTY SECONDS AND WE'LL BE CLEAR.

WHY DOES HE WANT ME HERE FOR THIS?

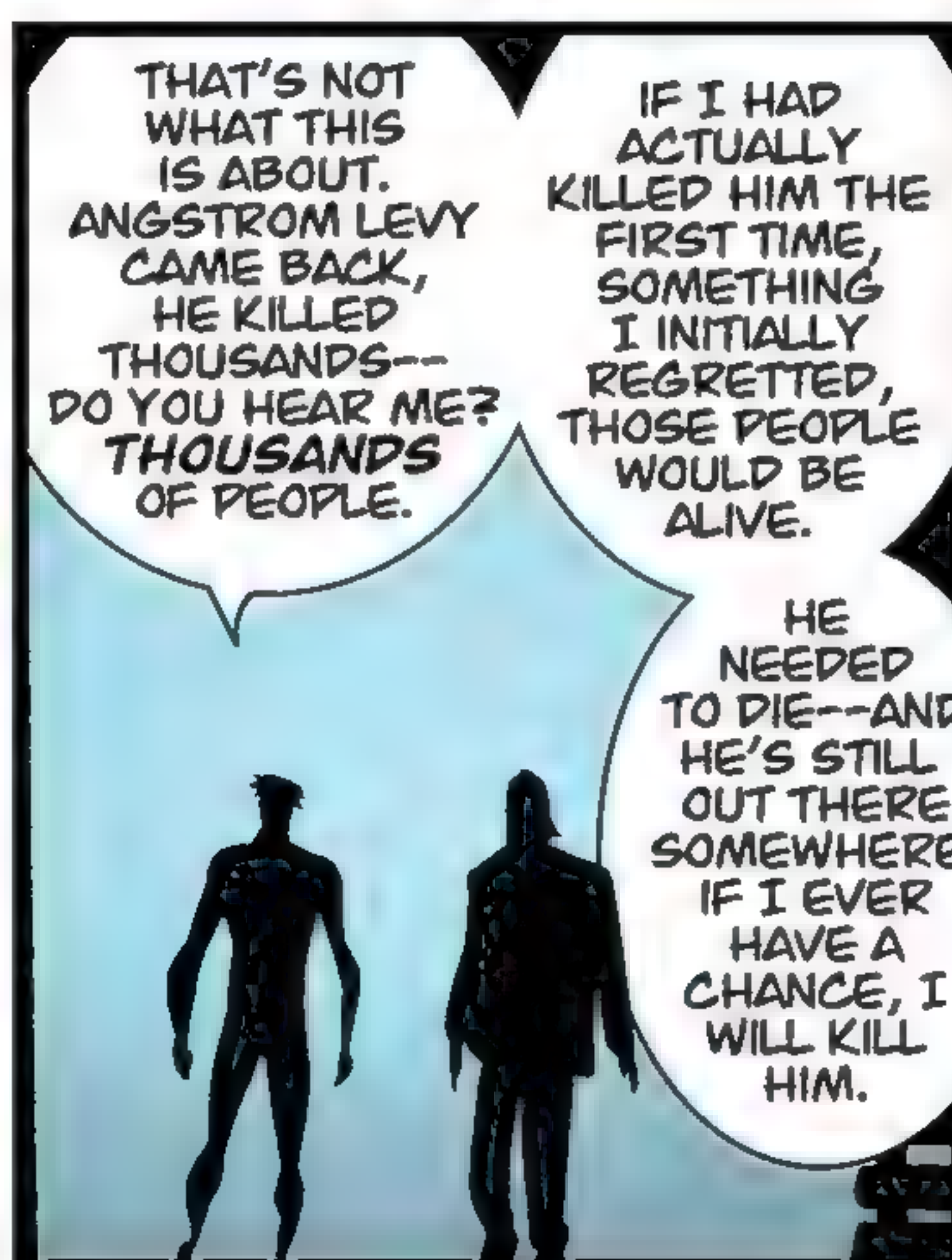
I HAVE NO IDEA. HELP ME GET THESE CANISTERS CLOSED. HE WANTS THEM HIDDEN FOR SOME REASON.



YOUR TEMPER GETS THE BETTER OF YOU MORE TIMES THAN I WOULD LIKE. IT'S BRED INTO YOU--IN YOUR BLOOD.

YOU ARE A **VILTRUMITE**, THAT APPEARS TO COME WITH A GOOD DEAL OF BUILT-IN AGGRESSION.

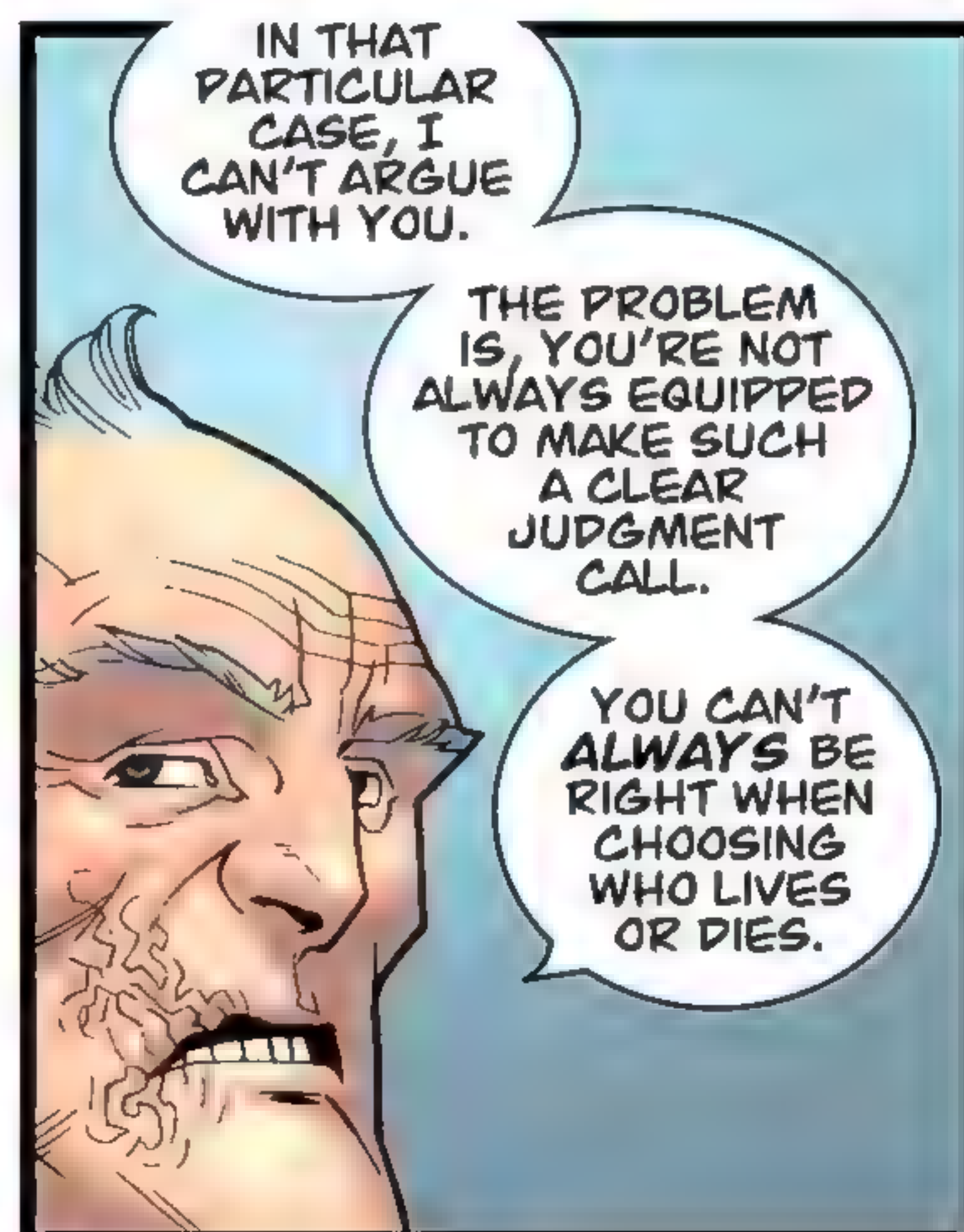
WE'VE DISCUSSED THIS, I KNOW THIS IS A CONCERN YOU SHARE.



THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT. **ANGSTROM LEVY** CAME BACK, HE KILLED THOUSANDS--DO YOU HEAR ME? **THOUSANDS** OF PEOPLE.

IF I HAD ACTUALLY KILLED HIM THE FIRST TIME, SOMETHING I INITIALLY REGRETTED, THOSE PEOPLE WOULD BE ALIVE.

HE NEEDED TO DIE--AND HE'S STILL OUT THERE SOMEWHERE. IF I EVER HAVE A CHANCE, I WILL KILL HIM.



IN THAT PARTICULAR CASE, I CAN'T ARGUE WITH YOU.

THE PROBLEM IS, YOU'RE NOT ALWAYS EQUIPPED TO MAKE SUCH A CLEAR JUDGMENT CALL.

YOU CAN'T ALWAYS BE RIGHT WHEN CHOOSING WHO LIVES OR DIES.

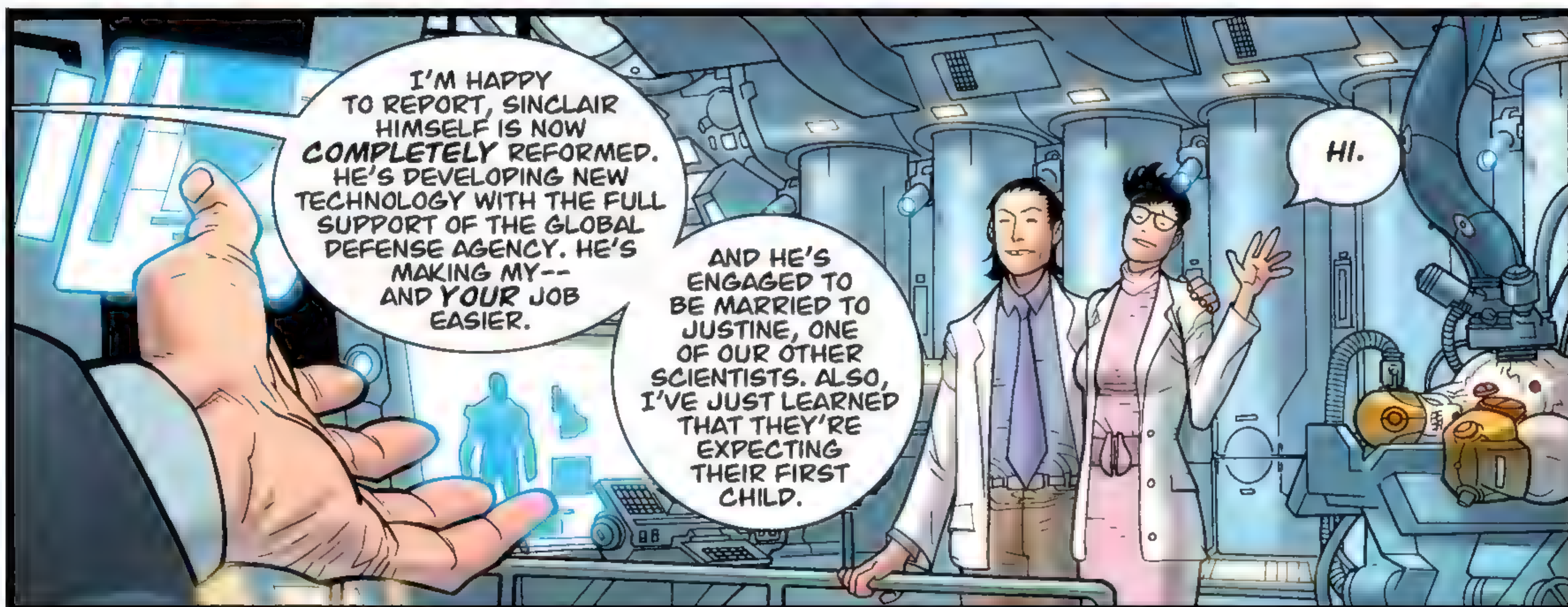
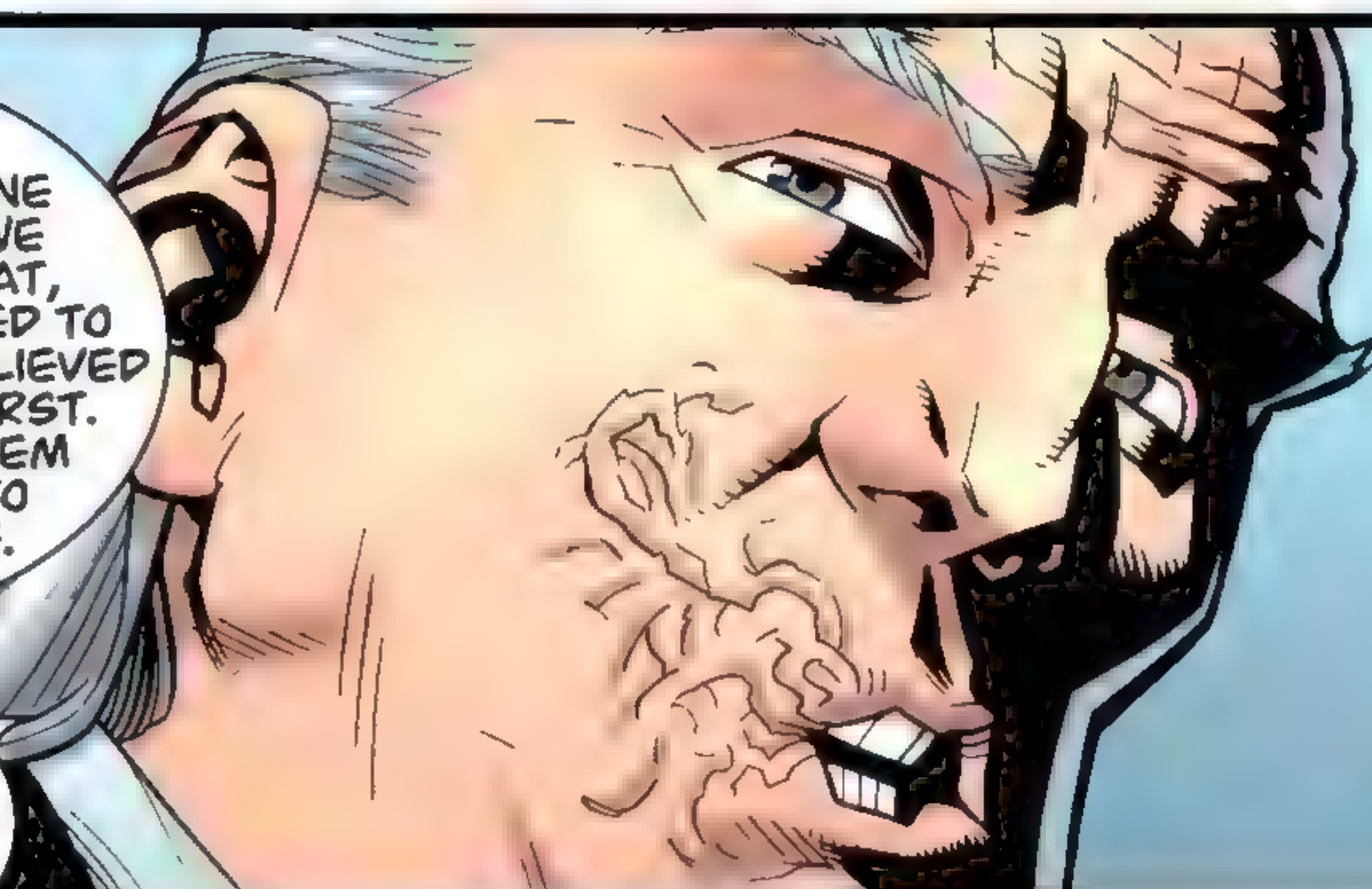


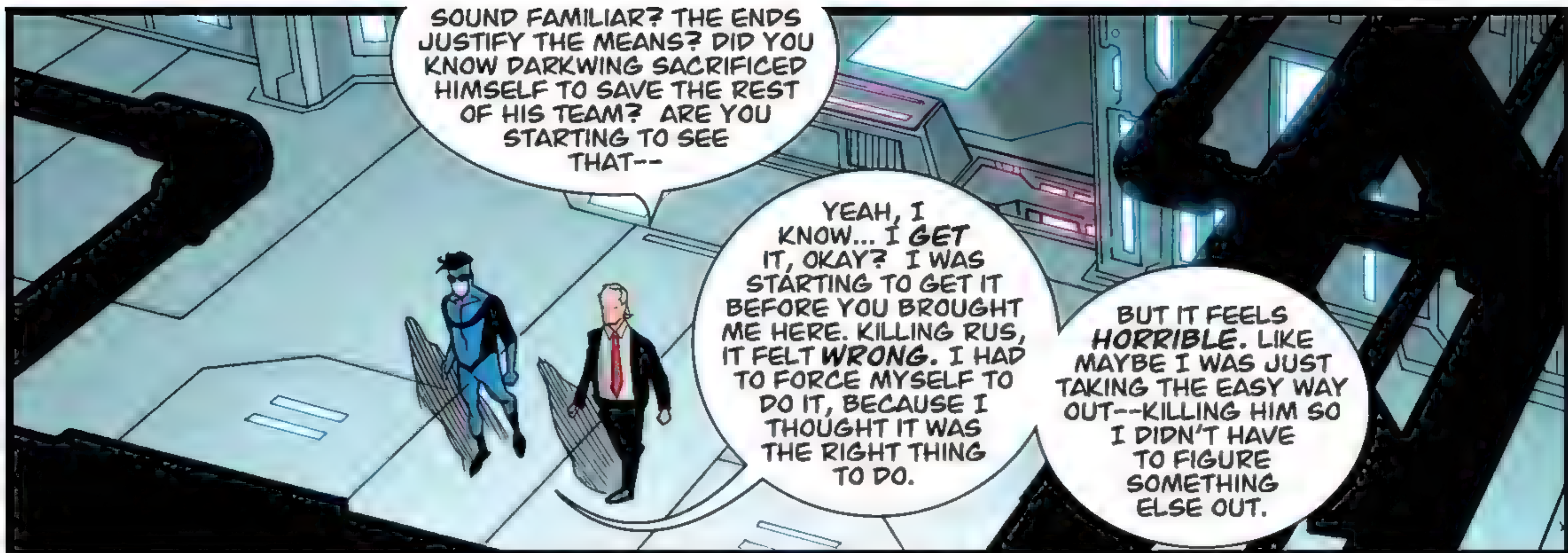
THIS IS A **LEARNING** EXPERIENCE. D.A. SINCLAIR, HE WAS DEVELOPING HIS REANIMEN TECHNOLOGY WHILE ATTENDING UPSTATE UNIVERSITY. HE EXPERIMENTED ON THE HOMELESS PEOPLE IN THE AREA--EVEN A FEW STUDENTS.

NOW THAT THE TECHNOLOGY IS IN USE, THE REANIMEN TROOPS ARE SAVING **COUNTLESS** LIVES. BUILT ON CADAVERS NOW, THEY EACH TAKE THE PLACE OF **TWENTY** FOOT SOLDIERS.

HORRIFIC THINGS WERE DONE TO THOSE MEN, WE ALL AGREE ON THAT, BUT NO ONE LISTENED TO SINCLAIR, NO ONE BELIEVED HIS THEORIES AT FIRST. HE HAD TO PUT THEM INTO PRACTICE TO PROVE HIMSELF.

THEY'RE MAKING THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE.





SOUND FAMILIAR? THE ENDS JUSTIFY THE MEANS? DID YOU KNOW DARKWING SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO SAVE THE REST OF HIS TEAM? ARE YOU STARTING TO SEE THAT--

YEAH, I KNOW... I GET IT, OKAY? I WAS STARTING TO GET IT BEFORE YOU BROUGHT ME HERE. KILLING RUS, IT FELT WRONG. I HAD TO FORCE MYSELF TO DO IT, BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

BUT IT FEELS HORRIBLE. LIKE MAYBE I WAS JUST TAKING THE EASY WAY OUT--KILLING HIM SO I DIDN'T HAVE TO FIGURE SOMETHING ELSE OUT.



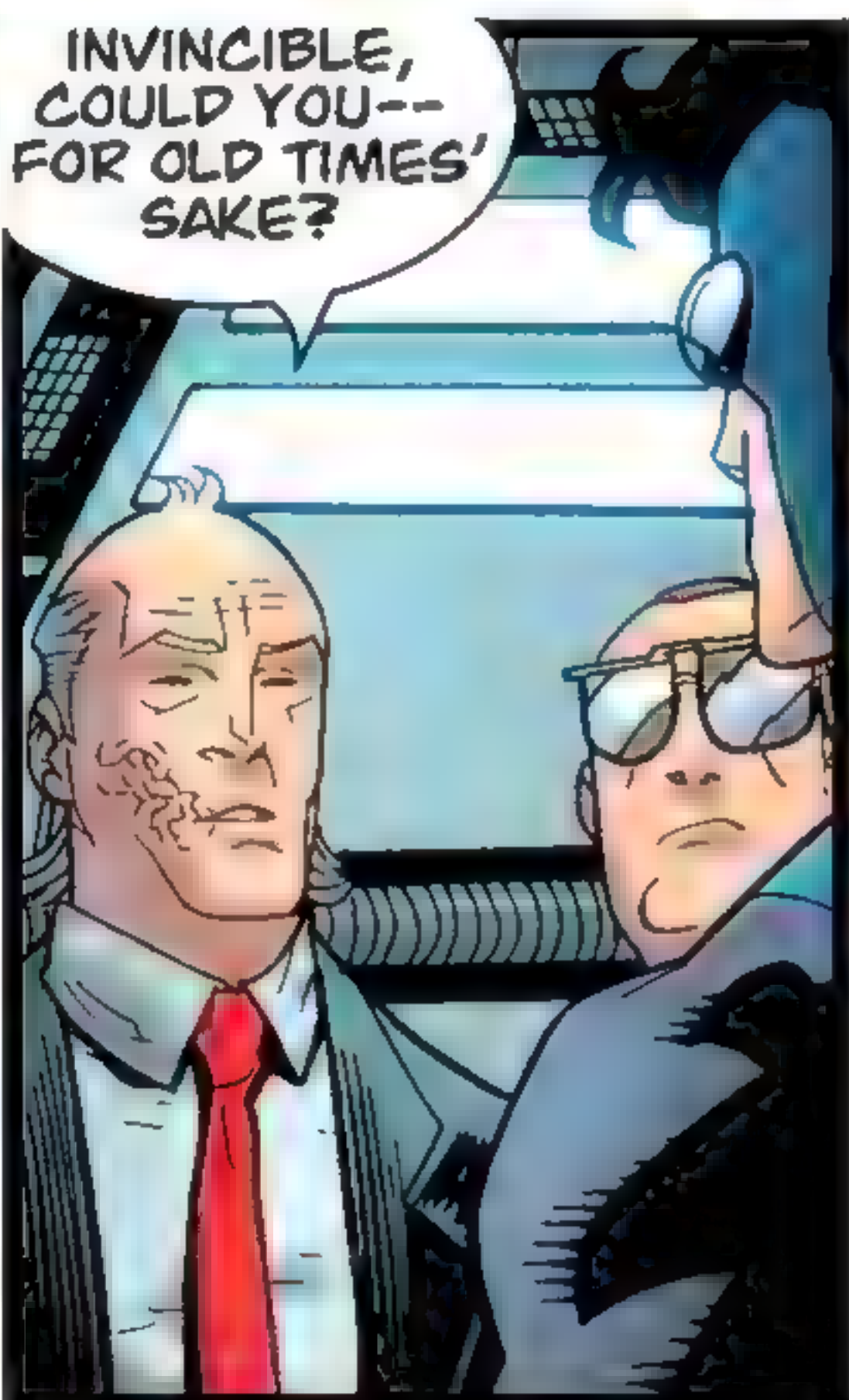
I GET WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, KILLING IS ALMOST NEVER JUSTIFIED. OTHERWISE, I'M JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHER VILTRUMITES. YOU KNOW I DON'T WANT THAT.

THESE LAST FEW MONTHS HAVE BEEN HARD ON ME-- IT'S GOT ME ALL TURNED AROUND. I'LL BE THE FIRST TO ADMIT I LOST MY WAY.

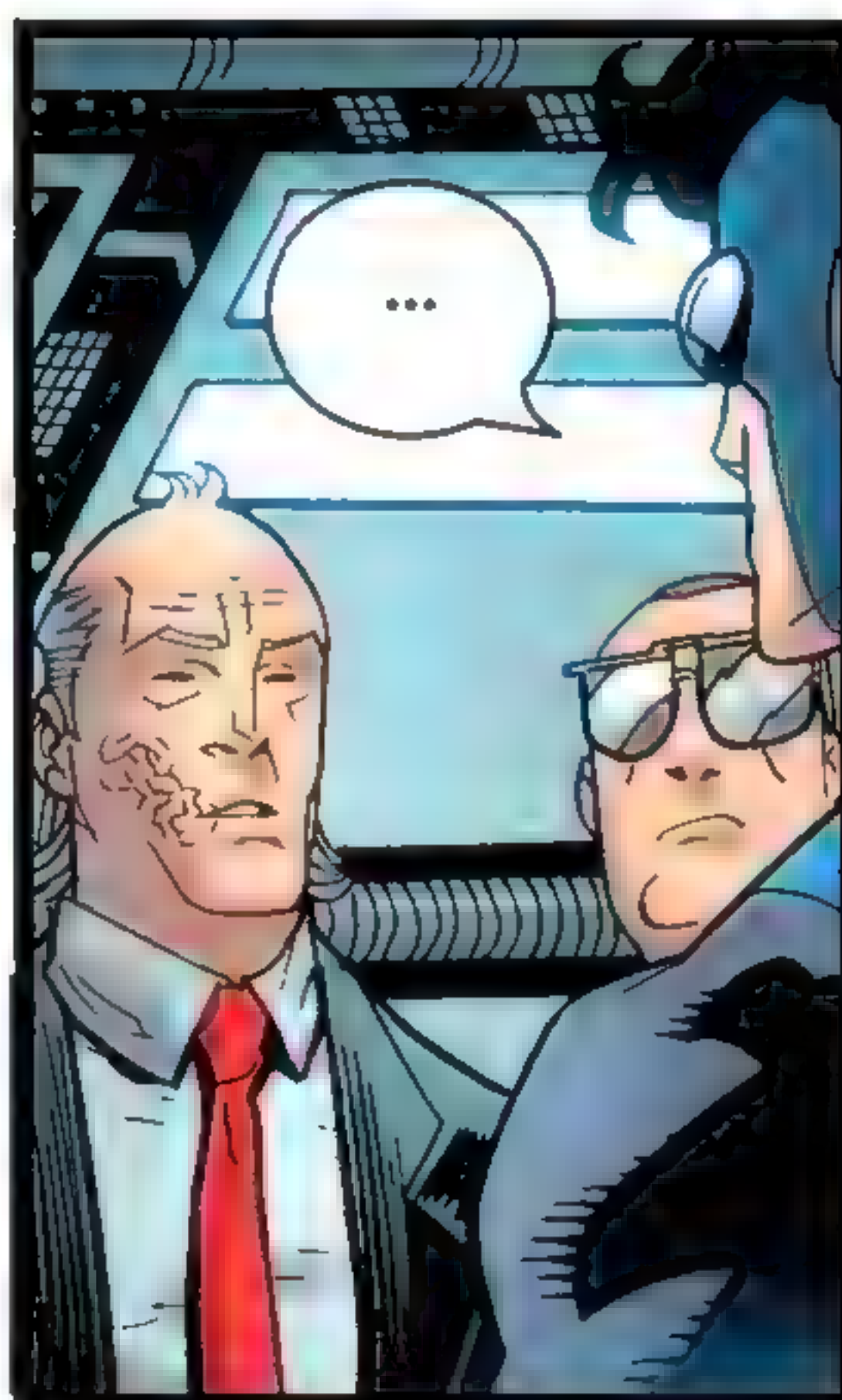
THANK YOU FOR ADMITTING THAT. LOOK, I KNOW THIS ISN'T GOING TO REPAIR OUR RELATIONSHIP OVERNIGHT, BUT IF--



WE'VE GOT A SITUATION IN NEW YORK. LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO SEND SOMEONE IN.



INVINCIBLE, COULD YOU-- FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE?



...



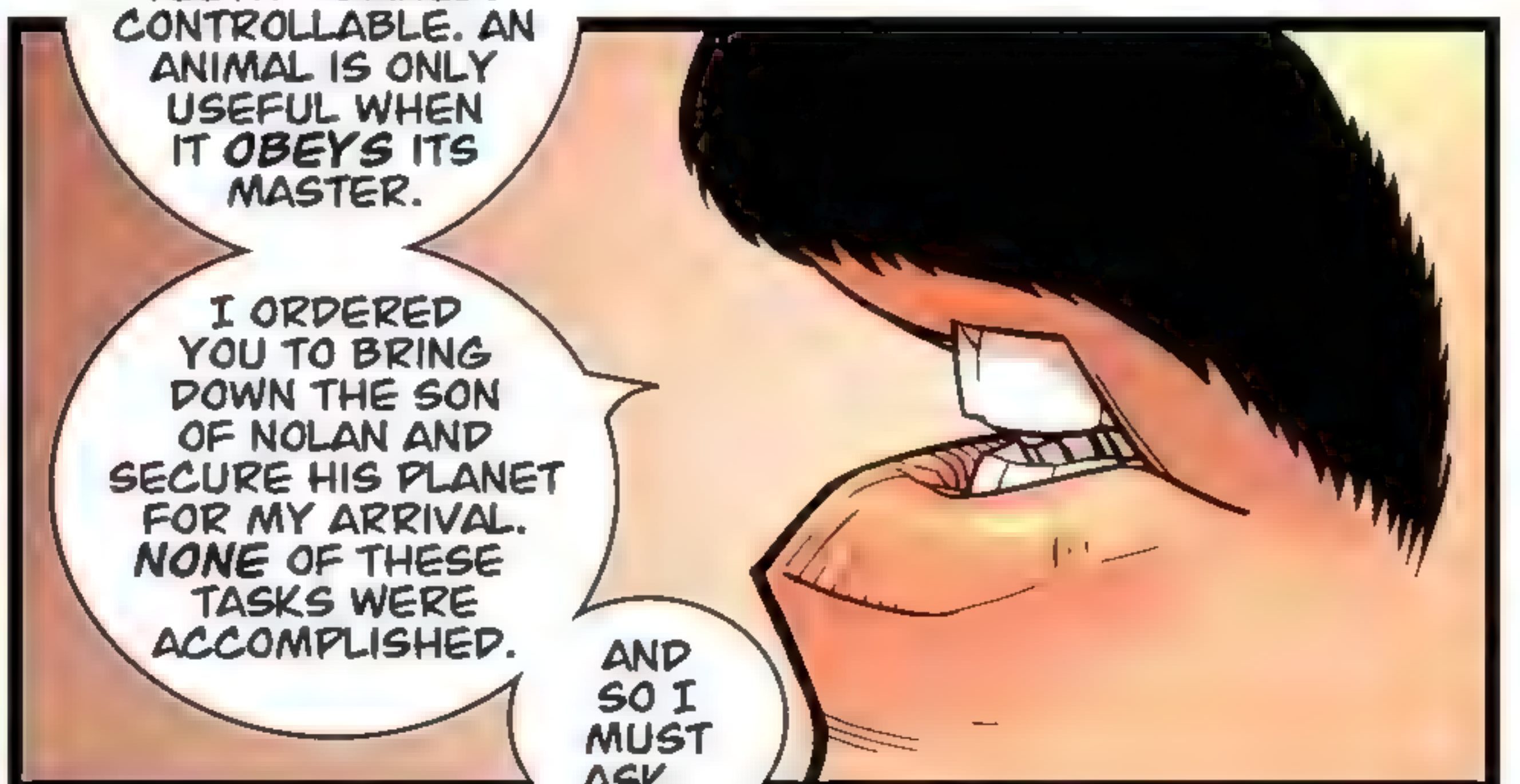
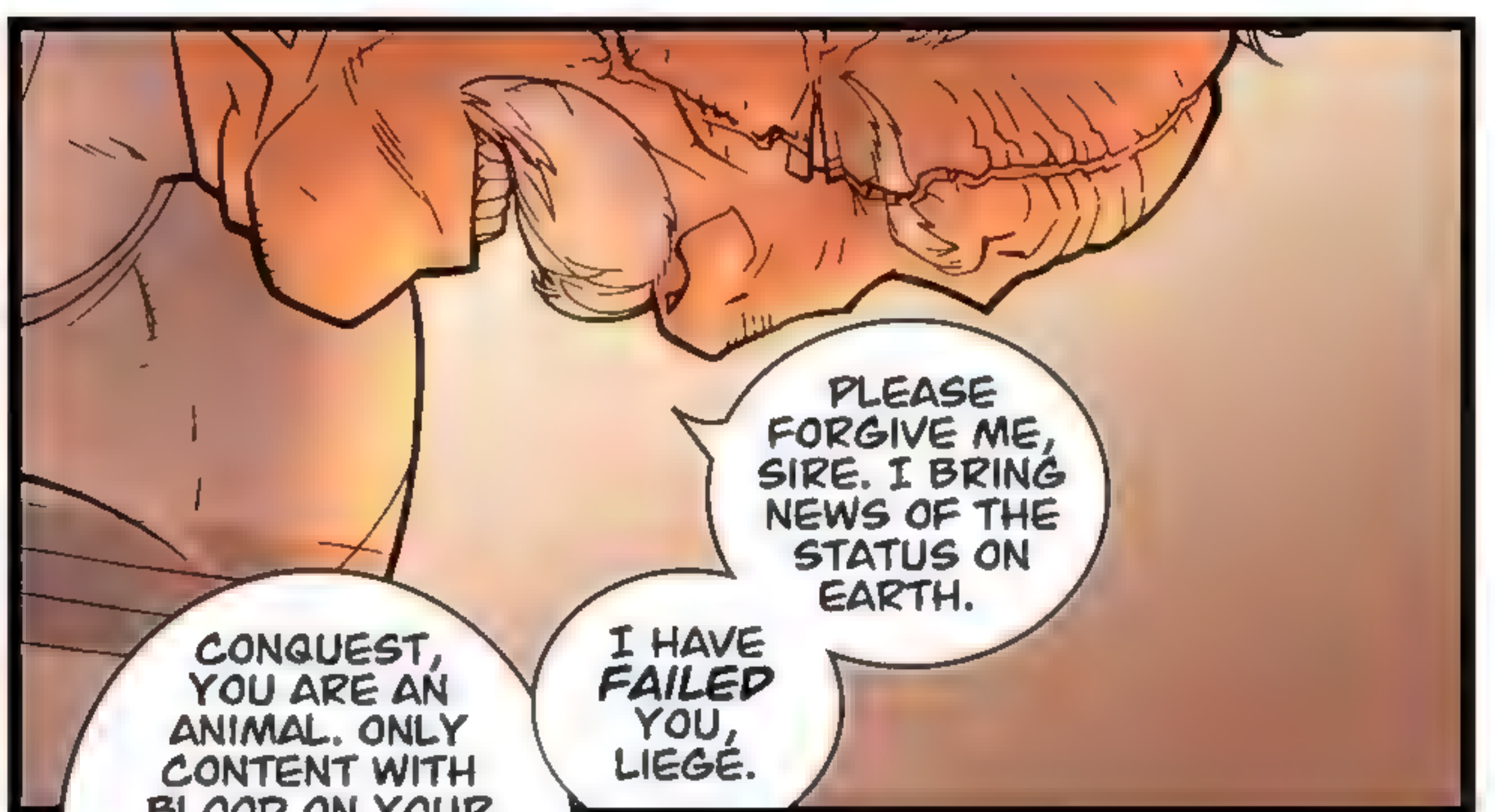
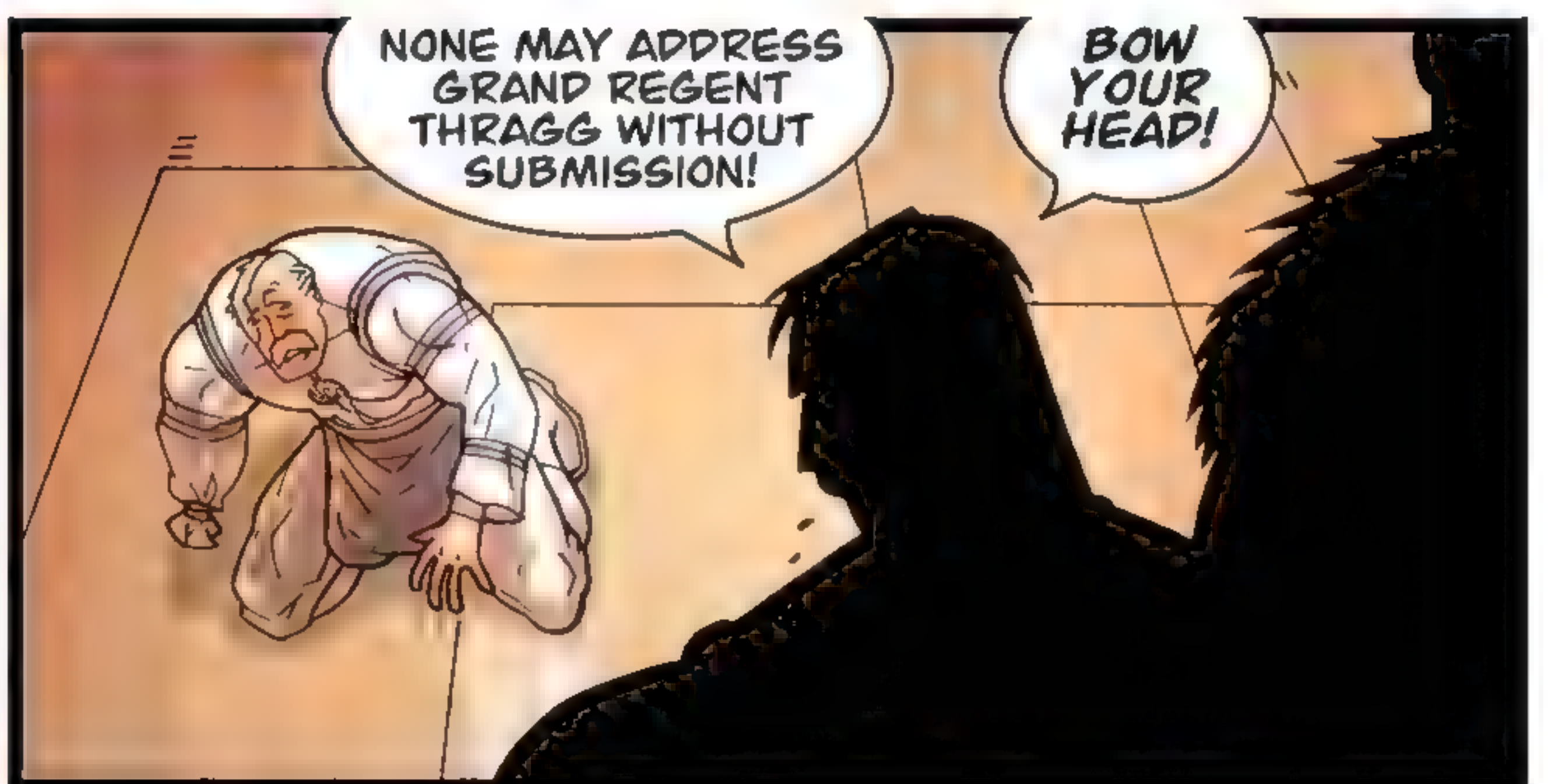
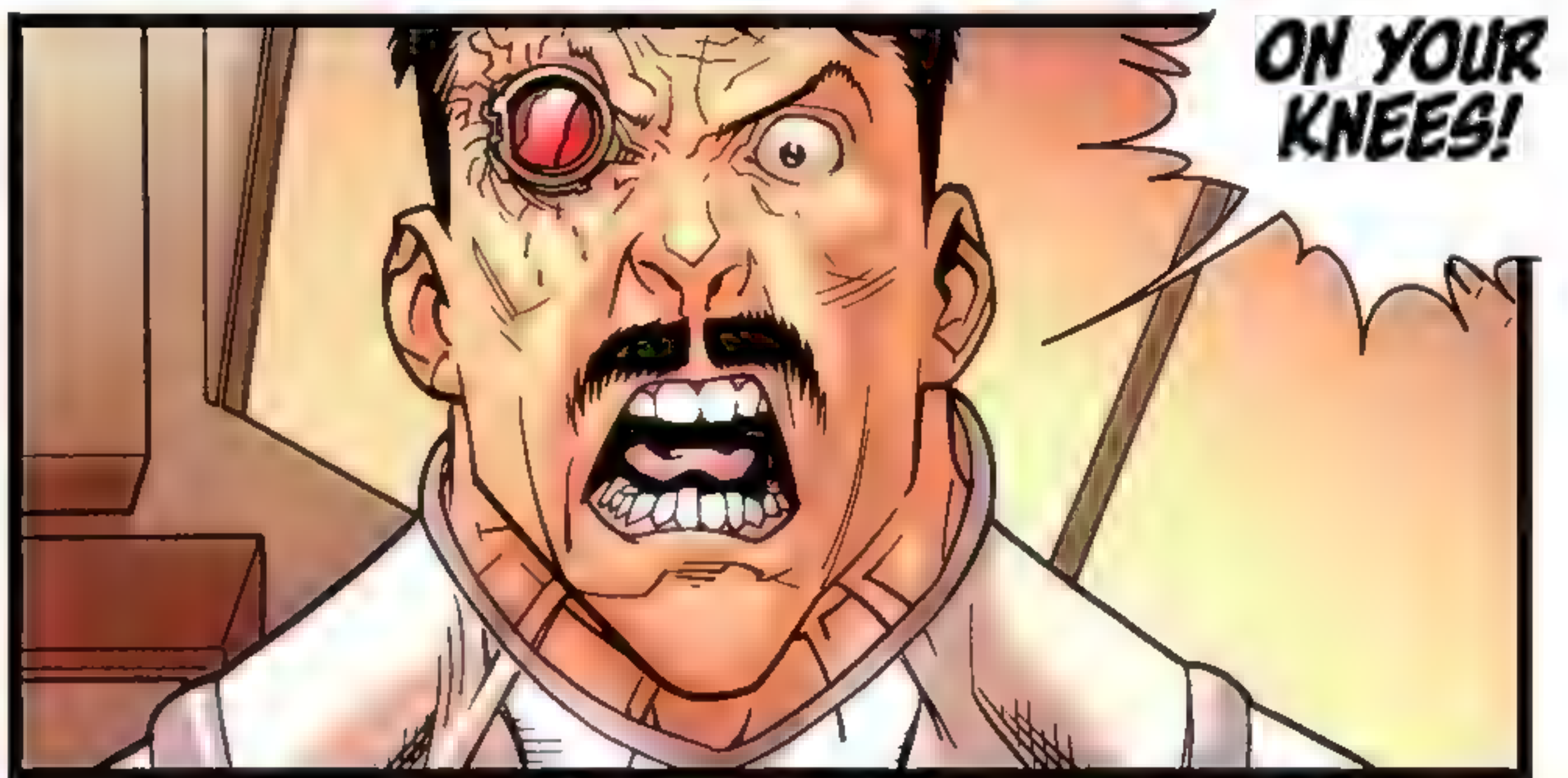
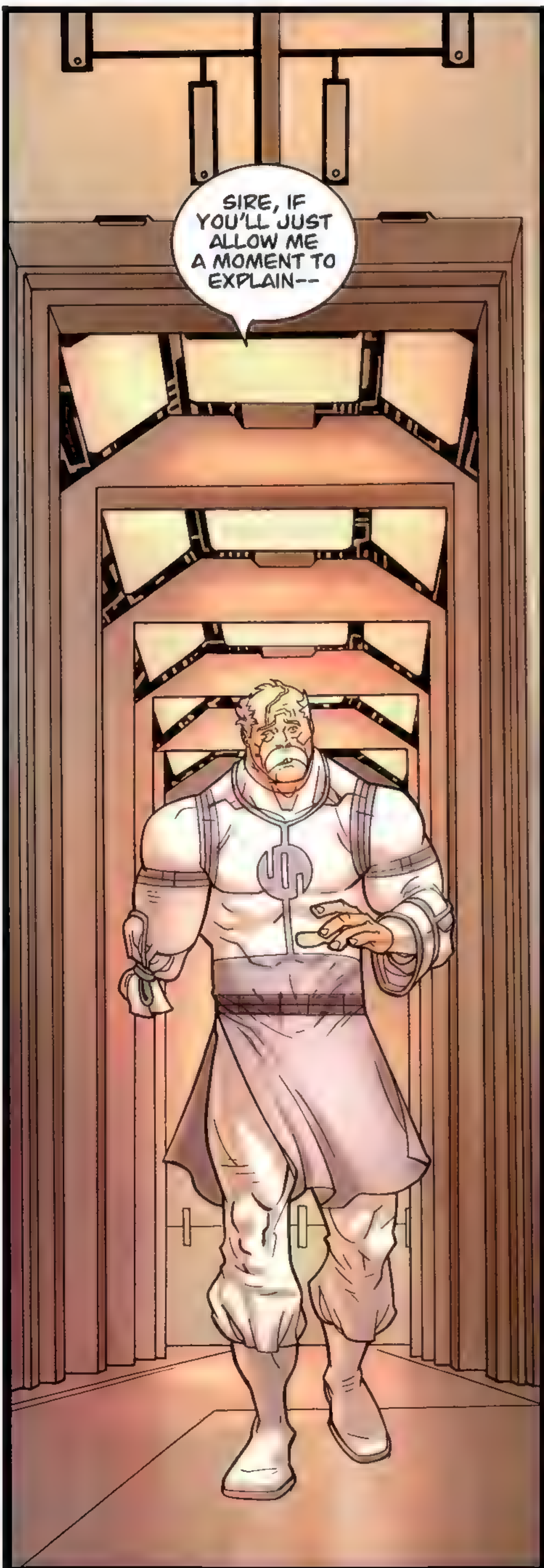
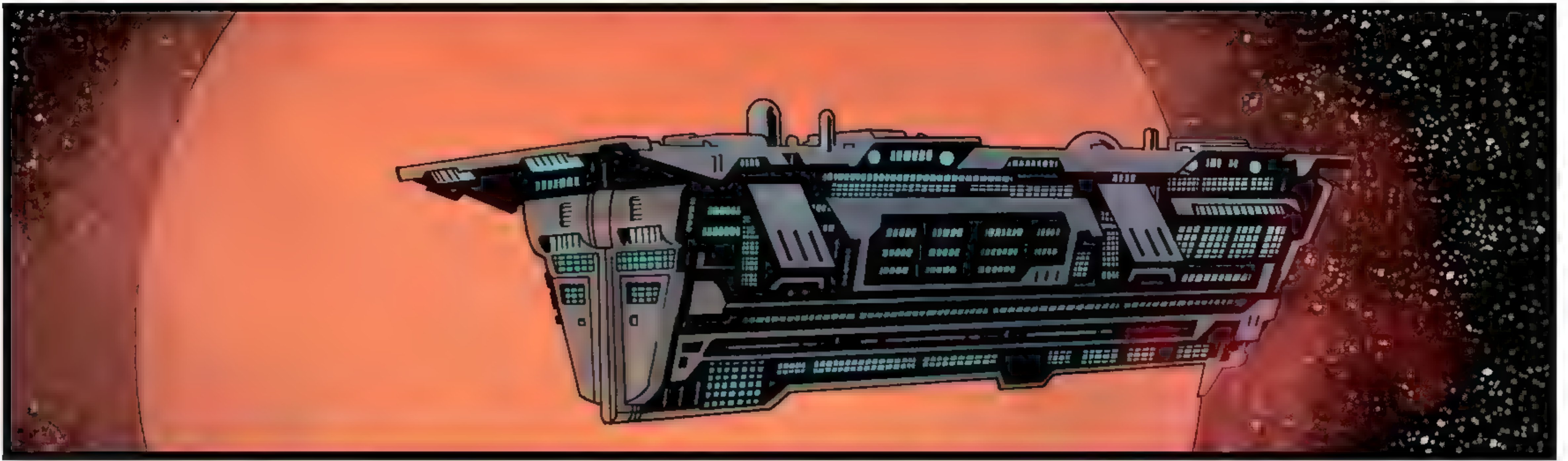
EXCELLENT TIMING, DONALD. AND NEW YORK? WE LUCKED OUT HAVING SOMETHING HAPPEN SO CLOSE, MAKES MORE SENSE TO ASK HIM.

I'M NOT COMFORTABLE MANIPULATING HIM LIKE THIS--AND I TAKE IT YOU DIDN'T TELL HIM ABOUT CONQUEST?

MANIPULATING? THIS IS NOTHING. I'M JUST USING HIM OBVIOUSLY SECOND GUESSING HIMSELF TO PULL HIM BACK TO OUR SIDE. HE'S TOO POWERFUL TO HAVE HIM OUT THERE ON HIS OWN.

AND TELLING HIM NOW THAT WE KEPT THAT MONSTER ALIVE WOULD ONLY TURN INVINCIBLE AGAINST US... AND HE'D BE RIGHT TO BE ANGRY. WE MADE A HUGE MISTAKE THERE.

ONCE CONQUEST BROKE AWAY FROM OUR FACILITY, HE LEFT THE PLANET AND HASN'T COME BACK--MAYBE HE WON'T COME BACK. WE'LL WAIT UNTIL IT'S A PROBLEM BEFORE WE TAKE ANY ACTION.

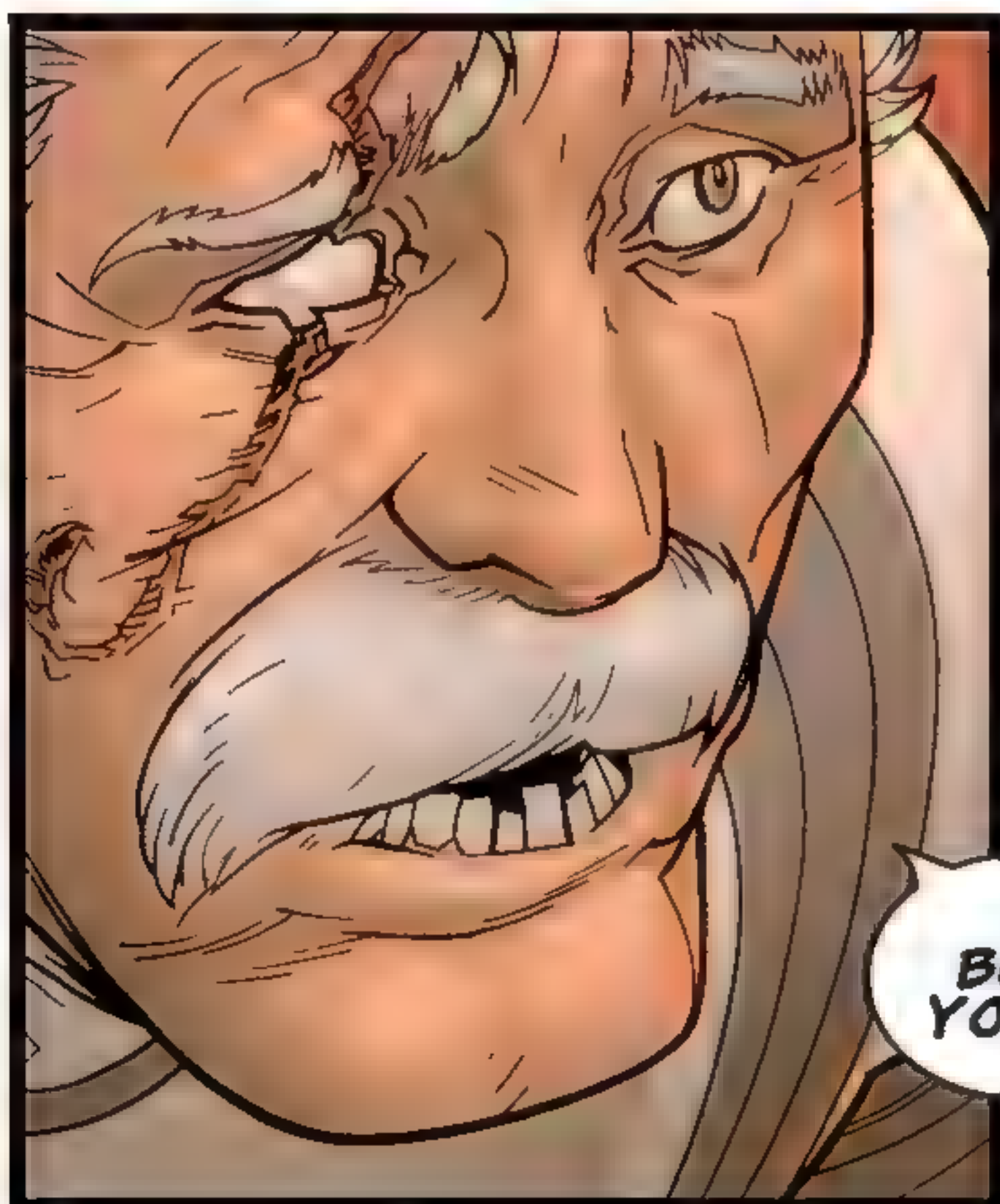




...OF WHAT
FURTHER
USE COULD
YOU BE TO
ME?

I UNDERESTIMATED
THE BOY. I TOYED WITH
HIM FAR TOO LONG, I
GAVE HIM TIME TO GAIN
AN ADVANTAGE.

I HAVE
SERVED YOU
WELL FOR MANY
YEARS. PLEASE
FORGIVE MY
CARELESSNESS
AND SPARE
ME.



I
BEG
YOU...



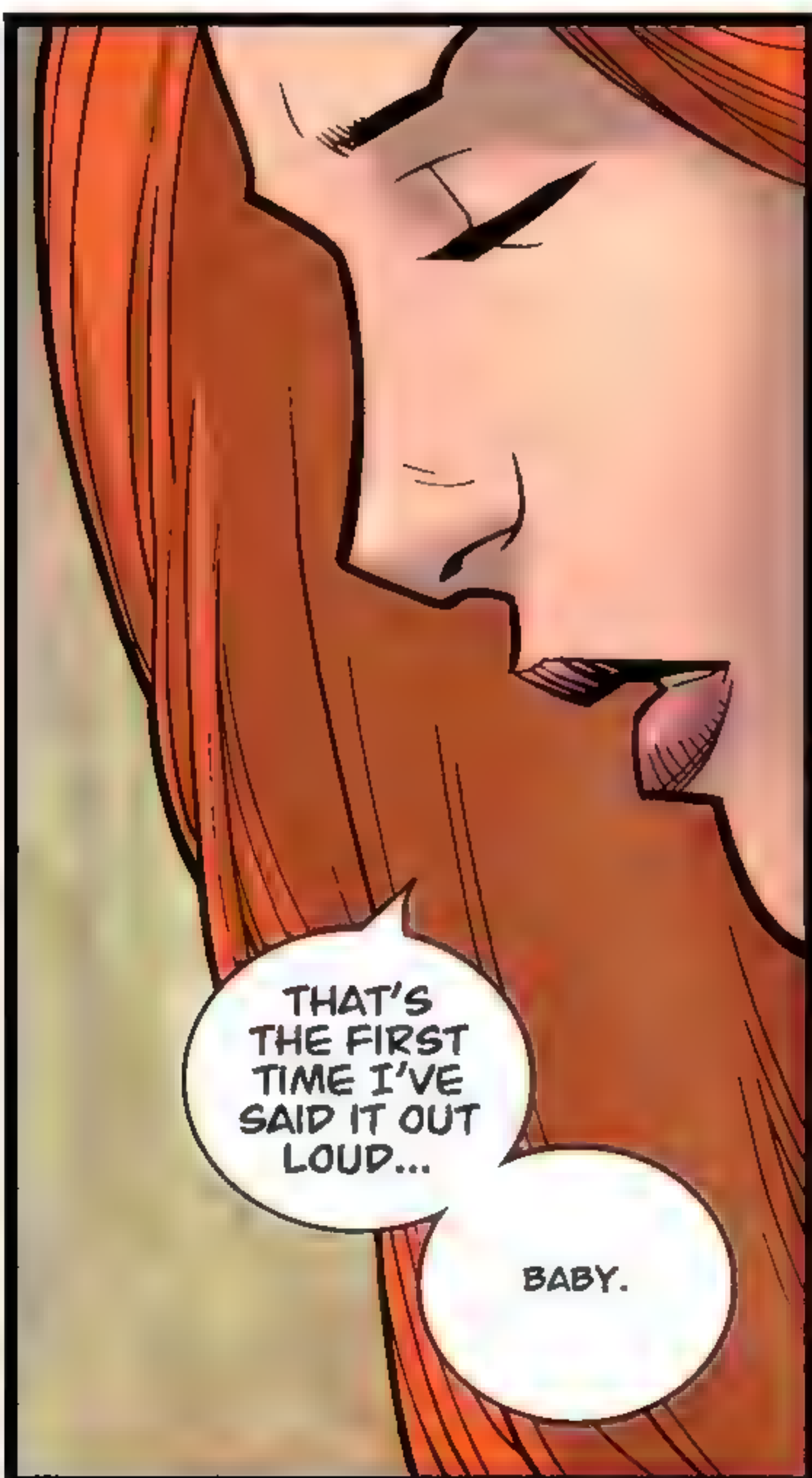
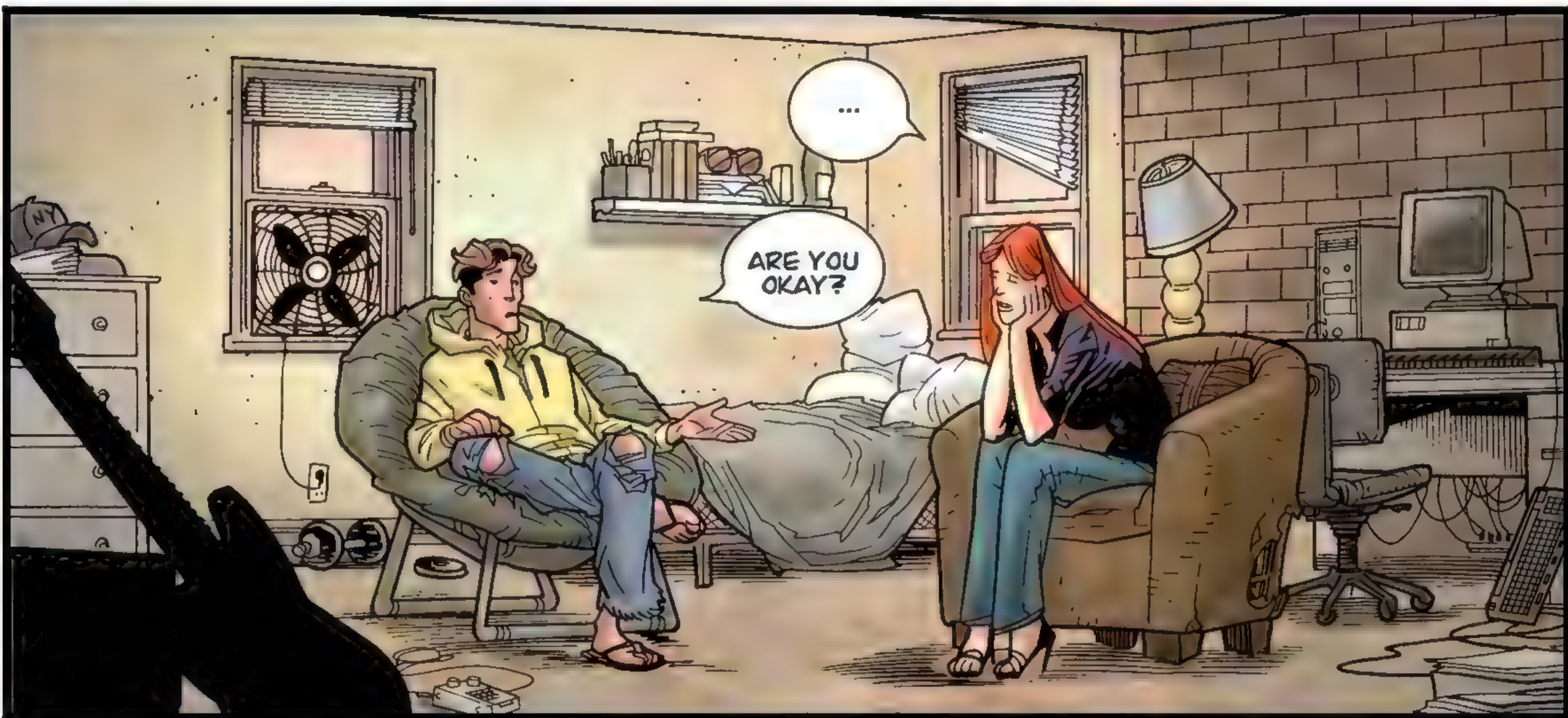
WE HAVE LEARNED OF
A TEAM SENT TO EARTH
TO RETRIEVE NOLAN'S
SON AND BRING HIM
INTO DIRECT CONFLICT
WITH US.

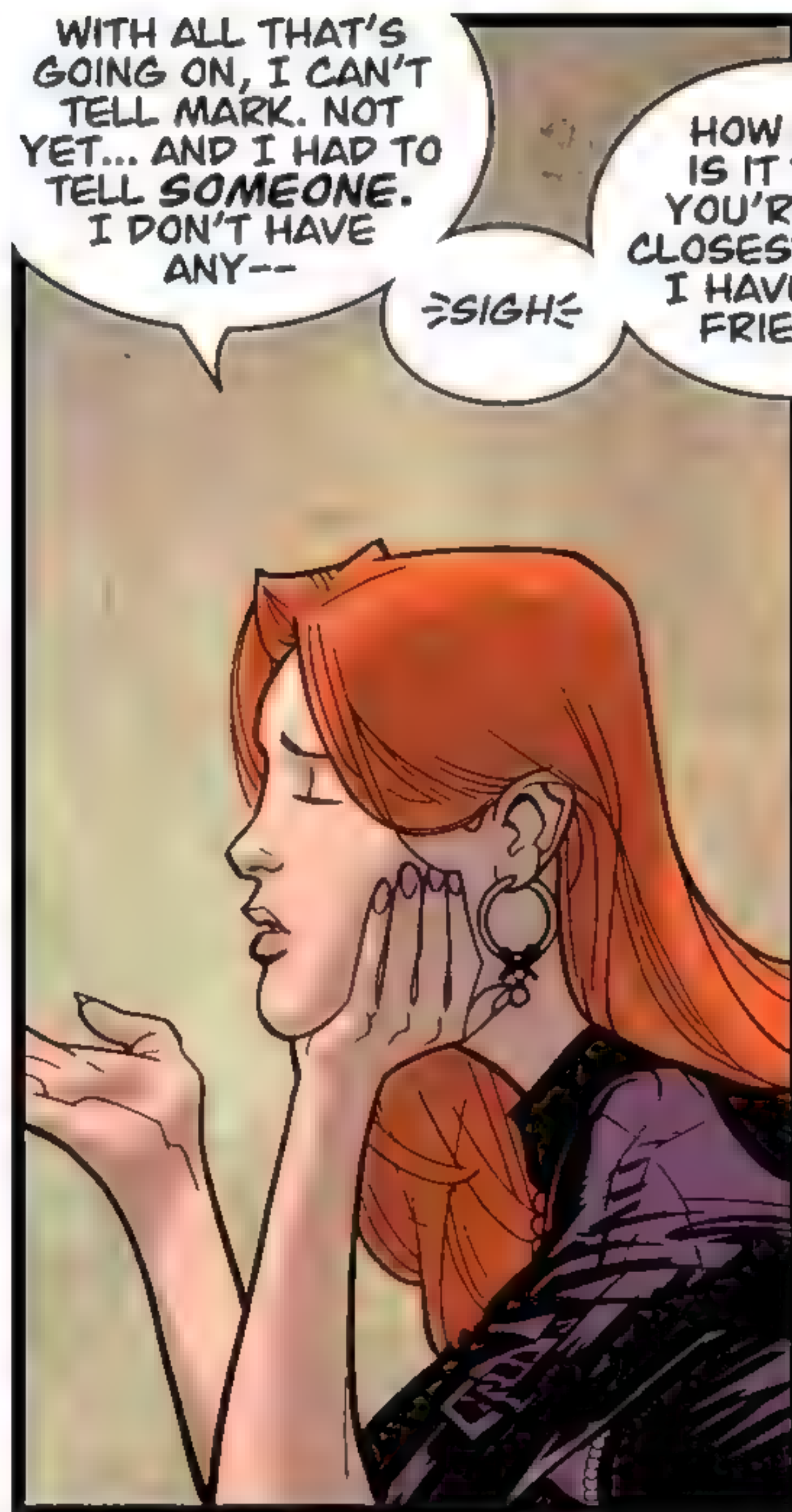
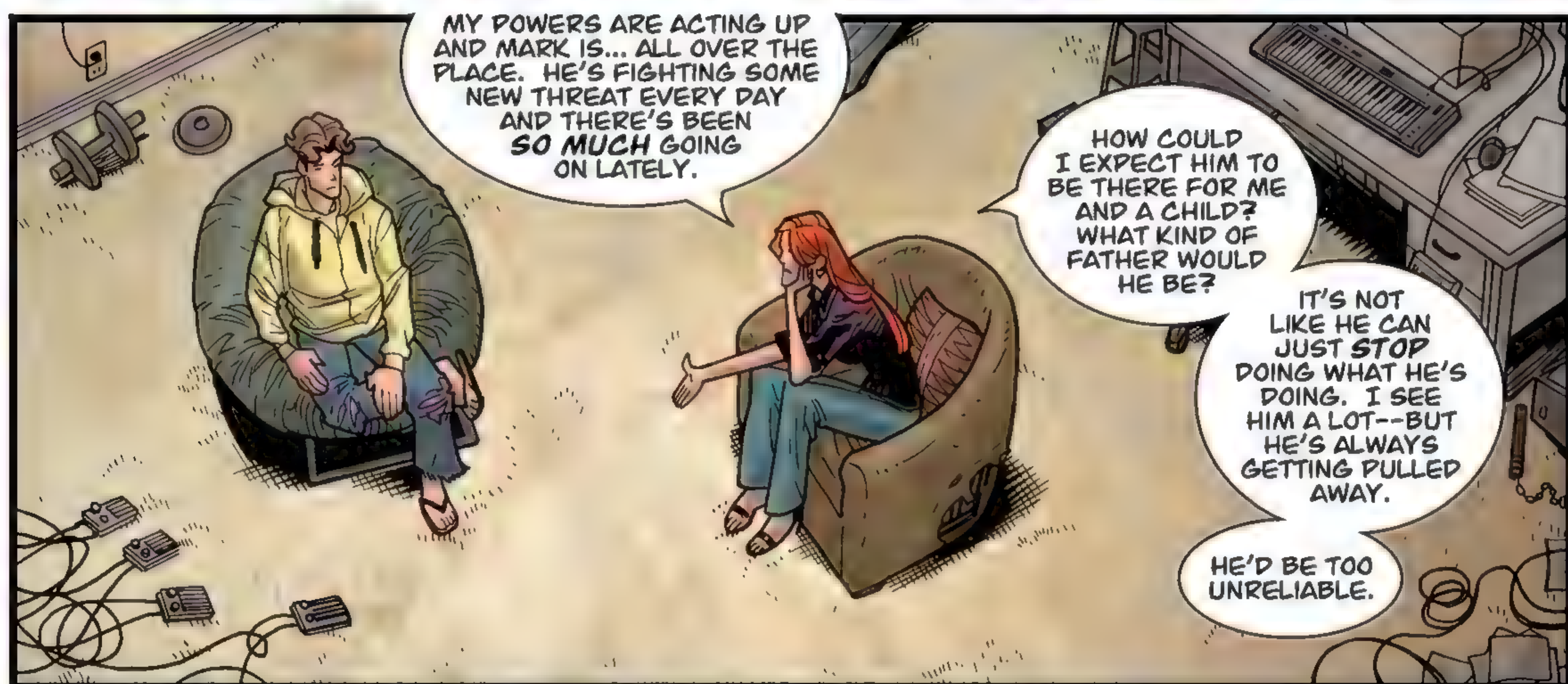
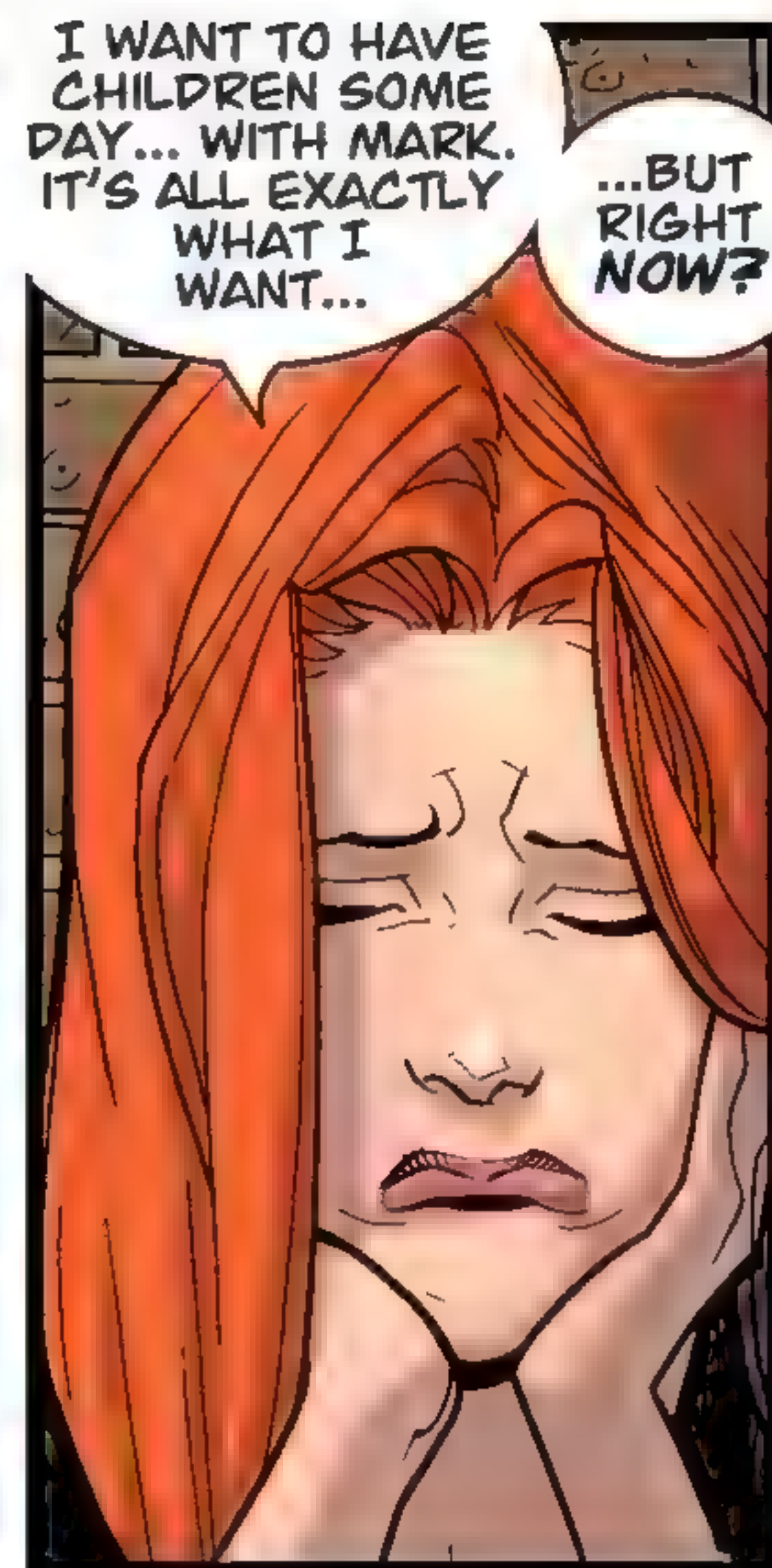
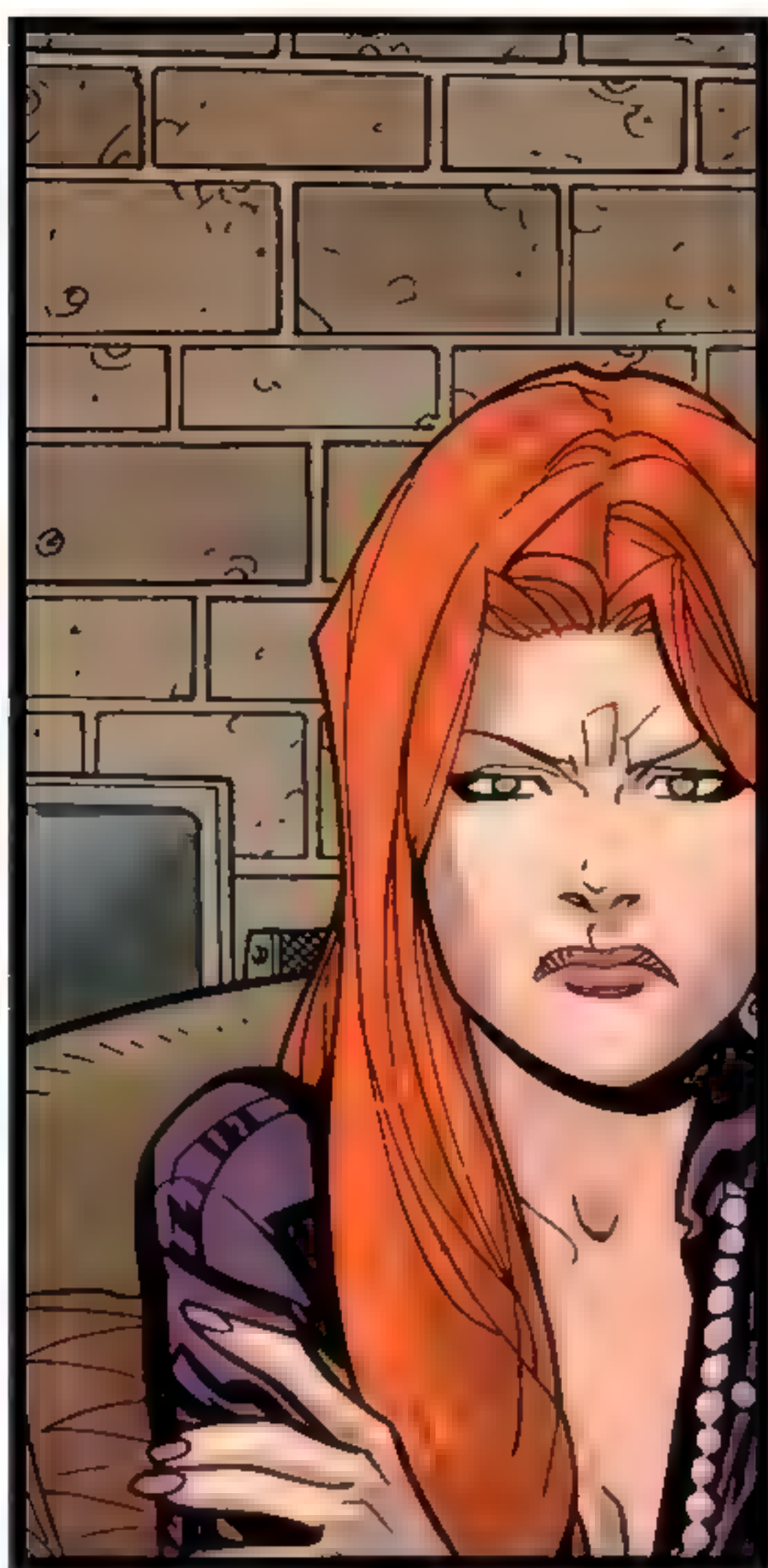


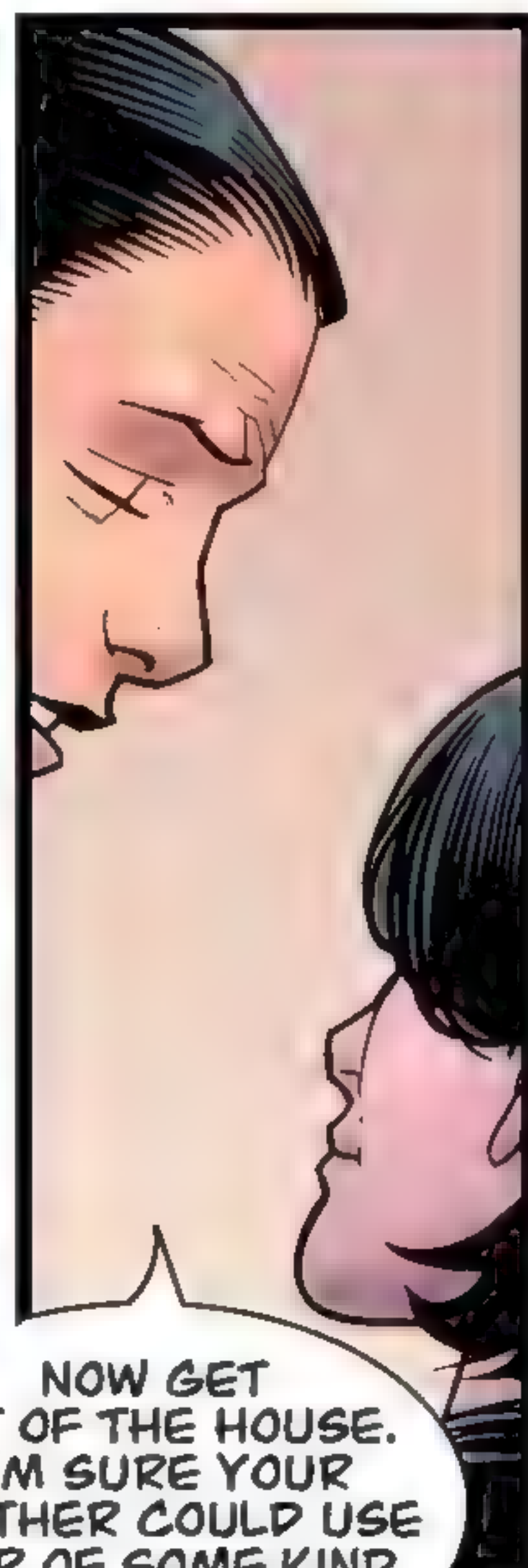
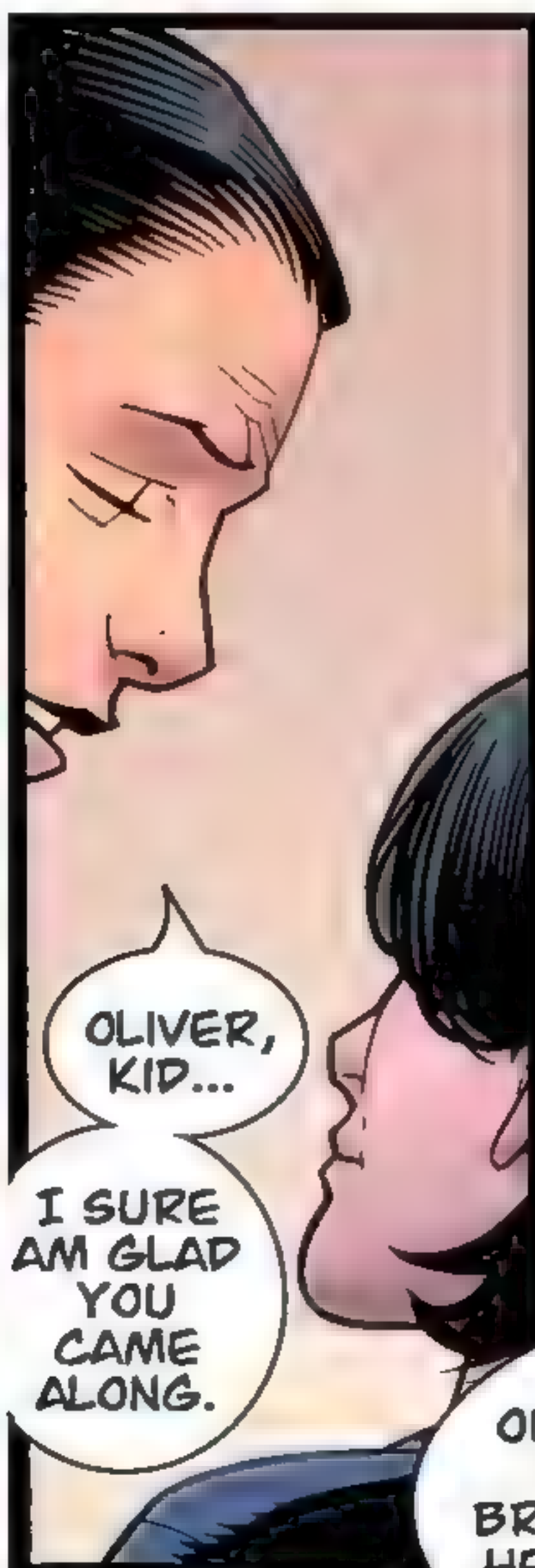
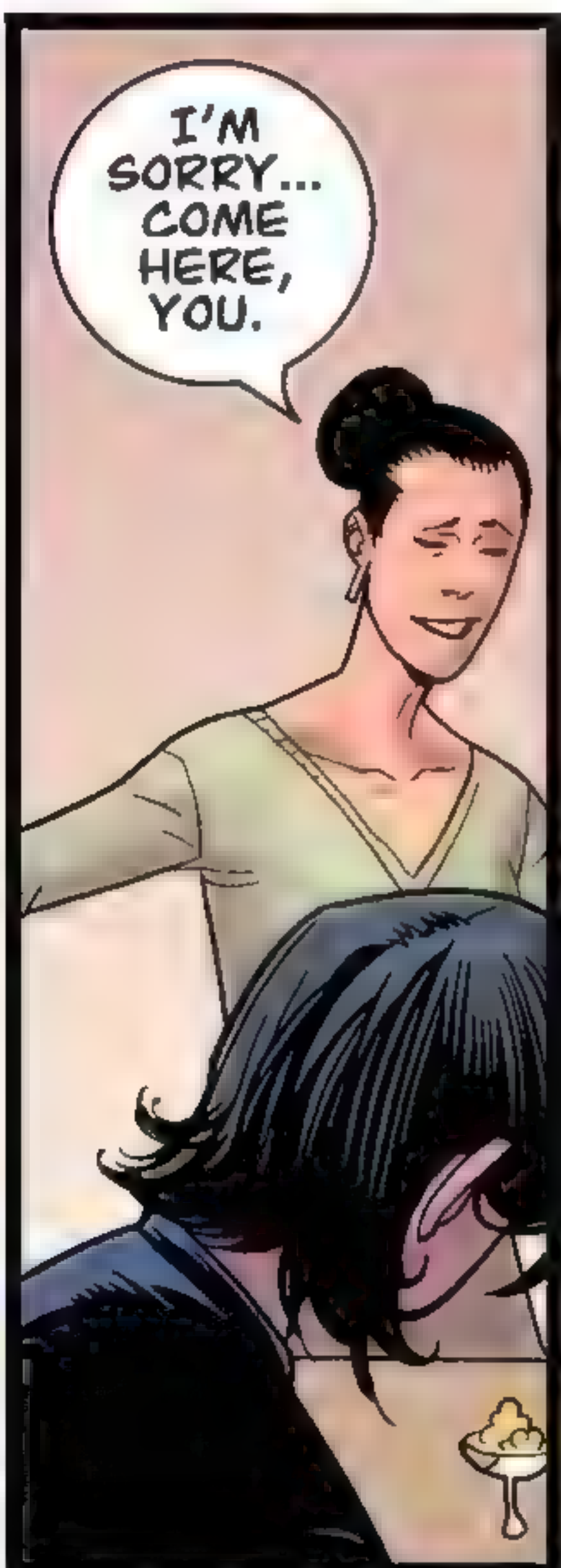
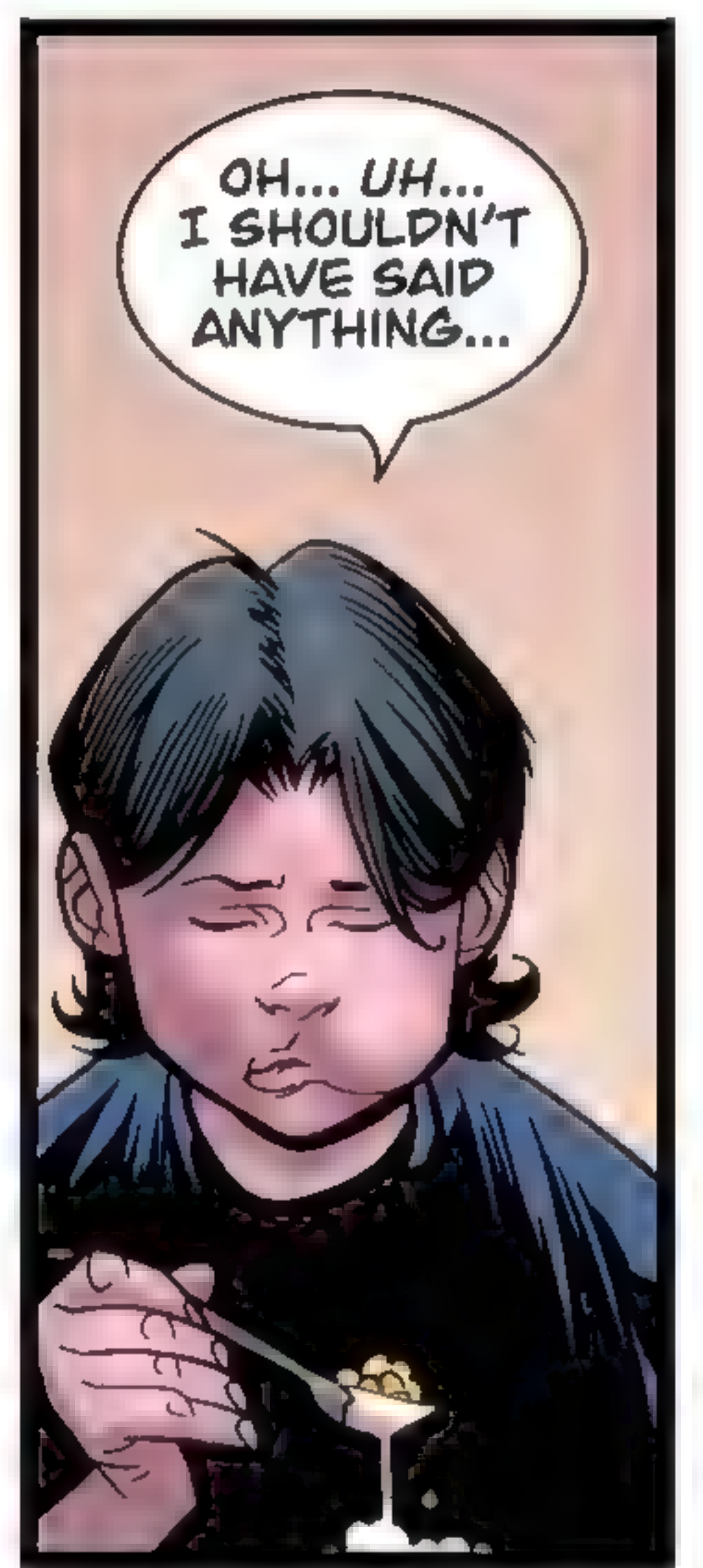
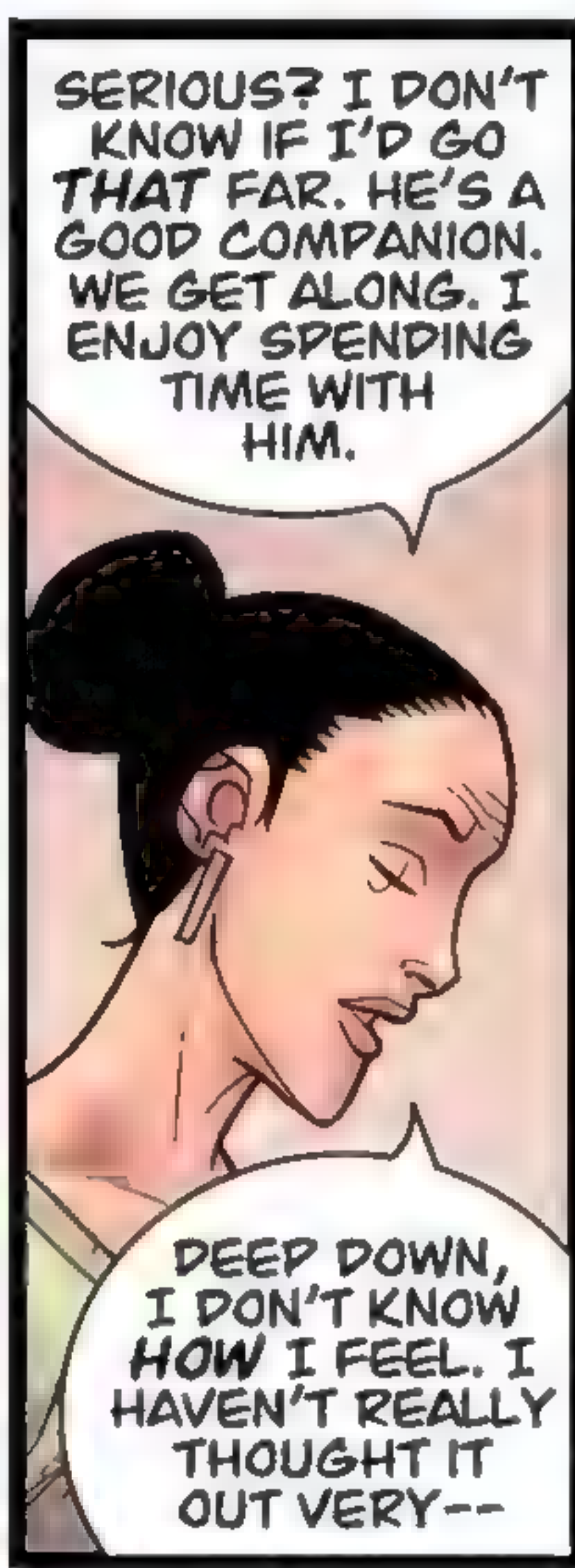
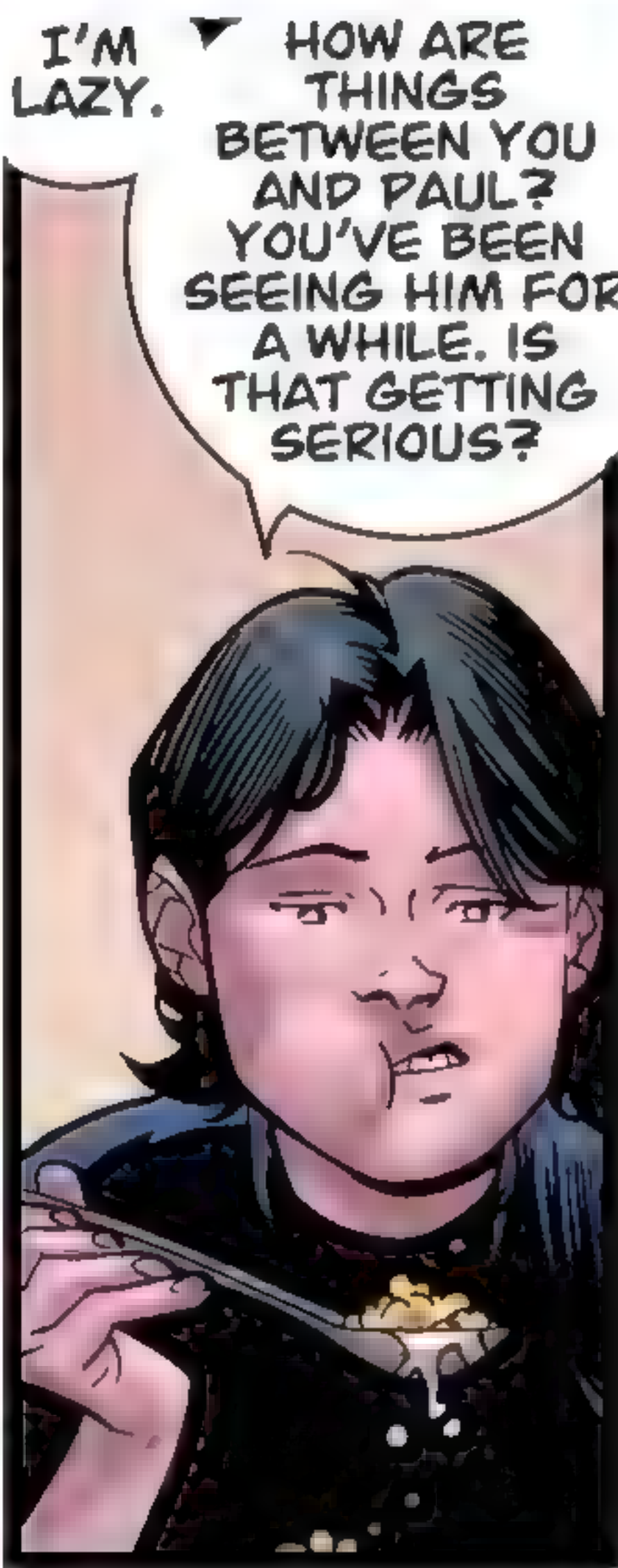
I DOUBT YOU HAVE TIME
TO PREVENT THIS, BUT GO,
CATCH THEM ON THEIR
RETURN AND ENSURE NONE
OF THEM ARE ABLE TO
JOIN THE FIGHT.

LEAVE
NONE
ALIVE.

DO NOT
FAIL ME
AGAIN.







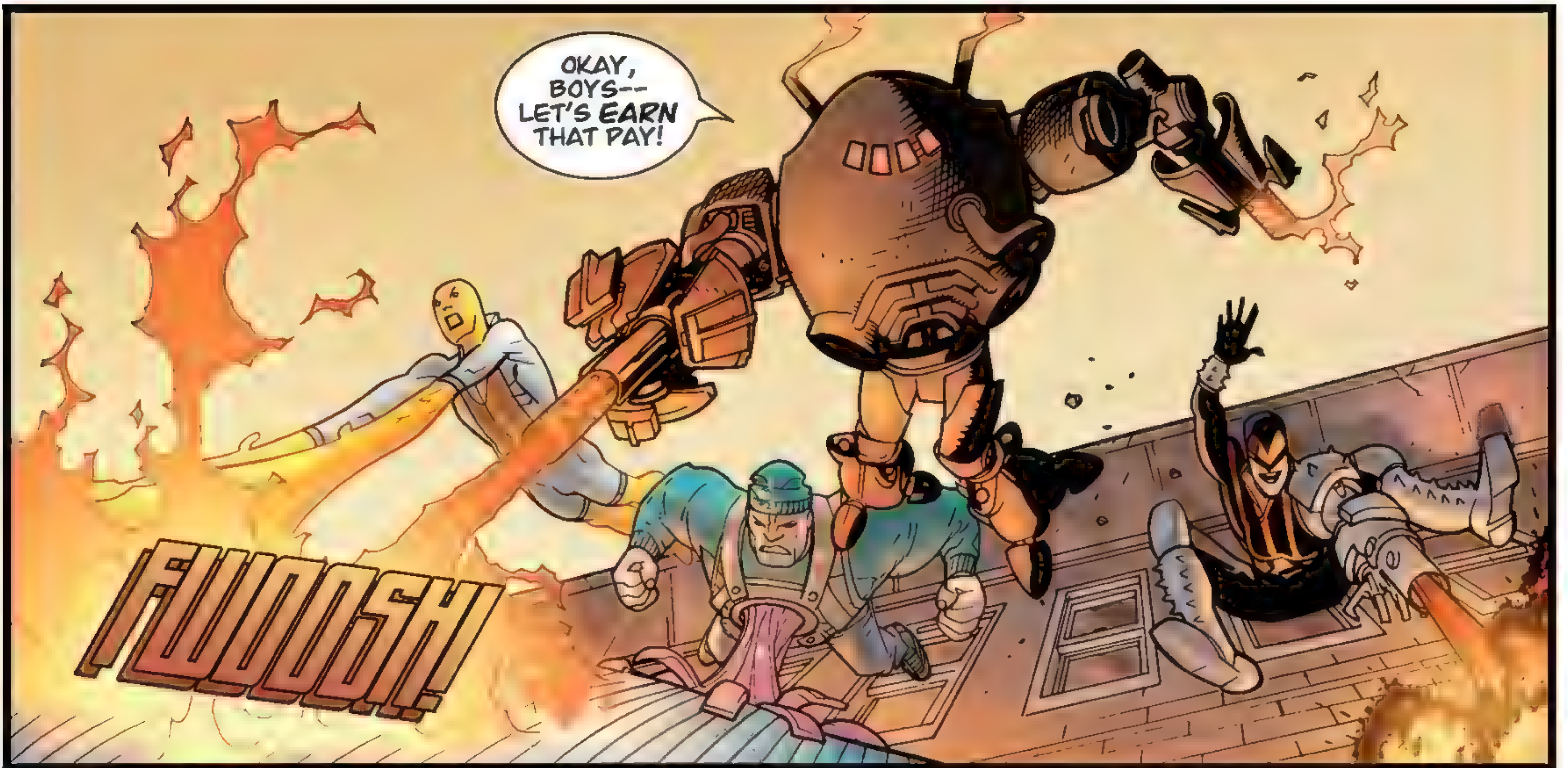


I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING AGAIN!

RELAX!

NOBODY ASKED YOU TO GET INVOLVED!

KROOOM!



OKAY,
BOYS--
LET'S EARN
THAT PAY!

FWOOSH!



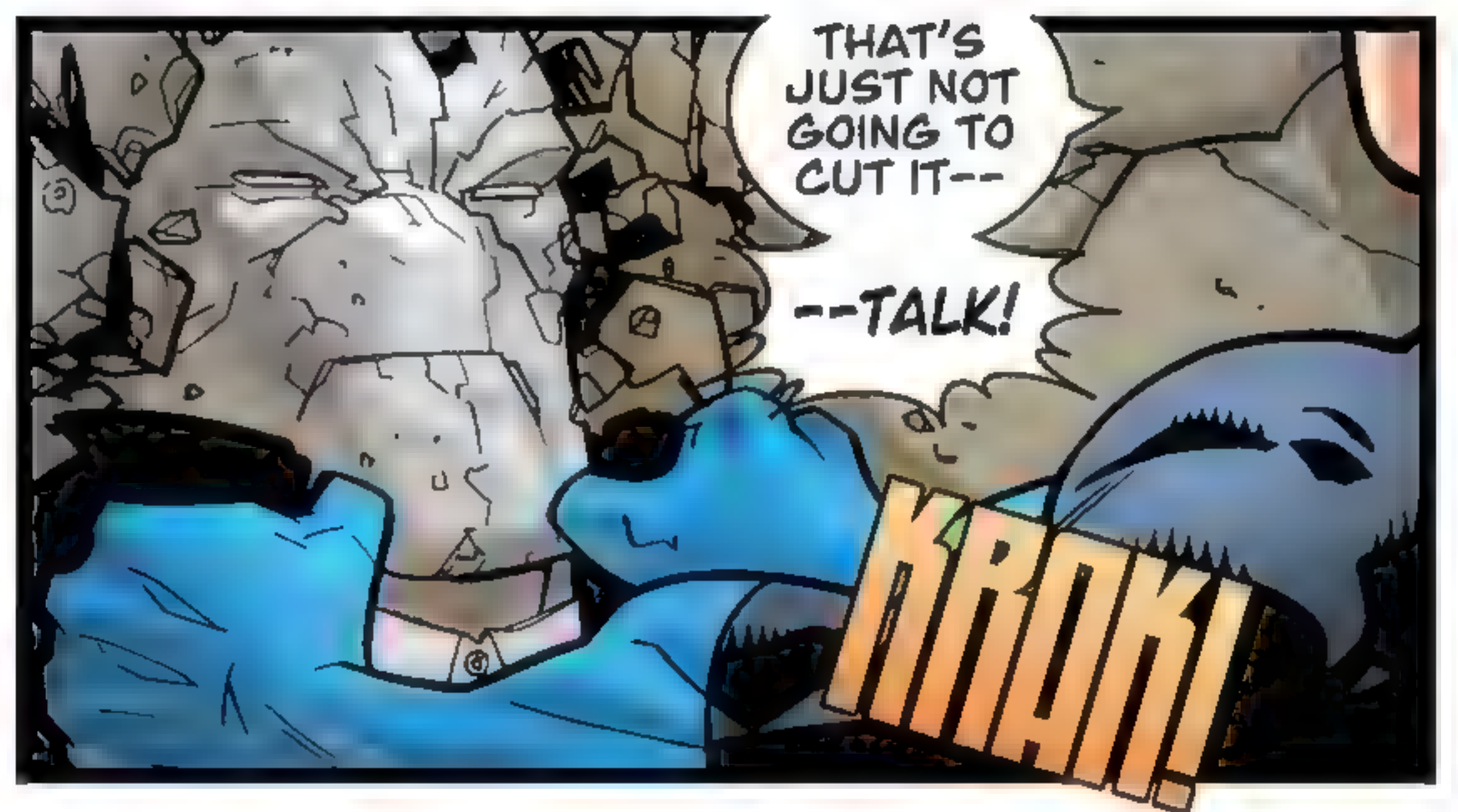
THAT
SHOULD
KEEP HIM
BUSY.

GOOD--
YOU'LL
HAVE TIME
TO GIVE ME
ANSWERS!



THAT THING ATTACKED BOTH
OF US AT STRONGHOLD PRISON
A WHILE BACK. WHAT IS IT?!
WHY IS IT AFTER
YOU?

THIS IS
SIMPLY A DISPUTE
OVER MY TERRITORY.
YOU DON'T WANT TO
GET INVOLVED. THE
LESS YOU KNOW,
THE BETTER.
TRUST ME.



THAT'S
JUST NOT
GOING TO
CUT IT--

--TALK!

KROOK!



OW--
OKAY.
FINE.

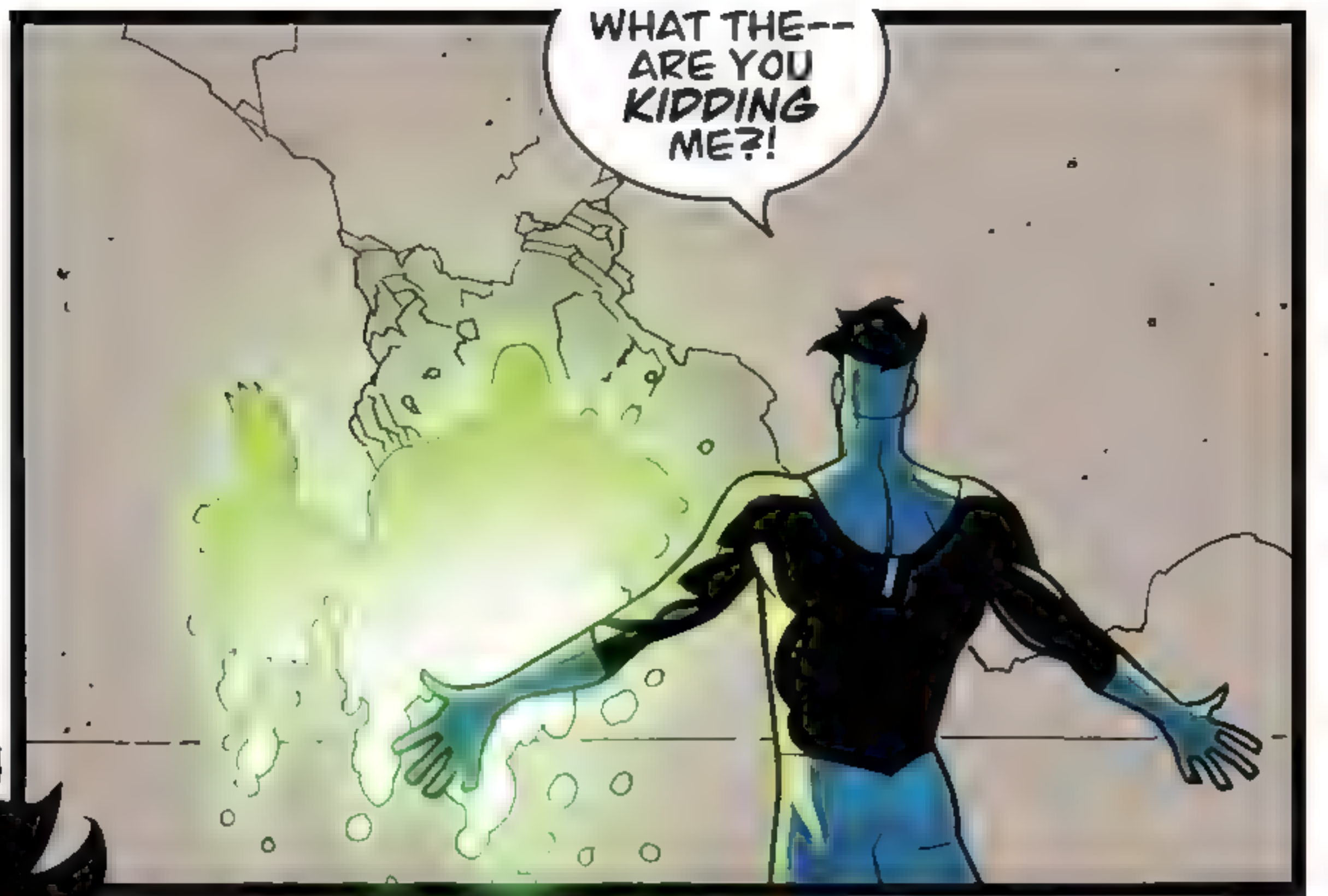
I WAS
GRANDFATHERED
INTO AN INTERNATIONAL
CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION
CALLED THE ORDER
WHEN I TOOK OVER
MACHINE HEAD'S
TERRITORY.

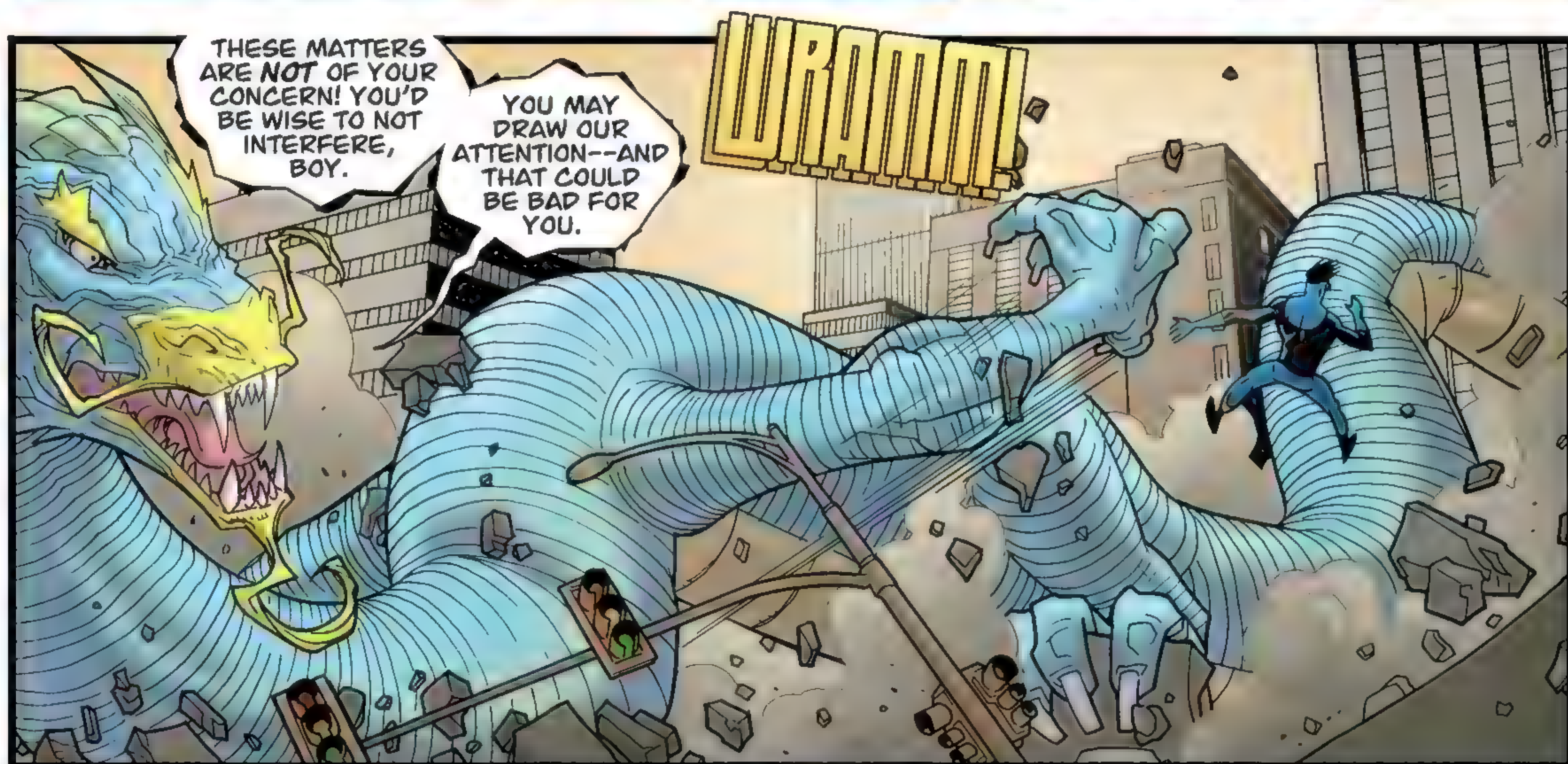
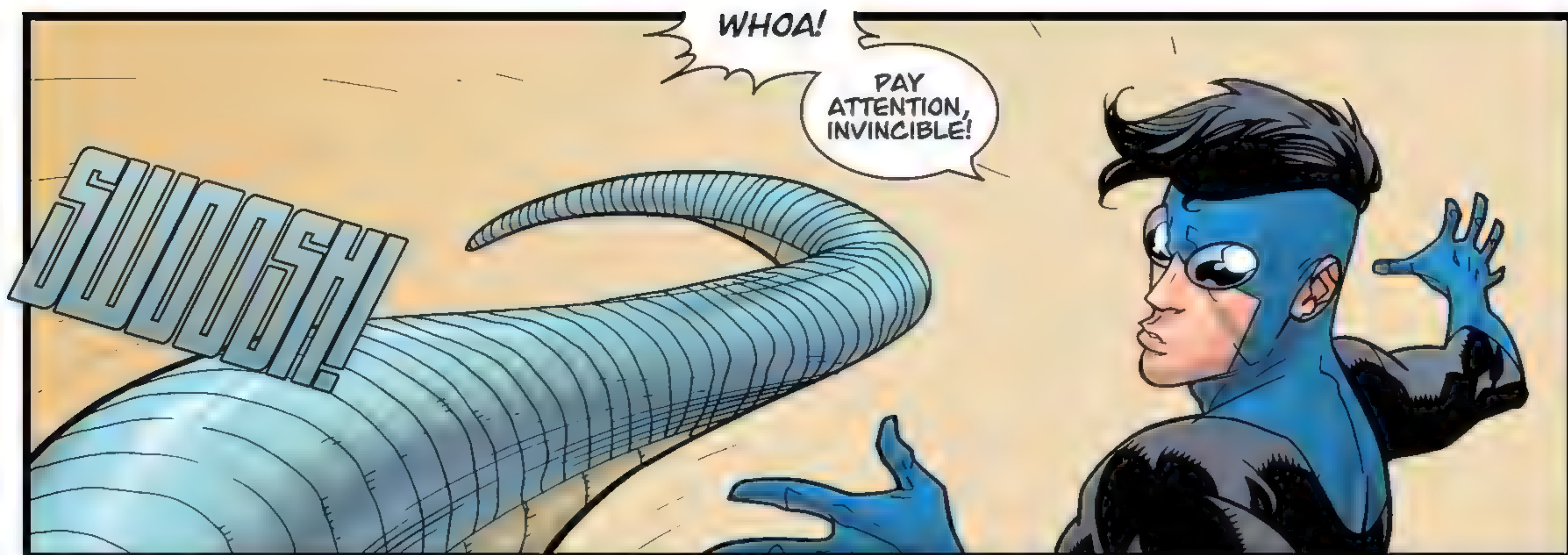
IT
DIDN'T
WORK
OUT.

IT COSTS
TOO MUCH, IT
WAS A HASSLE. I
DECIDED I DIDN'T
NEED THEM. NOW
THEY'RE TRYING
TO MUSCLE
ME OUT.

THIS GUY'S
THE MUSCLE. HIS
AGENT WAS BEING
HELD IN STRONGHOLD,
I WAS THERE TO
SPRING HIM... WASN'T
DOING IT FAST ENOUGH
SO HE STEPPED IN.
GUY'S A GRADE-A JERK.

SO HE
ATTACKED
YOU,
THEN?











IT'S LIKE--NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT'S REALLY AT STAKE, I'M WILLING TO GO TO EXTREMES.

I KILLED A MAN.

...

I DID IT TO PREVENT MORE DEATHS... BUT IT STILL FELT SO WRONG.

AND I...

I ALMOST DID IT AGAIN, TODAY.

NOW THAT I'VE OPENED THAT DOOR, I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN CLOSE IT. MY TEMPER GETS THE BEST OF ME...

...IT'S HARD TO HOLD BACK.

I CAN'T EVEN LOOK AT MYSELF ANYMORE. I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF MYSELF.

I FEEL LIKE I CAN'T WEAR THIS COSTUME ANY MORE. LIKE THIS WHOLE THING WAS A MISTAKE, BEING INVINCIBLE...

NONSENSE. THE FACT THAT YOU'RE SITTING HERE, QUESTIONING YOUR ACTIONS, PROVES THAT YOU'RE A GOOD MAN.

YOU'VE STRAYED, MAYBE CROSSED A LINE OR TWO, BUT YOU RECOGNIZE THAT. SO MANY OTHERS DON'T. I'VE SEEN IT TOO MANY TIMES.

WHAT YOU DO COMES WITH AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF PRESSURE. IT WEARS ON YOU.

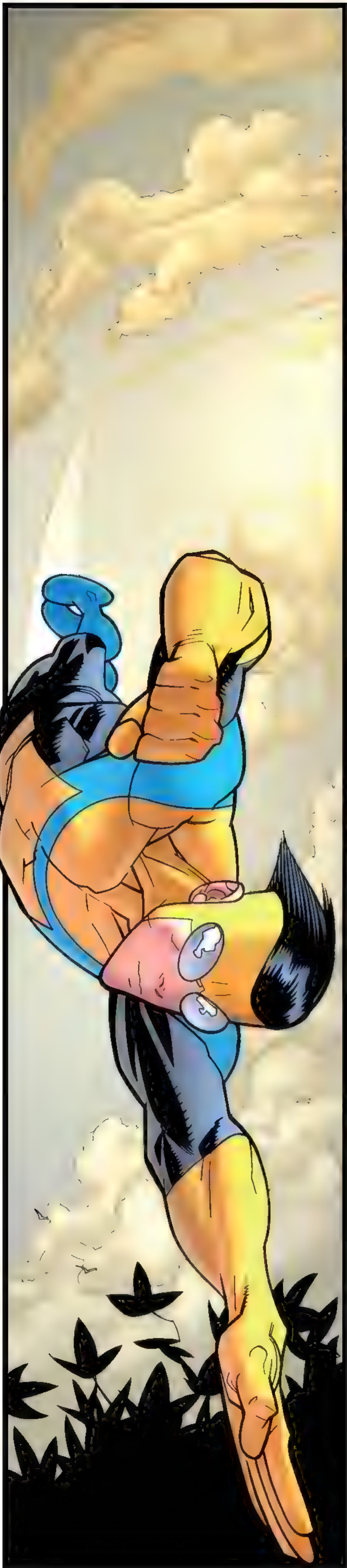
YOU'RE HANDLING IT BETTER THAN MOST--AND YOU'VE SEEN THE WORST THIS JOB HAS TO OFFER.

IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU CAN'T WEAR THAT COSTUME ANYMORE... THEN DON'T WEAR THAT COSTUME ANYMORE.

I CAN'T GO BACK IN TIME, I CAN'T UNDO WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

BUT IF YOU'RE READY TO GO BACK TO THE MAN YOU WERE, IF THAT'S REALLY WHO YOU WANT TO BE... I CAN MAKE SURE YOU LOOK THE PART.





I WAS WORRIED, THEN I SAW YOU ON THE NEWS. THOUGHT YOU'D BE HOME SOON SO I CAME UP HERE.

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE IN THE MARKET FOR A COSTUME CHANGE.

YEAH. I WENT TO SEE ART.

WE TALKED ABOUT MY RECENT MISSTEPS, HOW MUCH I'D LIKE TO GO BACK A FEW STEPS. FOR ART THAT MEANT A COSTUME CHANGE.

YOU KNOW HOW HE IS.

YOU DON'T HAVE THE SNOT BEATEN OUT OF YOU... SO I ASSUME YOUR "TALK" WITH CECIL WENT FINE.

IT DID.

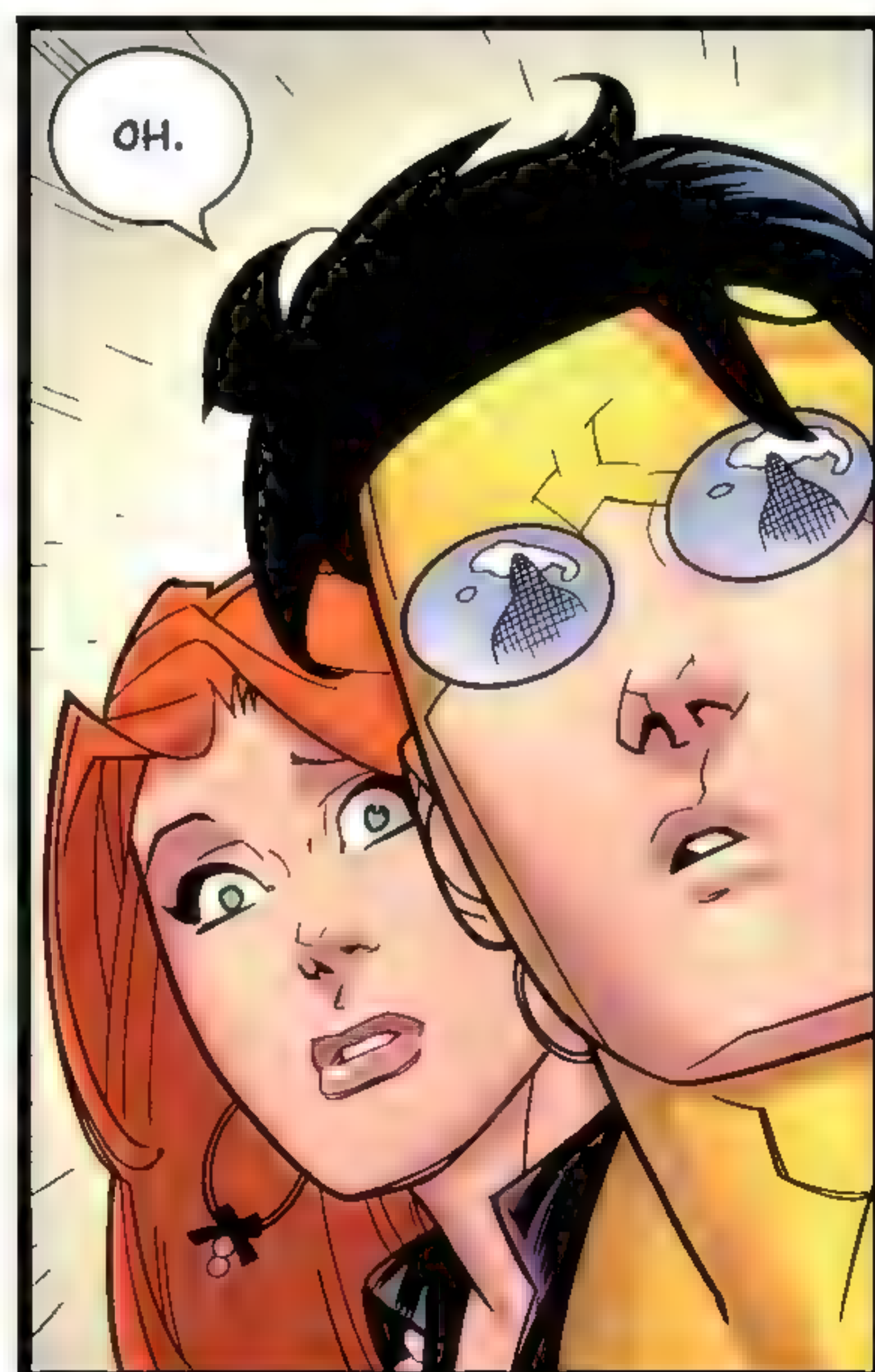
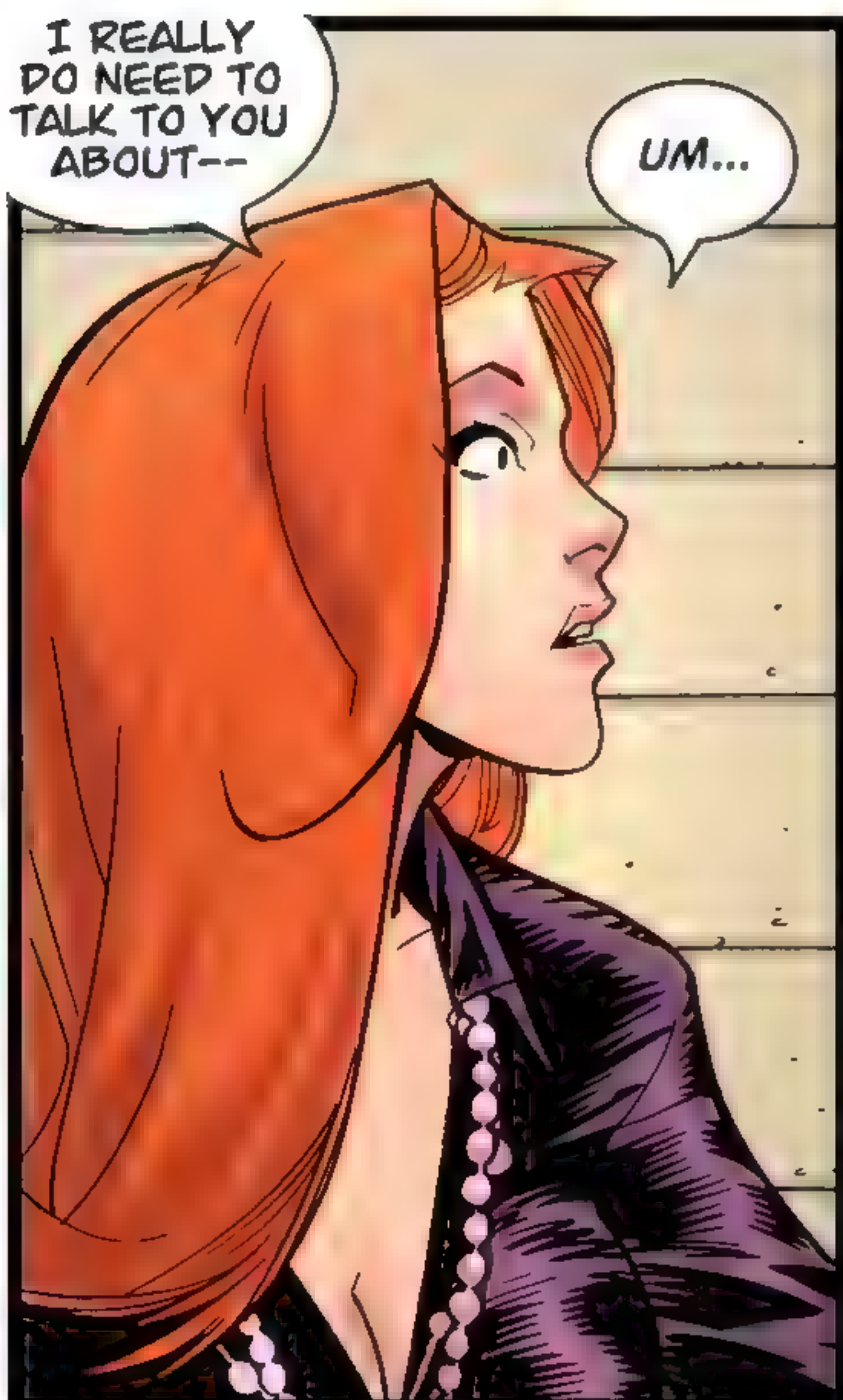
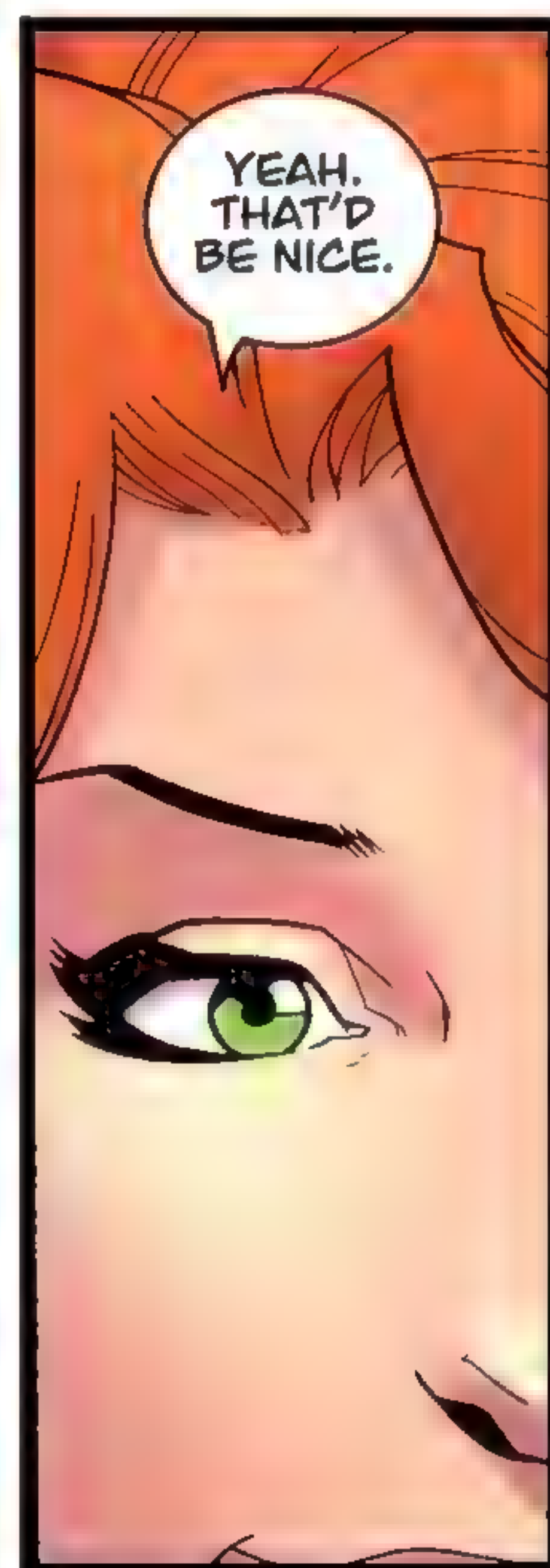
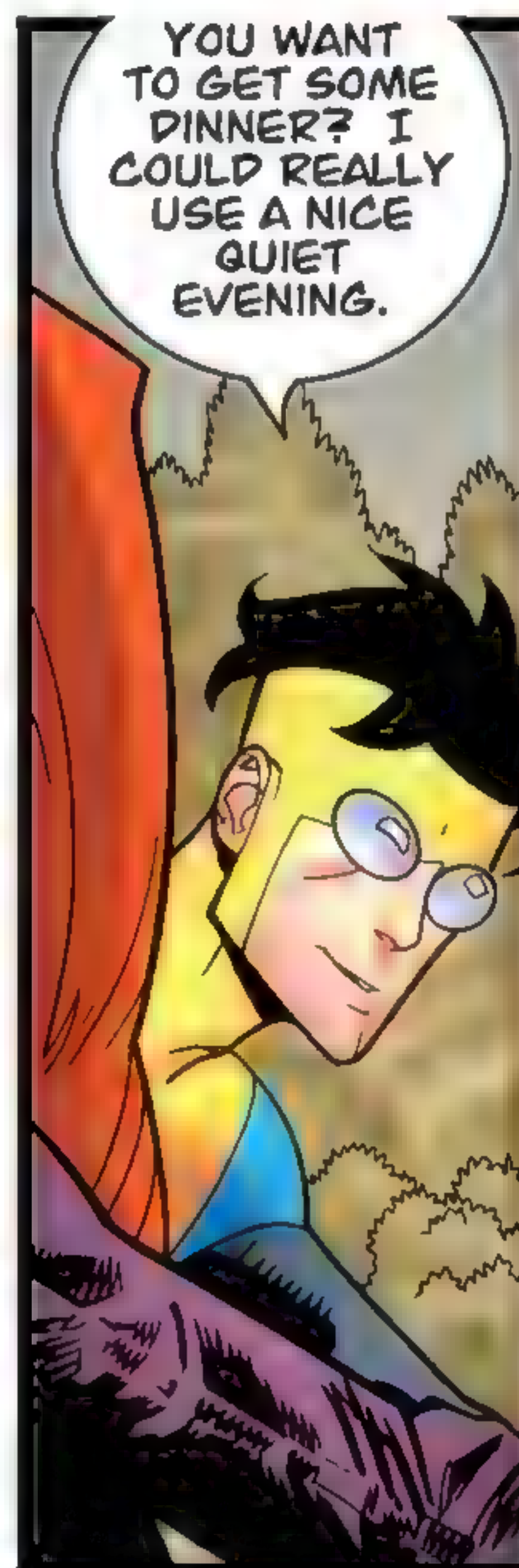
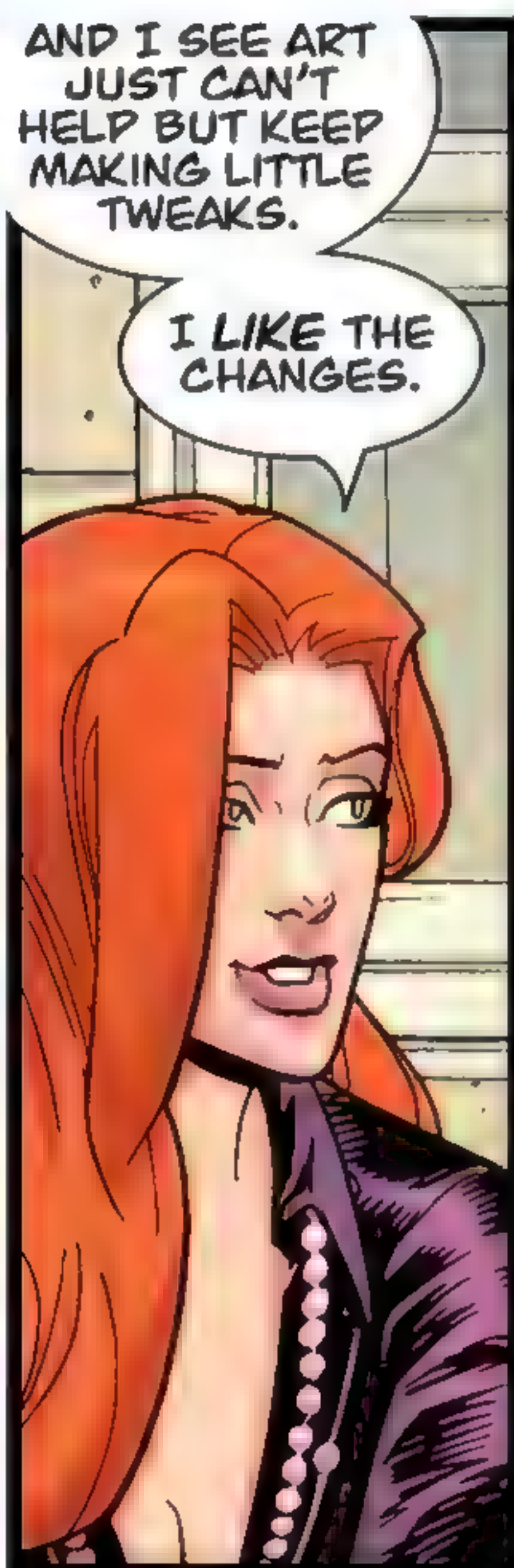
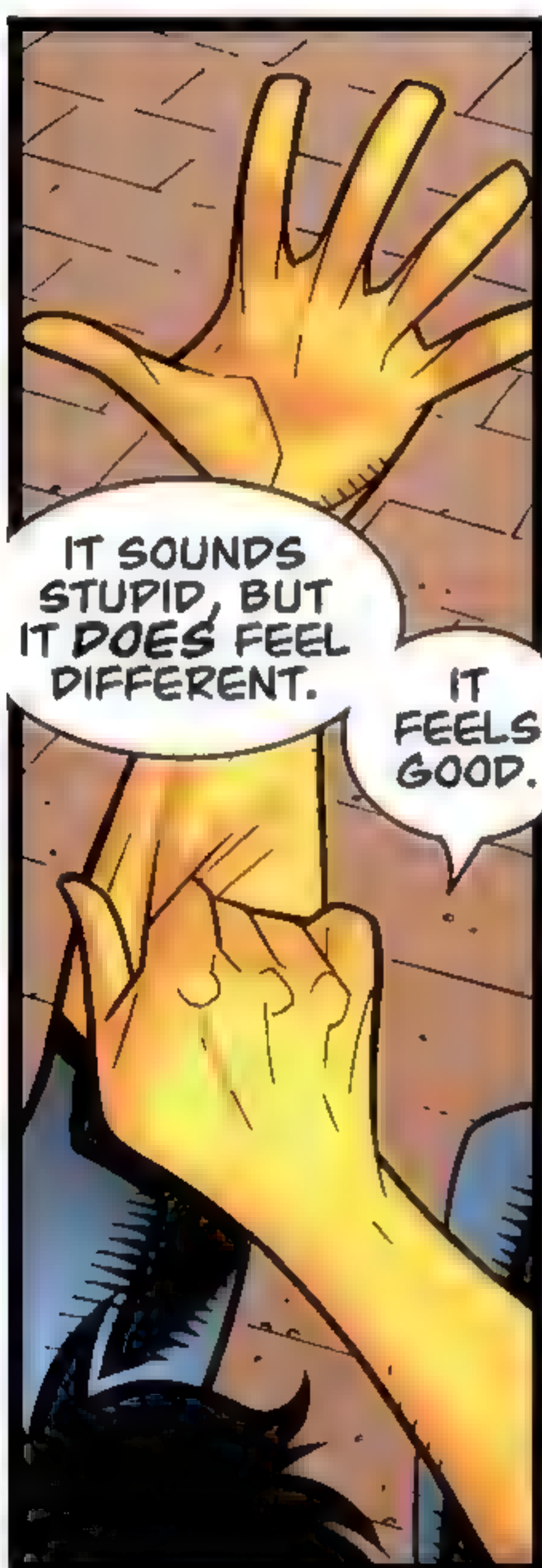
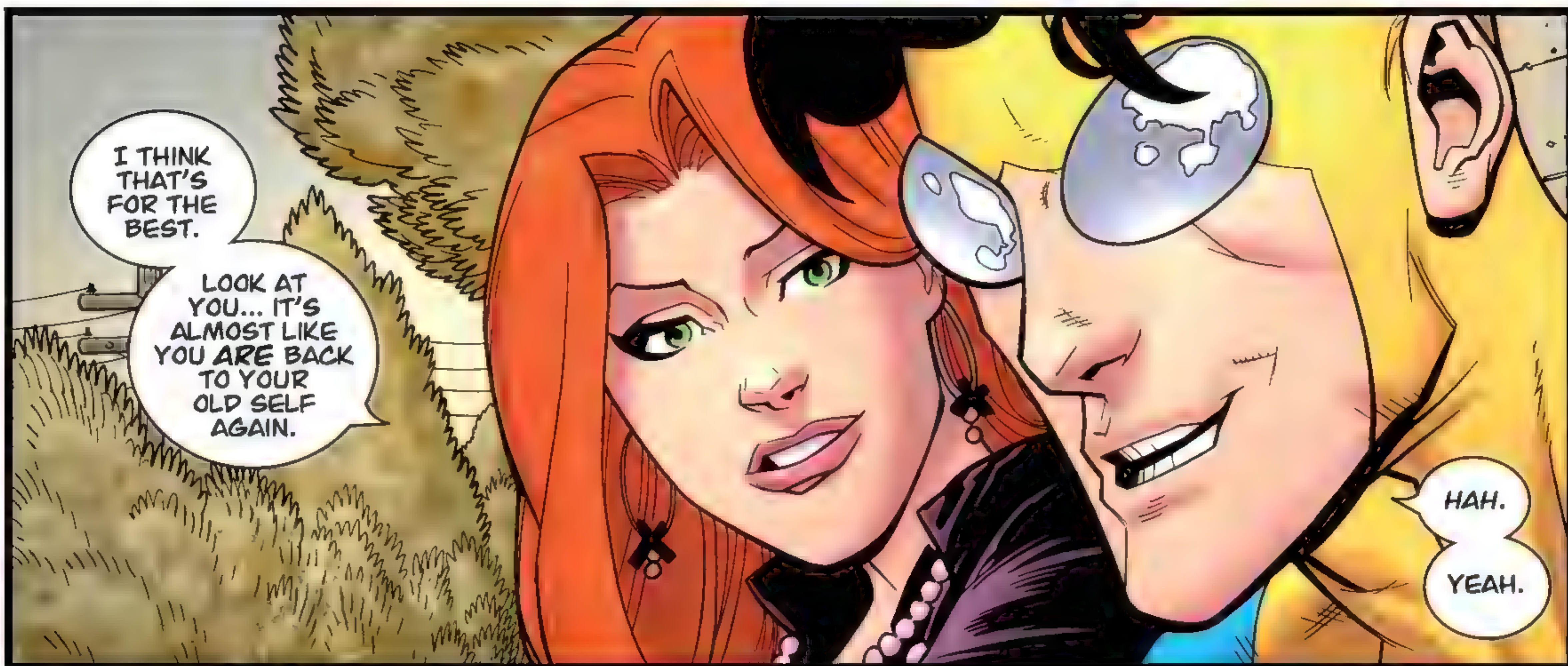
IT WAS A JUSTIFIED LECTURE. HE'S WORRIED ABOUT MY RECENT ACTIONS, WHAT IT COULD MEAN FOR ME.

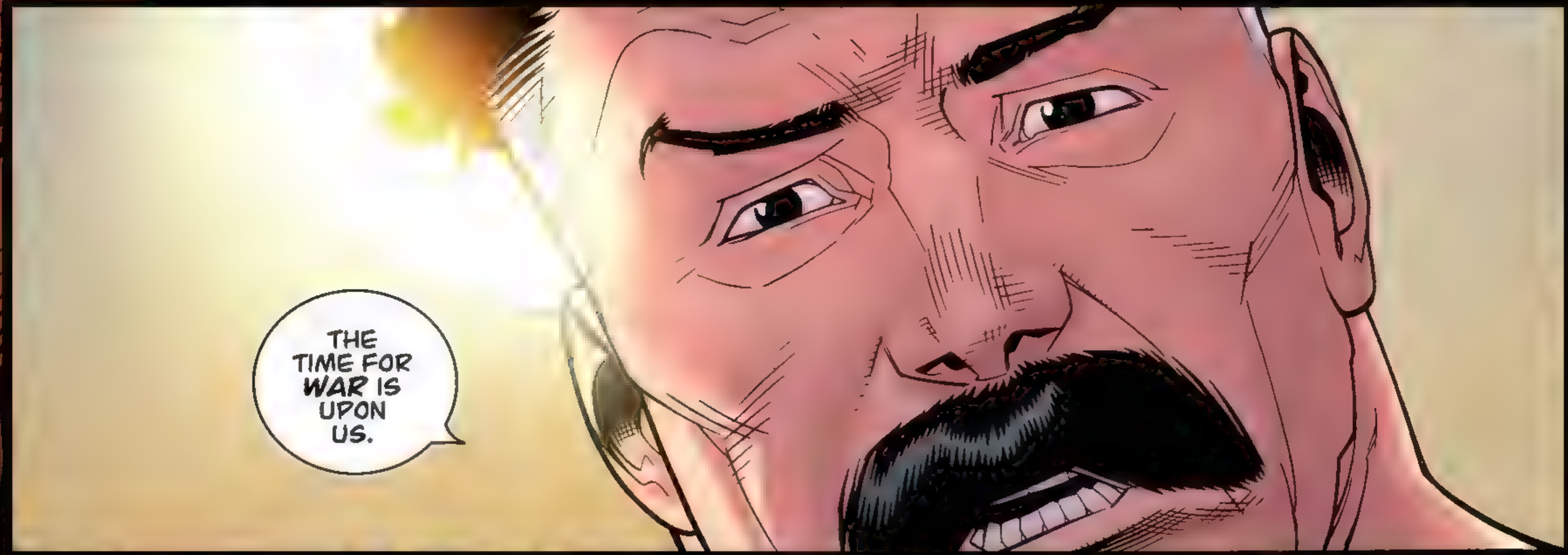
WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT WHEN HE SHOWED UP.

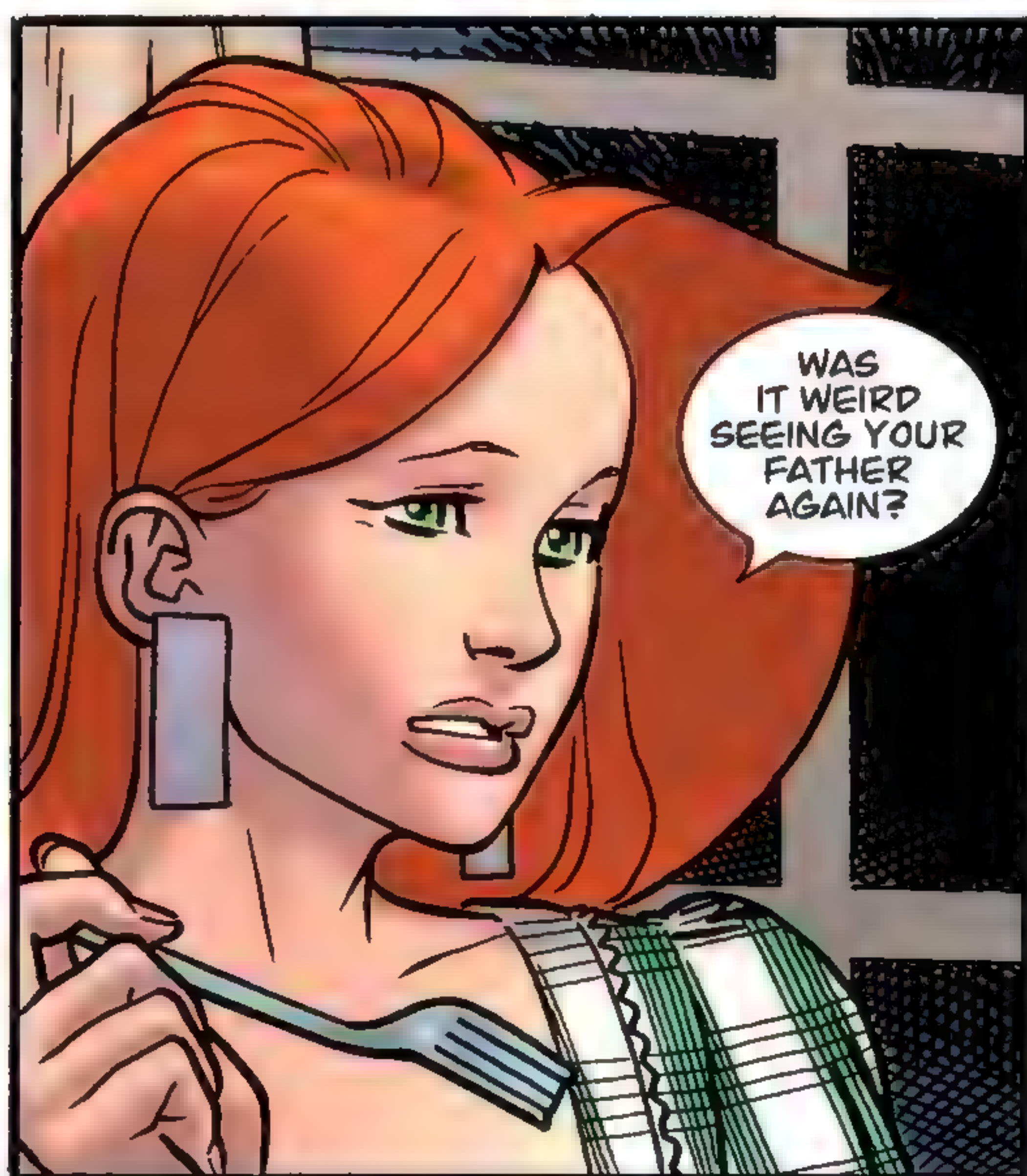
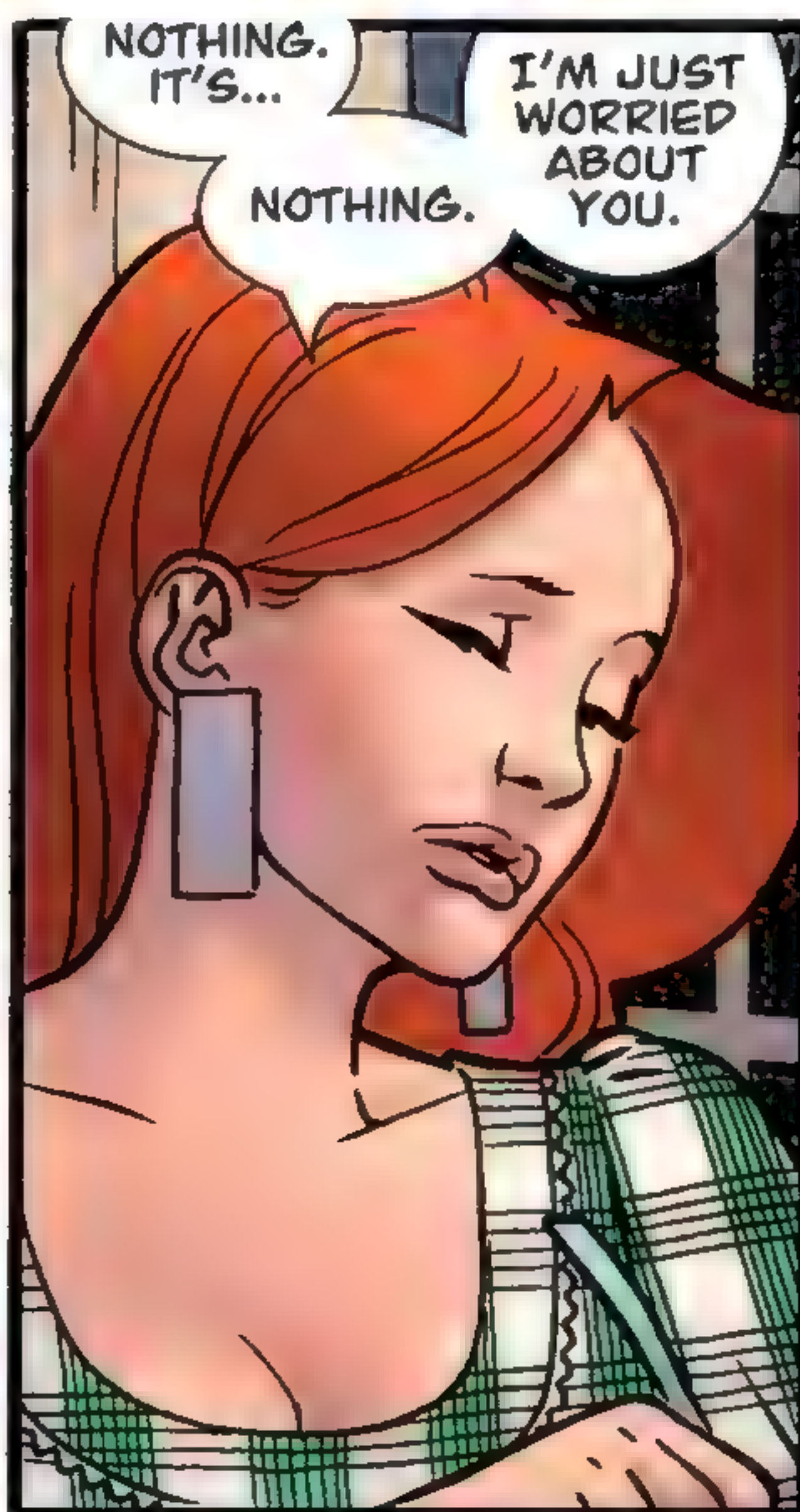
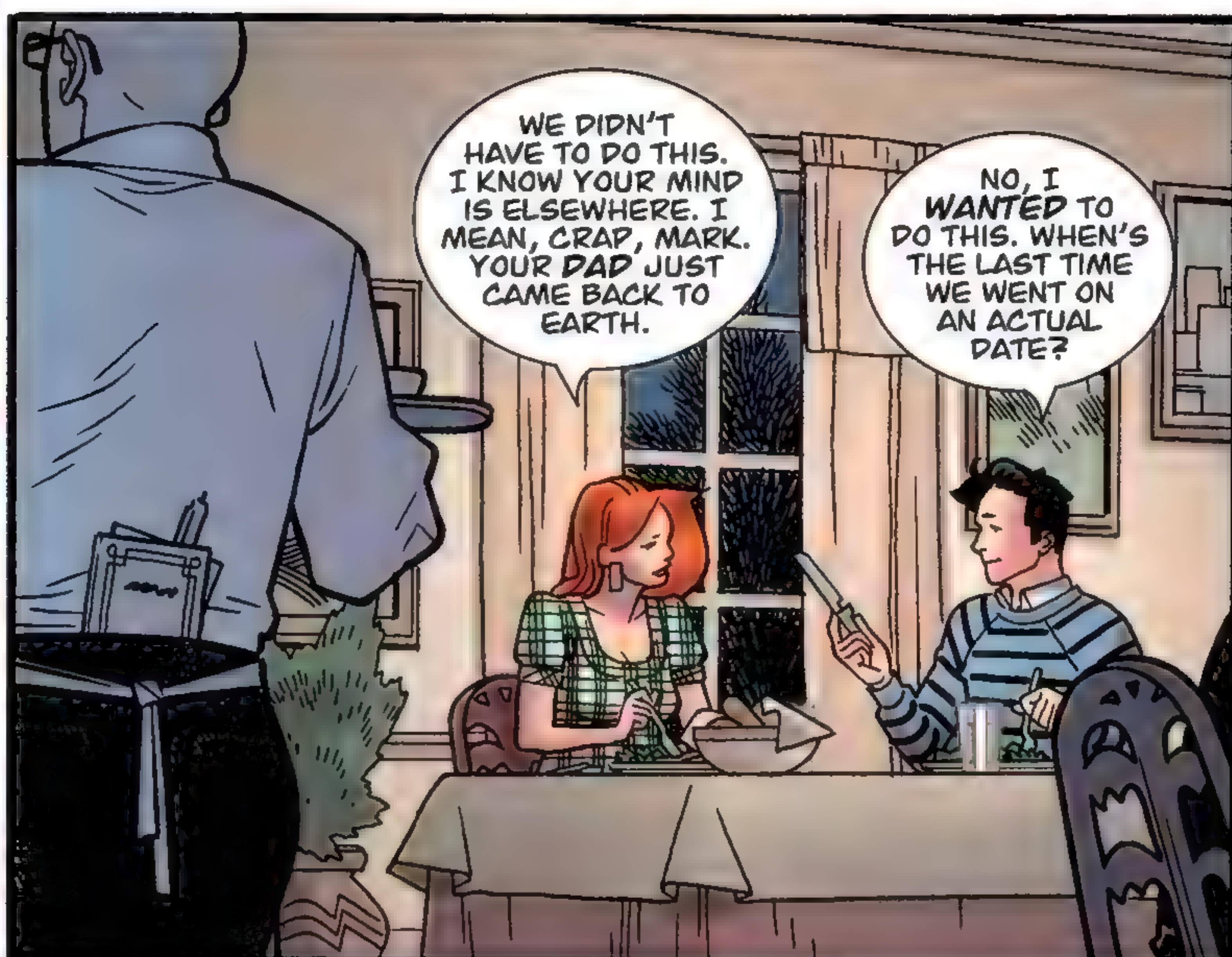
AND?


I'M DONE WITH KILLING--- IT'S TOO EASY, IT CHANGES THINGS. I'M JUST NOT CONVINCED IT'S THE ANSWER ANYMORE.

EVEN IF IT WOULD PREVENT FUTURE ATTACKS... IT SEEMS TO ALSO POTENTIALLY PREVENT GOOD THINGS.







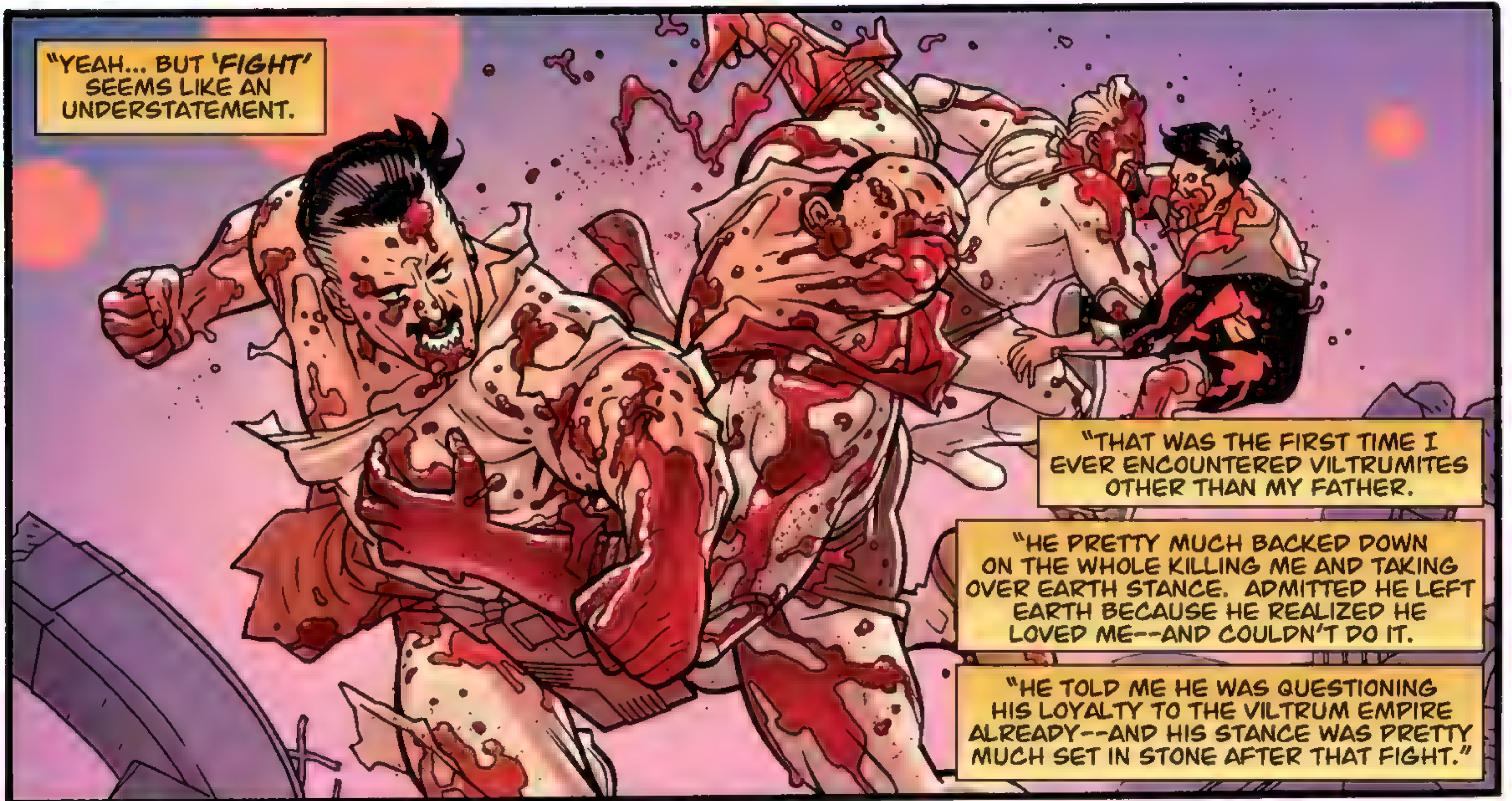
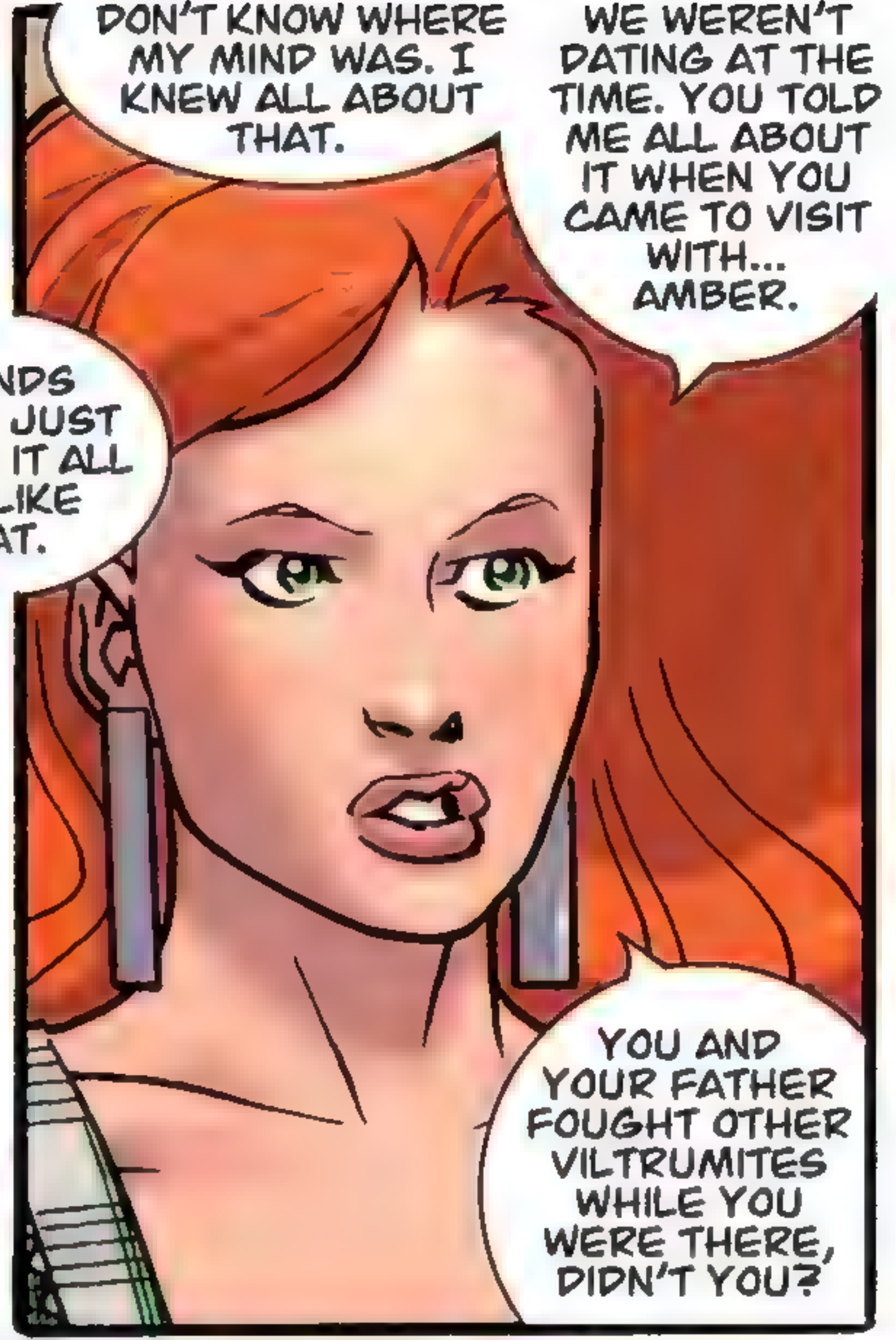
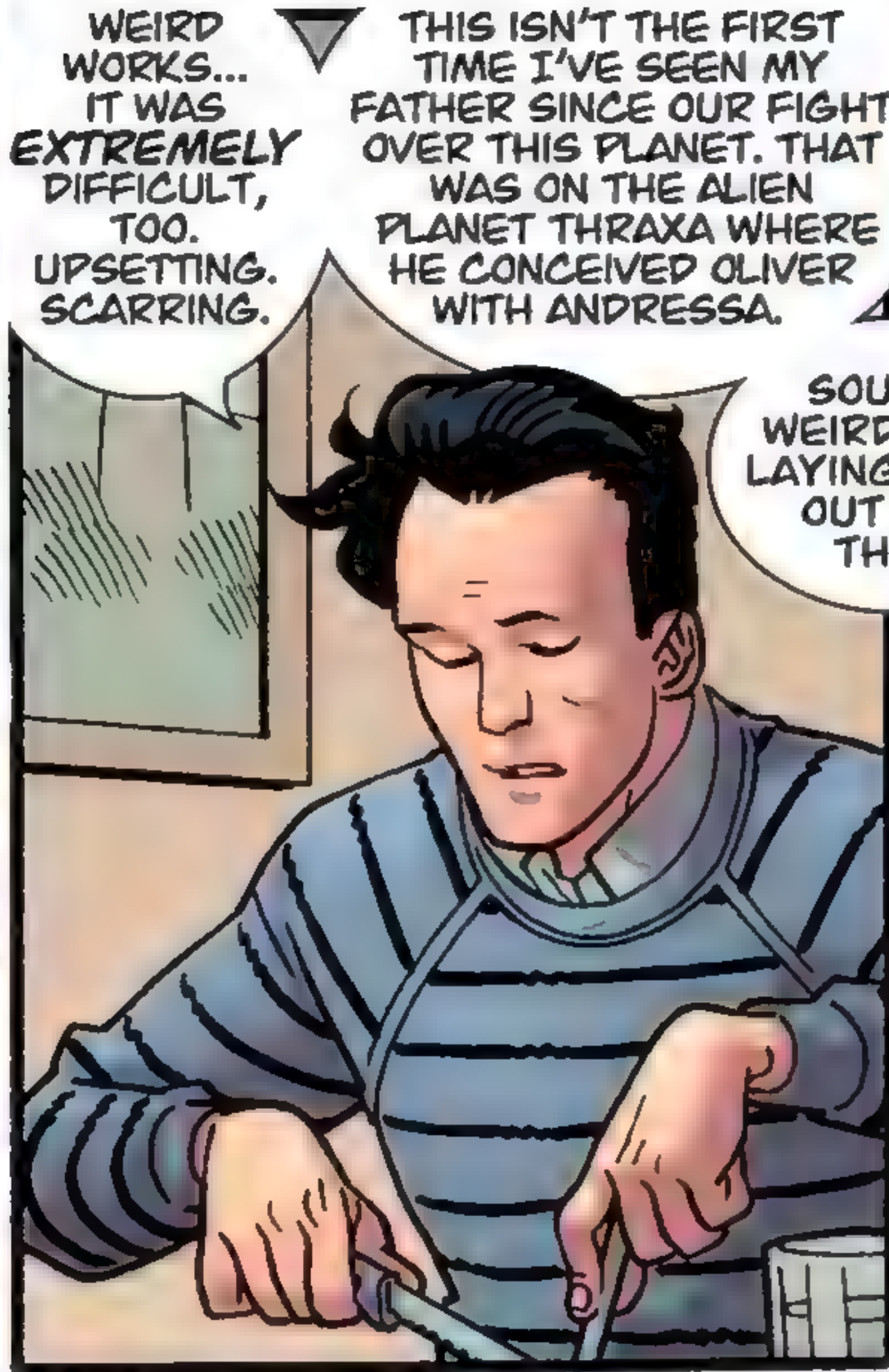


"YOU MEAN
BECAUSE HE
TRIED TO KILL
ME ONCE?"

"OR IS IT THE FACT
THAT BEFORE DOING
SO, HE REVEALED TO
ME AFTER BEING A
COMPLETELY NORMAL,
ALBEIT SUPERHERO
DAD ALL MY LIFE THAT
HE WAS ACTUALLY A
MEMBER OF AN ALIEN
RACE OUT TO CONQUER
THE UNIVERSE AND
HE WANTED MY HELP
TAKING OVER EARTH?"

"OR IS IT THAT HE TOLD ME
DURING THE FIGHT THAT HE
WAS COMPLETELY PREPARED
TO KILL ME, WAS INDIFFERENT
ABOUT THAT, AND CONSIDERED
MY MOTHER TO BE LITTLE
MORE THAN A PET?"

"OR, WELL... ALL
OF THE ABOVE?"



OKAY, SO NOW THAT WE'RE OUT OF THERE AND CAN SPEAK FREELY--YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT I KNOW NEXT TO **NOTHING** ABOUT VILTRUMITES. IT'S THIS LOOMING THREAT THAT HANGS OVER YOUR HEAD EVERY SECOND OF EVERY DAY AND YOU NEXT TO **NEVER** TALK ABOUT IT.



CAN YOU JUST TELL ME EVERYTHING--EVEN IF YOU THINK I ALREADY KNOW SOME OF IT?



EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT VILTRUMITES?

THIS SHOULD TAKE TWO MINUTES.

OH, WHATEVER. YOU HAVE TO KNOW **SOMETHING** ABOUT THEM.

I'M UP TO SPEED ON EVERYTHING BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR DAD AND EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED WITH... CONQUEST.

IT'S ALL THE **BETWEEN** STUFF THAT I'M IN THE DARK ABOUT.

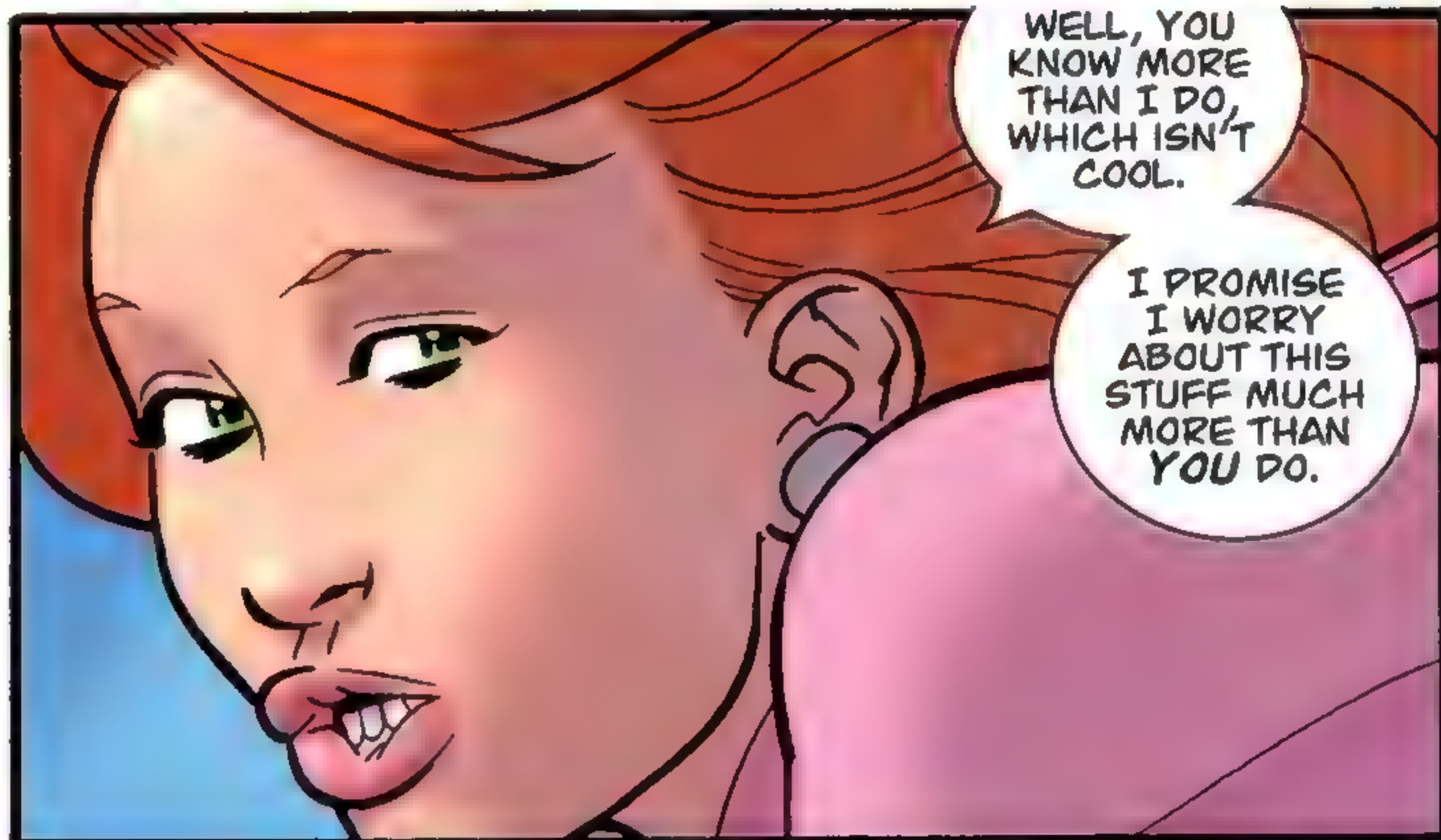
I'VE HAD BRIEF ENCOUNTERS HERE AND THERE, BUT I REALLY KNOW NEXT TO **NOTHING** ABOUT THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO THEIR LEADER IS.



WELL, YOU KNOW MORE THAN I DO, WHICH ISN'T COOL.

I PROMISE I WORRY ABOUT THIS STUFF MUCH MORE THAN YOU DO.



I TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT. IT'S TOO OVERWHELMING.

SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED. I THOUGHT MY DAD WAS DEAD. HE WAS SCHEDULED FOR EXECUTION.

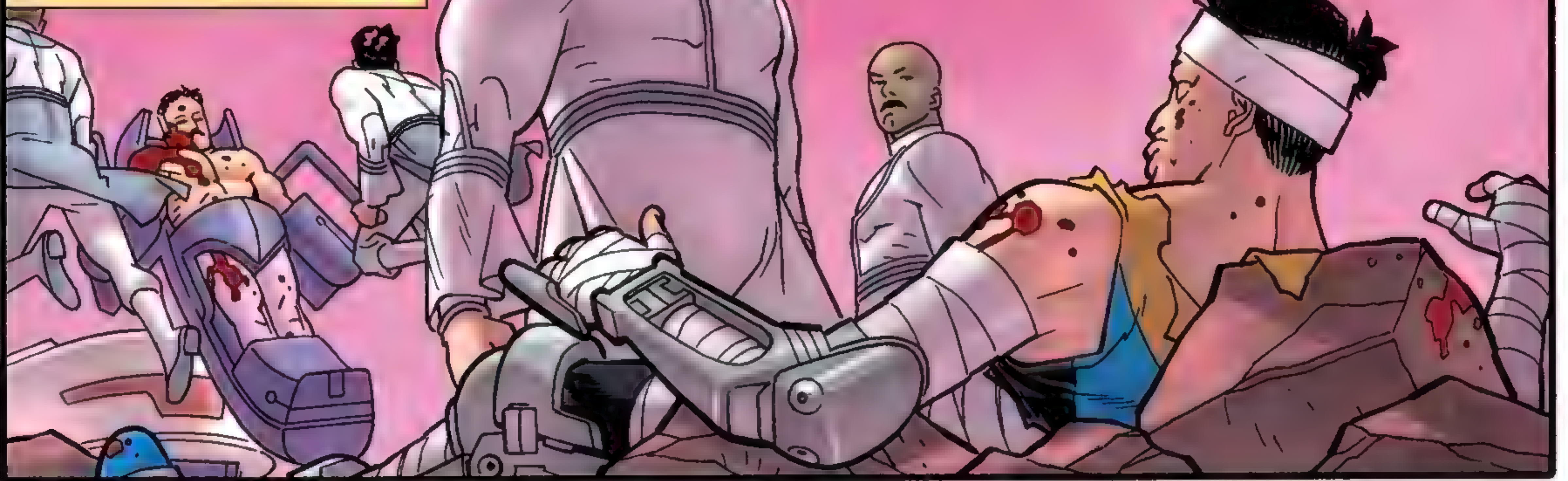
I KNOW, IF IT'S TOO HARD TO TALK ABOUT, I UNDERSTAND.

NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. I DON'T WANT YOU FEELING LEFT IN THE DARK. THIS IS TOO BIG.



"A GOOD EXAMPLE OF ME NOT KNOWING ANYTHING ABOUT VILTRUMITES... THERE WAS THIS GUY ON THRAXA, I HEARD SOMEONE CALL HIM **GENERAL KREGG**. HE TOLD ME I'D BEEN MADE THE VILTRUMITE AGENT STATIONED ON EARTH, THAT IT WAS MY RESPONSIBILITY TO PREPARE IT FOR VILTRUMITE INVASION.

"THIS WAS SHORTLY AFTER THEY TOOK MY FATHER AWAY TO BE EXECUTED."



DIDN'T KNOW WHO HE WAS, HE COULD BE THEIR LEADER FOR ALL I KNOW. HE NEVER REALLY SAID ANYTHING ELSE TO ME--AND HAVING JUST BEEN TOLD MY FATHER WAS GOING TO BE EXECUTED, I WAS A LITTLE SHAKEN.

AND I WAS BADLY BEATEN UP... SO MUCH SO THAT I JUST LAID THERE, HALF CONSCIOUS FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT.

THEY JUST TOOK HIM AND LEFT. IT WAS SO WEIRD.

"YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF EARTH, KID. NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US, WE'RE GOING TO GO KILL YOUR DAD."

WHY WOULD THEY PUT ME IN CHARGE OF EARTH? THAT MAKES NO SENSE! THAT'S LIKE APPOINTING YOU TO BE IN CHARGE OF MY LAUNDRY OR SOMETHING-- YOU NEVER SIGNED UP FOR THAT. IT'S SOMETHING I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO DO.

BUT YOUR DAD'S OKAY... AND HE'S TOTALLY GONE "GOOD GUY" NOW. HE'S FIGHTING FOR THIS COALITION OF PLANETS THING?

THAT'S COOL.

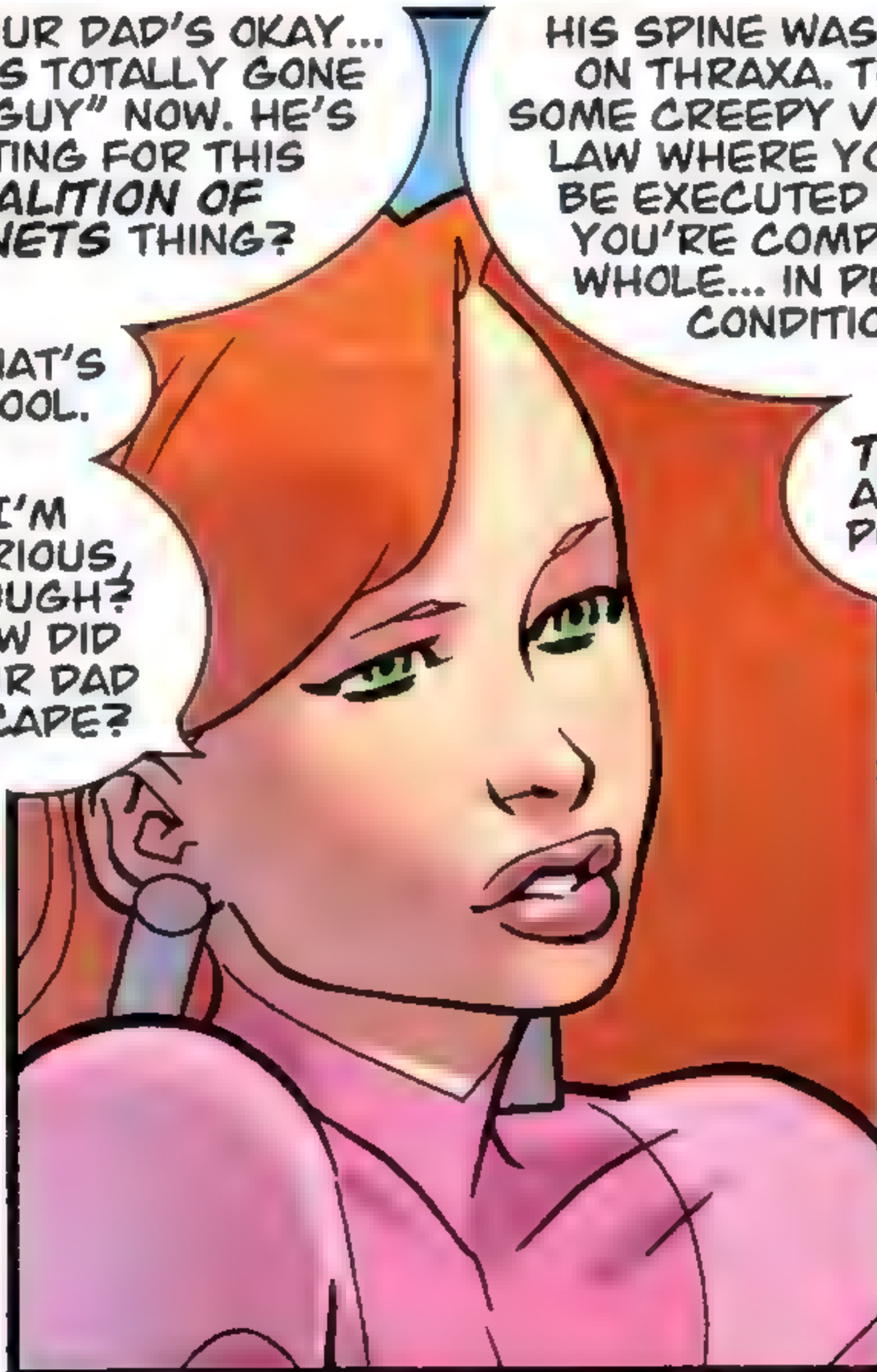
I'M CURIOUS, THOUGH? HOW DID YOUR DAD ESCAPE?

HIS SPINE WAS BROKEN ON THRAXA. THERE'S SOME CREEPY VILTRUMITE LAW WHERE YOU CAN'T BE EXECUTED UNLESS YOU'RE COMPLETELY WHOLE... IN PERFECT CONDITION.

THESE ARE MY PEOPLE.

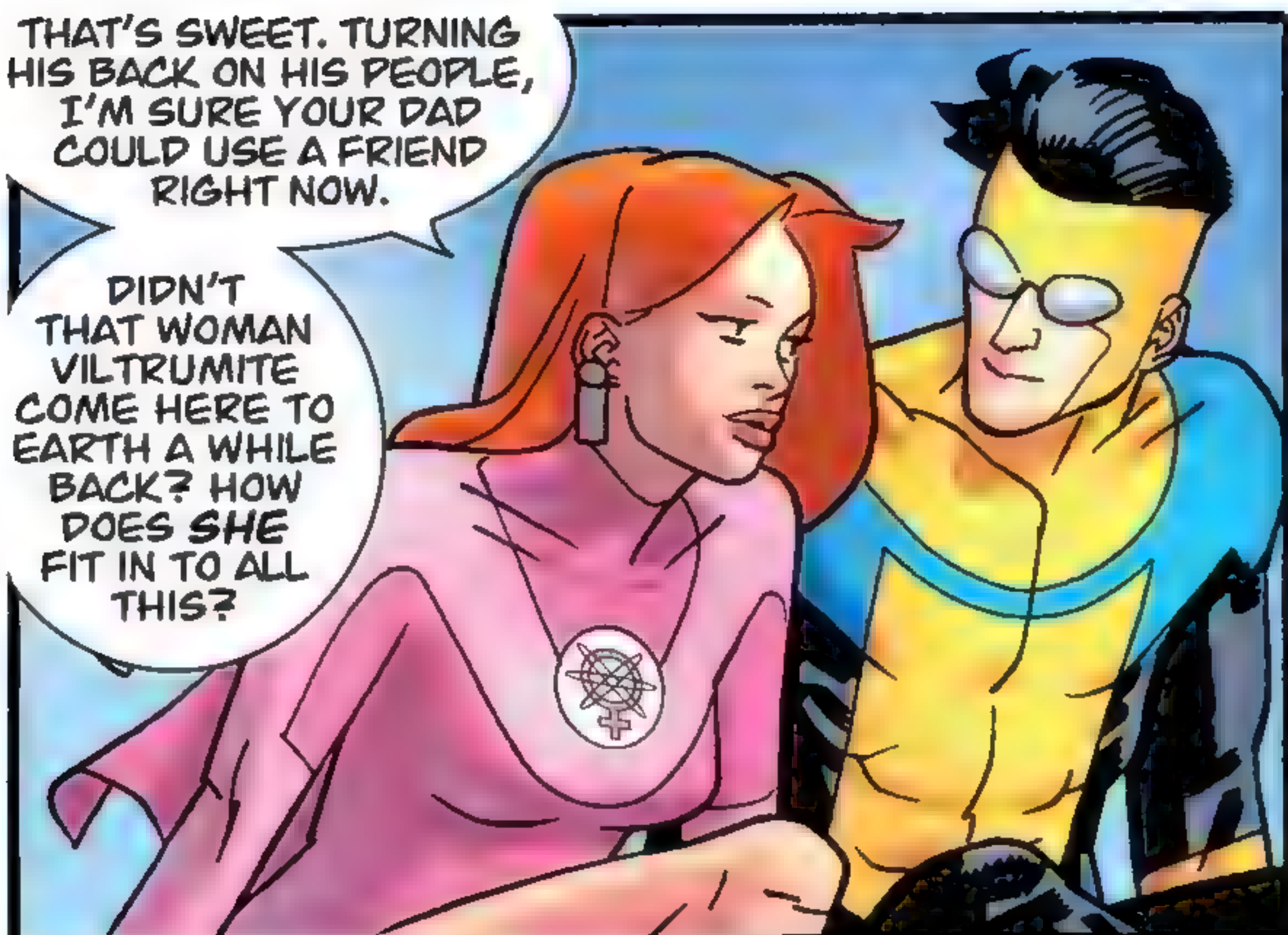
IN THE TIME IT TOOK HIM TO HEAL, ALLEN FOUND HIS WAY TO HIM AND HELPED HIM ESCAPE.

THEY'RE LIKE BEST FRIENDS NOW.



THAT'S SWEET. TURNING HIS BACK ON HIS PEOPLE, I'M SURE YOUR DAD COULD USE A FRIEND RIGHT NOW.

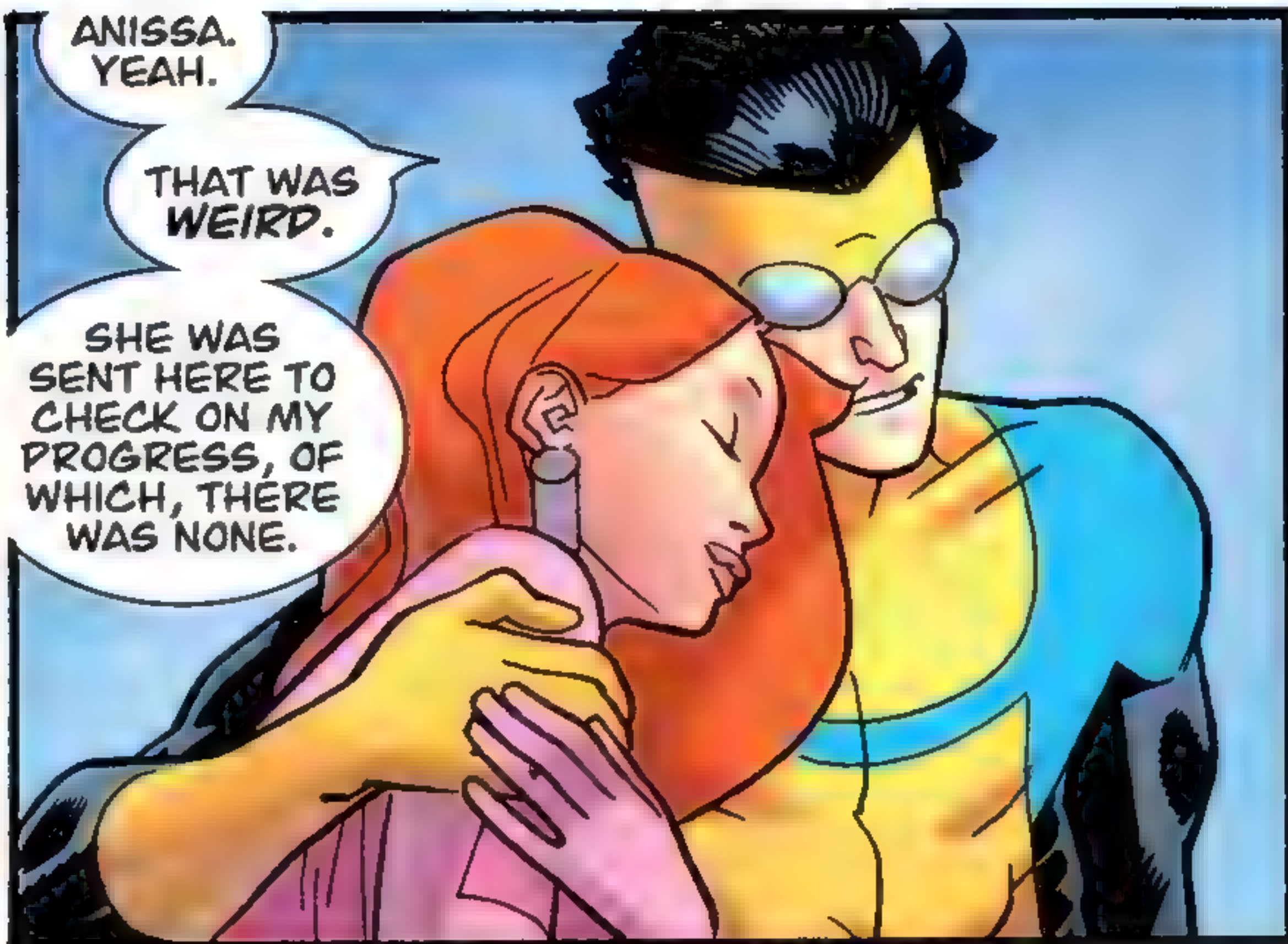
DIDN'T THAT WOMAN VILTRUMITE COME HERE TO EARTH A WHILE BACK? HOW DOES SHE FIT IN TO ALL THIS?



ANISSA. YEAH.

THAT WAS WEIRD.

SHE WAS SENT HERE TO CHECK ON MY PROGRESS, OF WHICH, THERE WAS NONE.



"THAT DIDN'T MAKE HER HAPPY."

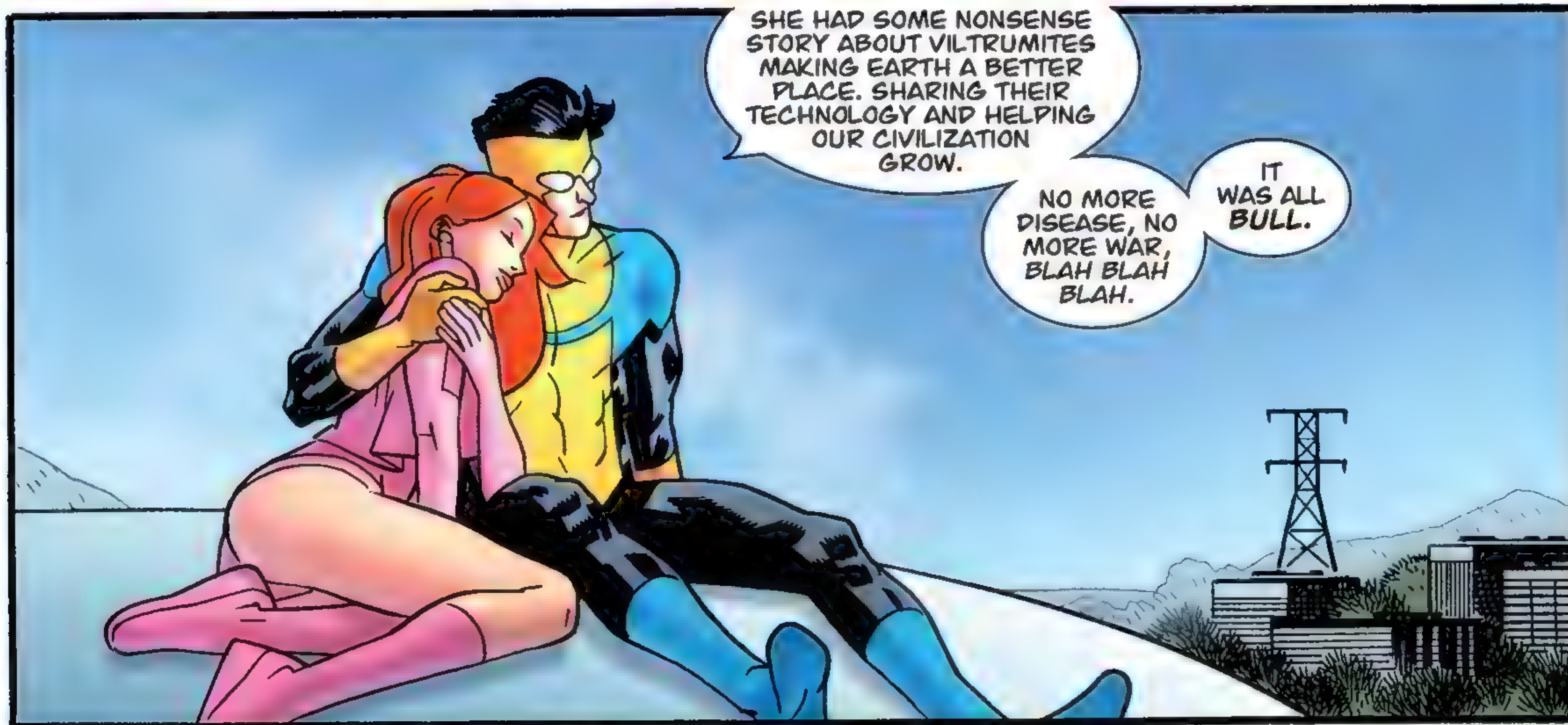
"WE FOUGHT A LITTLE BIT. THINKING BACK, SHE WAS CLEARLY GOING EASY ON ME. JUST HERE TO WARN ME, REALLY."



SHE HAD SOME NONSENSE STORY ABOUT VILTRUMITES MAKING EARTH A BETTER PLACE. SHARING THEIR TECHNOLOGY AND HELPING OUR CIVILIZATION GROW.

NO MORE DISEASE, NO MORE WAR, BLAH BLAH BLAH.

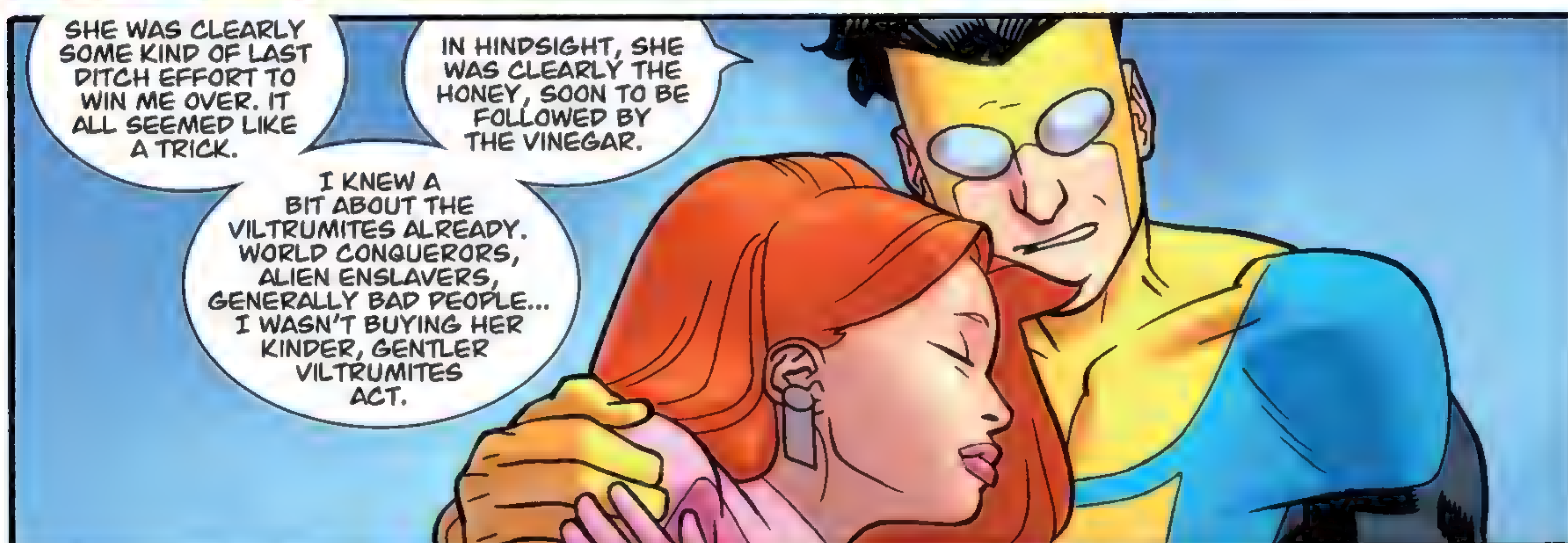
IT WAS ALL BULL.





"SHE EVEN HELPED ME SAVE A BUNCH OF PEOPLE AS SOME KIND OF FORCED DISPLAY OF THE GOOD THE VILTRUMITES COULD DO.

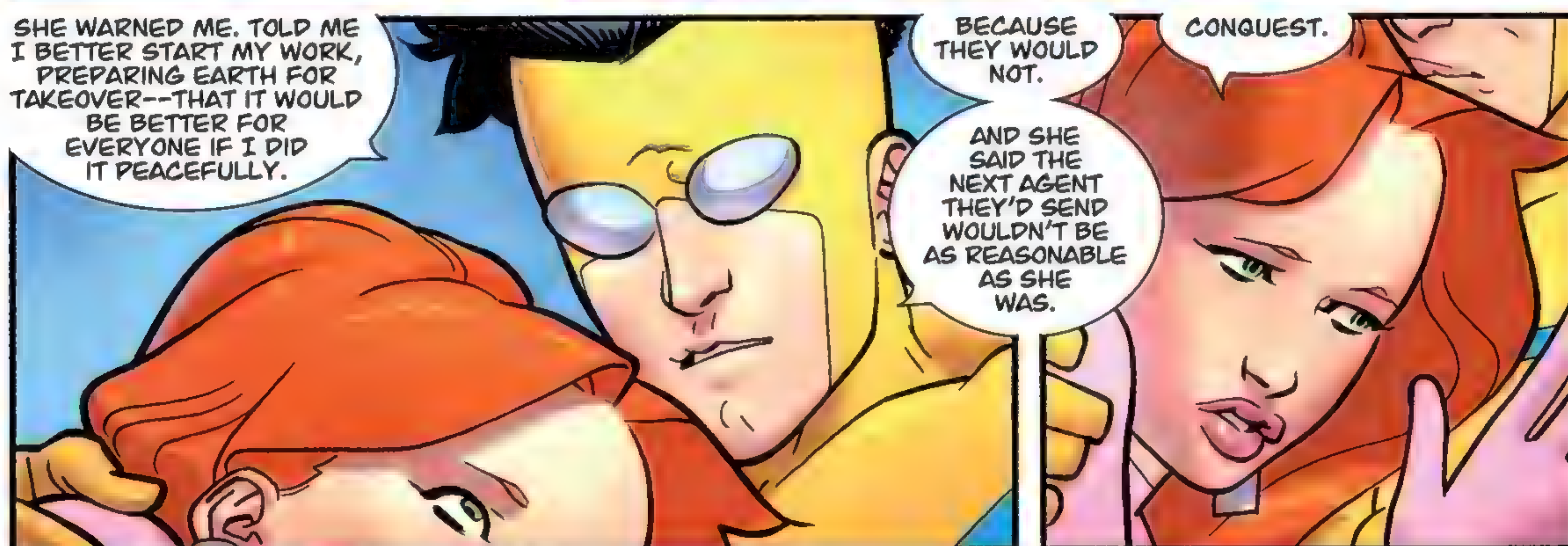
"I DIDN'T BUY IT."



SHE WAS CLEARLY SOME KIND OF LAST DITCH EFFORT TO WIN ME OVER. IT ALL SEEMED LIKE A TRICK.

IN HINDSIGHT, SHE WAS CLEARLY THE HONEY, SOON TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE VINEGAR.

I KNEW A BIT ABOUT THE VILTRUMITES ALREADY. WORLD CONQUERORS, ALIEN ENSLAVERS, GENERALLY BAD PEOPLE... I WASN'T BUYING HER KINDER, GENTLER VILTRUMITES ACT.



SHE WARNED ME. TOLD ME I BETTER START MY WORK, PREPARING EARTH FOR TAKEOVER--THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR EVERYONE IF I DID IT PEACEFULLY.

BECAUSE THEY WOULD NOT.

CONQUEST.

AND SHE SAID THE NEXT AGENT THEY'D SEND WOULDN'T BE AS REASONABLE AS SHE WAS.

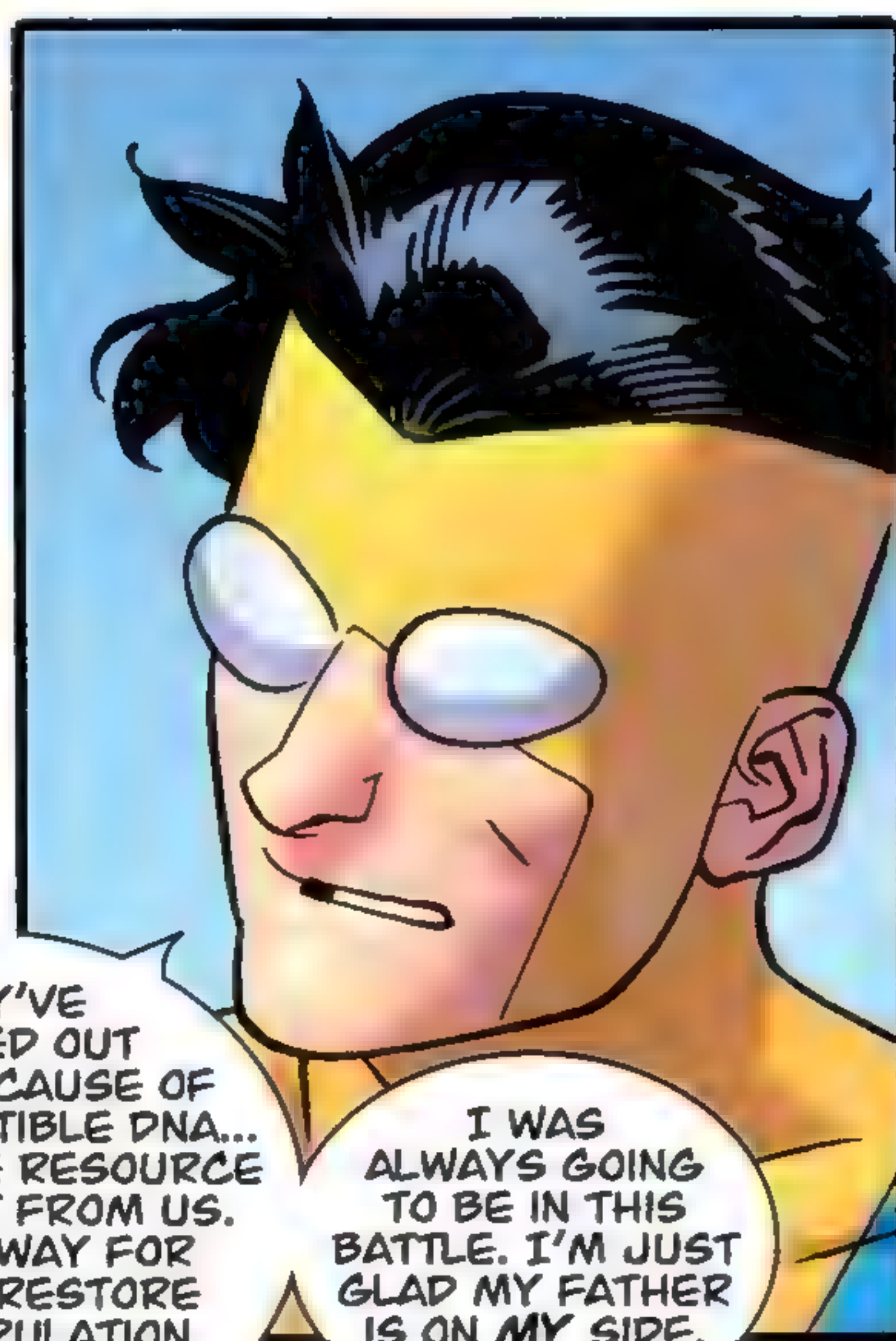
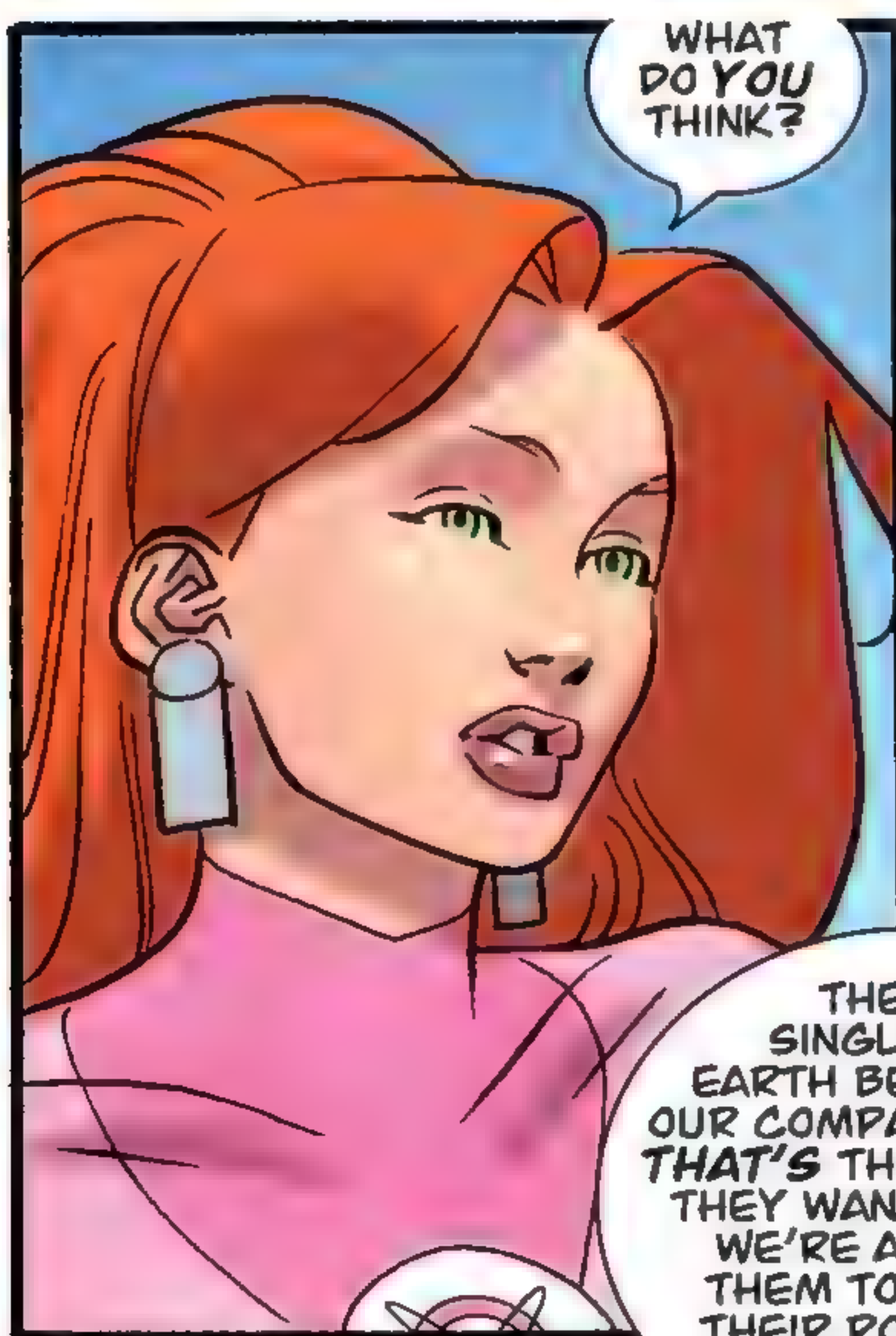
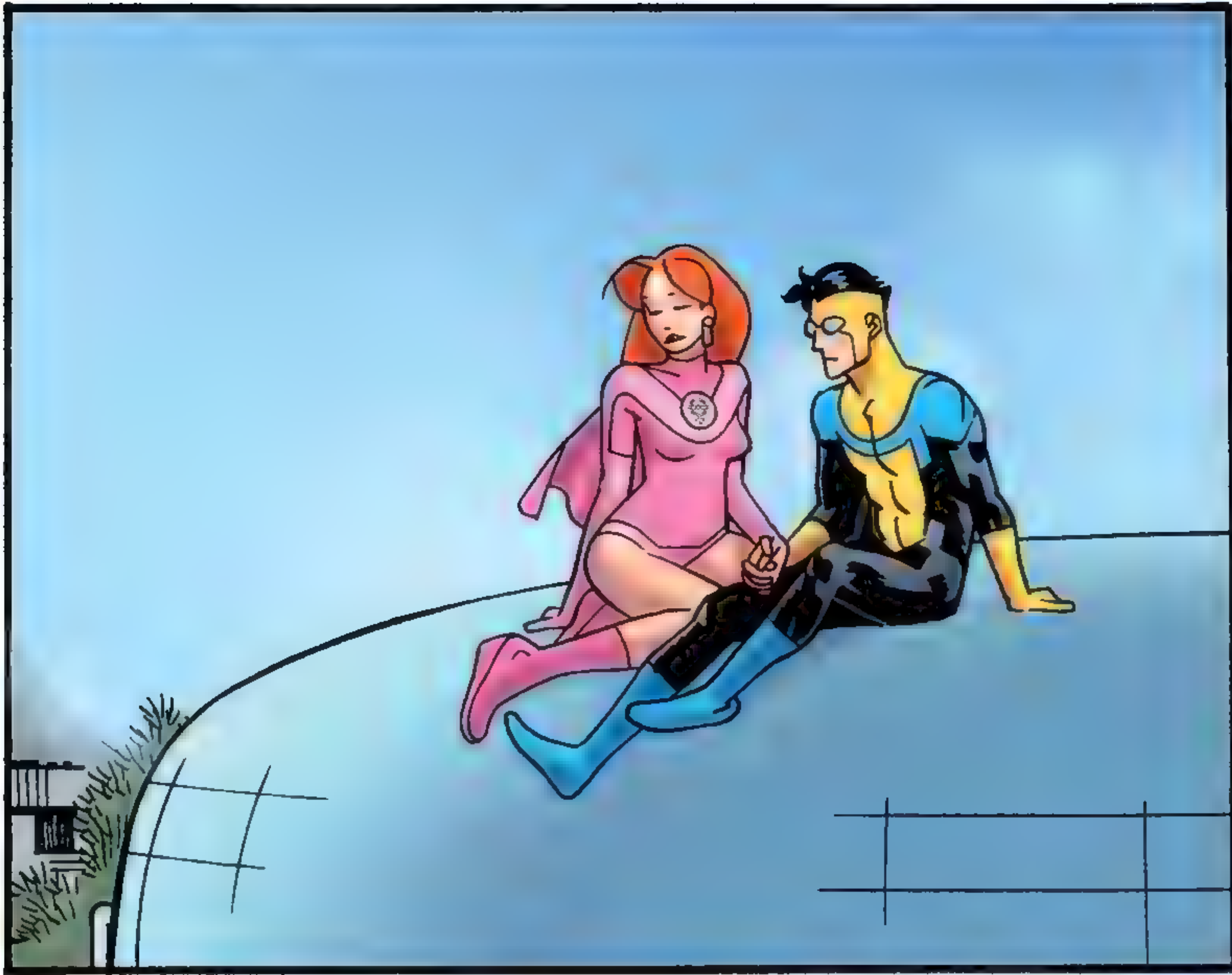


YEAH.. CONQUEST.

NO NEED TO GO THERE, MARK. REALLY.

THE LESS SAID ABOUT HIM THE BETTER.







IT'S WEIRD. I'VE KNOWN HIM ALL MY LIFE TO BE THIS GOOD PERSON, OMNI-MAN, DEFENDER OF DEMOCRACY... AND I CAN'T CONVINCE MYSELF ALL THAT WAS AN ACT.

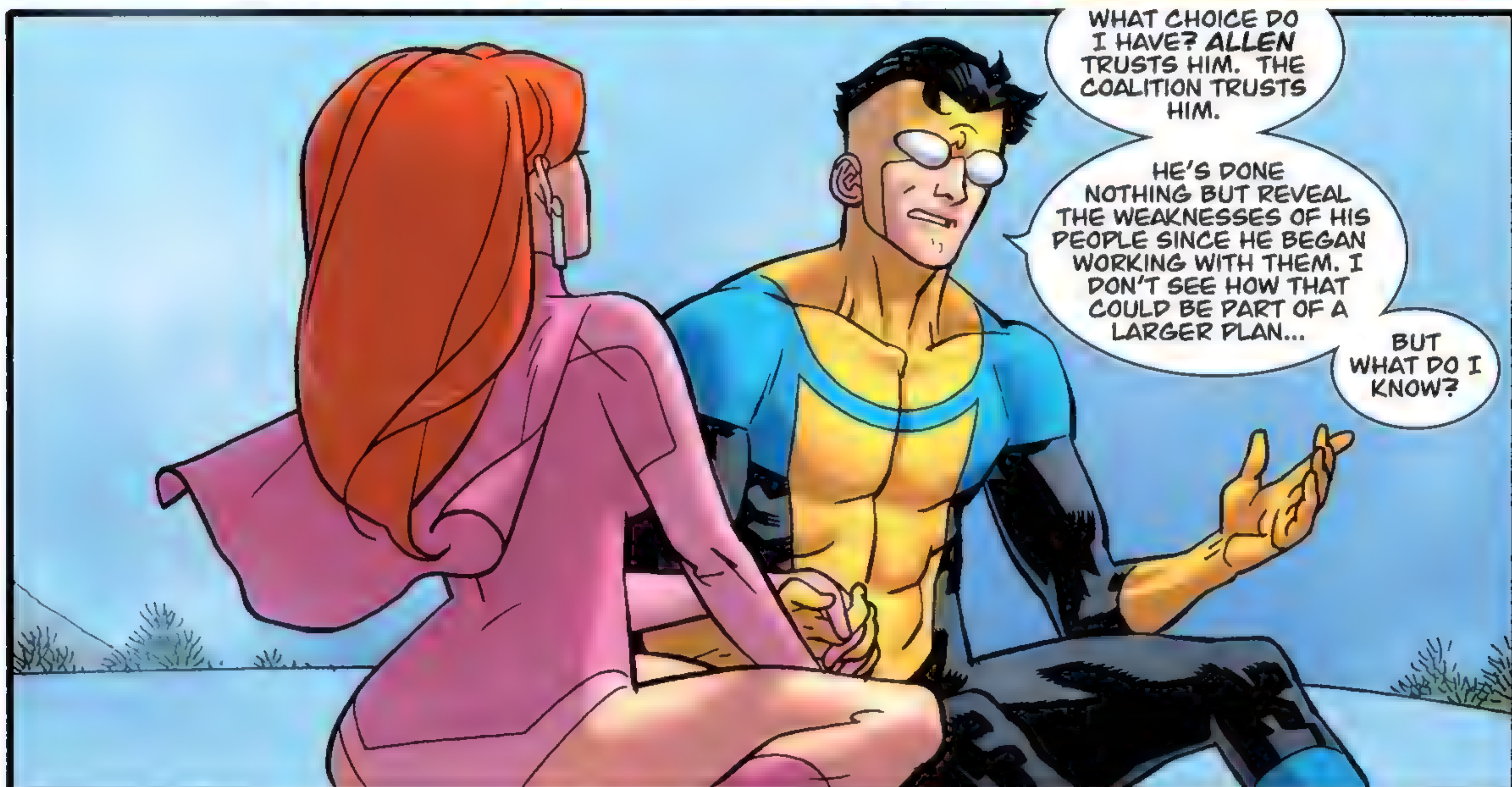
THE KINDNESS HE SHOWED ME, THE LOVE BETWEEN A FATHER AND SON, IT ALL SEEMED SO REAL, SO NORMAL. SO I BELIEVE THAT IT WAS.

THE BAD PARTS, HIM TRYING TO TAKE OVER, FIGHTING ME... IT WAS SUCH A BRIEF PERIOD. HE SEEMS BACK TO NORMAL AGAIN.



THEN AGAIN, HE'S BEEN ALIVE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. THE ENTIRETY OF HIS TIME WITH ME MUST SEEM LIKE THE BLINK OF AN EYE TO HIM.

SO... I DON'T KNOW.



WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE? ALLEN TRUSTS HIM. THE COALITION TRUSTS HIM.

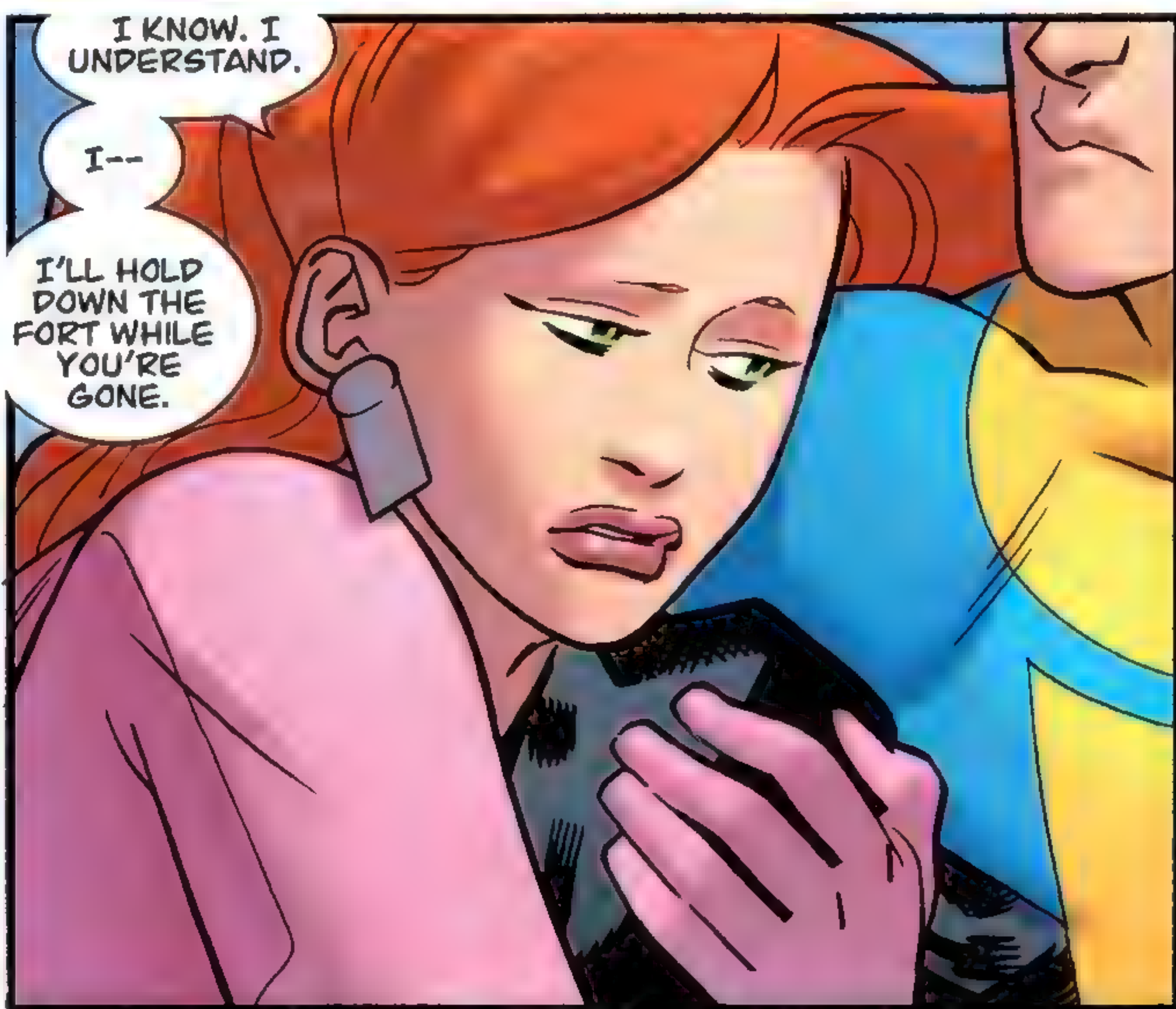
HE'S DONE NOTHING BUT REVEAL THE WEAKNESSES OF HIS PEOPLE SINCE HE BEGAN WORKING WITH THEM. I DON'T SEE HOW THAT COULD BE PART OF A LARGER PLAN...

BUT WHAT DO I KNOW?



WE'RE SUPPOSED TO LEAVE TOMORROW. I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I'LL BE GONE AND I WON'T HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH EARTH.

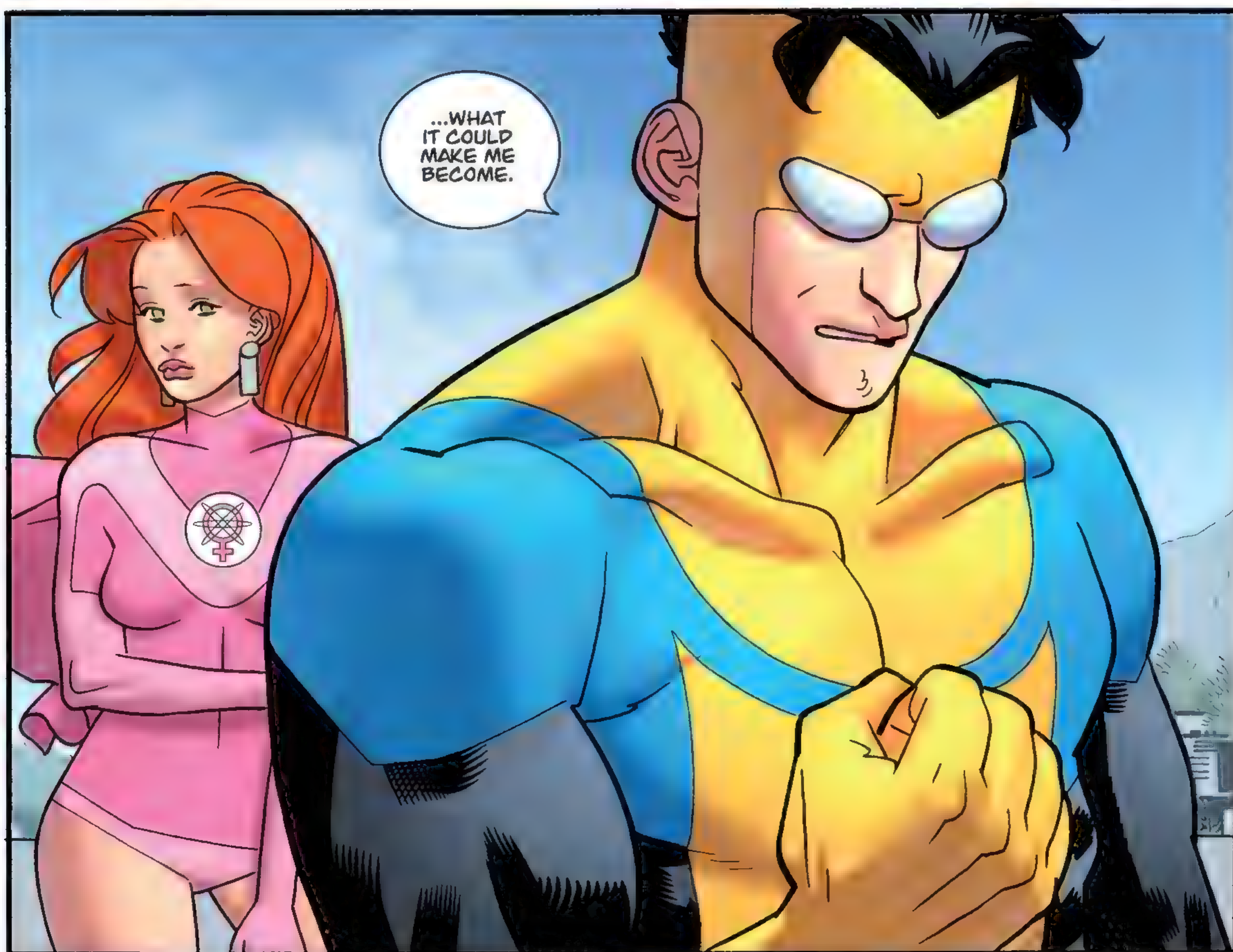
BUT THIS IS SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO-- FOR THE SAKE OF THE WHOLE PLANET.



I KNOW. I UNDERSTAND.

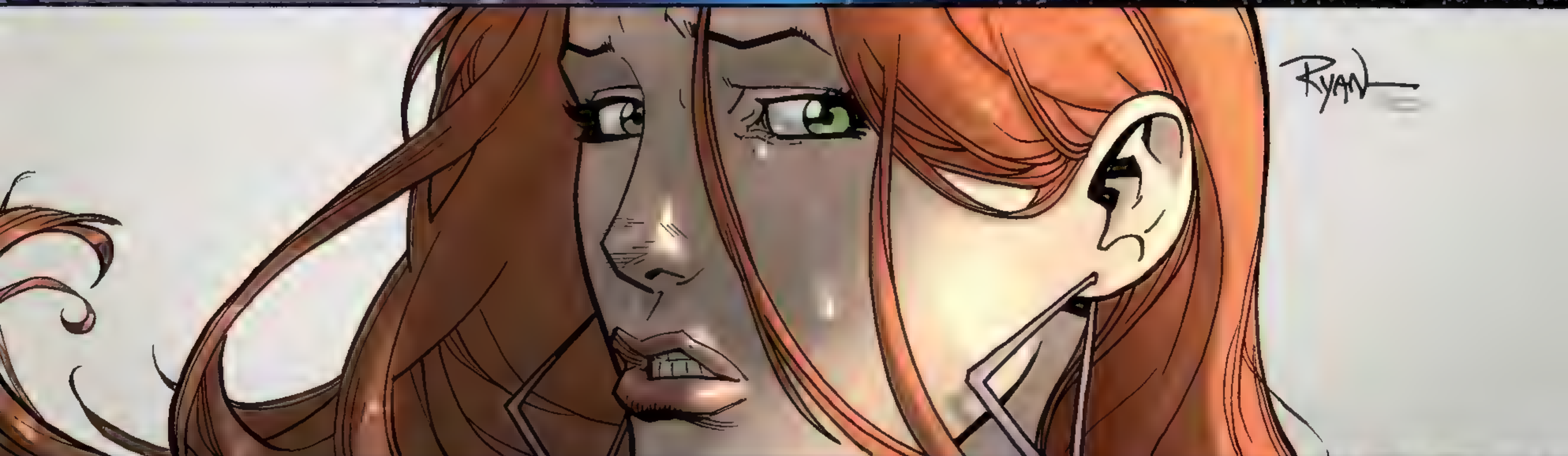
I--

I'LL HOLD DOWN THE FORT WHILE YOU'RE GONE.





CHAPTER 71





BREFT!
BREFT!

YOU'RE
KIDDING
ME!



STUPID PHONE.



WHATEVER IT IS, I CAN'T MAKE IT!

SOMETHING CAME UP.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU CAN'T MAKE IT?! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ON YOUR WAY BACK HERE, ANYWAY.



IF IT'S ANYTHING LESS THAN AN ALIEN INVASION-- YOU NEED TO DROP IT AND GET OVER HERE. SHOPPING MALL CLIENT, BIG DEAL.

FUNNY YOU SHOULD SAY THAT.



IS HE TALKING ON THE PHONE?!

WHO? DO YOU KNOW THESE GUYS?

NEVER MIND.

CAN YOU CALL OLIVER? I THINK HE'S AT THE HOUSE WITH MY MOM.

I DON'T HAVE OLIVER UNDER CONTRACT SO OUR INSURANCE WON'T COVER HIM. IT'S TOO MUCH OF A RISK. I KNOW WE'VE TALKED ABOUT SIGNING UP OTHER HEROES BUT I HAVEN'T HAD THE CHANCE.

I CAN'T GET AWAY. YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO SEND OLIVER. I'M SORRY.

I'M GOING TO BE LEAVING THE PLANET TODAY--WHEN WERE YOU PLANNING ON SIGNING UP OTHER HEROES?



I'VE HAD A LOT ON MY MIND LATELY, OKAY?!

I'LL DEAL WITH THIS-- JUST HURRY UP AND GET BACK HERE.



UNGH.

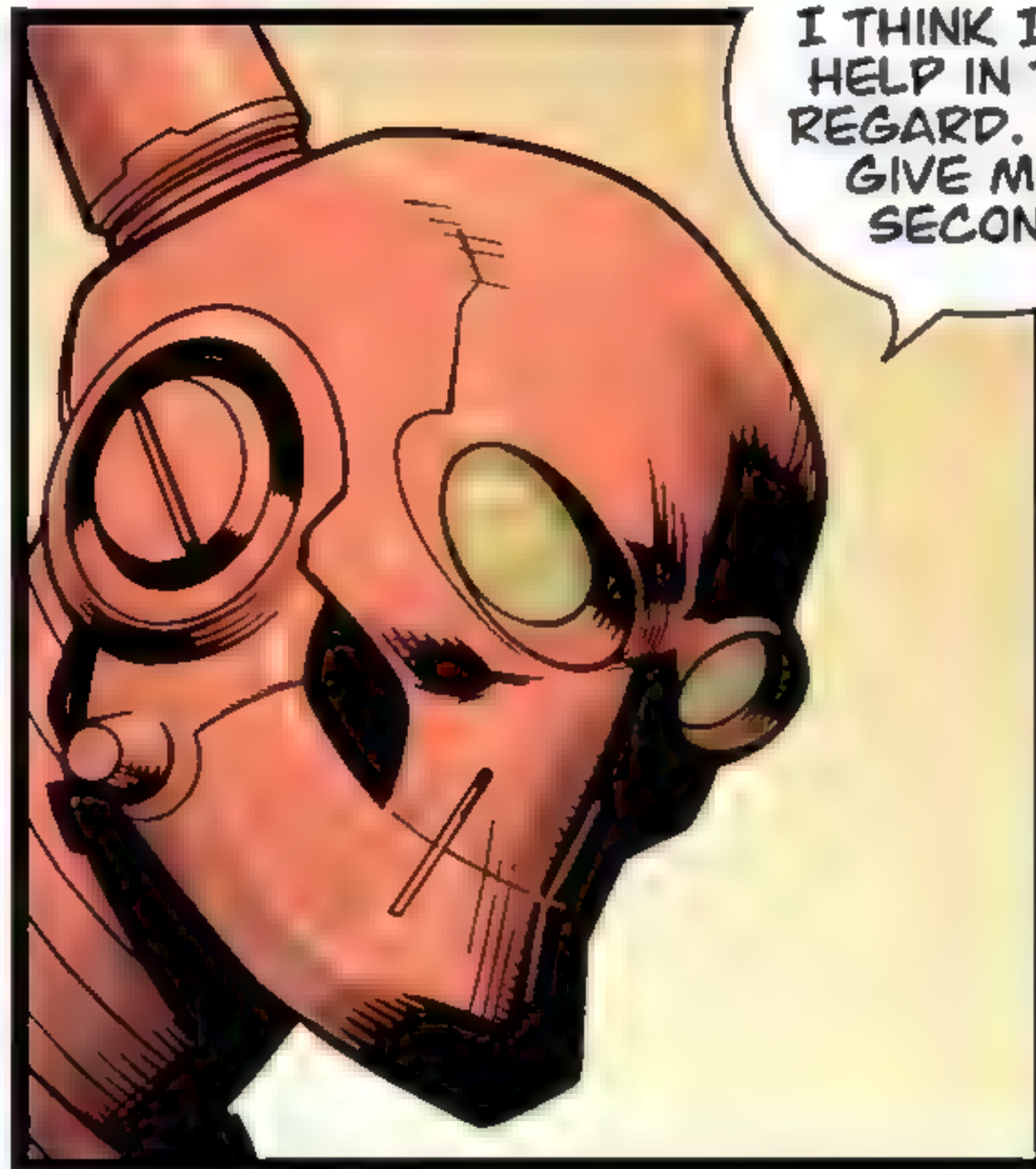
WE NEED TO WRAP THIS UP--EVERY SECOND THAT TICKS BY THEIR NUMBERS GROW. WE'VE GOT TO SHUT THAT PORTAL DOWN!

NO. THE FLAXANS ARE FROM A DIMENSION NOT IN SYNC WITH OUR OWN. TIME FOR THEM RUNS MUCH SLOWER SO OUR DIMENSION CAUSES THEM TO AGE AT A RAPID RATE.

WE JUST NEED TO FIGURE OUT HOW THEY'RE BLOCKING THOSE EFFECTS-- AND THIS WILL BE OVER.



THEN WE NEED TO BUY US SOME TIME TO DO THAT. THESE TANKS ARE CUTTING OUR AIR FORCE TO RIBBONS.

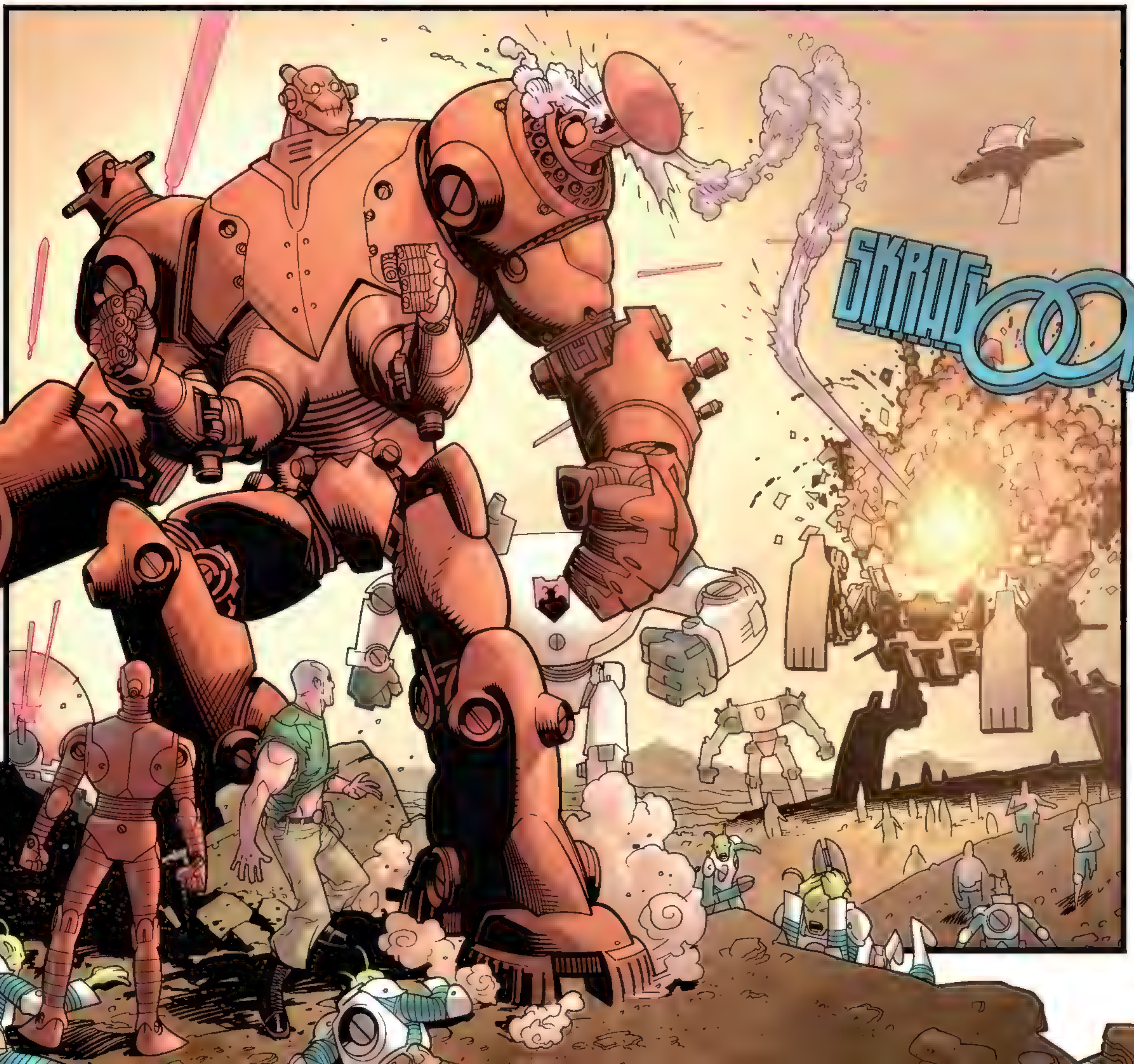


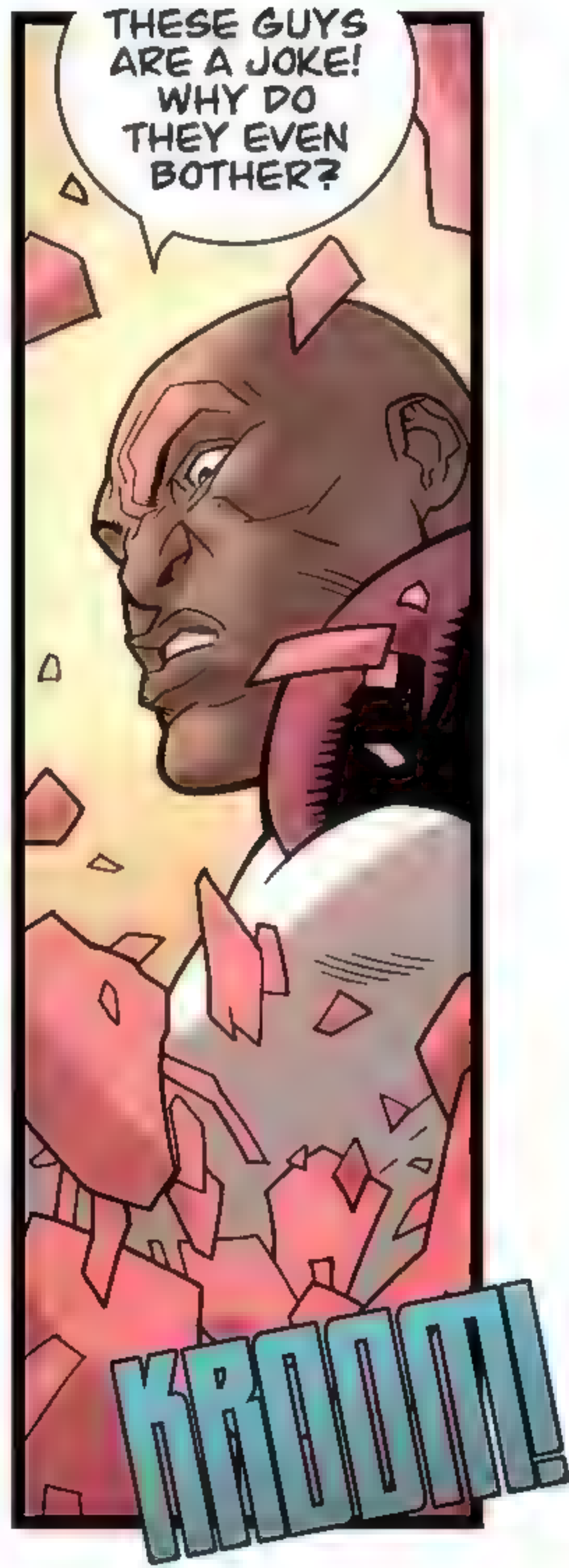
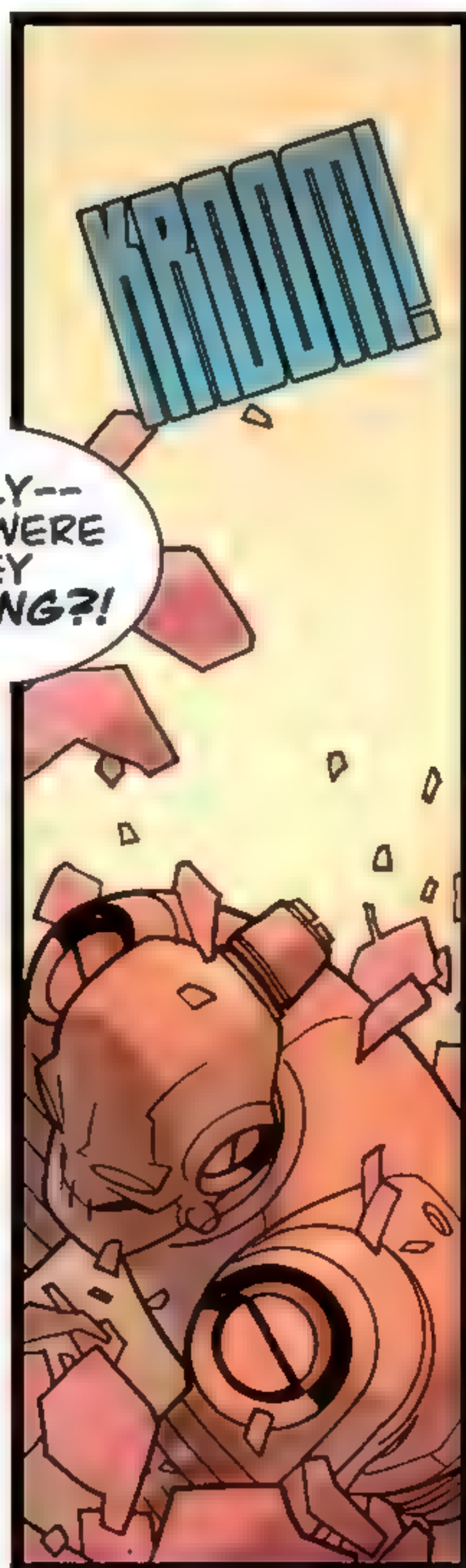
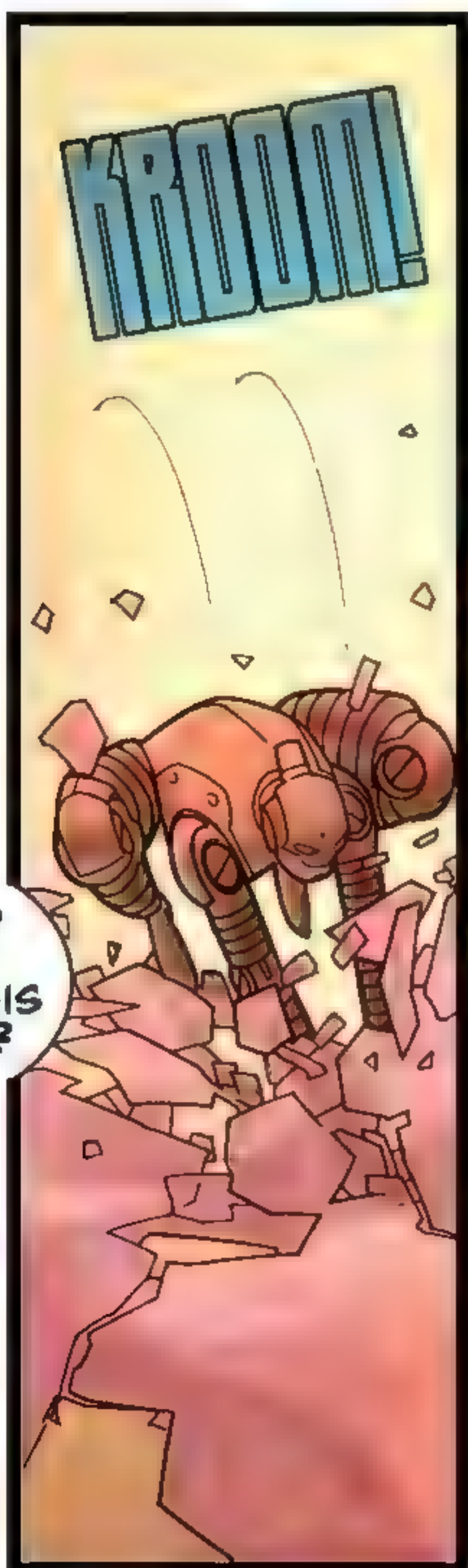
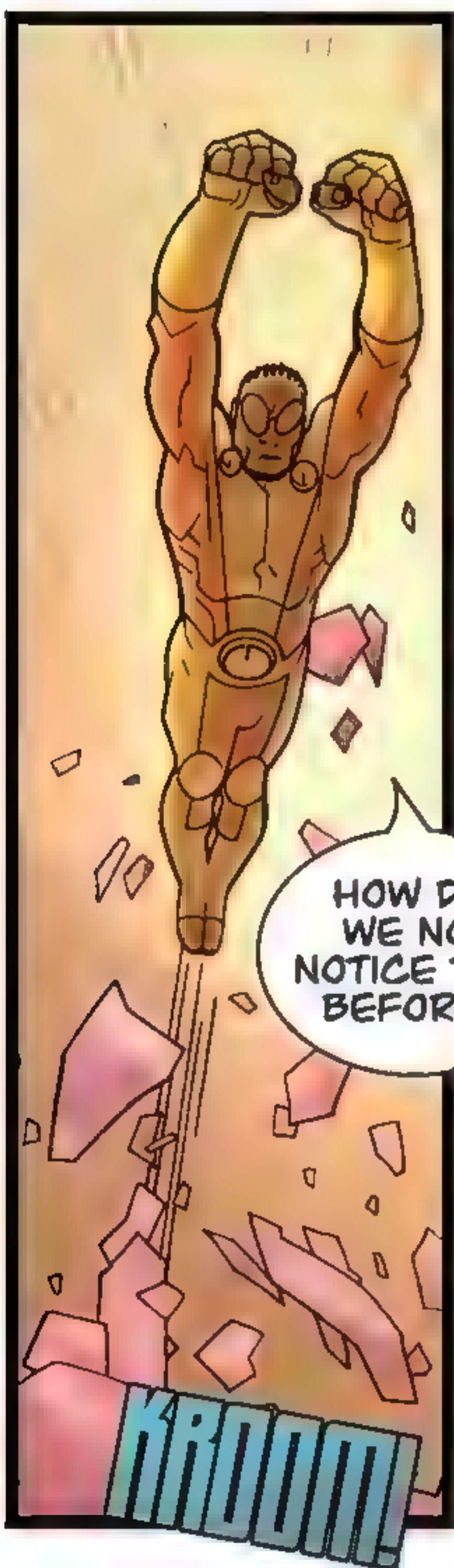
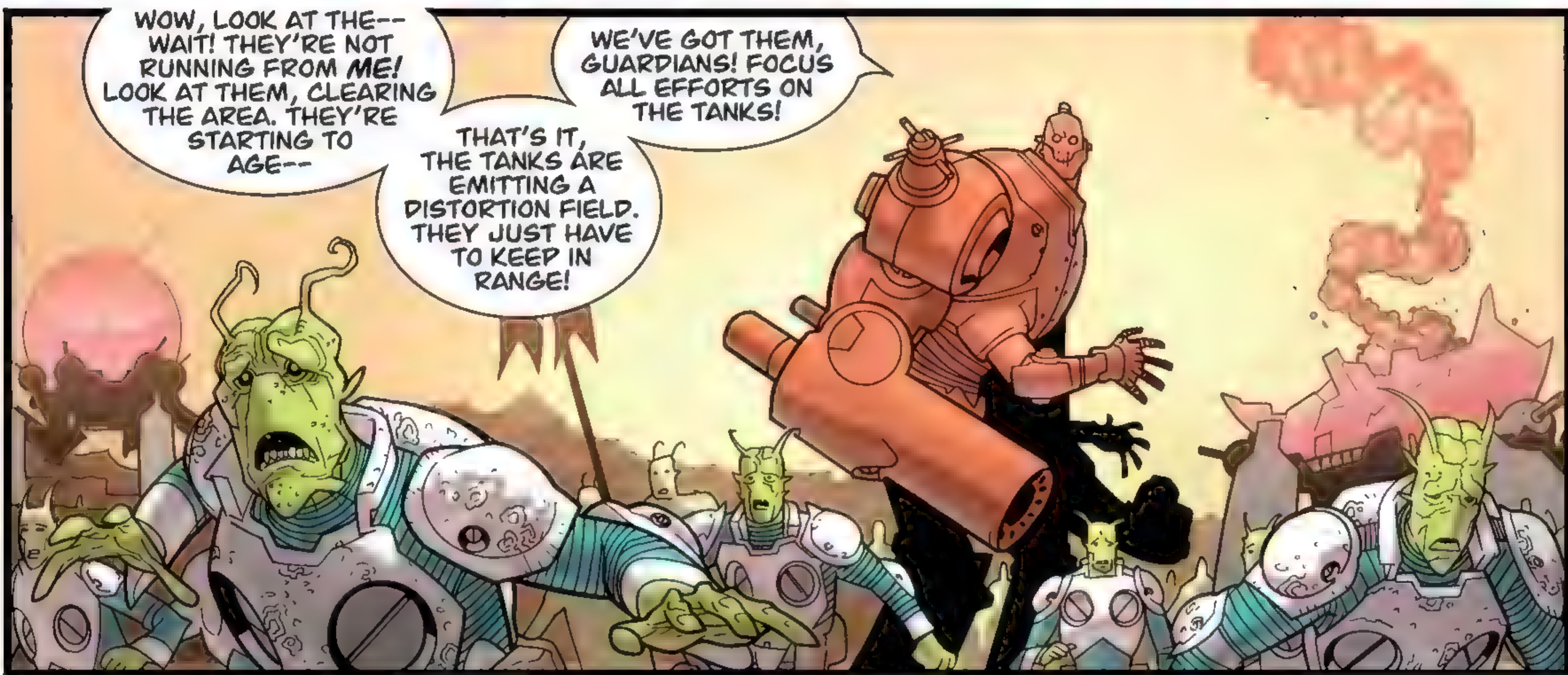
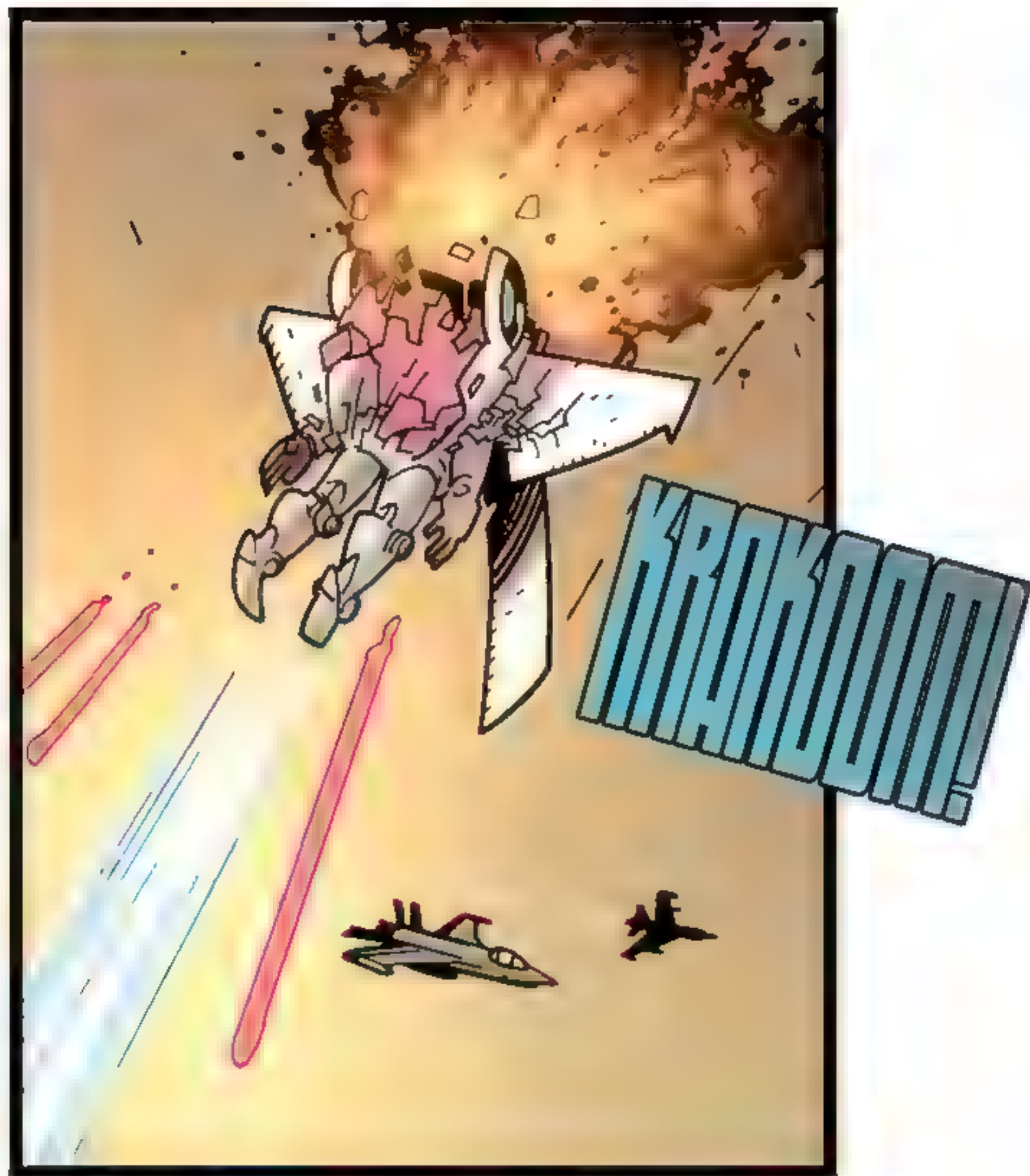
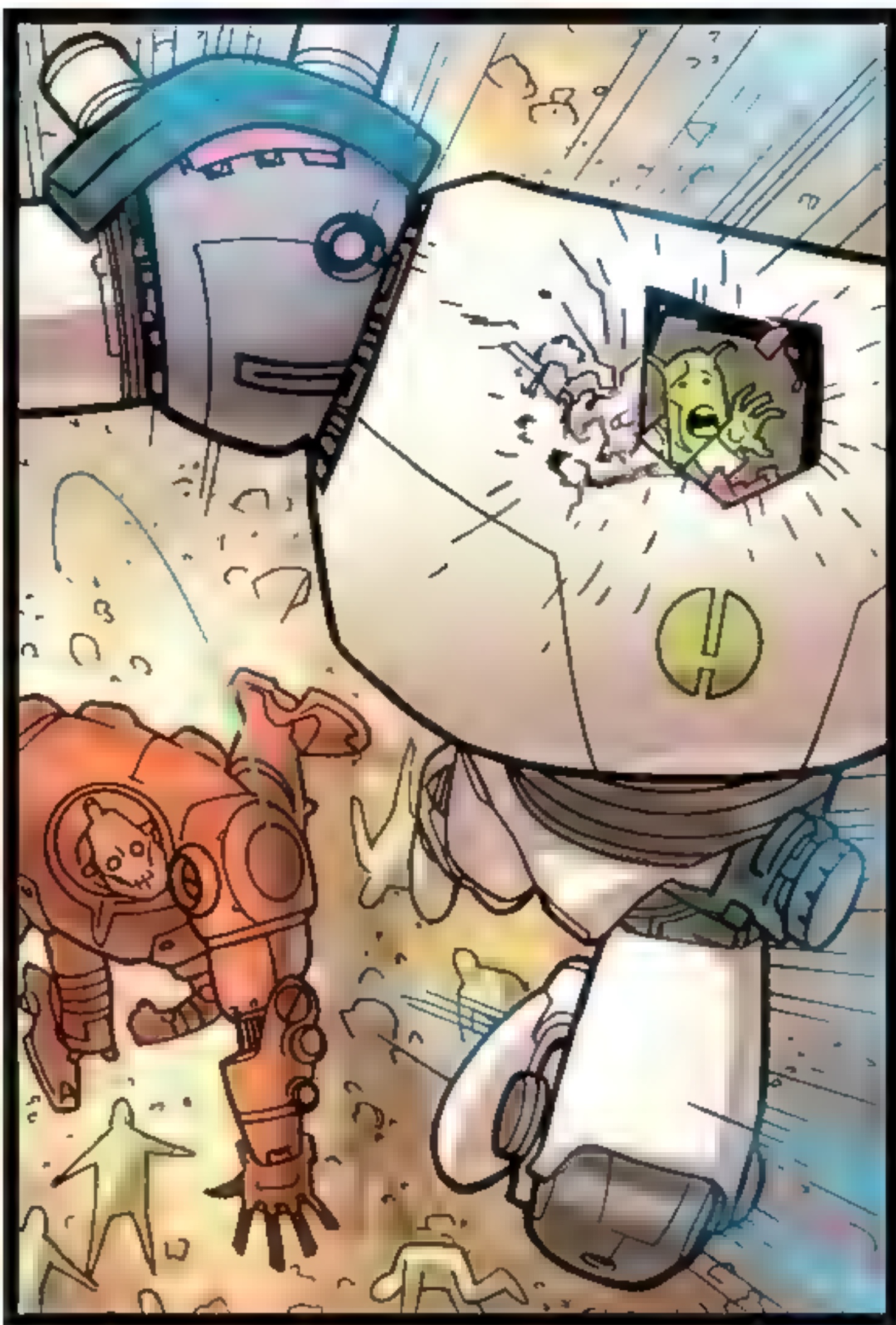
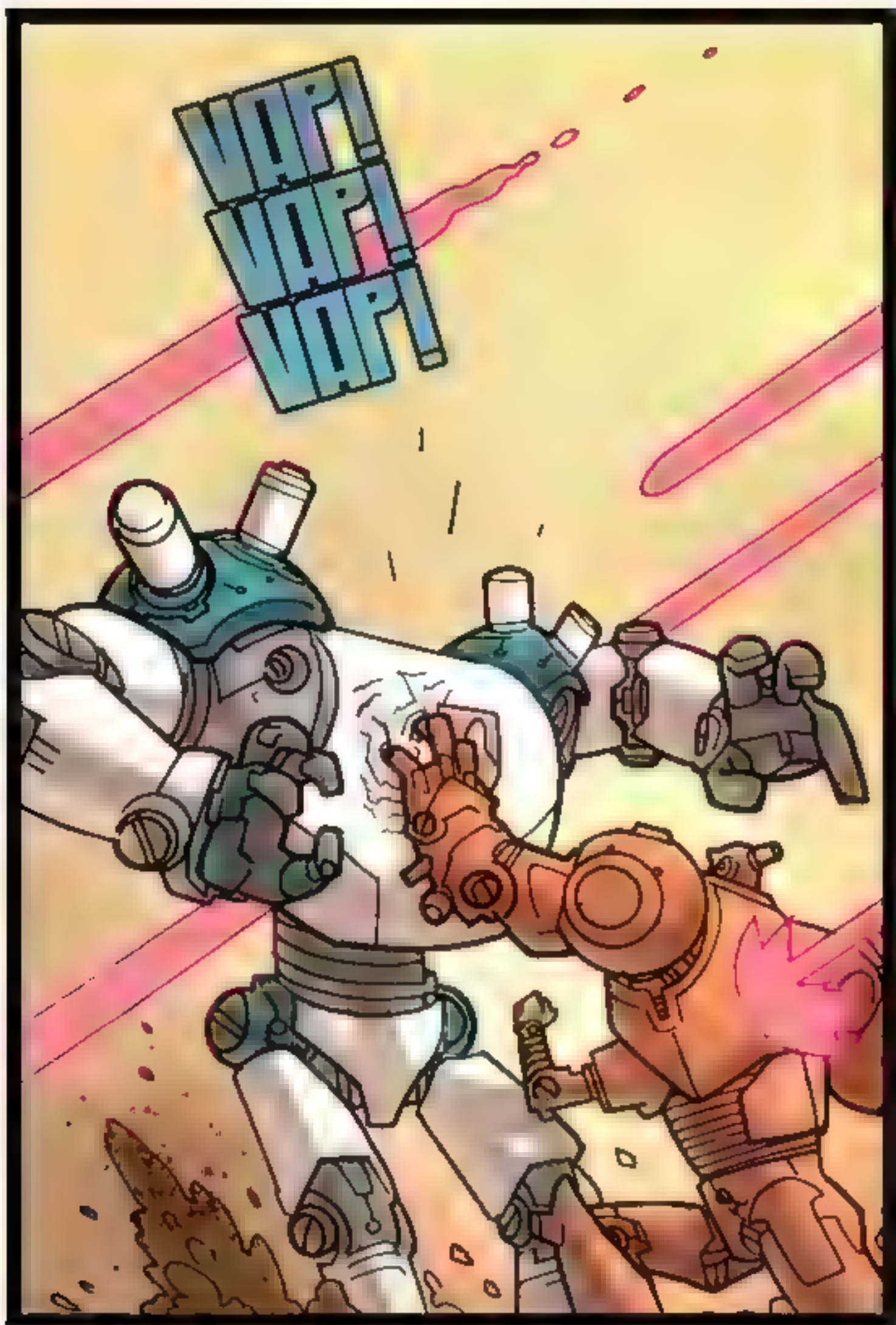
I THINK I CAN HELP IN THAT REGARD. JUST GIVE ME A SECOND.

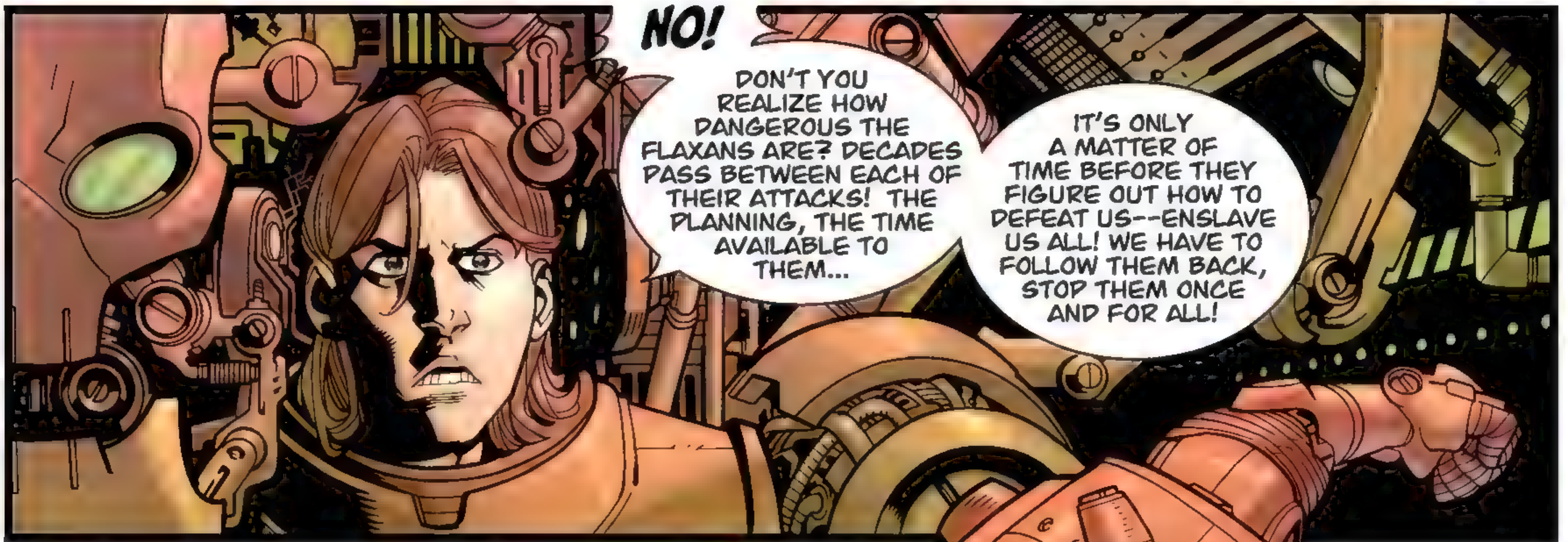


ARE YOU EVEN IN THAT ONE? I CAN NEVER TELL, ANYMORE. WHERE ARE YOU?

I'LL GIVE YOU A HINT, I'M IN THE ONE WITH THE MOST LEG ROOM.



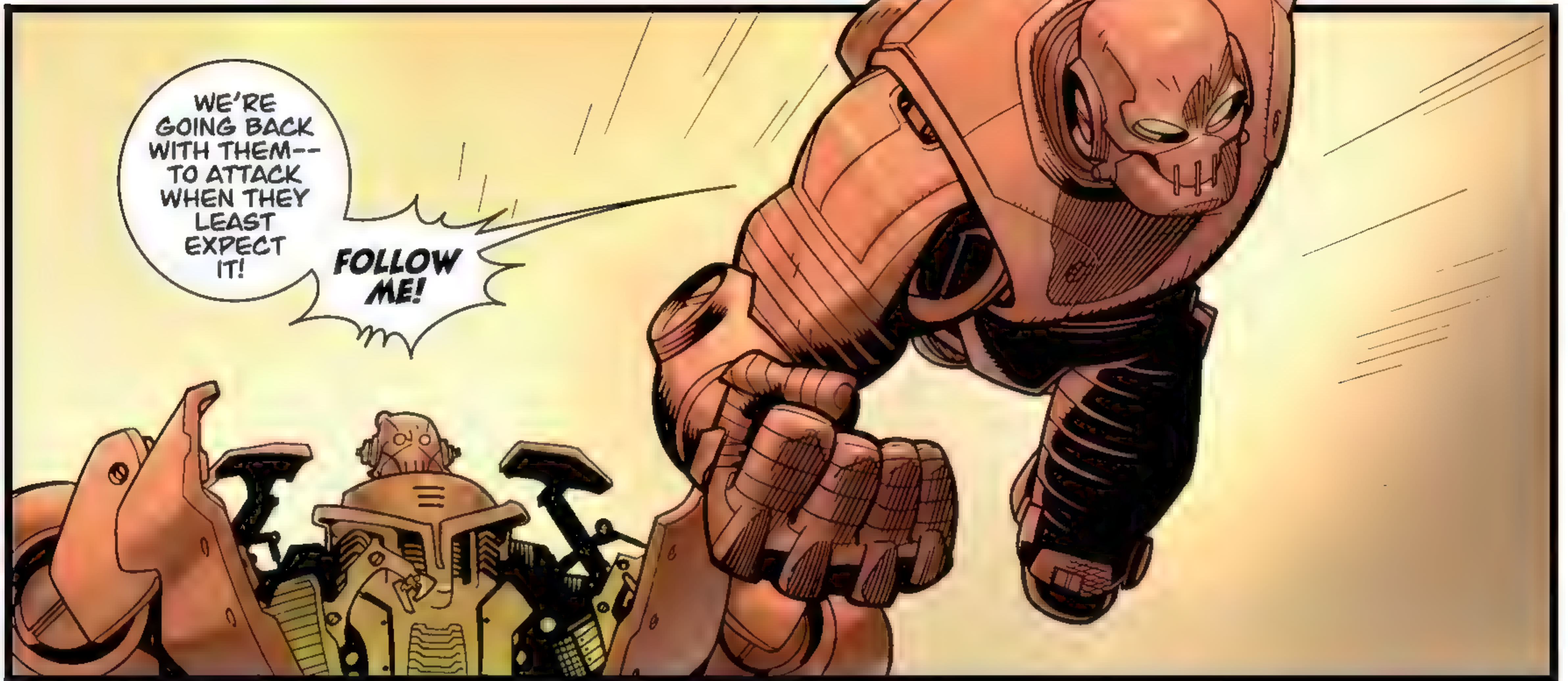




NO!

DON'T YOU REALIZE HOW DANGEROUS THE FLAXANS ARE? DECADES PASS BETWEEN EACH OF THEIR ATTACKS! THE PLANNING, THE TIME AVAILABLE TO THEM...

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY FIGURE OUT HOW TO DEFEAT US--ENSLAVE US ALL! WE HAVE TO FOLLOW THEM BACK, STOP THEM ONCE AND FOR ALL!



WE'RE GOING BACK WITH THEM-- TO ATTACK WHEN THEY LEAST EXPECT IT!

FOLLOW ME!



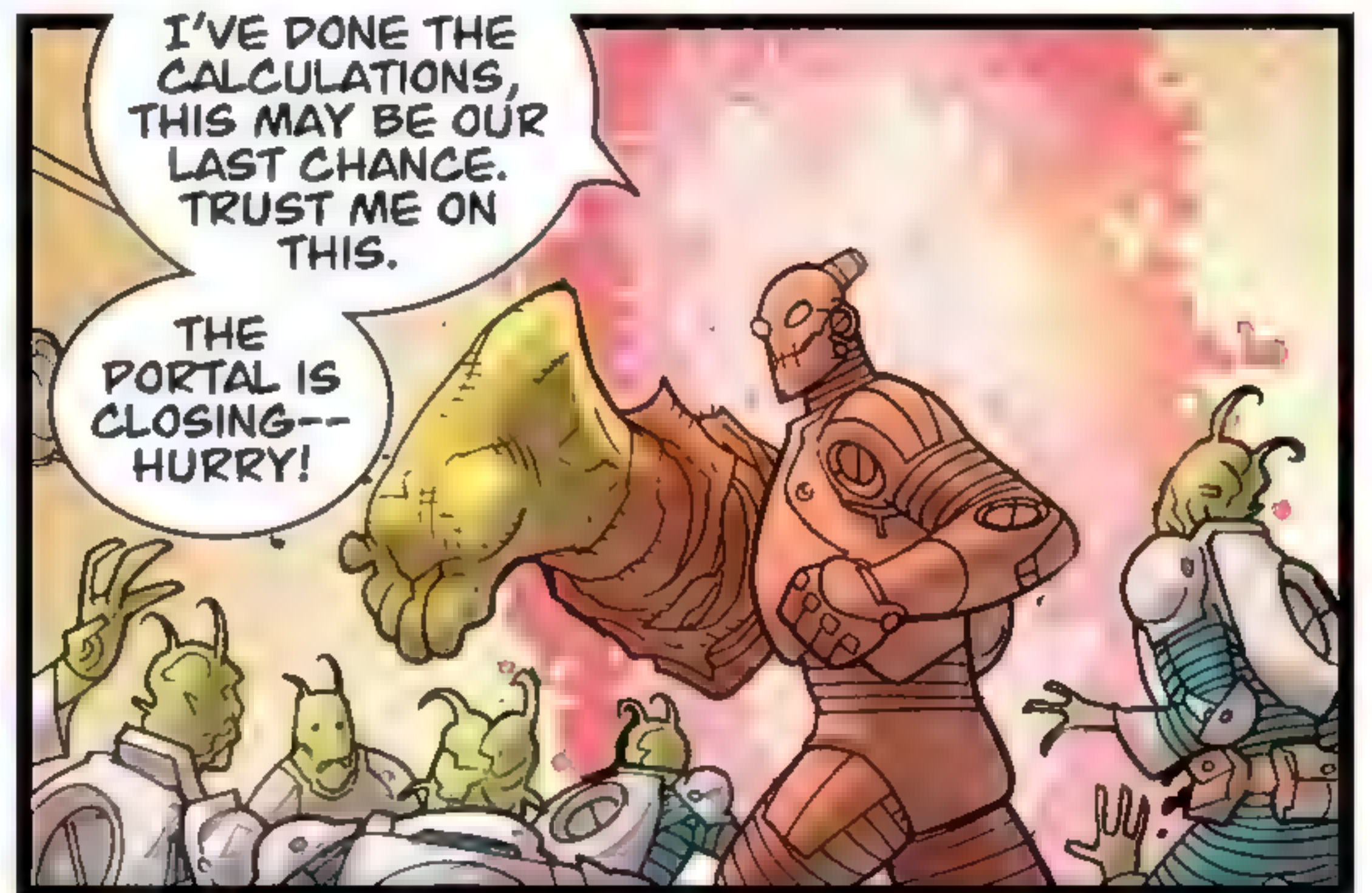
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?

THIS IS THEIR ARMY-- AND LOOK AT THEM. THEY OBVIOUSLY HAVE ACCESS TO THIS WORLD WHENEVER THEY WANT, SO GETTING BACK WILL BE NO TROUBLE.



ROBOT, STOP RIGHT NOW. WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'D BE RUNNING INTO--OR HOW THEIR DIMENSION WILL AFFECT US!

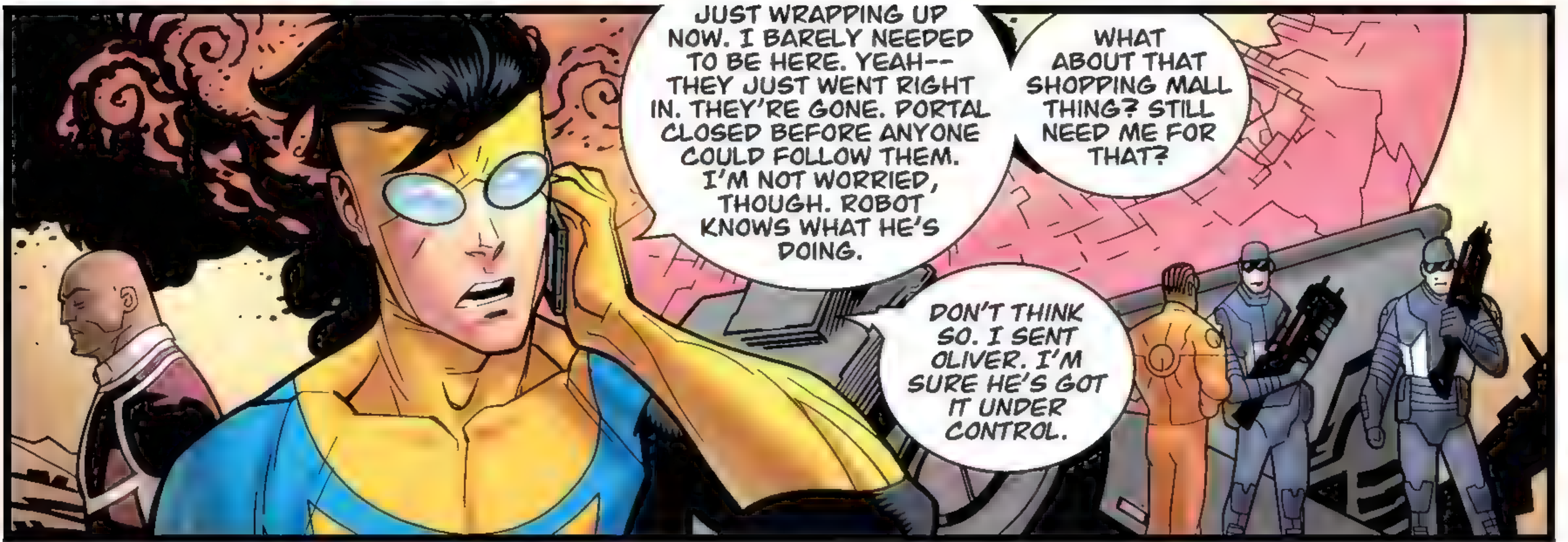
WE CAN PLAN FOR THIS, DO IT ANOTHER TIME!



I'VE DONE THE CALCULATIONS, THIS MAY BE OUR LAST CHANCE. TRUST ME ON THIS.

THE PORTAL IS CLOSING-- HURRY!







WHAT ABOUT YOUR WIFE? YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOING TO SEE HER WHILE YOU'RE HERE?

I COULDN'T. I WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. I'VE PUT HER THROUGH SO MUCH... LET'S JUST FIND THIS BOY AND GET OFF THIS PLANET.

TOO MANY BAD MEMORIES.

WELL, I CERTAINLY DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD TAKE THIS LONG TO FIND THIS TECH JACKET EITHER. HE AND HIS FAMILY JUST DISAPPEARED AT SOME POINT A WHILE BACK.

I WAS ABLE TO DISCOVER THIS HOUSE, OWNED BY THE BOY'S GRANDFATHER. MAYBE HE'LL KNOW WHERE THEY ARE.

THIS IS OUR LAST CHANCE, IF WE DON'T FIND HIM HERE--I DON'T CARE HOW POWERFUL THE GELDARIANS SAID HE WAS--WE'RE LEAVING WITHOUT HIM.

UNDERSTOOD.

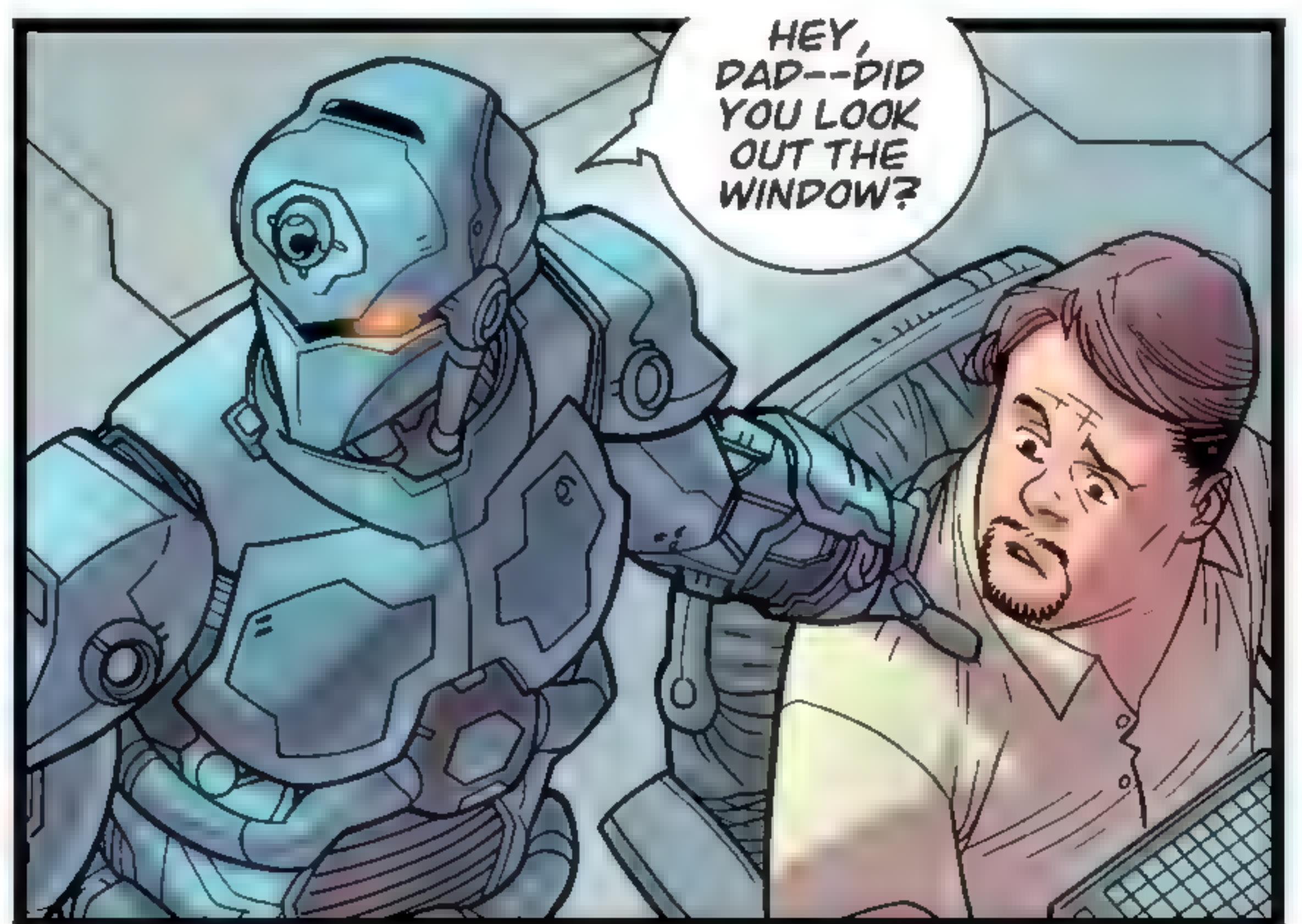
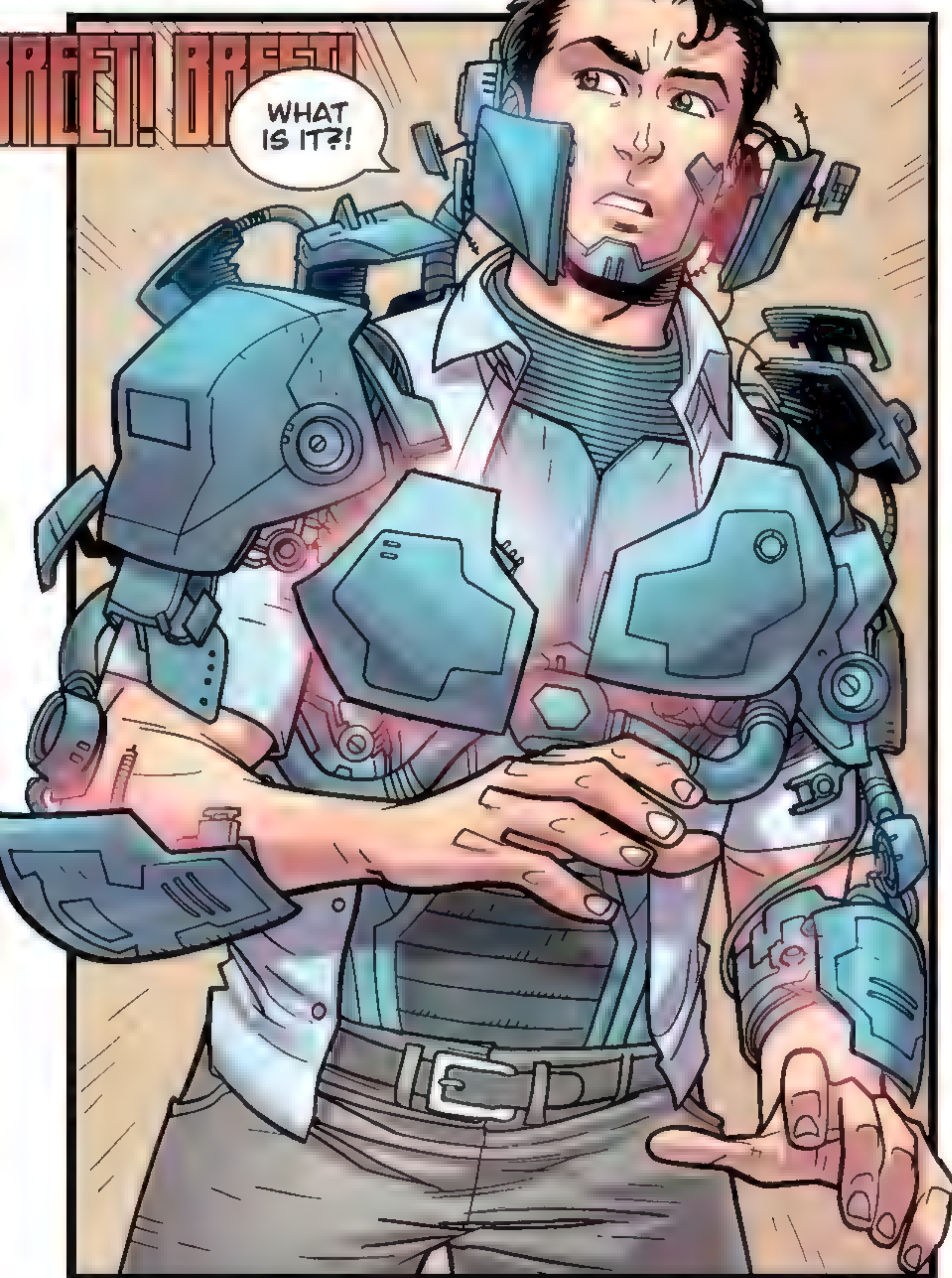
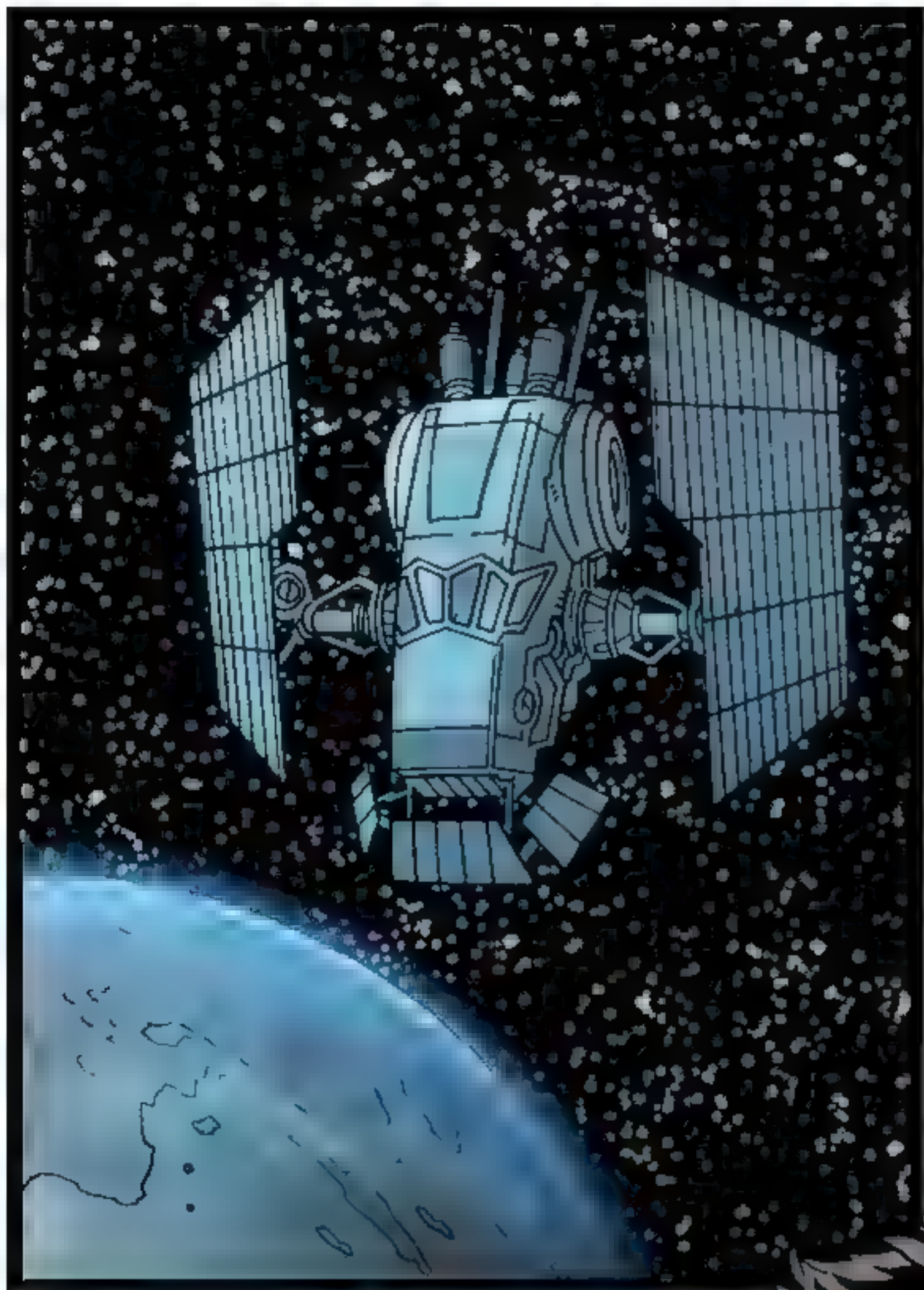
YOU LOOKING FOR THE THOMPSON BOY? CALLS HIMSELF TECH JACKET? WHAT AM I SAYING--OF COURSE YOU ARE.

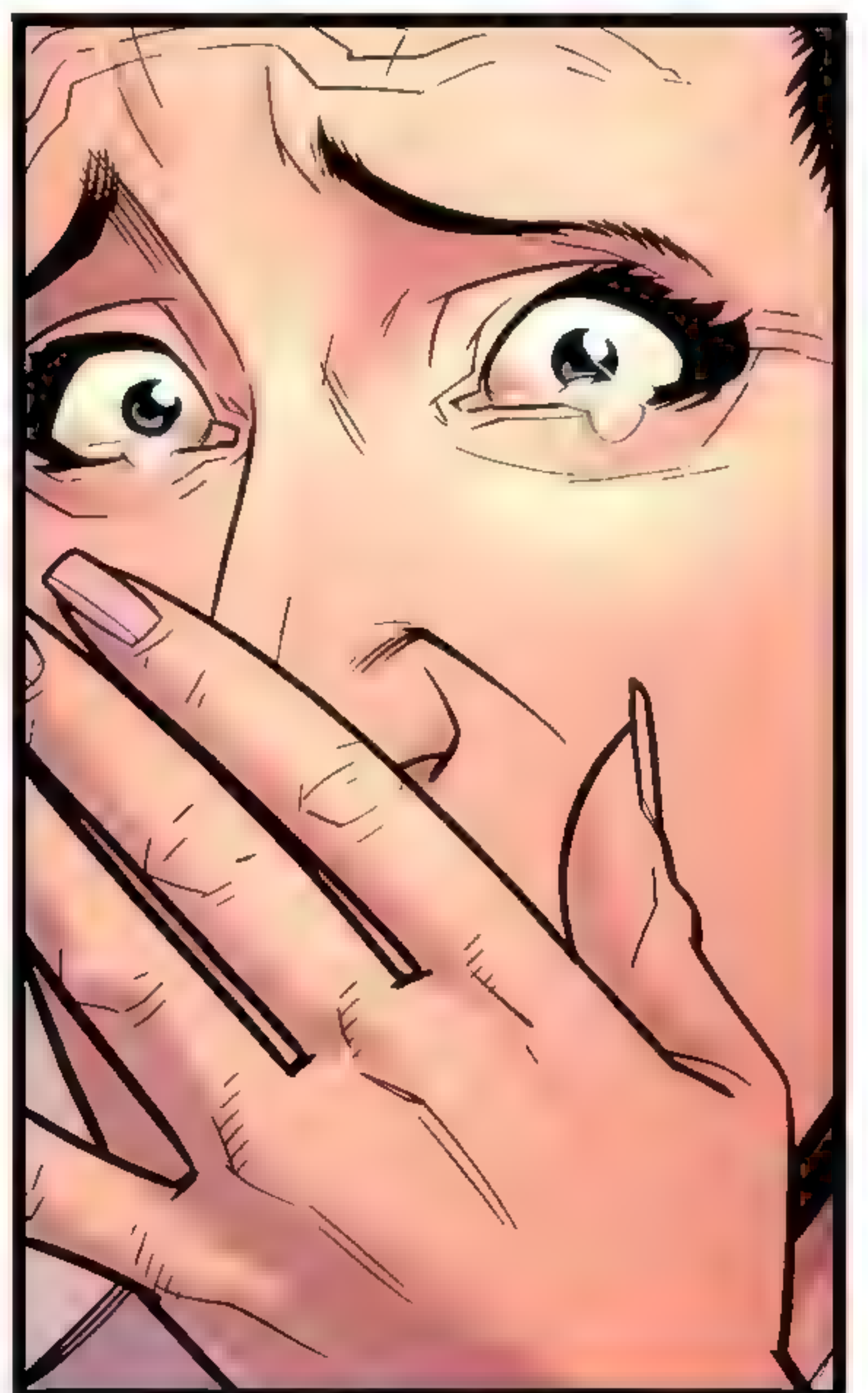
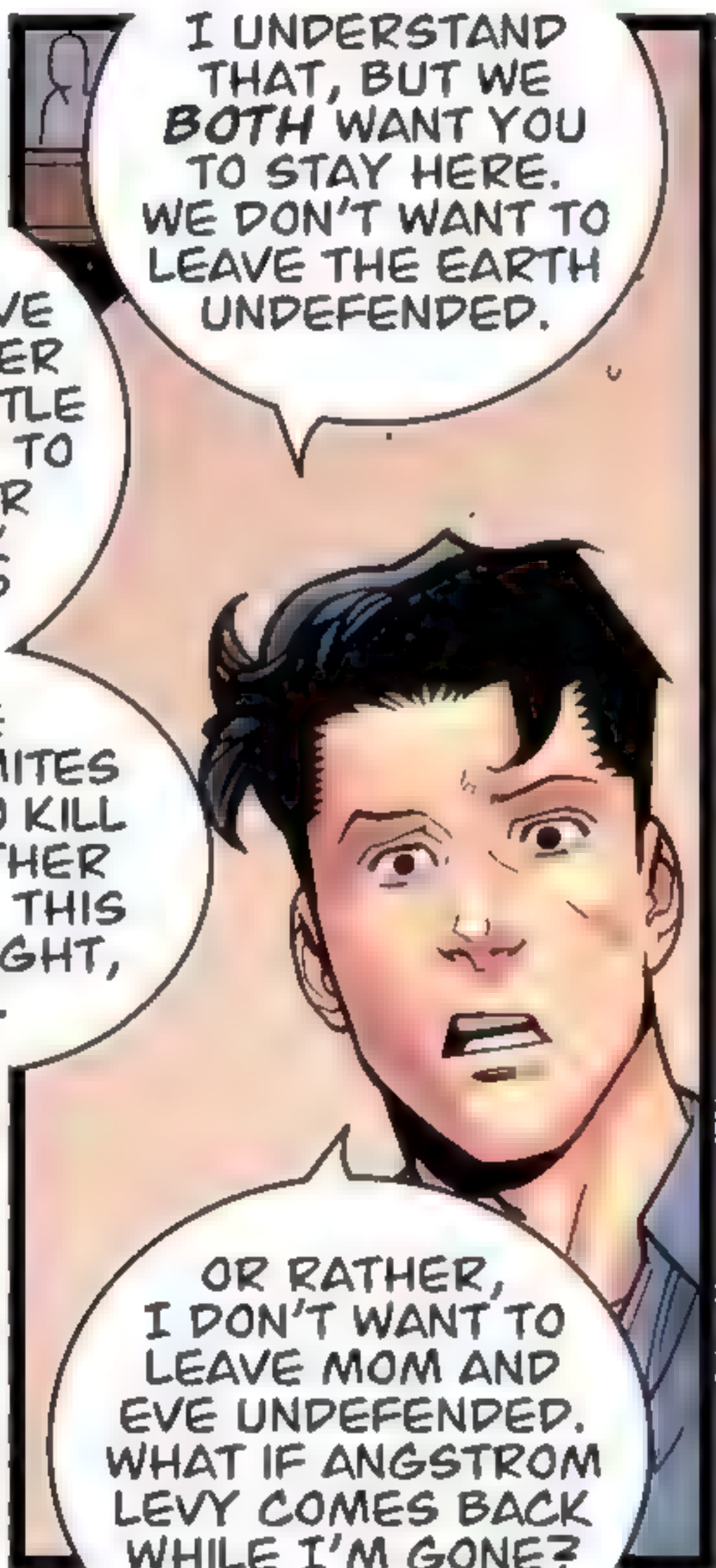
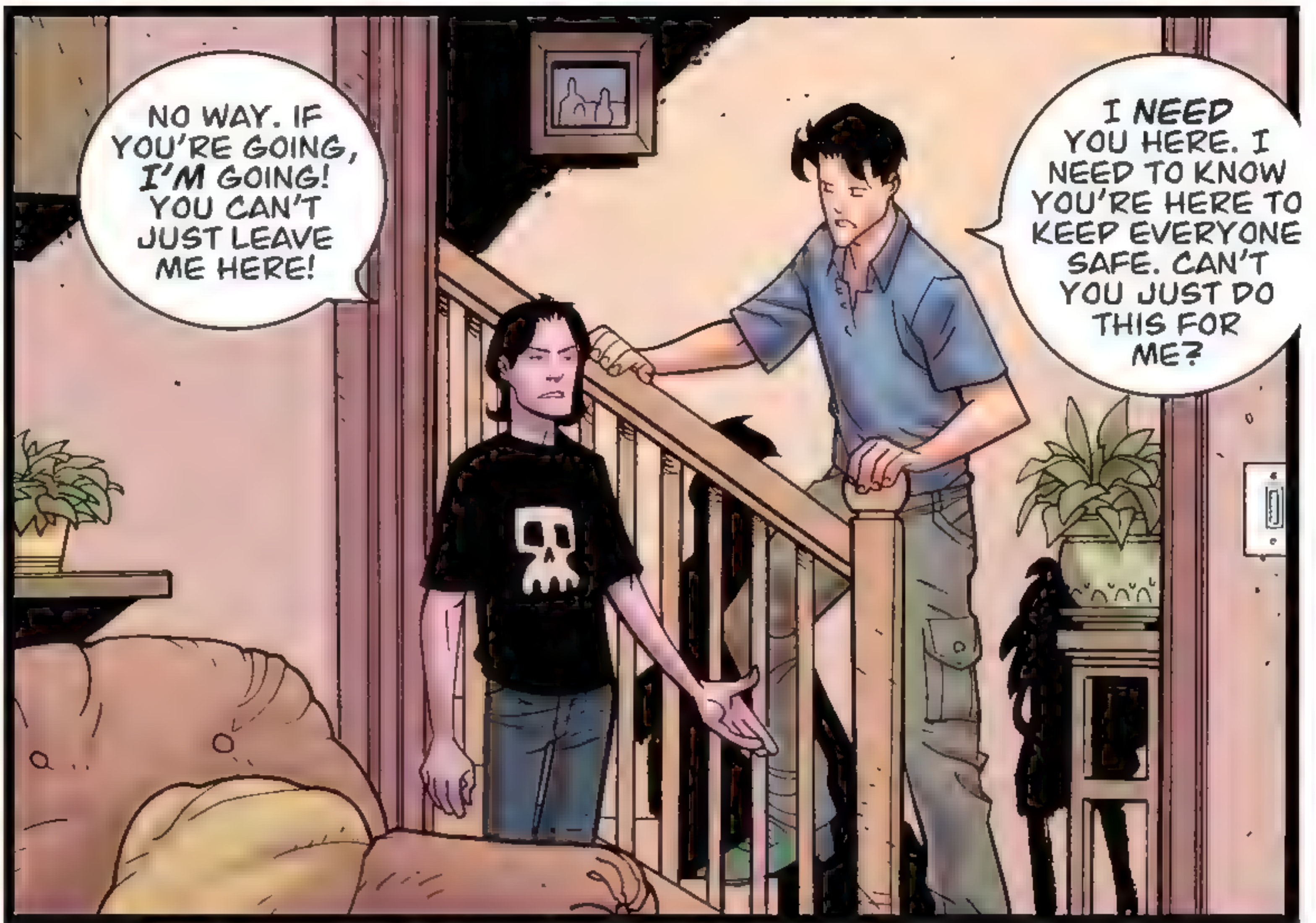
HE'S PROBABLY UP IN HIS SPACE STATION. THEY DON'T SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN THE HOUSE.

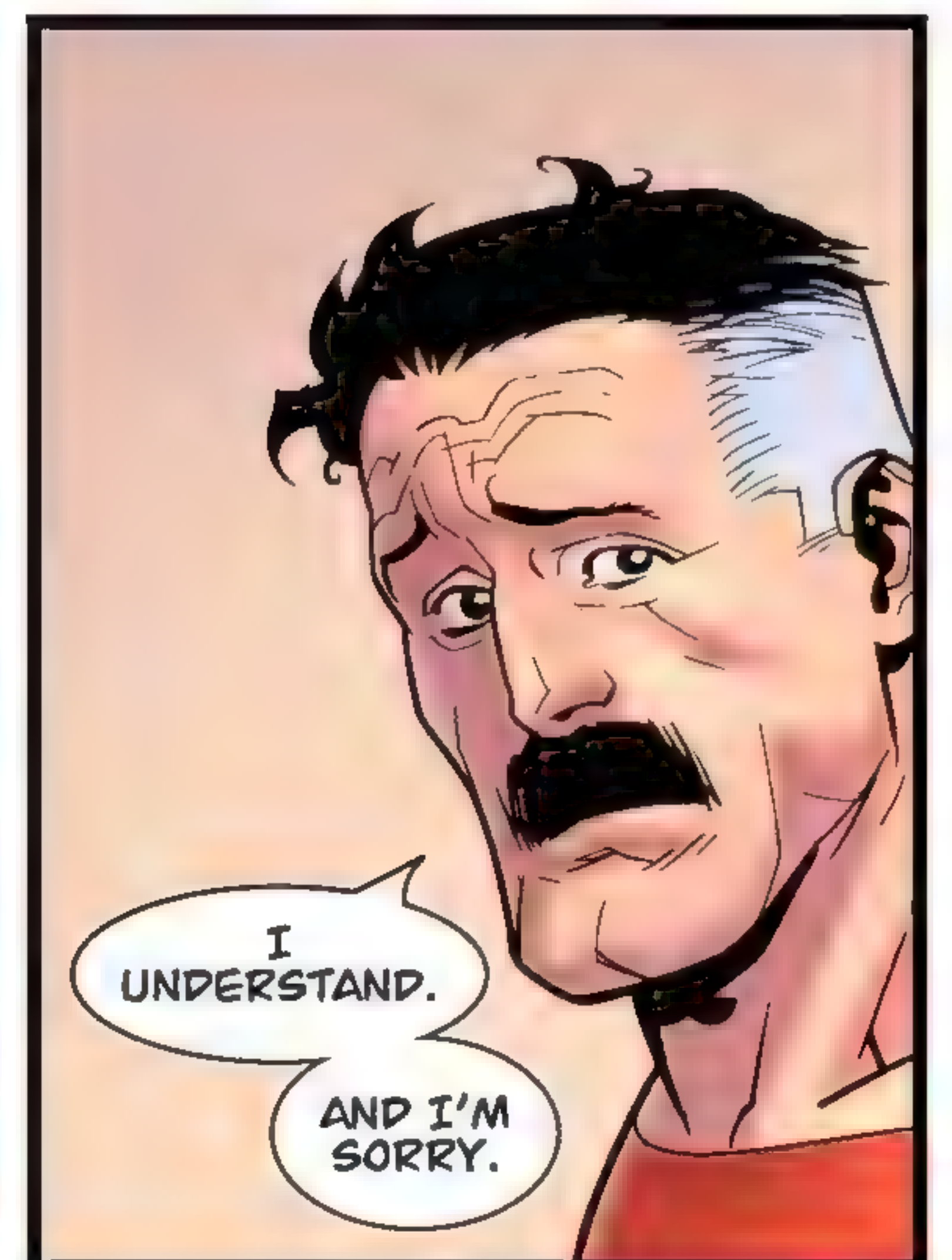
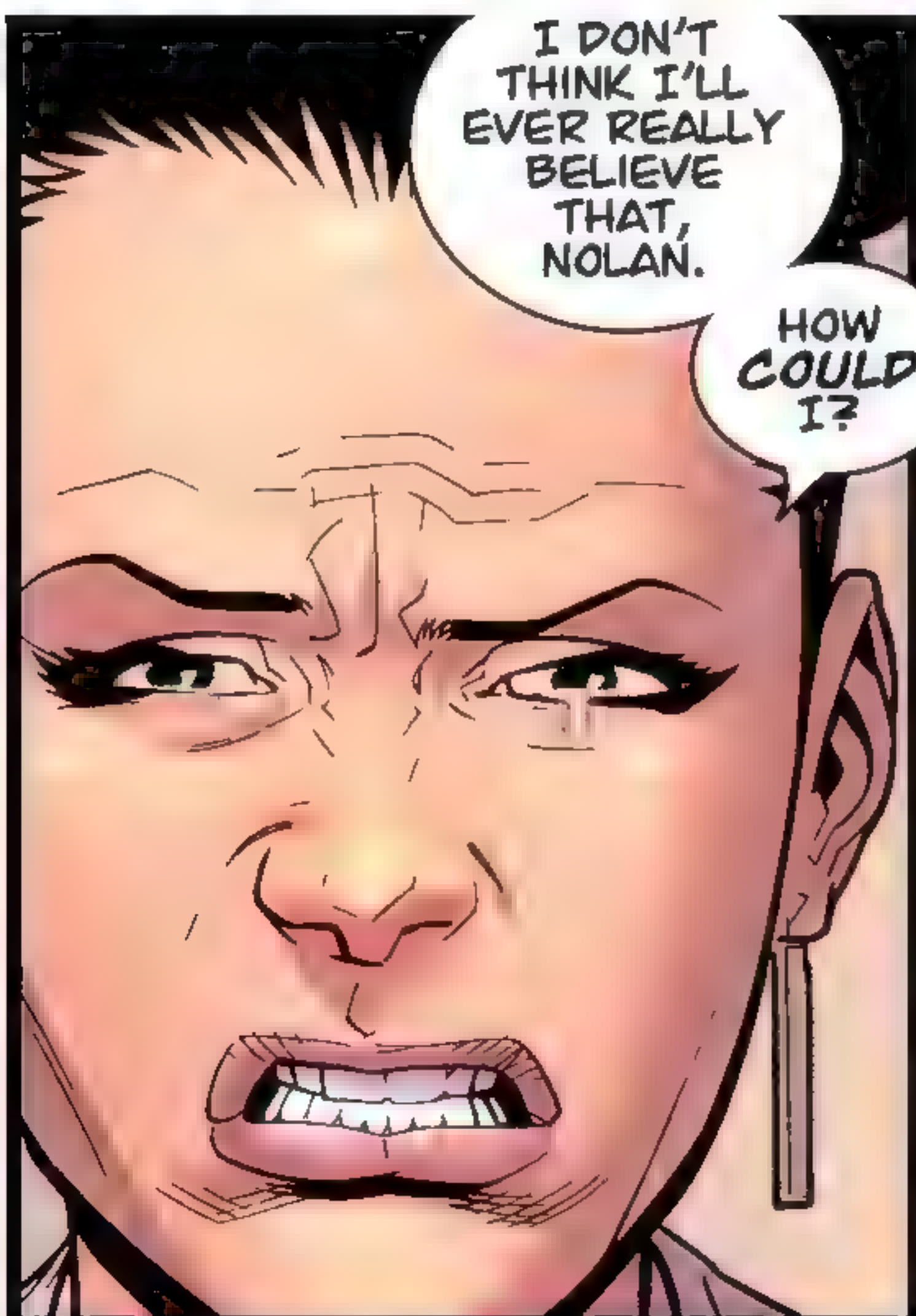
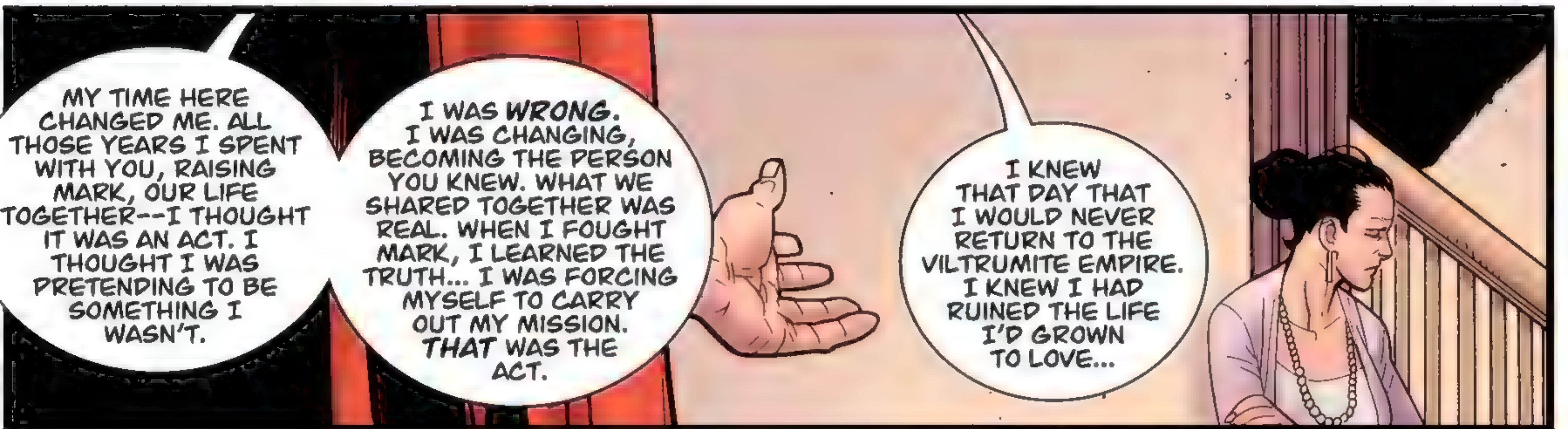
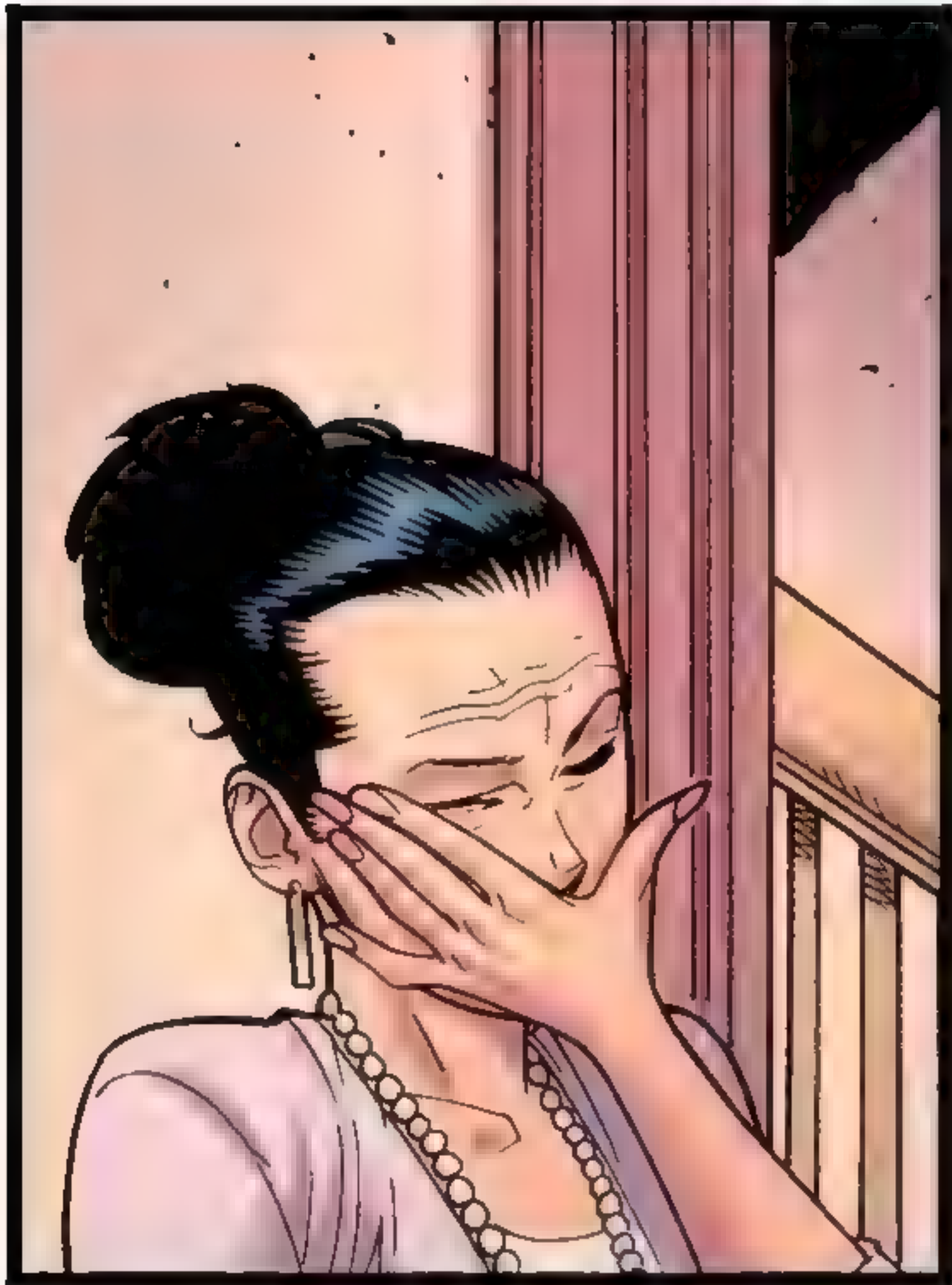
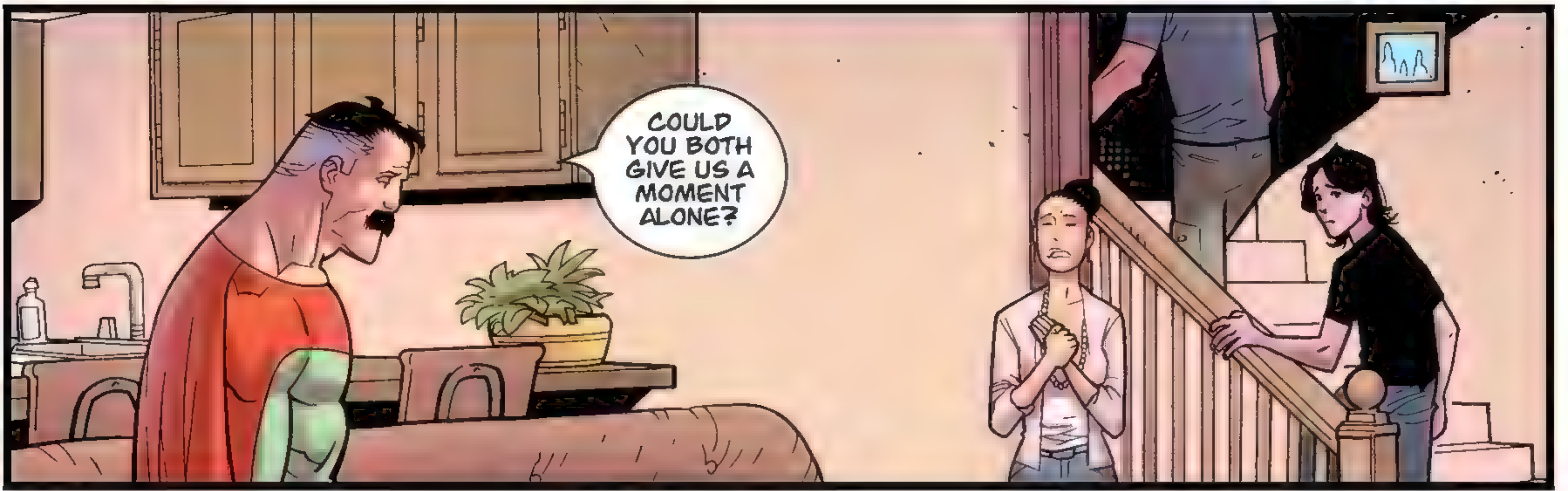
OUR APPEARANCE DOESN'T ALARM YOU?

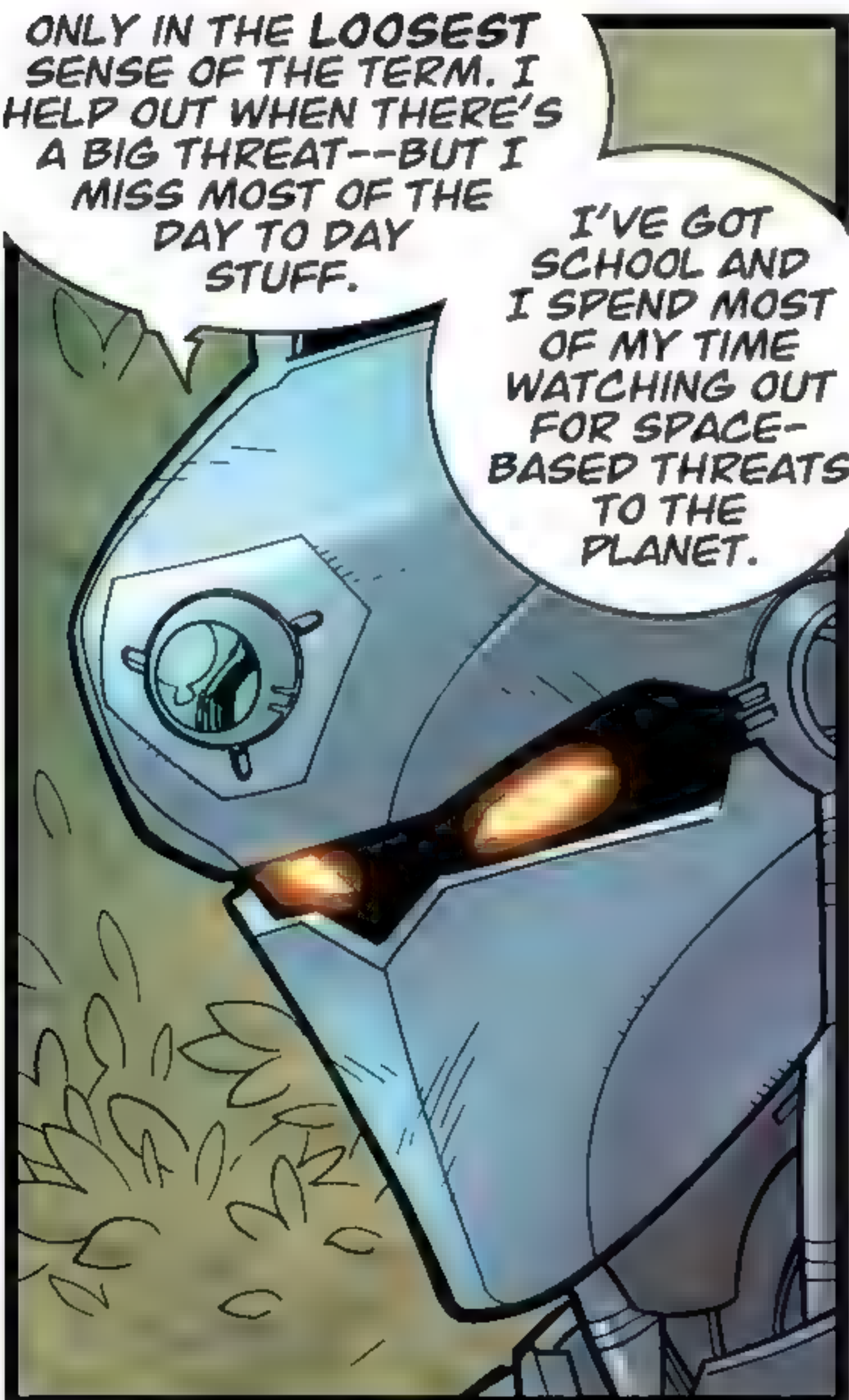
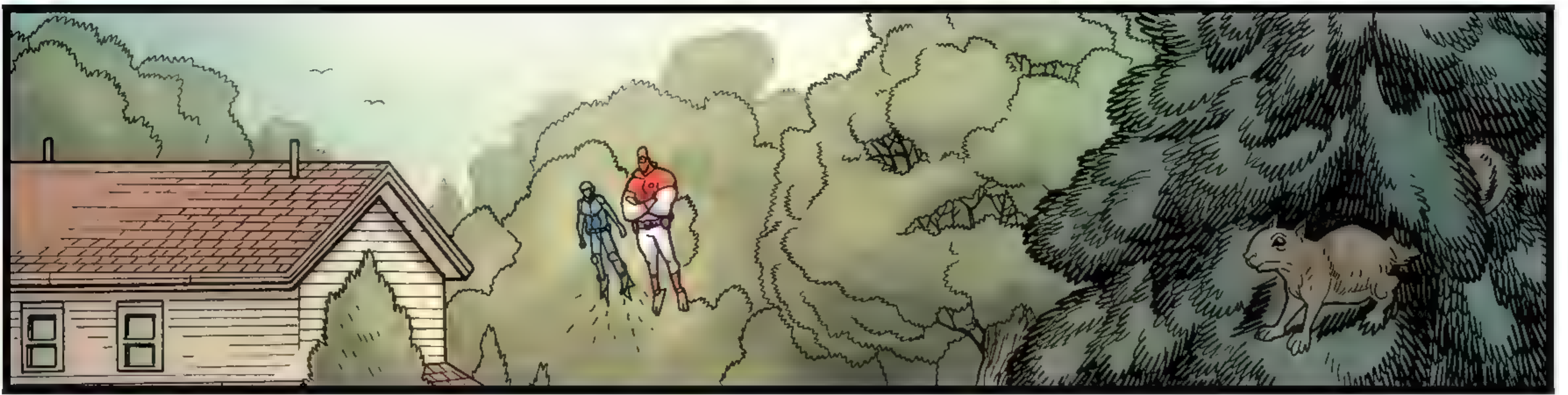
SEEN STRANGER, THAT'S FOR SURE...

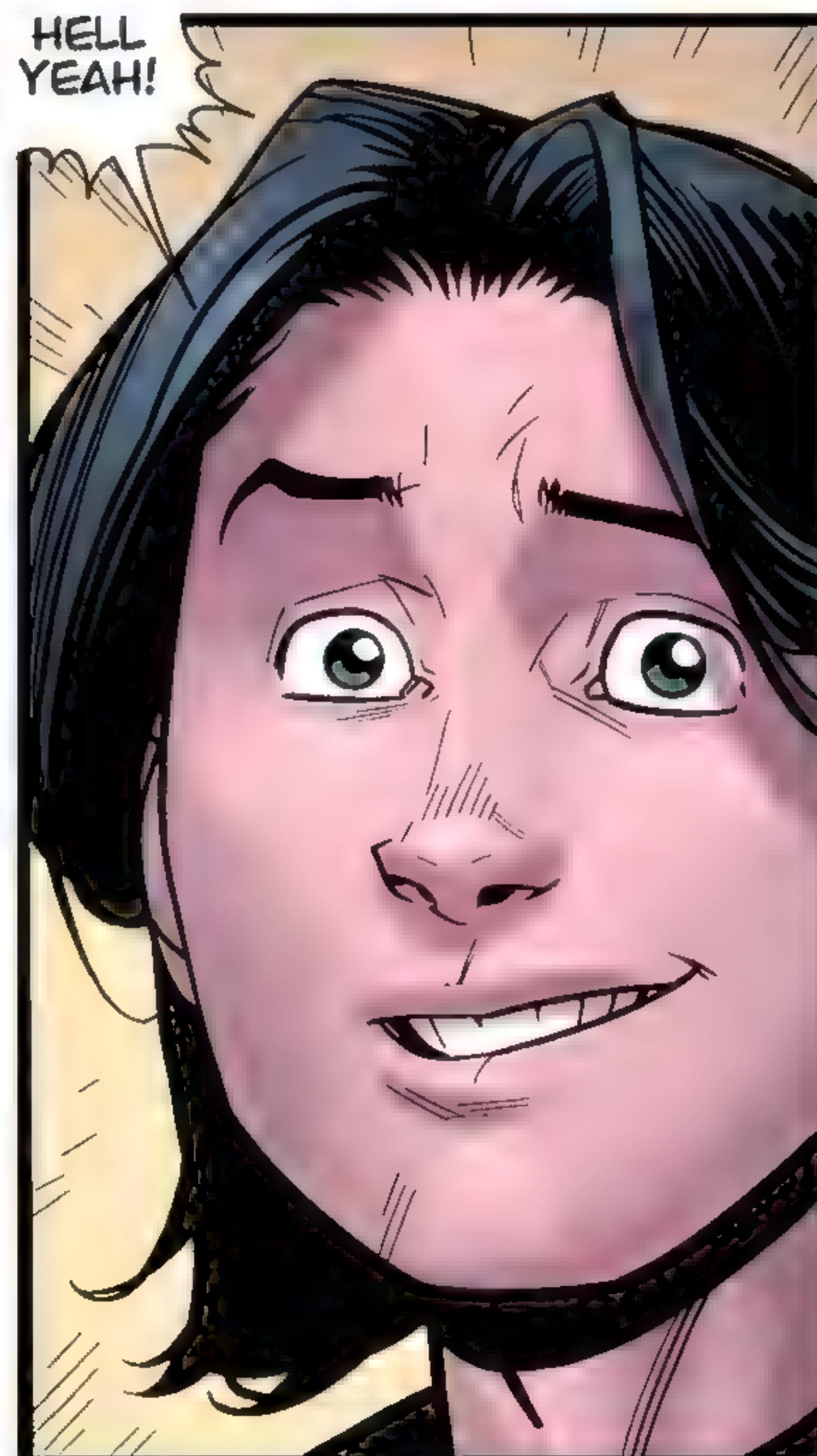
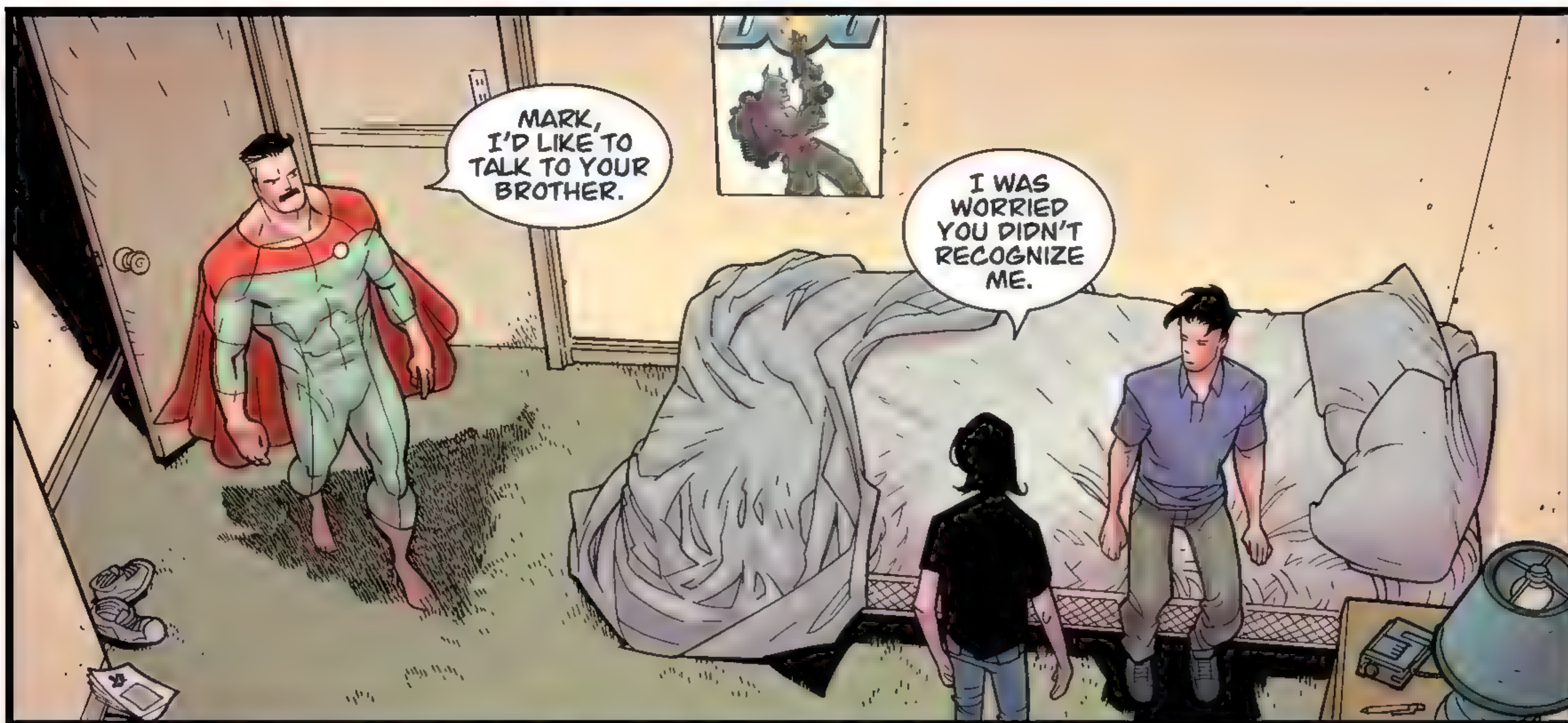
...AND THE BAD GUYS DON'T KNOCK FIRST.

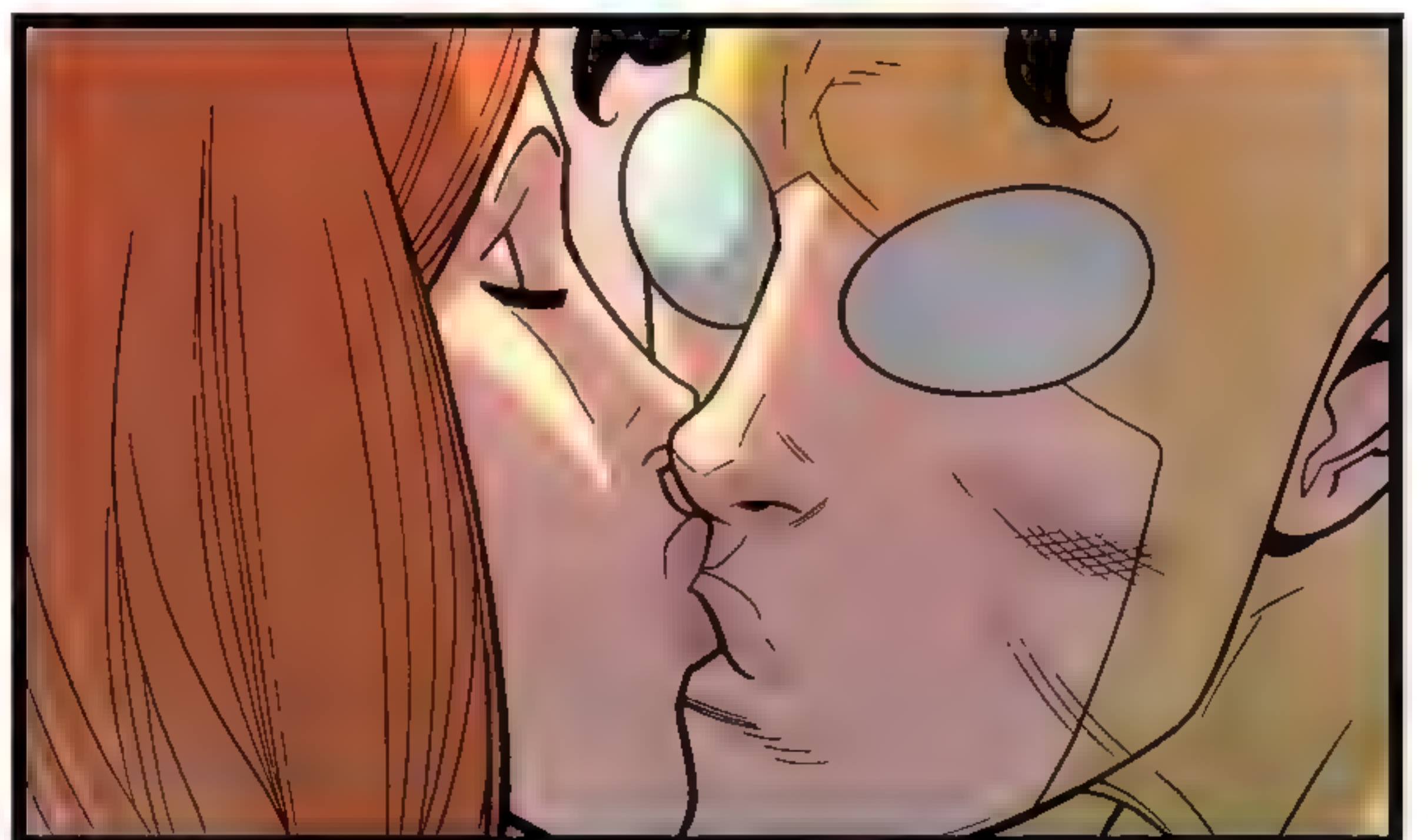
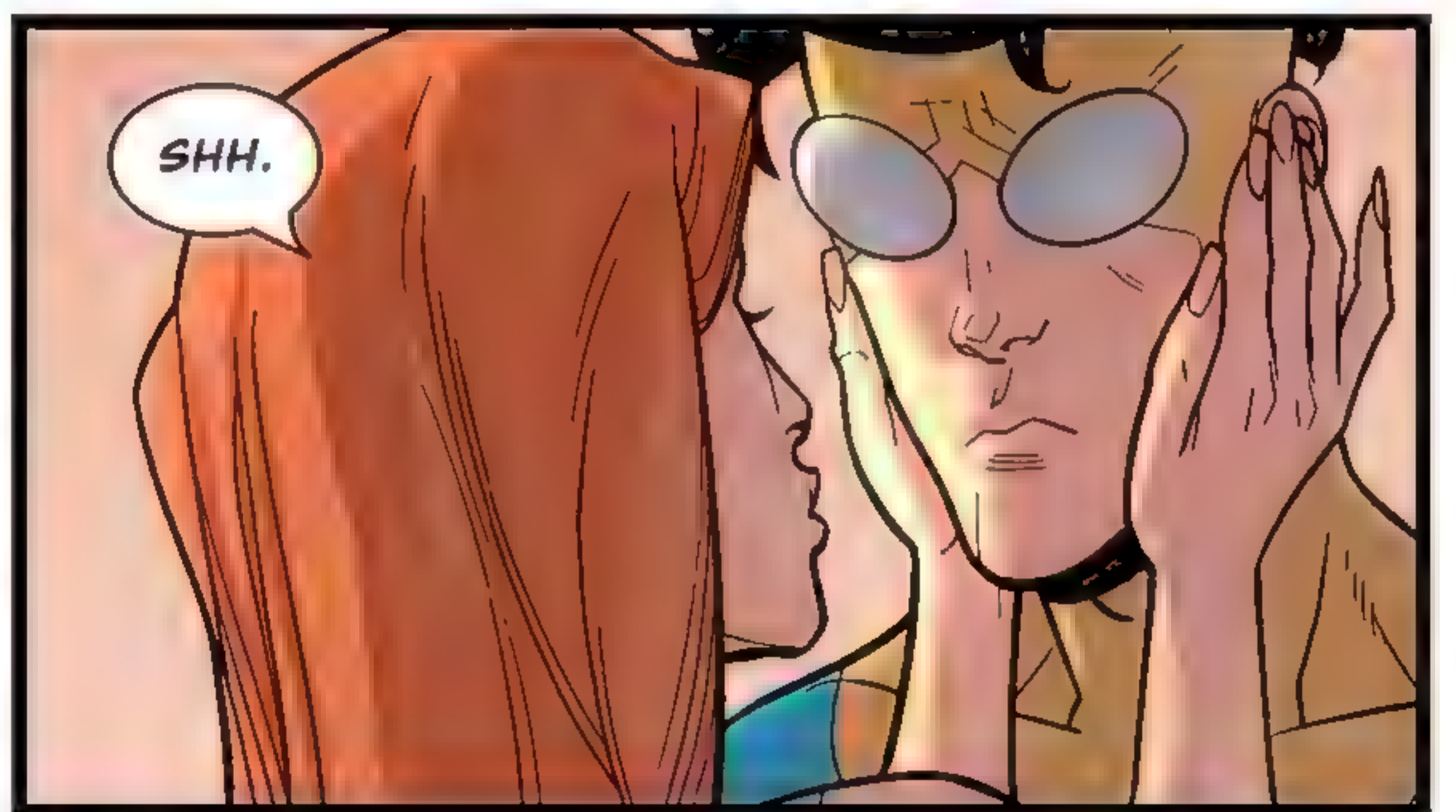
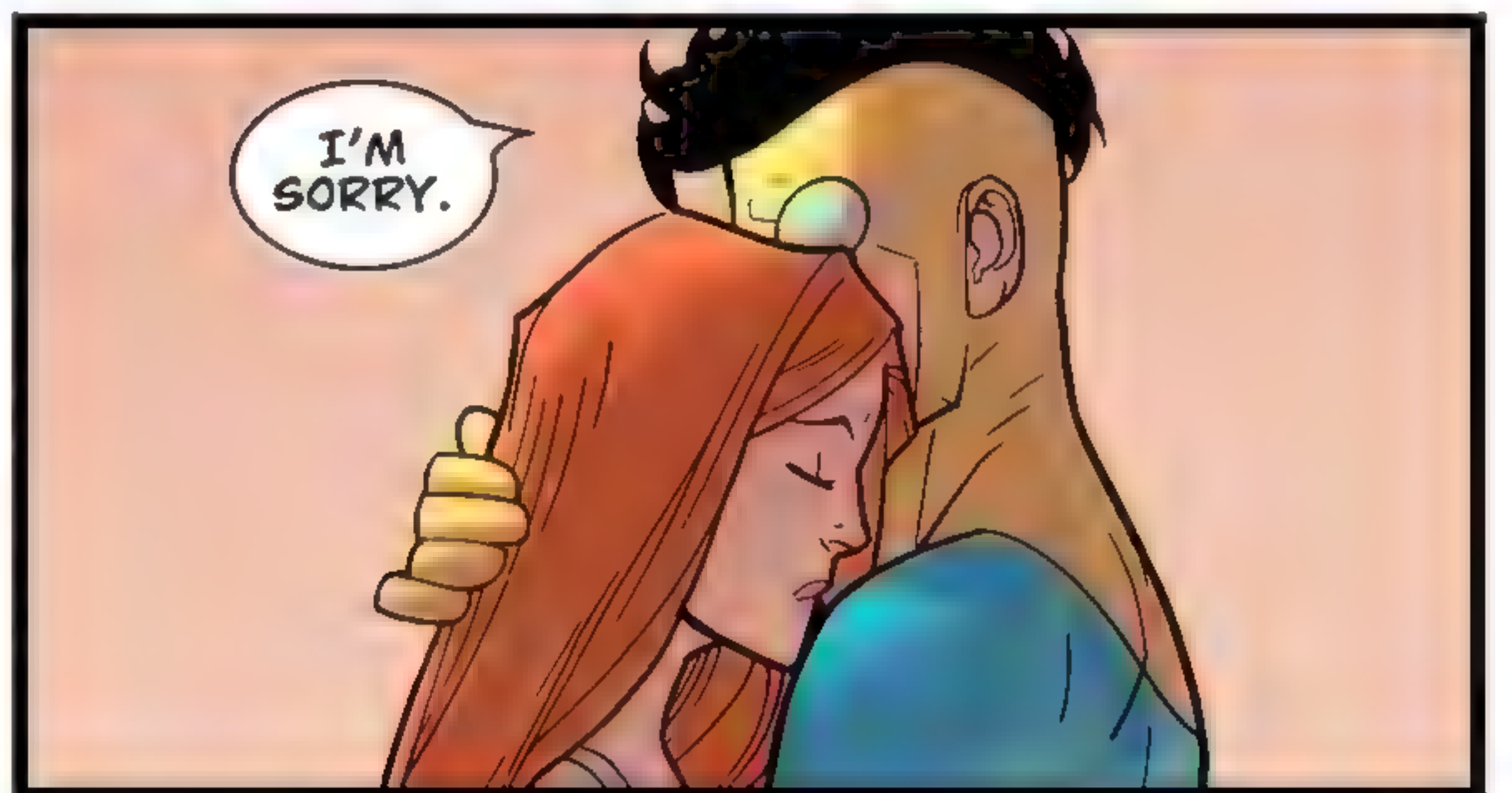
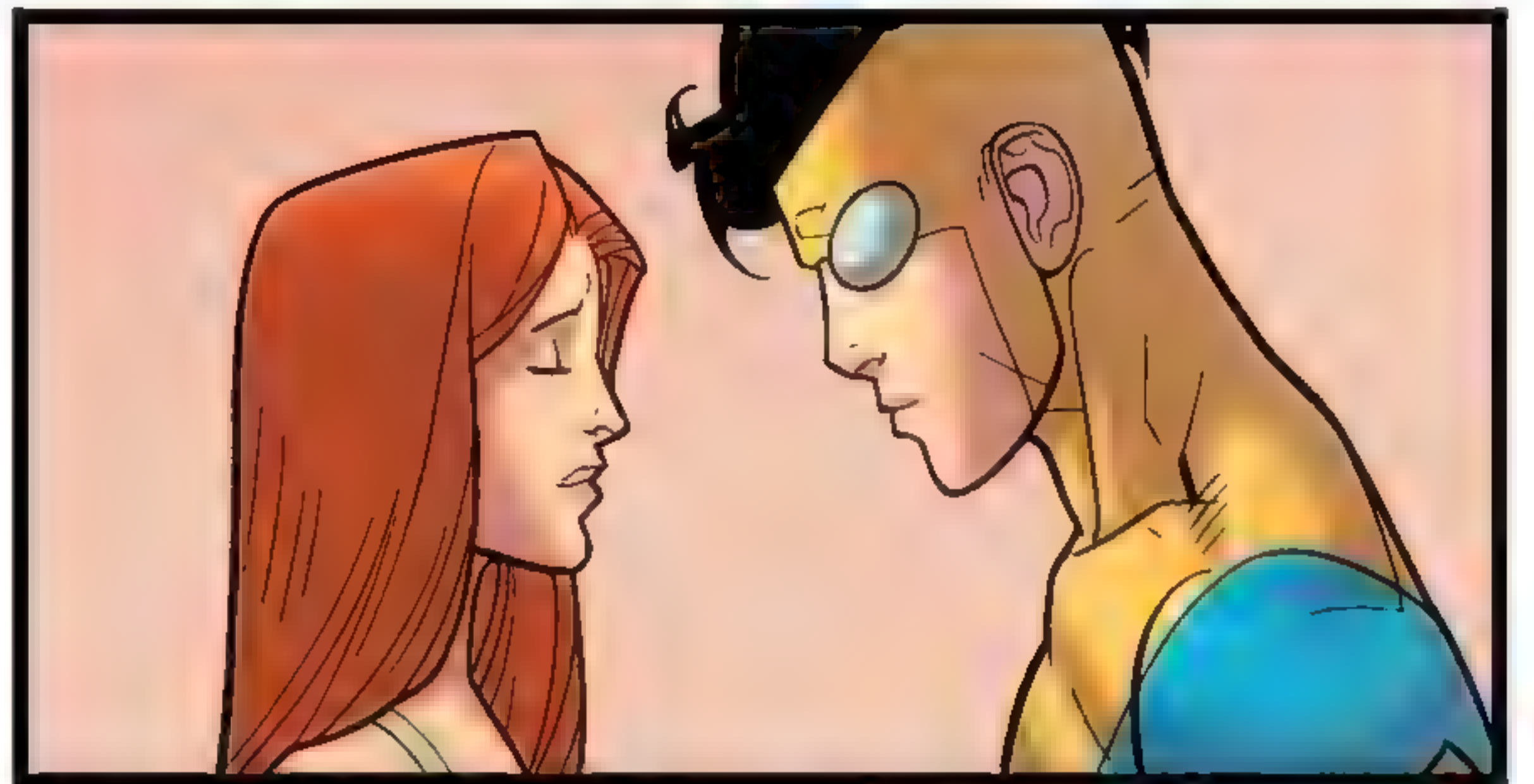
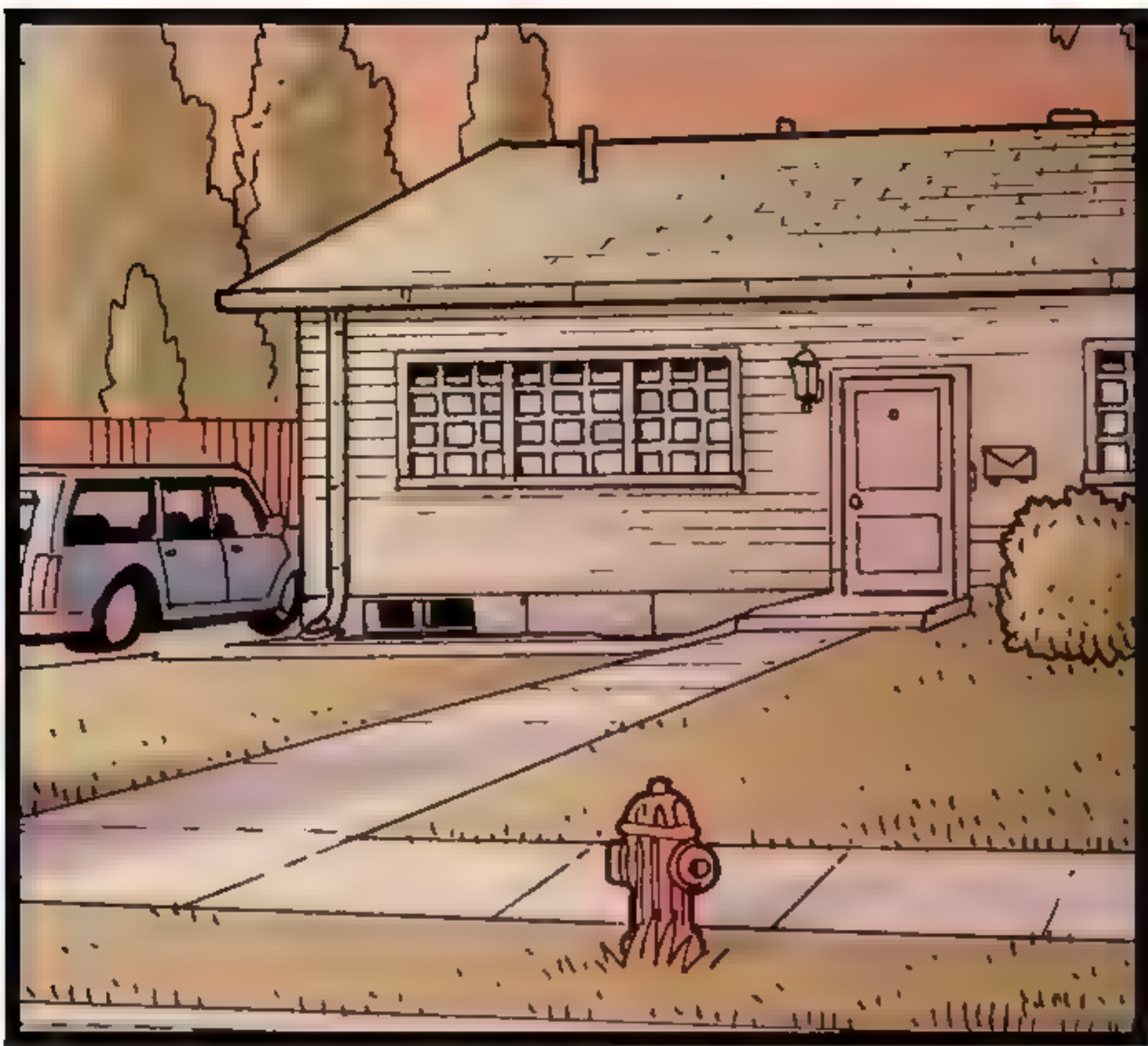


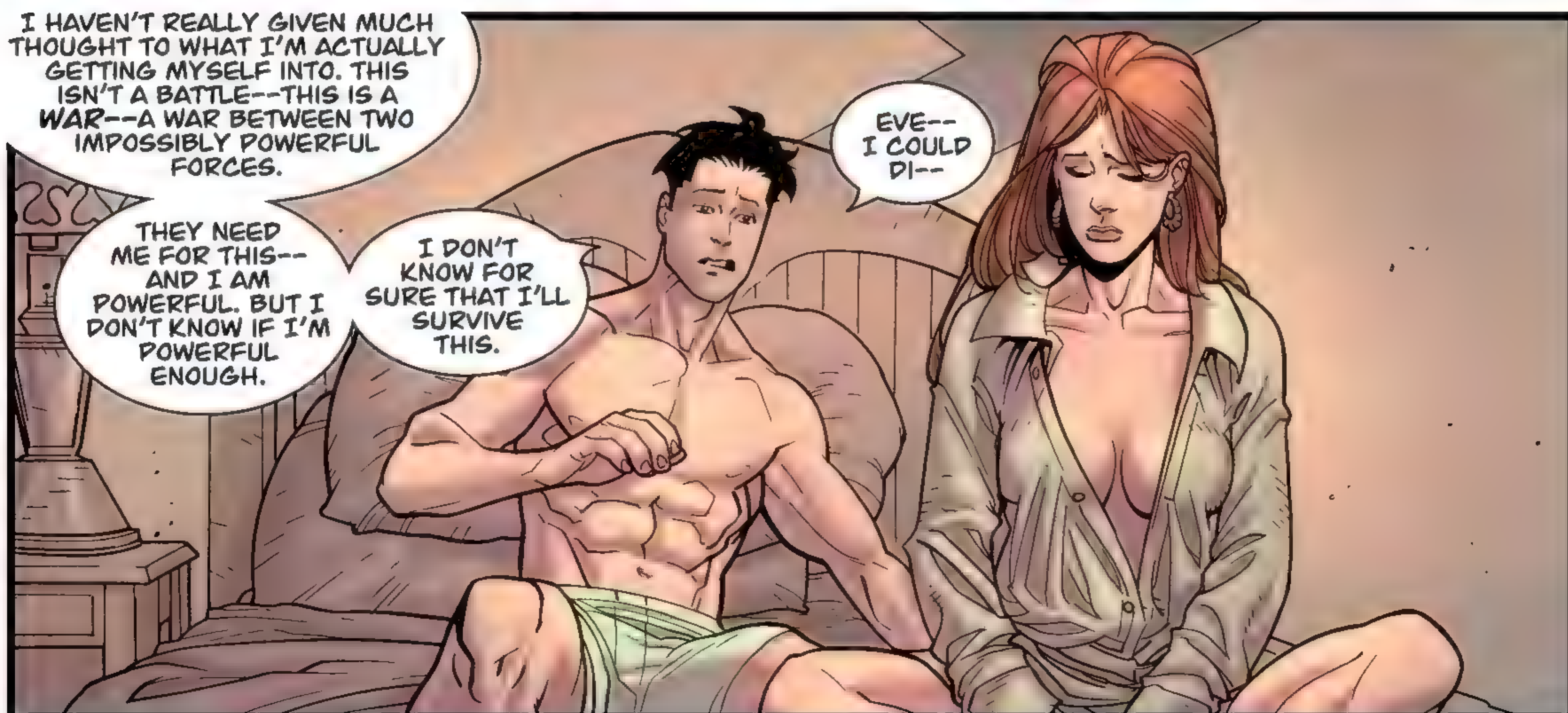
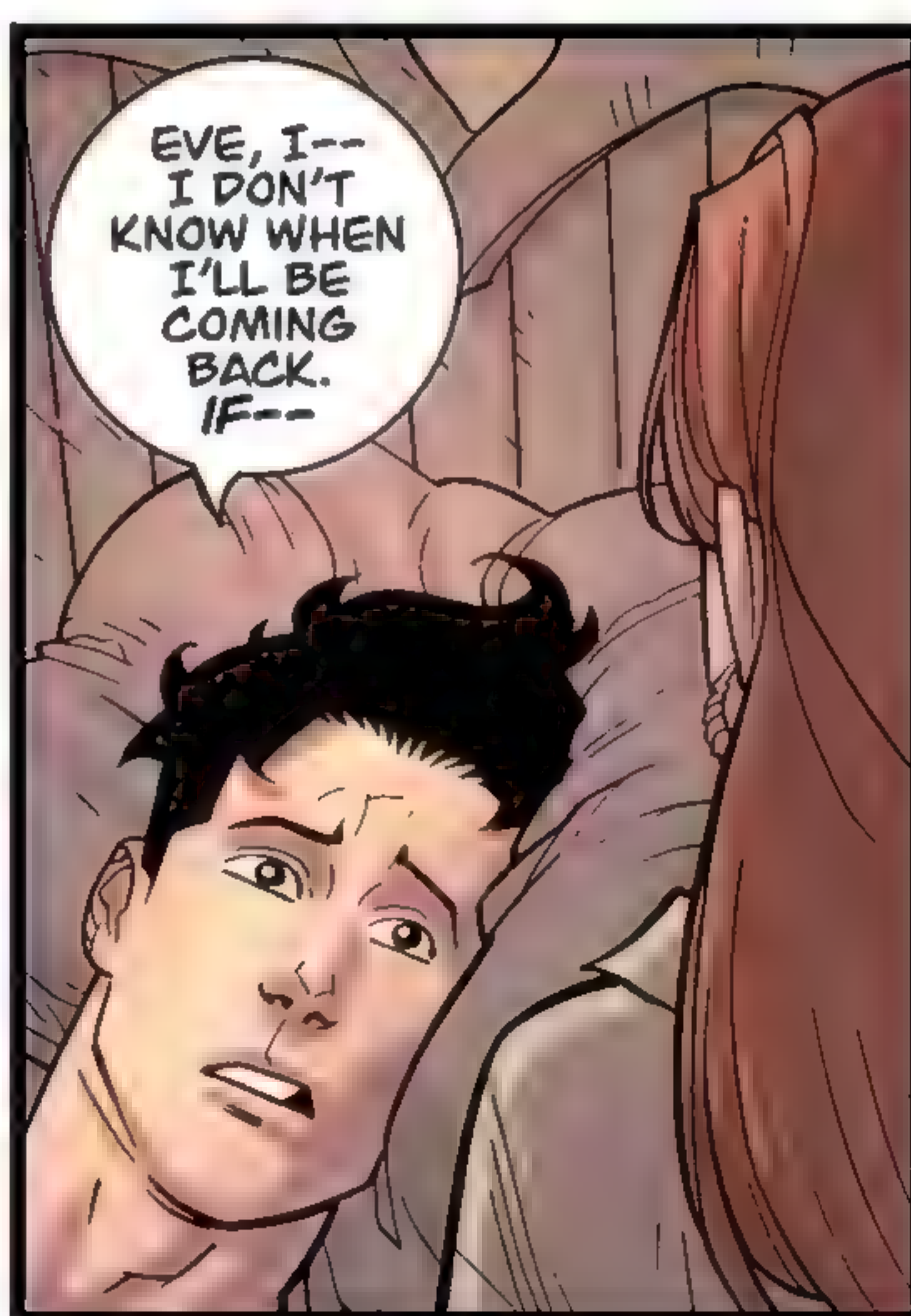
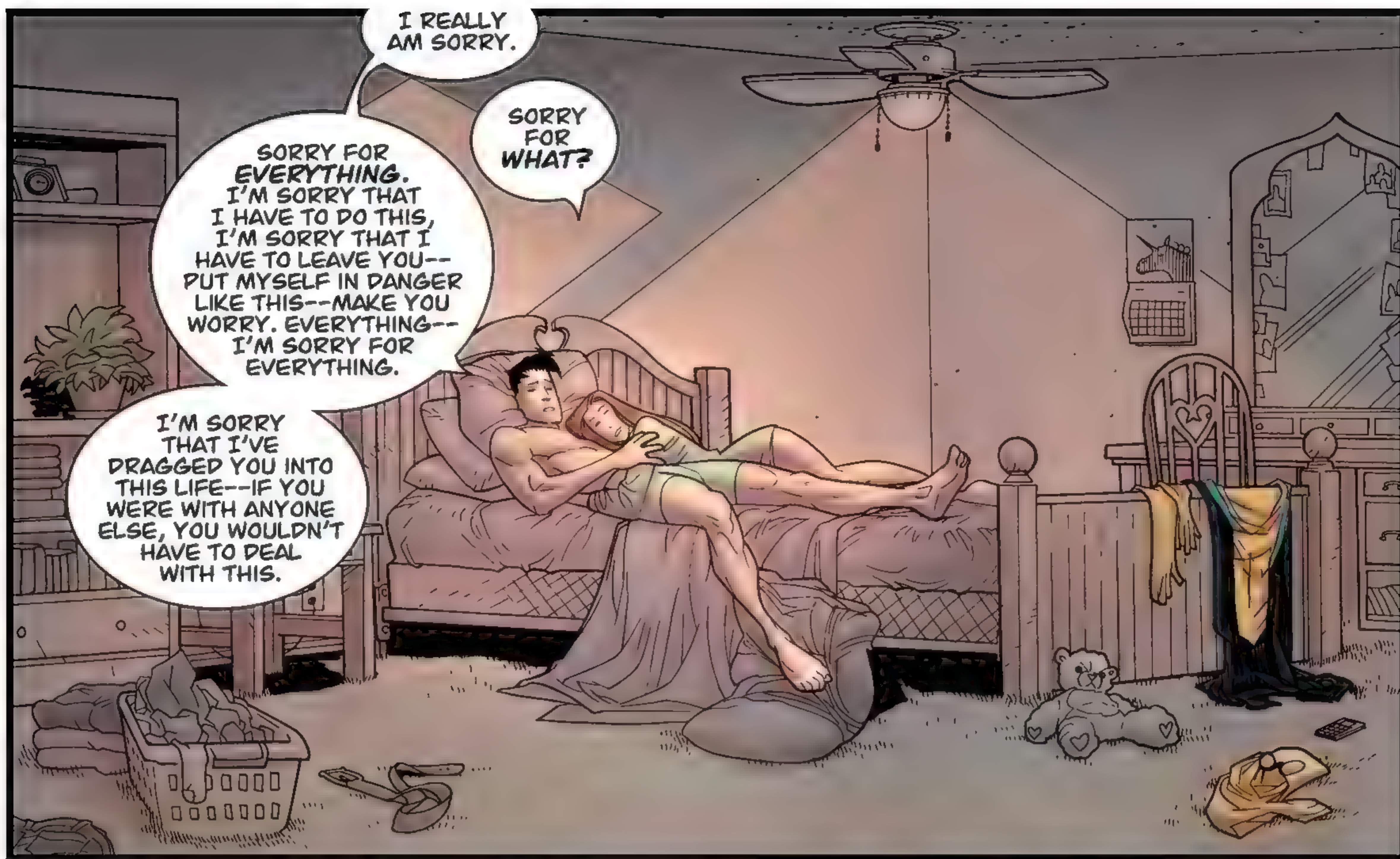


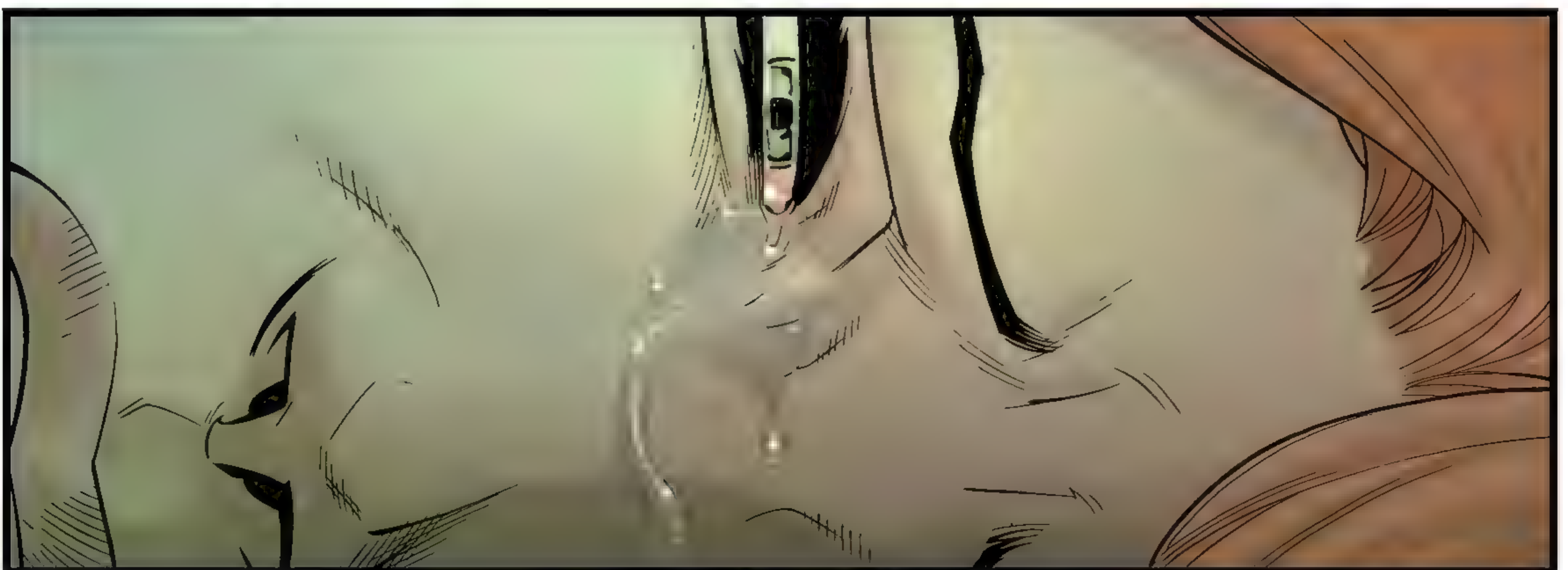
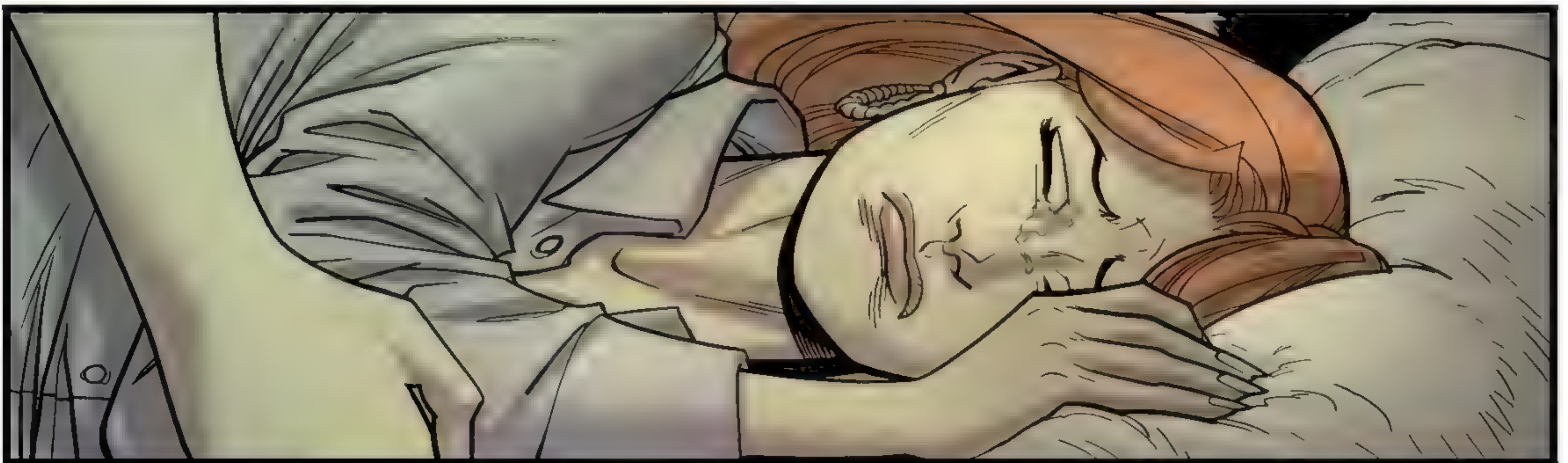
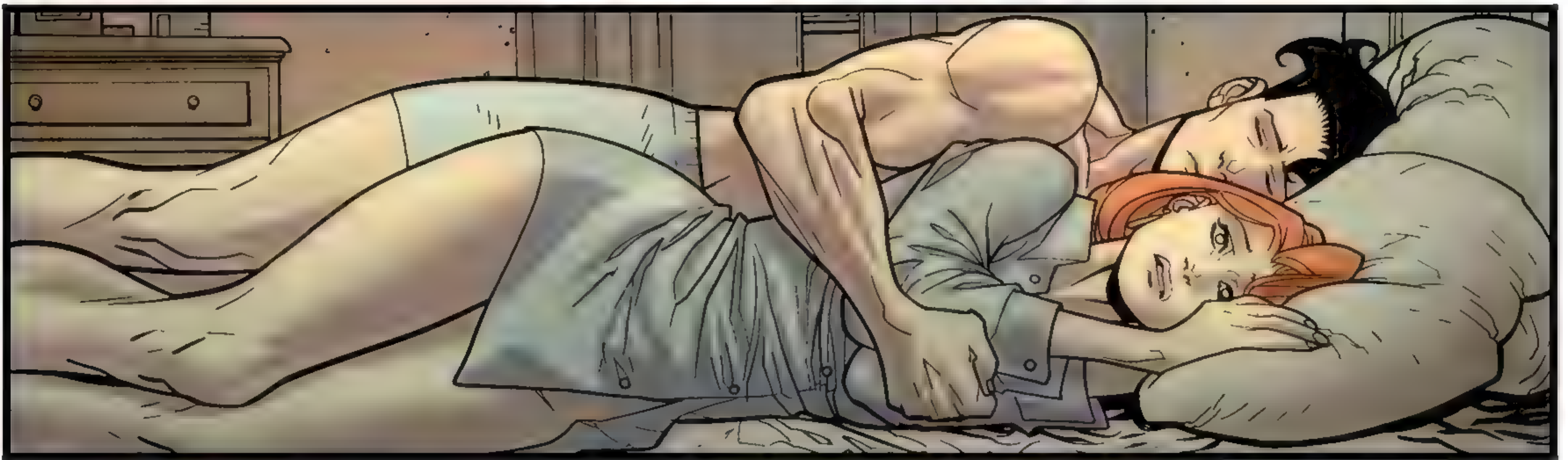


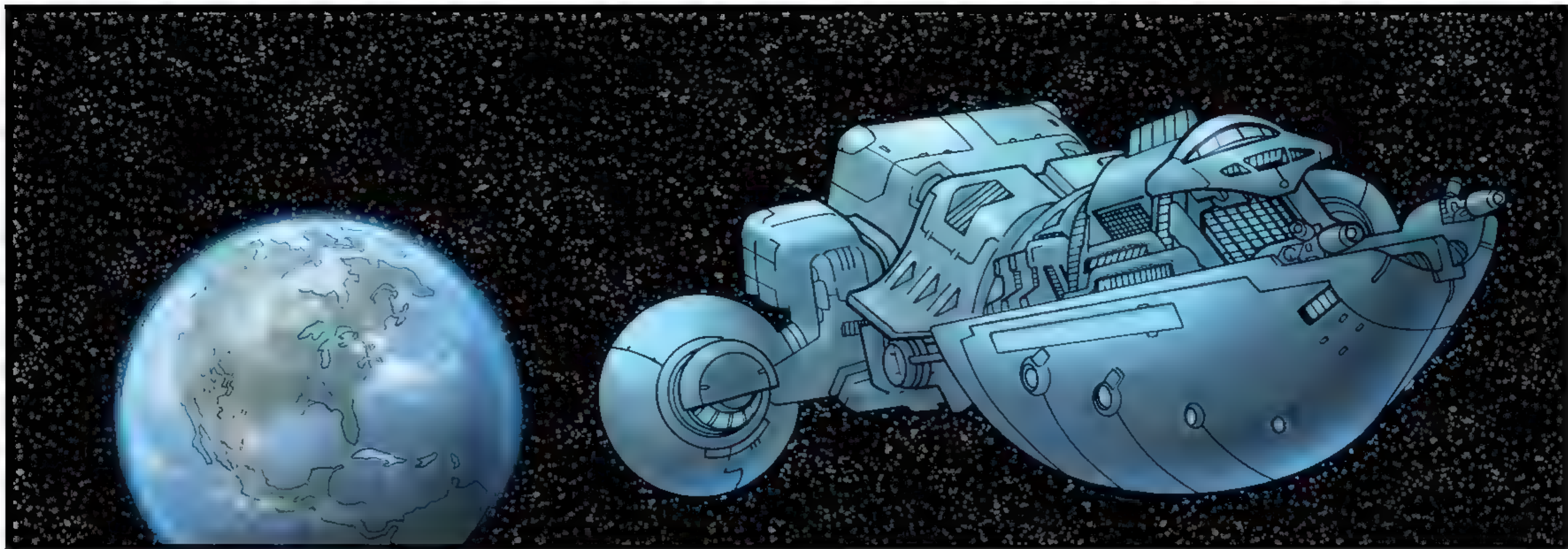












TO BE HONEST, I KIND OF FIGURED WE'D JUST BE FLYING THERE OURSELVES.

I'D RATHER WE HAD. I REQUESTED ANY SHIP BUT THIS ONE. THE CREW IS PATHETIC. STILL, EVEN WITH OUR ABILITIES, IT'S DIFFICULT TO TRAVEL THIS KIND OF DISTANCE WITHOUT A SHIP.

WE CAN ONLY HOLD OUR BREATH FOR SO LONG.

TAKE THESE EARPIECES. KEEP THEM IN AT ALL TIMES. IT WILL ALLOW US TO SPEAK TELEPATHICALLY TO EACH OTHER IN SPACE. IT'S SIMILAR TO WHAT ALLEN USES. IF WE DON'T ALL HAVE THEM, THE DISCUSSION ONLY WORKS ONE WAY.

NEAT. ALWAYS WONDERED ABOUT THAT.

WAIT, HOW LONG CAN WE HOLD OUR BREATH?

SORRY, I HAVEN'T GOTTEN AROUND TO TEACHING HIM THAT.

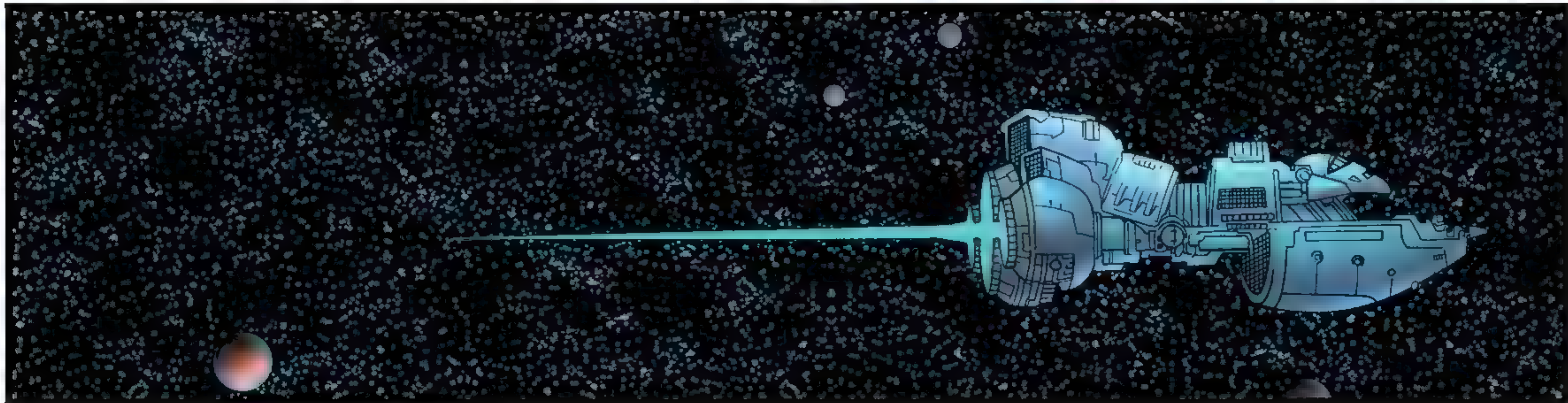
I'VE BEEN A LITTLE PREOCCUPIED AS OF LATE.

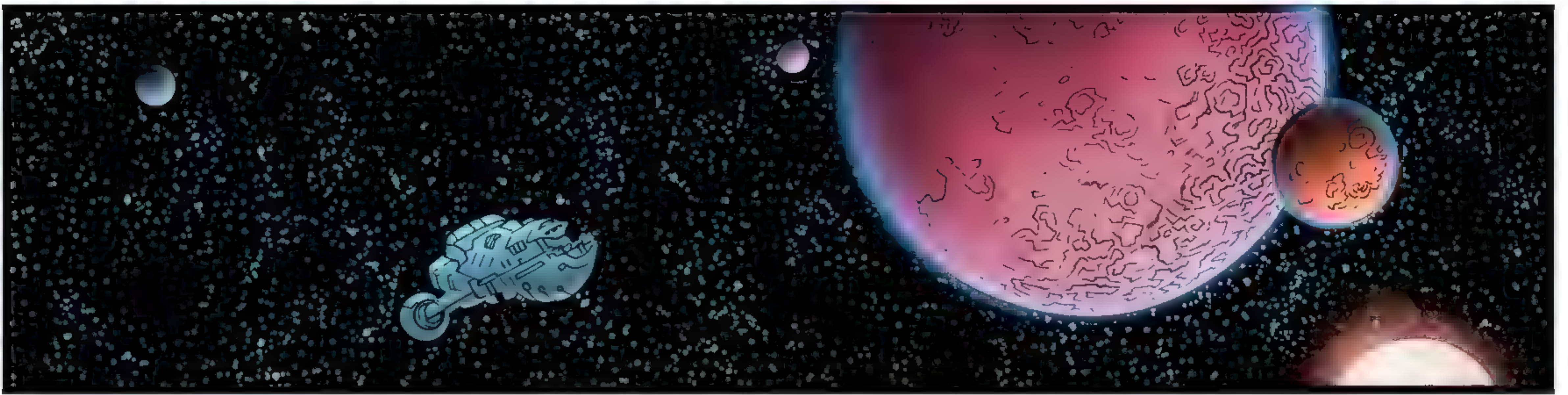
I SAW THAT. SHE'S VERY PRETTY.

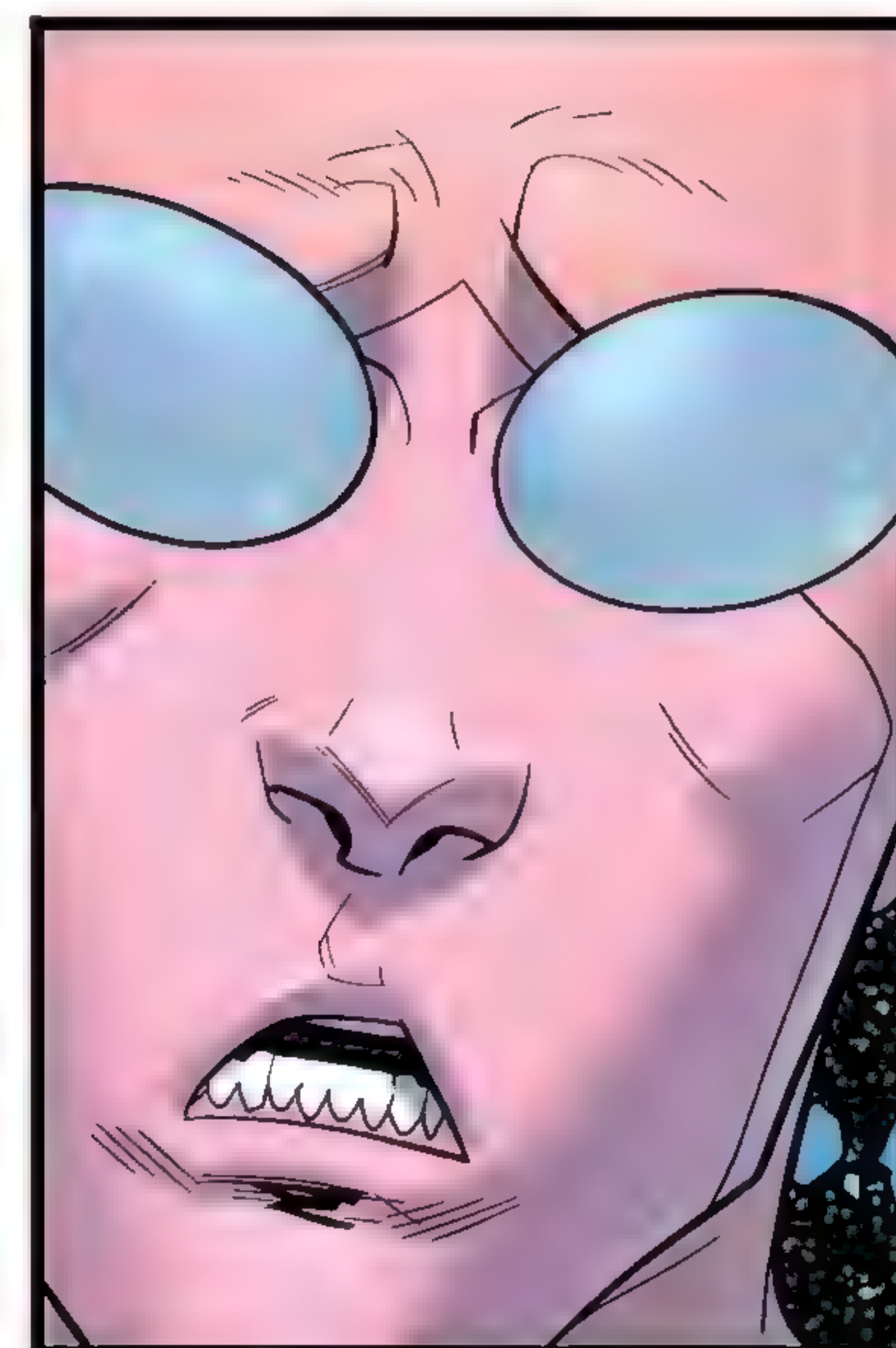
THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

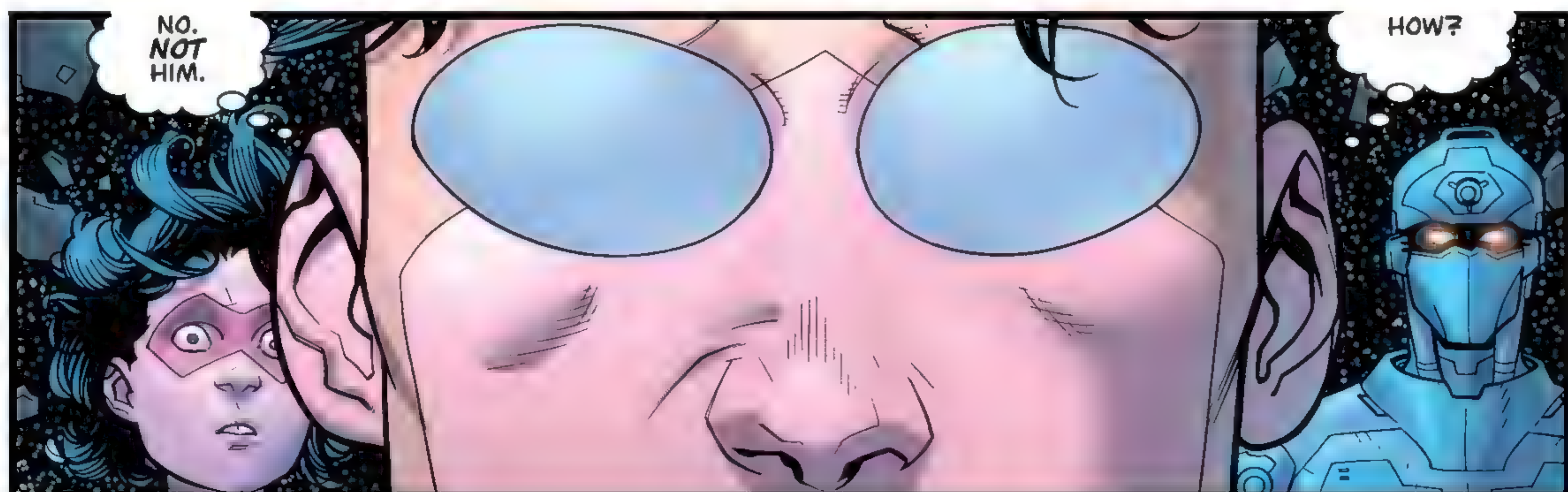
HAH.

SO SERIOUSLY--- I CAN HOLD MY BREATH FOR A LONG TIME?



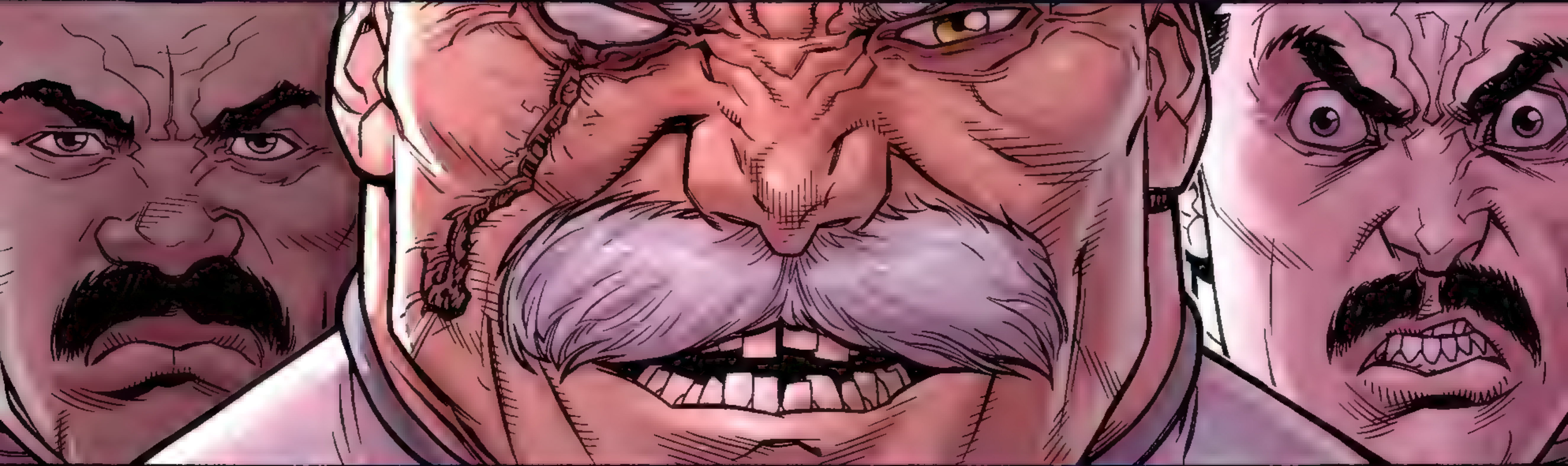








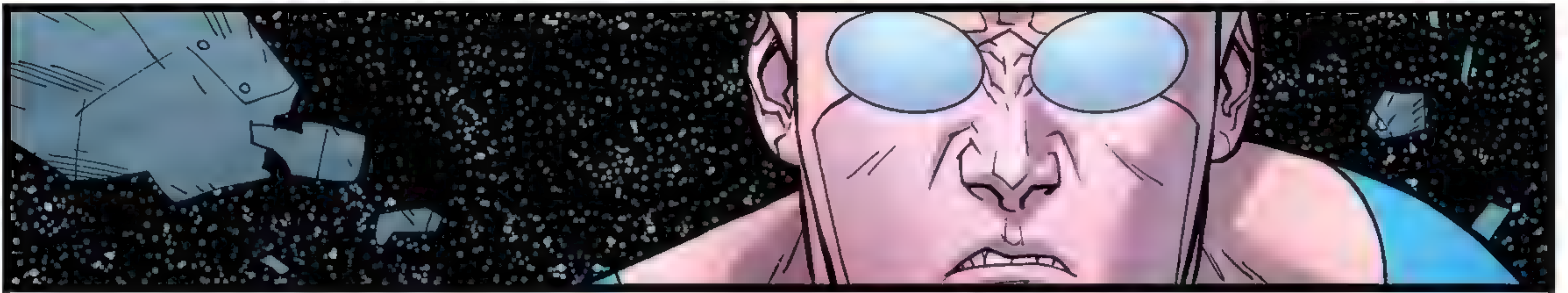
CHAPTER 72





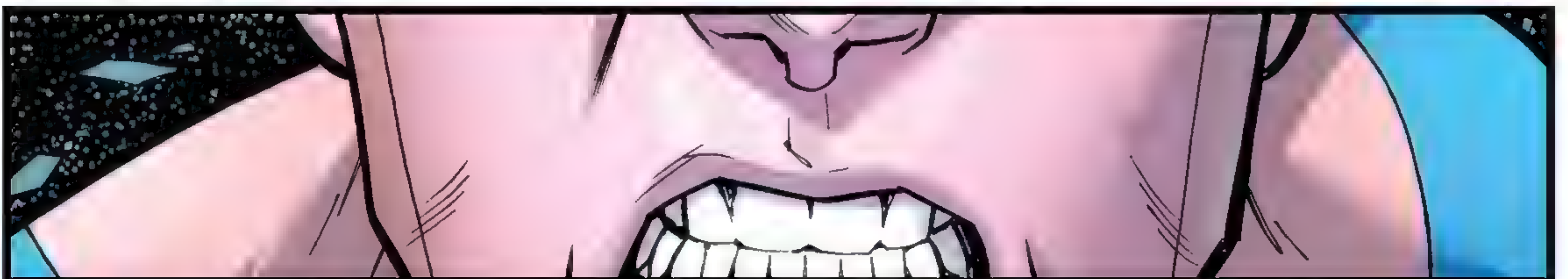
OH, MARK.
IT'S SO GOOD
TO **SEE** YOU
AGAIN.

AND I
SEE YOU'VE
BROUGHT
FRIENDS.



PUTTING IT ALL ON THE
TABLE, MY ORDERS ARE
SIMPLE. SLAUGHTER
YOU AND EVERYONE
WITH YOU.

I'M SO
HAPPY TO GET
ANOTHER SHOT
AT YOU. I'LL ADMIT
I UNDERESTIMATED
YOU THE FIRST TIME.
I TRUST YOU LEFT
THE GIRL AT HOME
THIS TIME?



A PITY. ○ YOU'VE BROUGHT ALONG SOME HELP,
WHICH SHOULD MAKE THINGS MORE
INTERESTING. ALTHOUGH, I THINK
YOU'VE GROSSLY OVERESTIMATED
THE ABILITIES OF THE GELDARIANS.
THEY NEED THEIR TECHNOLOGY TO
HOLD THEIR HEADS UP. HE'LL
BE **USELESS**.

AND THE
BOY, GOOD TO
SEE HIS ARM
HEALED.
I'LL ENJOY
BREAKING IT
AGAIN.

MARK, I
WANT YOU TO
ENJOY THE
SHOW, SO I'LL
BE KILLING
YOU **LAST**.





DID I
BLACK
OUT?

HOW
DID THAT
HAPPEN?

OH, NO---
THIS ISN'T
GOOD!



SERIOUSLY!
WHATEVER HELP
ANYONE CAN
MUSTER---
I'LL GLADLY
ACCEPT!

HE'S
SHRUGGING
OFF WHATEVER
I THROW AT
HIM!

FOOLISH
GELDARIAN.



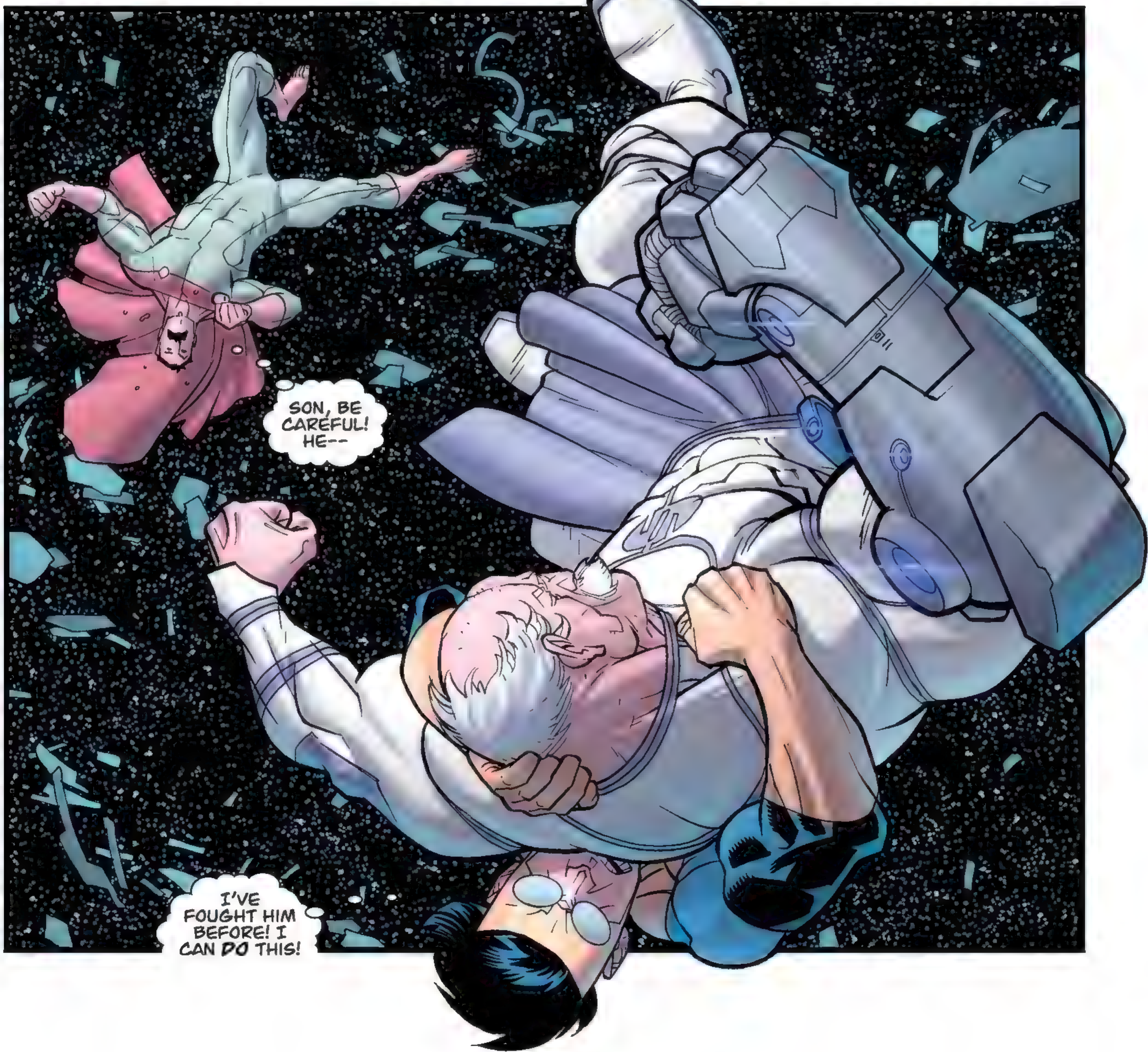
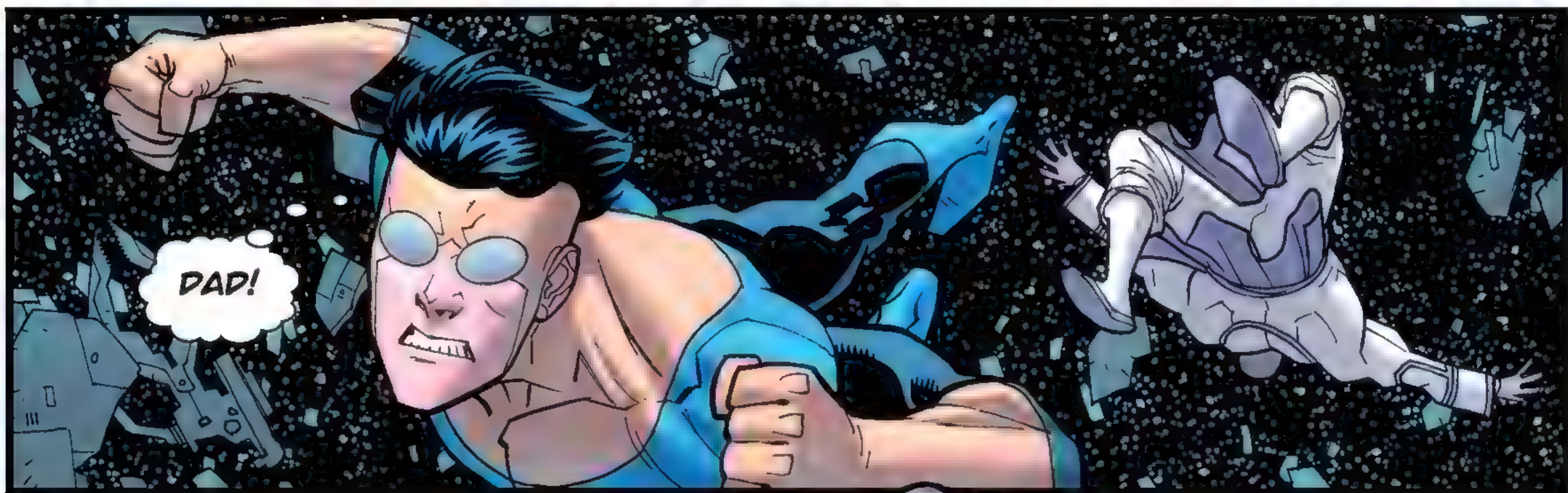
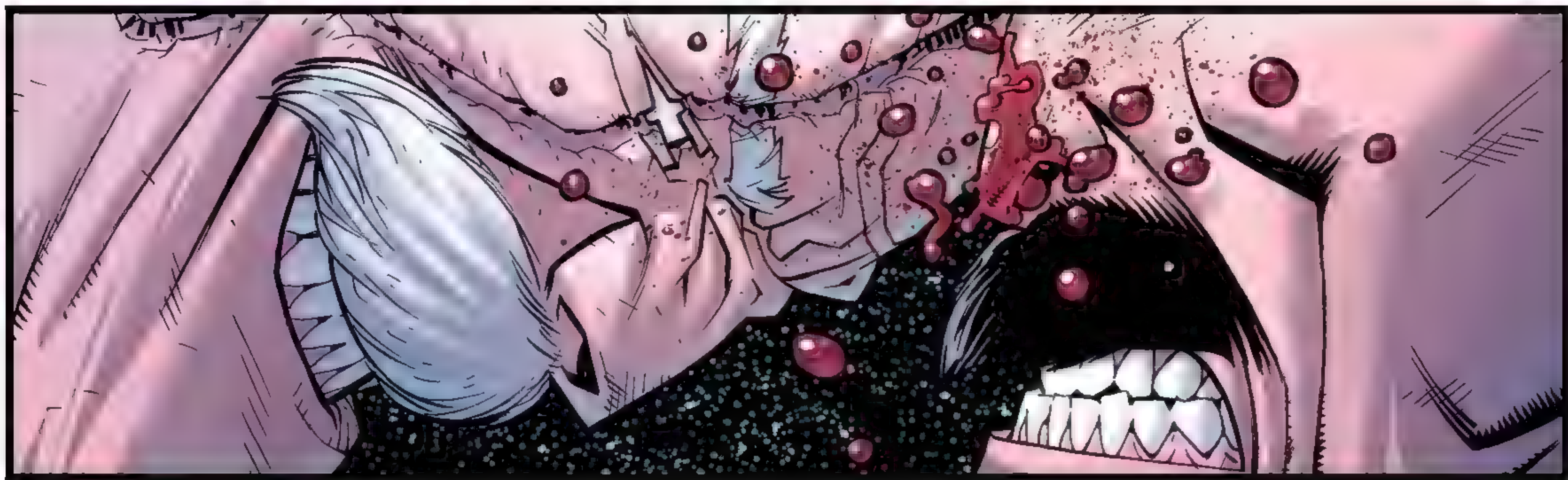
WAIT--
THAT
DID THE
TRICK!

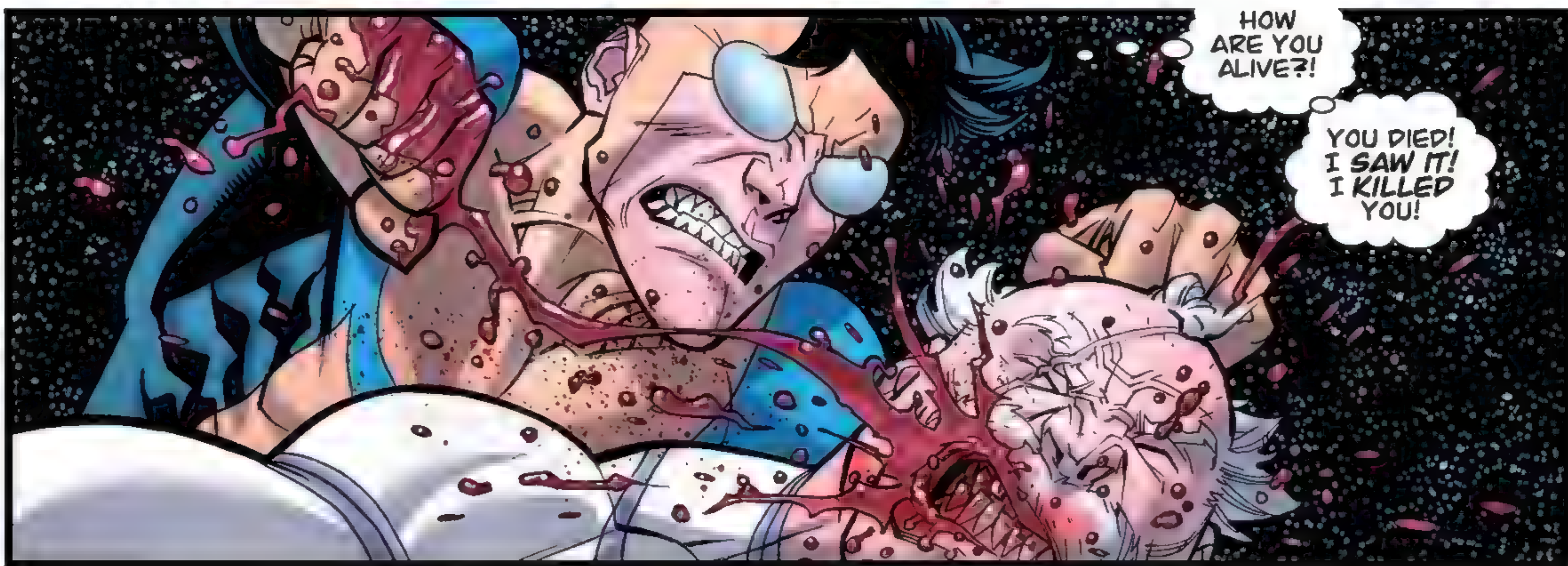


NOLAN! THE
TRAITOR! I CAN'T
BELIEVE MY
LUCK. I GET
TO KILL YOU,
TOO!

WHAT HAVE
I DONE TO
DESERVE SUCH
FORTUNE?!

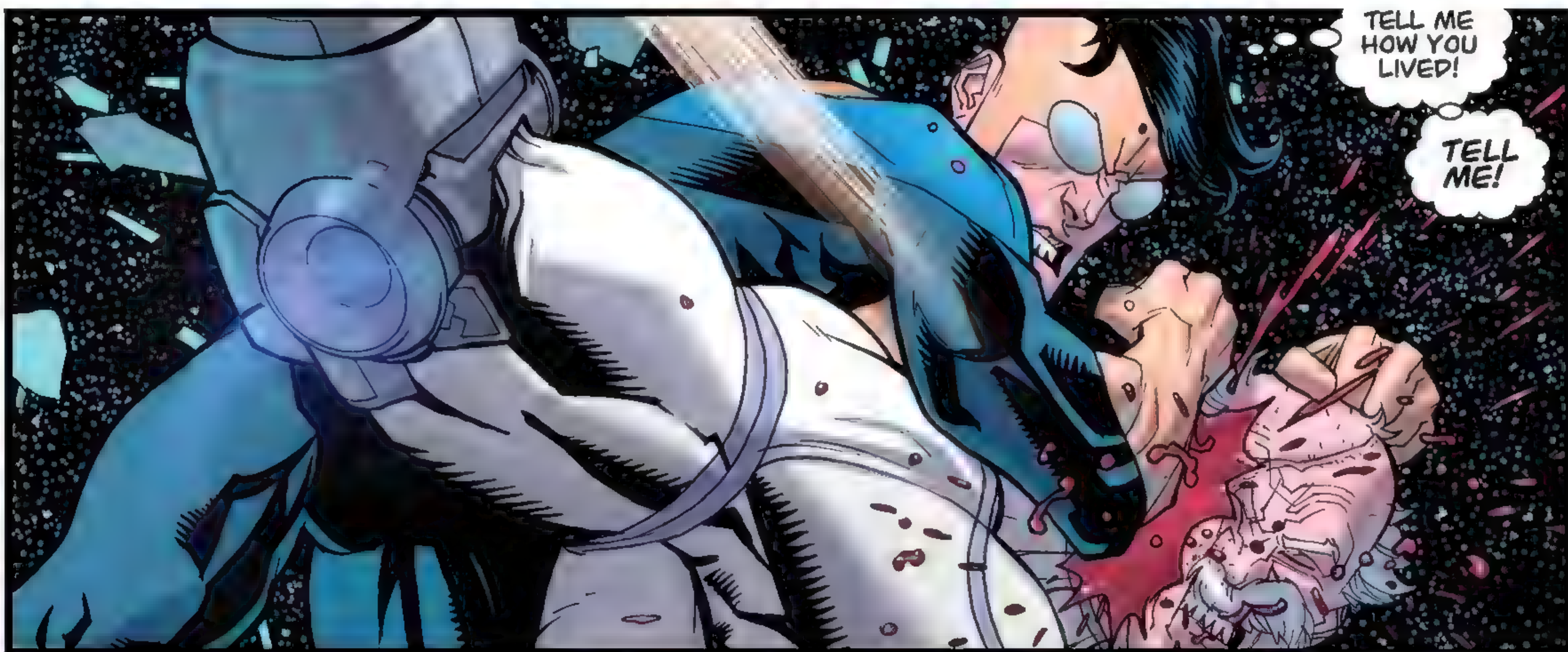
YOUR SON IS
SO POWERFUL--
ALMOST STRONGER
THAN YOU. YOU
MUST BE SO
PROUD!





HOW
ARE YOU
ALIVE?!

YOU DIED!
I SAW IT!
I KILLED
YOU!



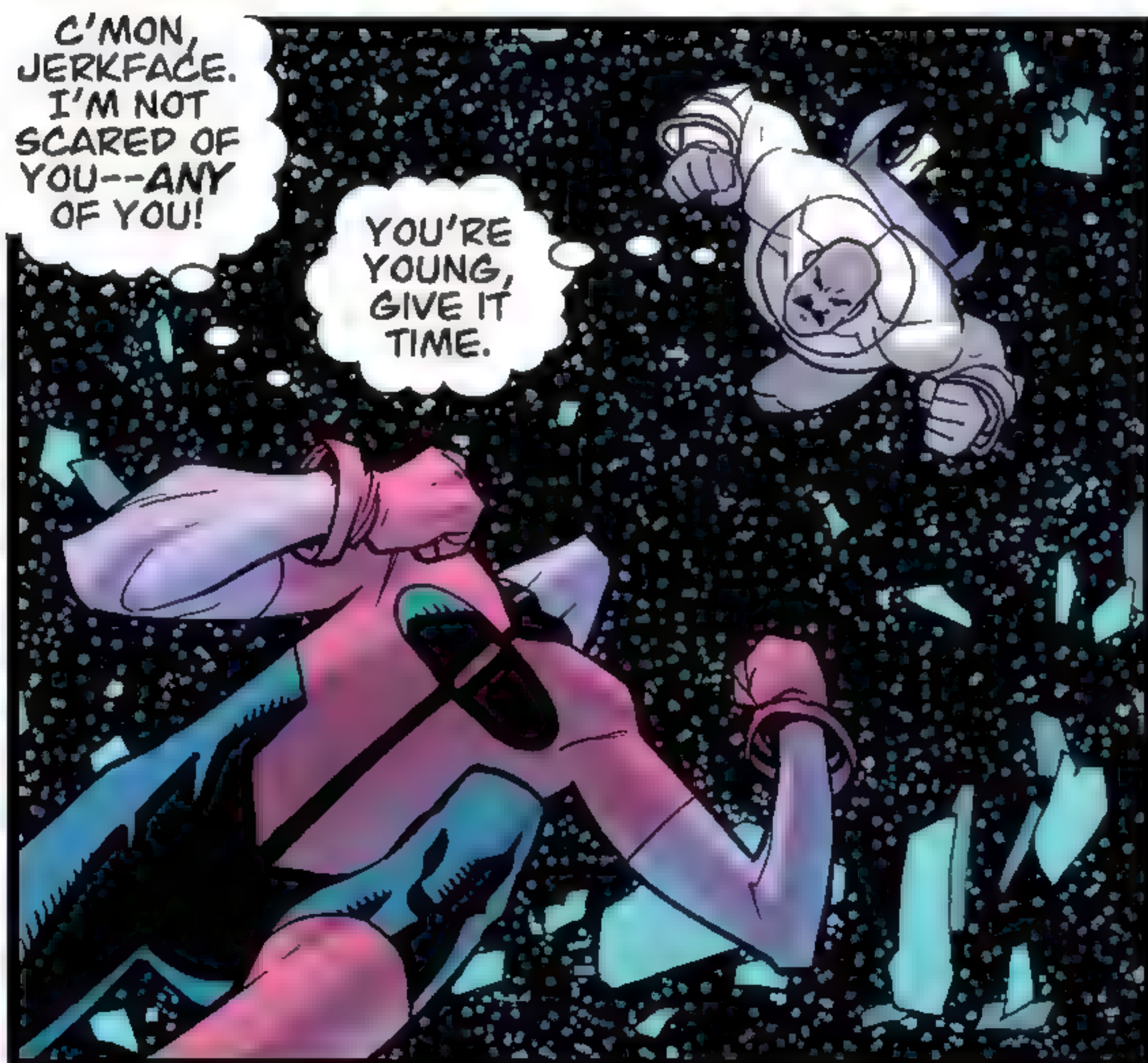
TELL ME
HOW YOU
LIVED!

TELL
ME!



I GUESS YOU'RE
JUST NOT AS
STRONG AS
YOU THOUGHT YOU
WERE, BOY!

NOW--LET'S
WRAP THIS UP!
I THINK I'LL POP
BY THAT PLANET
OF YOURS AFTER
FOR AN
ENCORE.



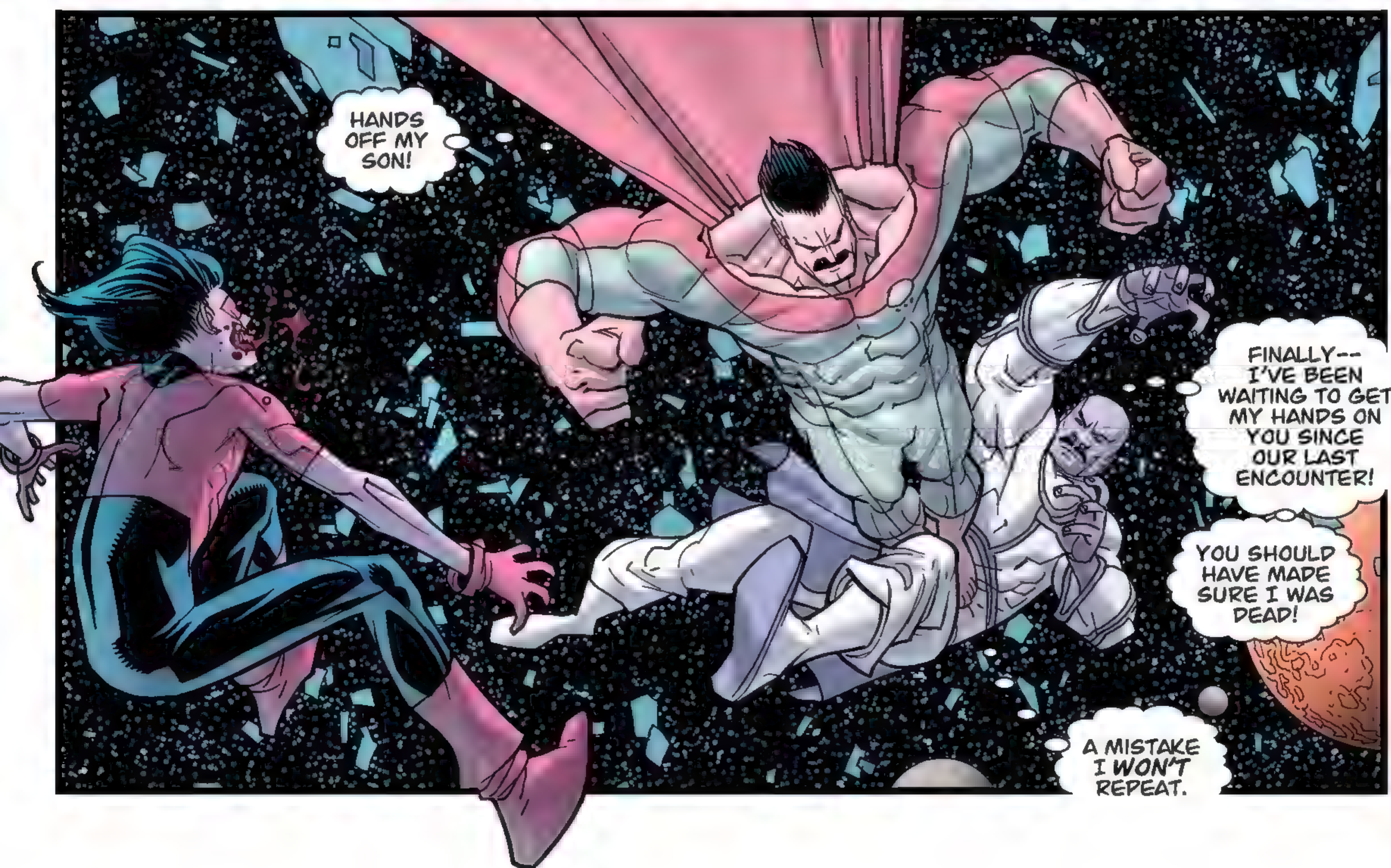
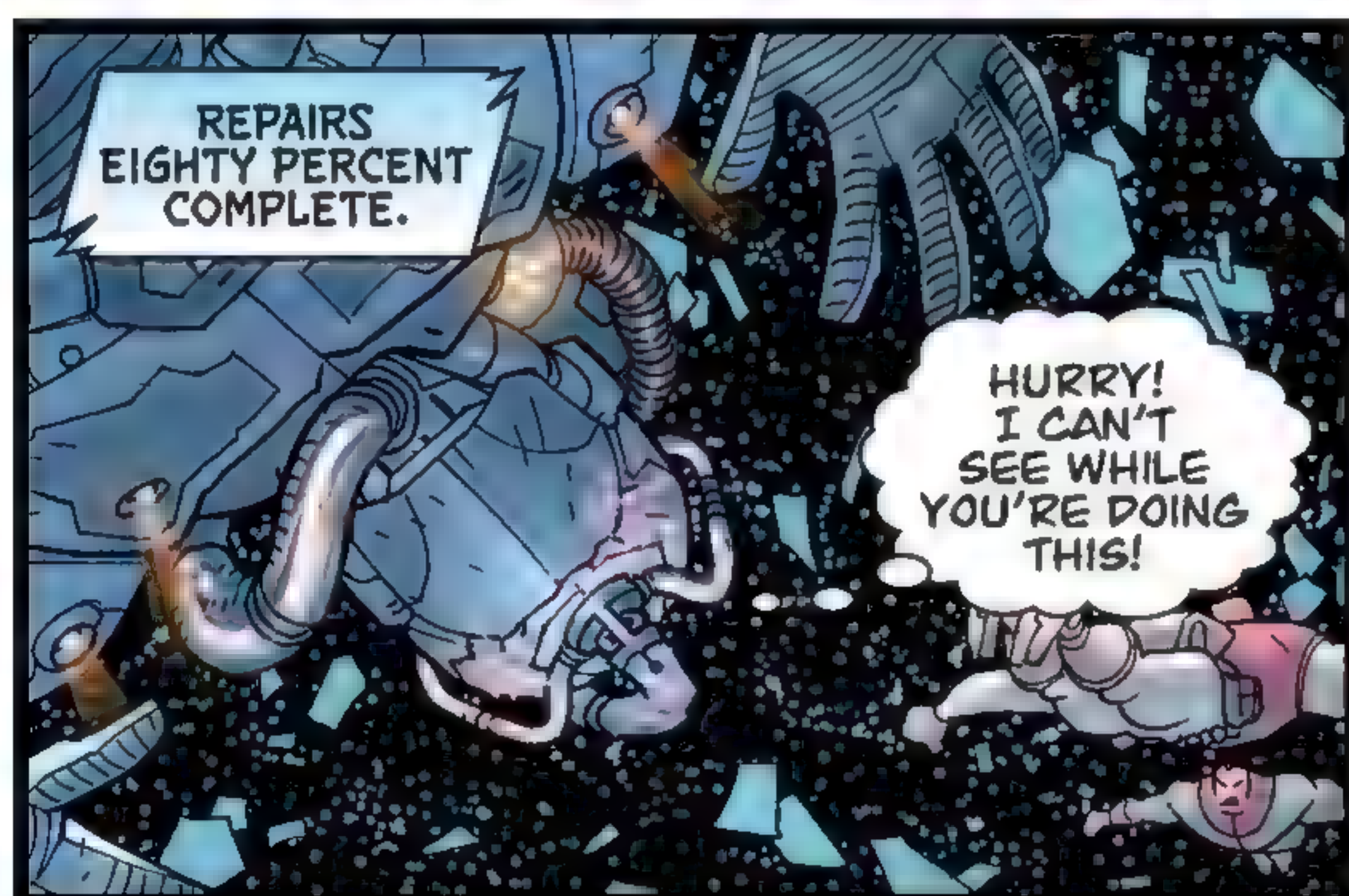
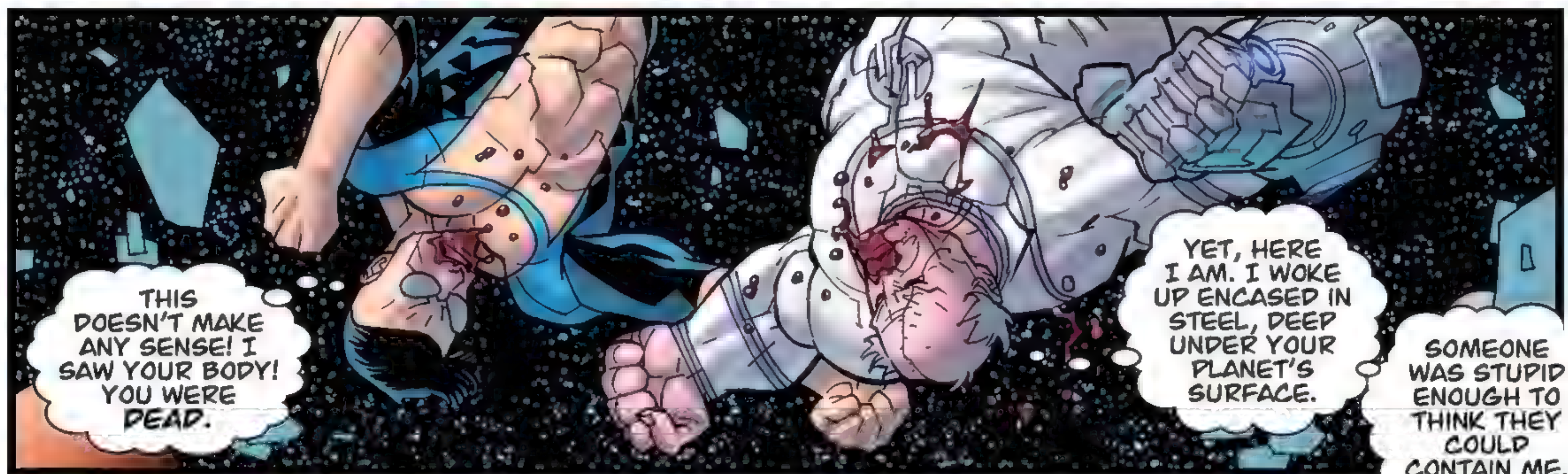
C'MON,
JERKFACE.
I'M NOT
SCARED OF
YOU--ANY
OF YOU!

YOU'RE
YOUNG,
GIVE IT
TIME.



YOU CAN'T HOPE TO
STAND AGAINST OUR
EMPIRE IF THESE
ARE THE FINEST
SOLDIERS YOU
CAN FIND.

PATHETIC!





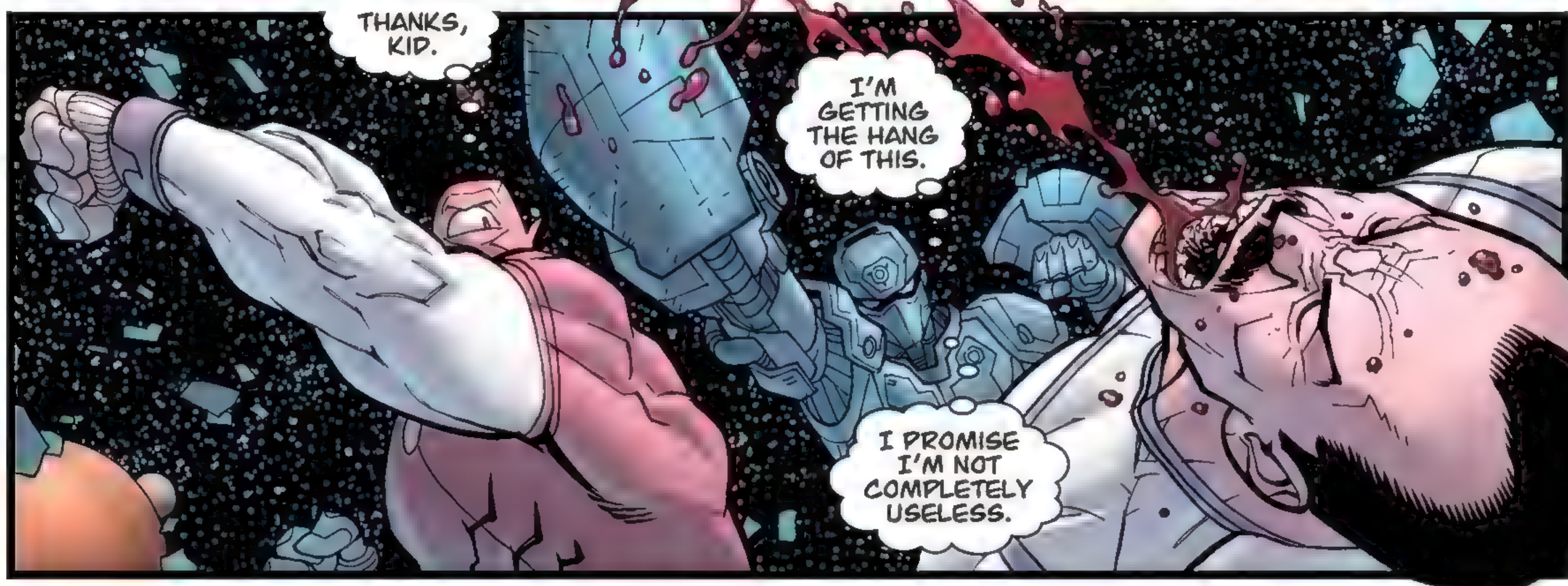
CECIL
KEPT
YOU ALIVE?!
THAT HAS
TO BE IT!

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
HE'D--WHEN
I SEE HIM
AGAIN...!



HOW
OPTIMISTIC
YOU ARE.

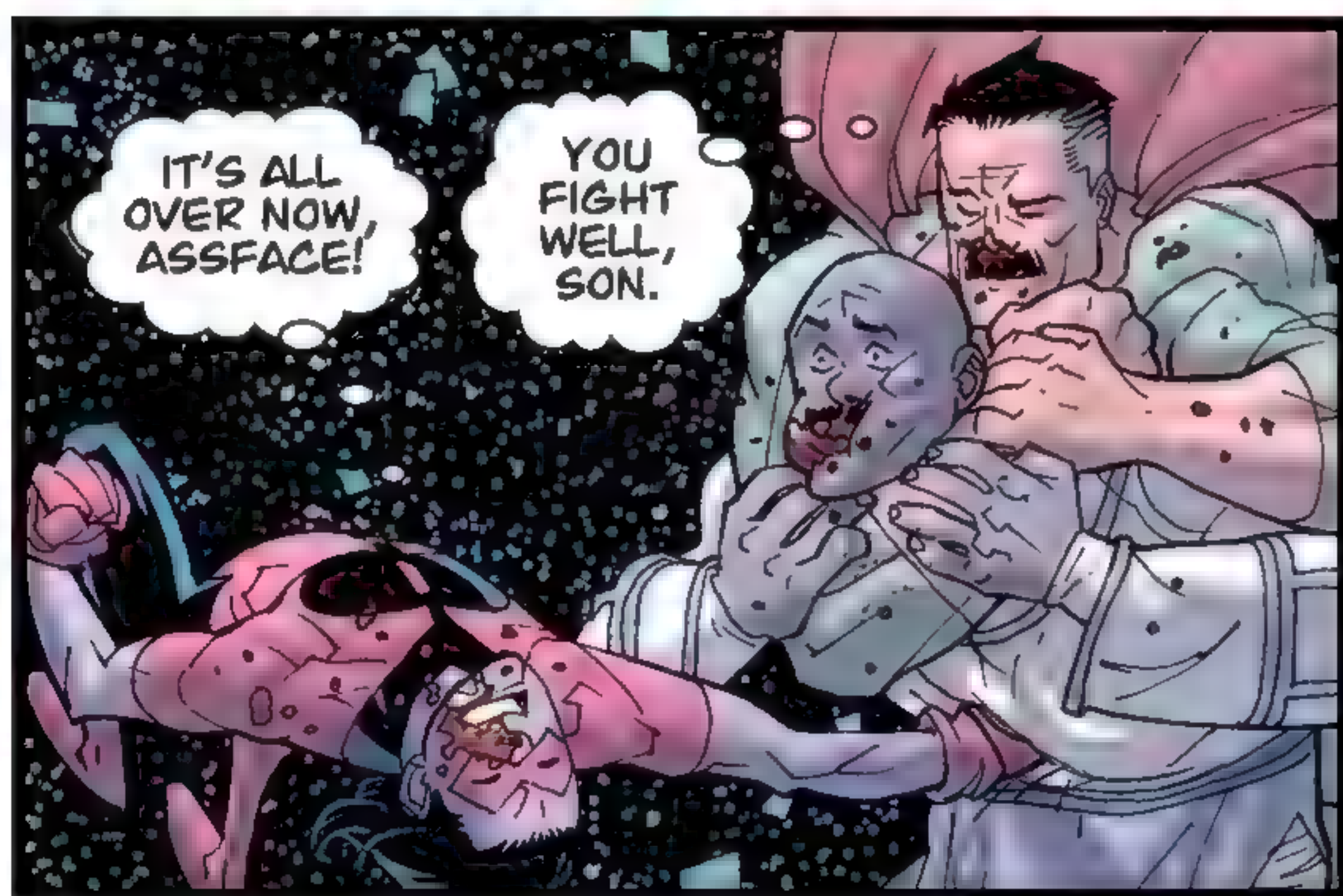
YOU WON'T
BE SEEING
ANYONE
AGAIN!



THANKS,
KID.

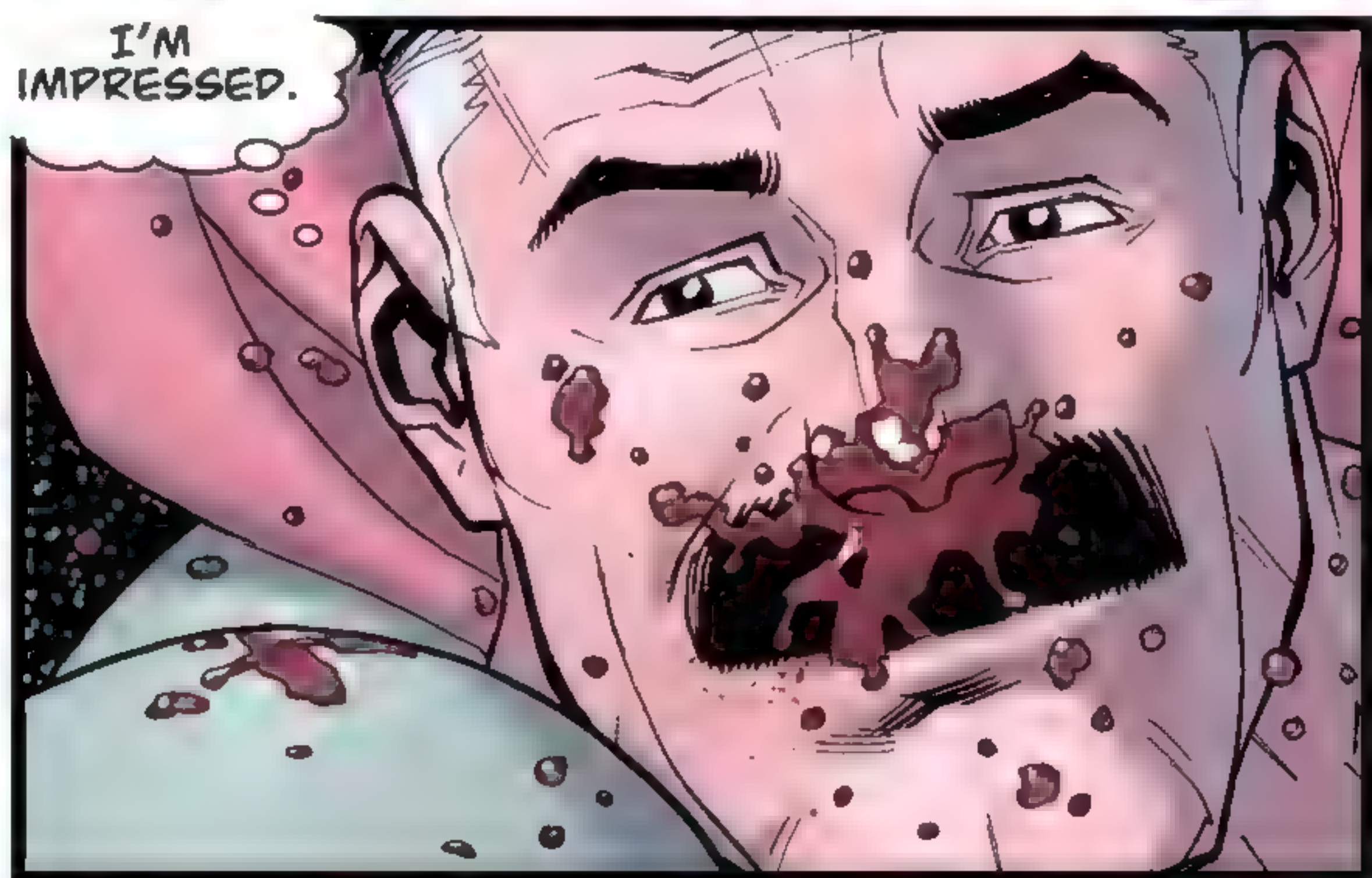
I'M
GETTING
THE HANG
OF THIS.

I PROMISE
I'M NOT
COMPLETELY
USELESS.

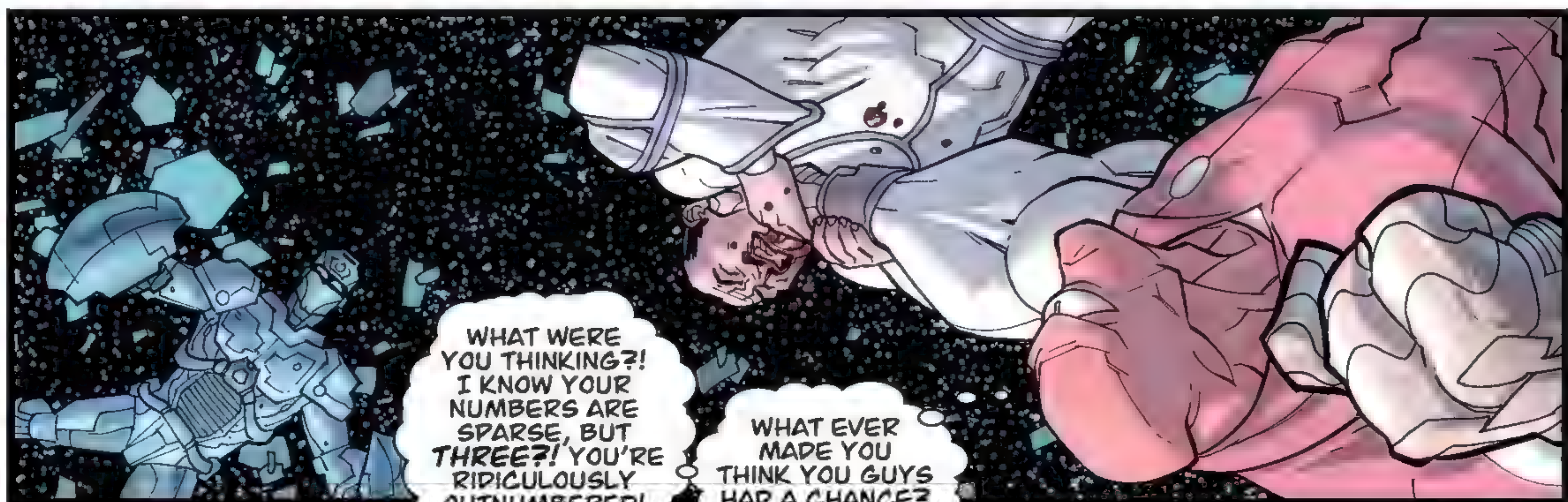


IT'S ALL
OVER NOW,
ASSFACE!

YOU
FIGHT
WELL,
SON.



I'M
IMPRESSED.



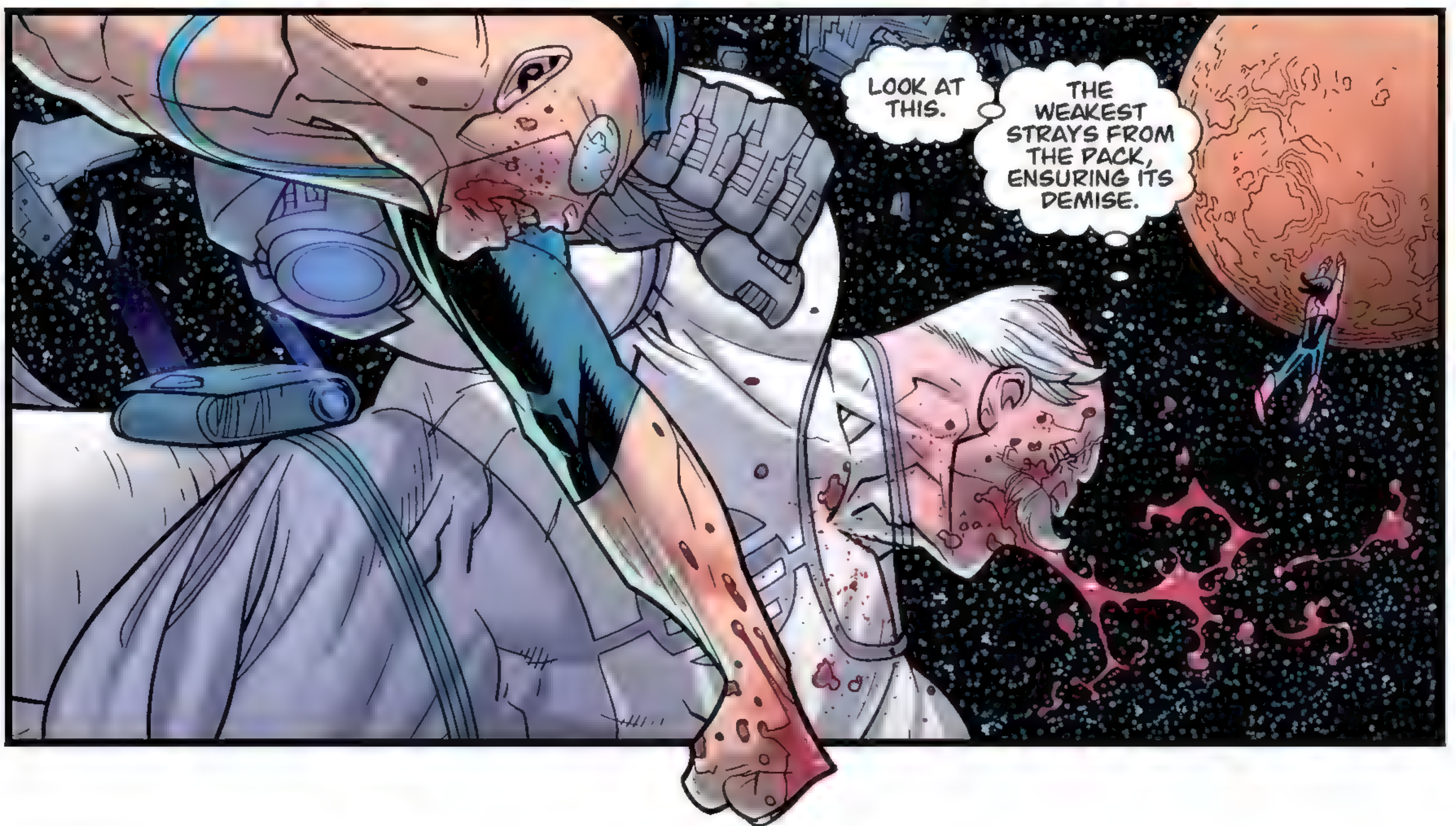
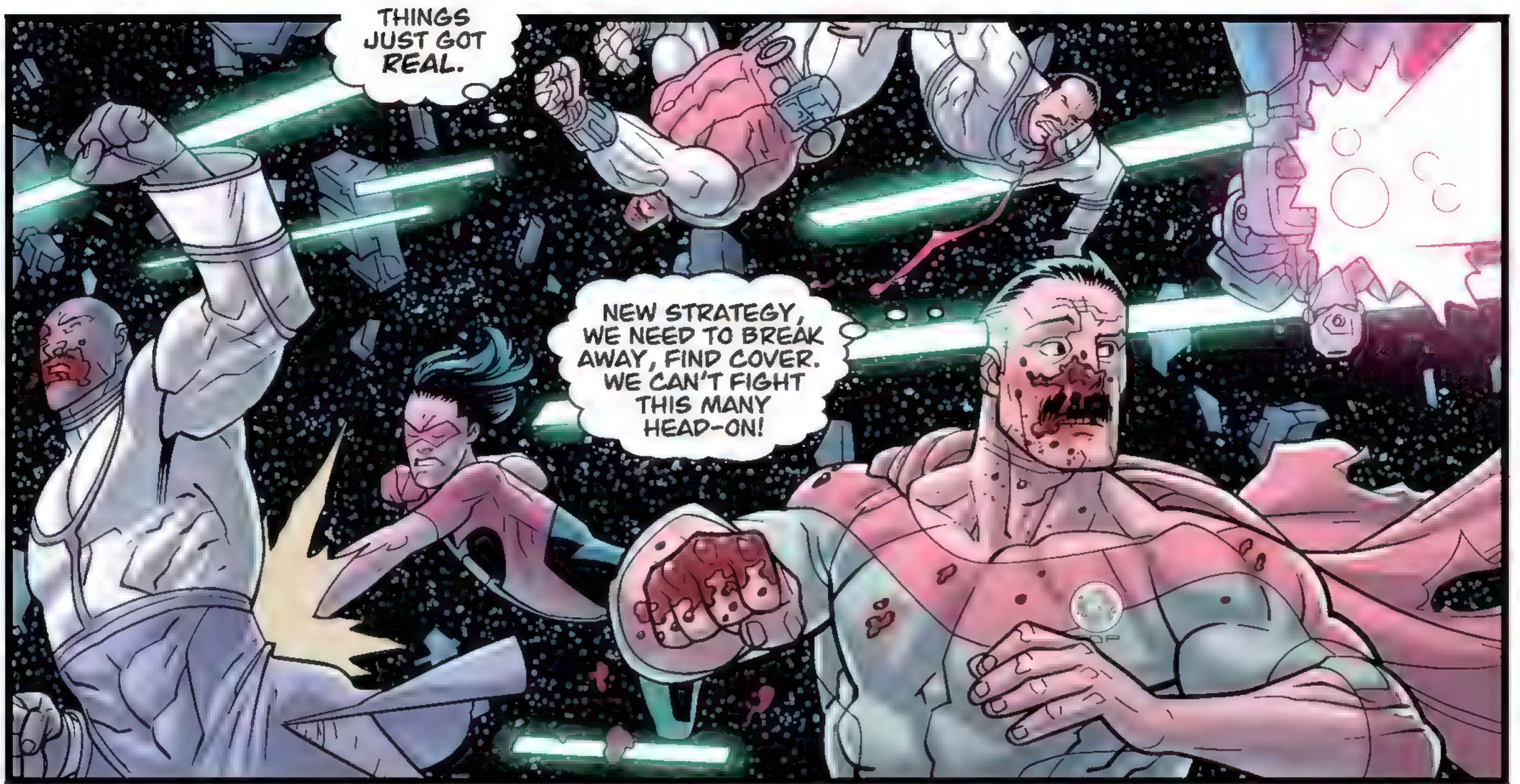
WHAT WERE
YOU THINKING?!
I KNOW YOUR
NUMBERS ARE
SPARSE, BUT
THREE?! YOU'RE
RIDICULOUSLY
OUTNUMBERED!

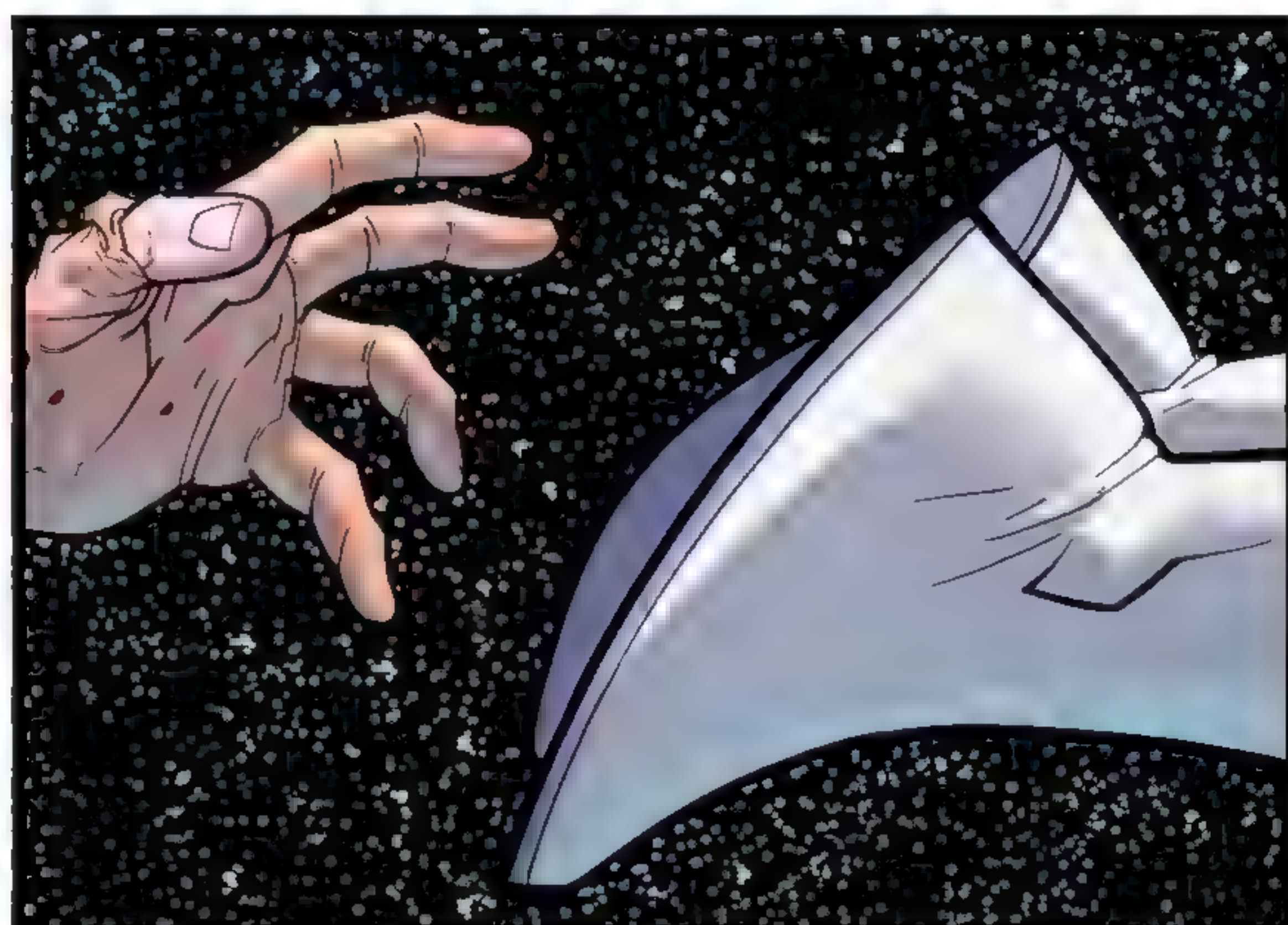
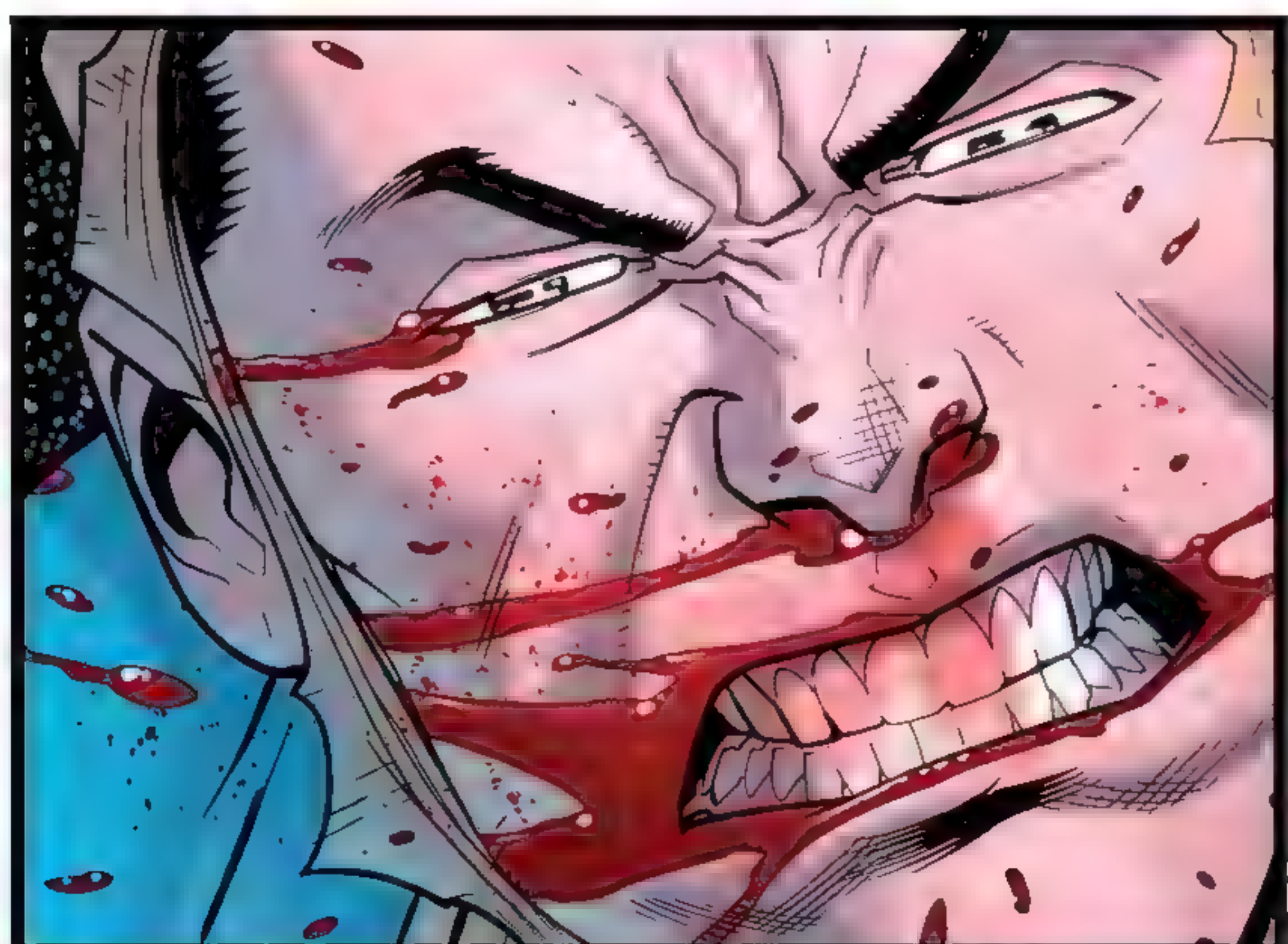
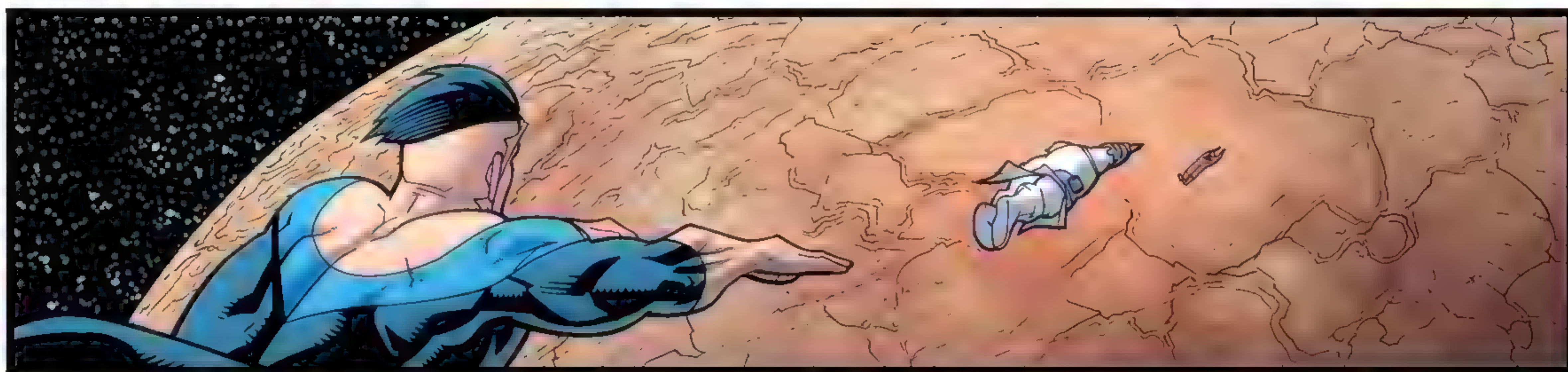
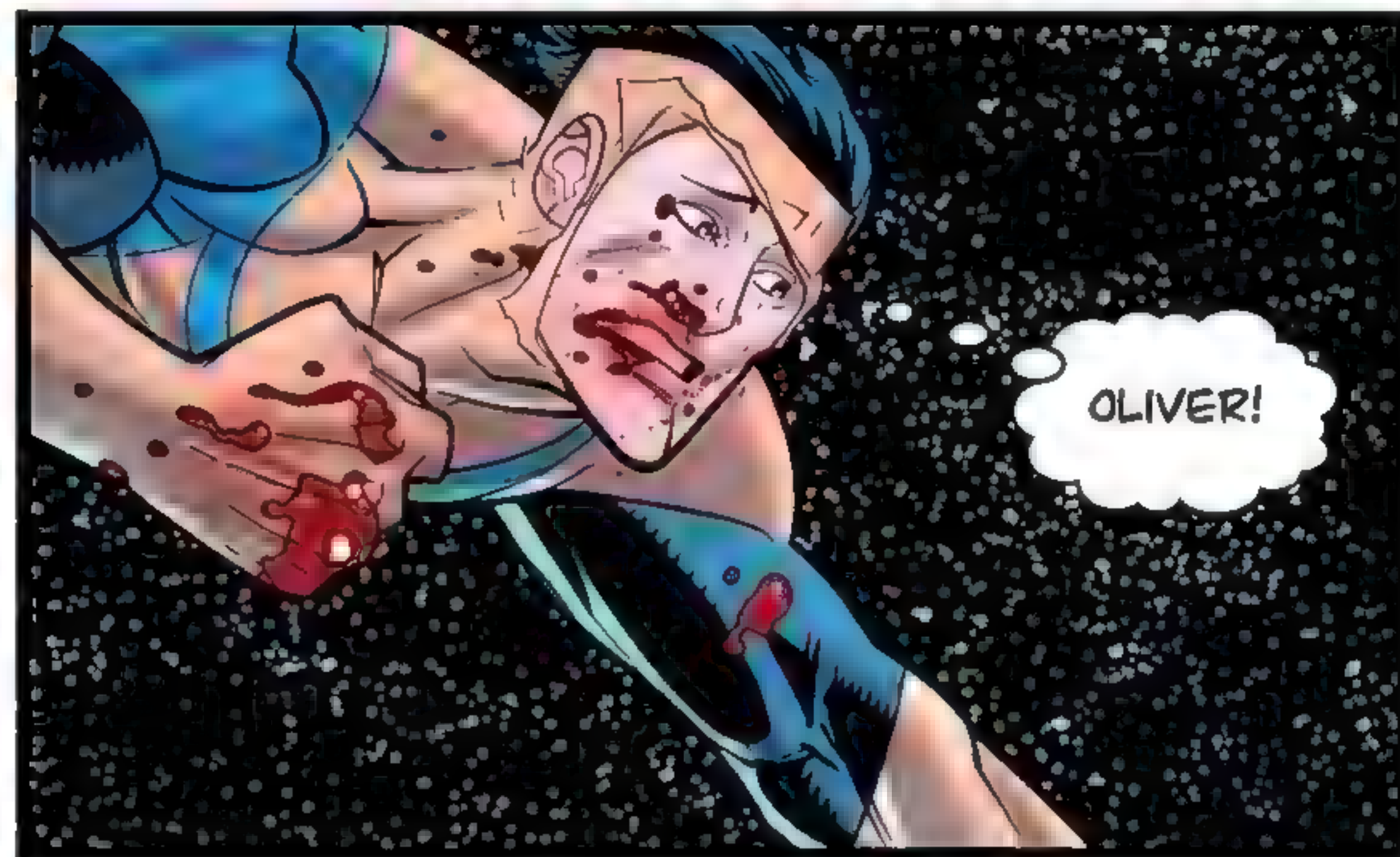
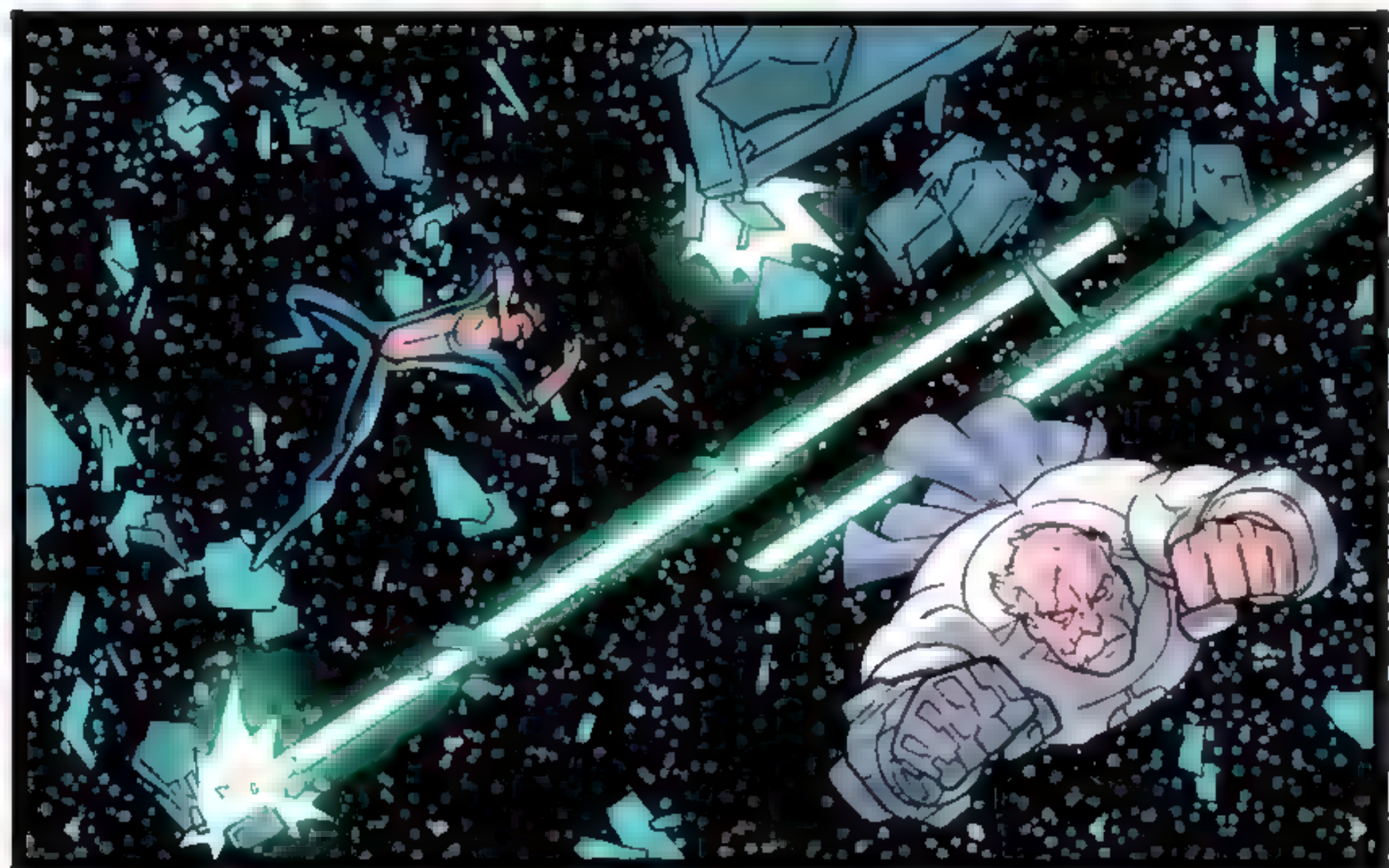
WHAT EVER
MADE YOU
THINK YOU GUYS
HAD A CHANCE?



NEVER
MIND
THEN.

OH.









THAT KNOCKED
THE WIND OUT
OF YOU--
DIDN'T IT?

OR DID
YOU JUST
EXHALE KNOWING
THAT YOU WERE
COMING TO THIS
PLANET--AND
COULD GET A
BREATH?



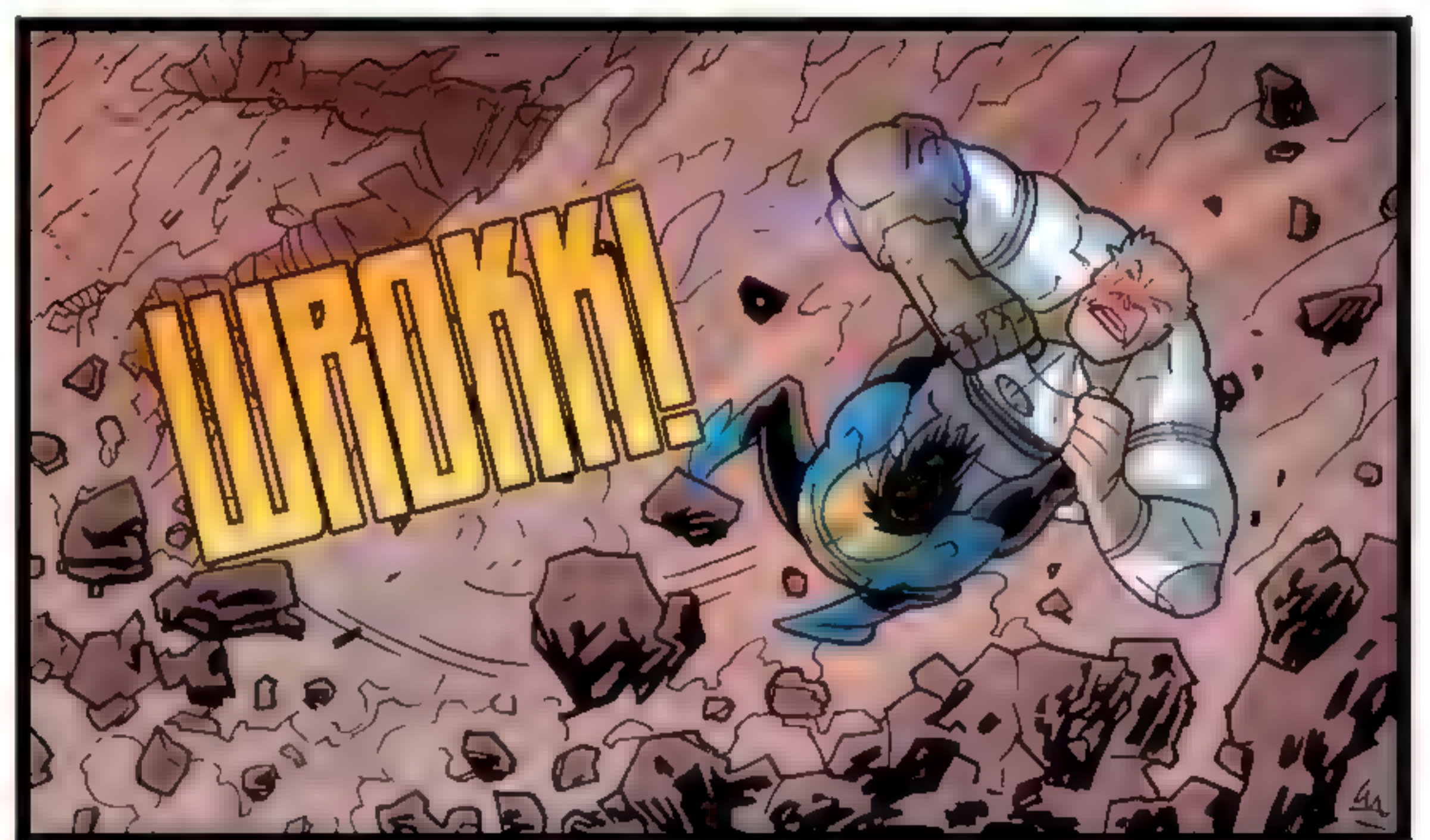
VERY--
GKK.

DON'T
HIDE BEHIND
THAT SMILE--
YOU'RE
DEAD.

I'M
MAKING
SURE
THIS
TI--



KROOM!



WROKK!

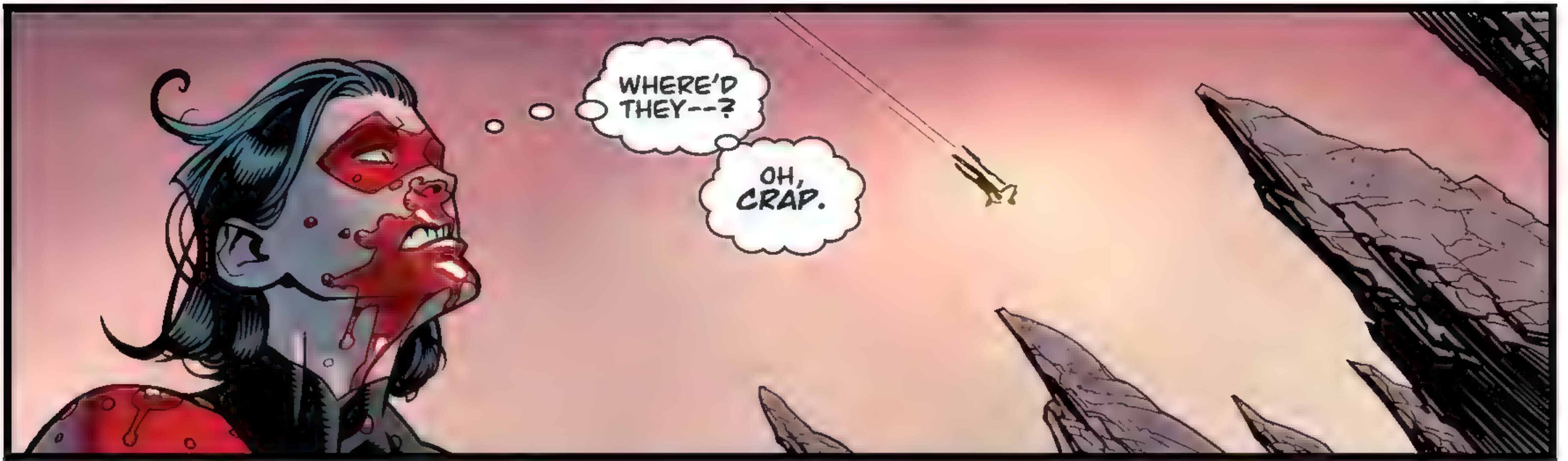


WHAT'S THIS
SUPPOSED TO
DO? I GOT A
BREATH.

YOU
REALLY
THINK I
CAN'T MAKE
YOU LET
GO?

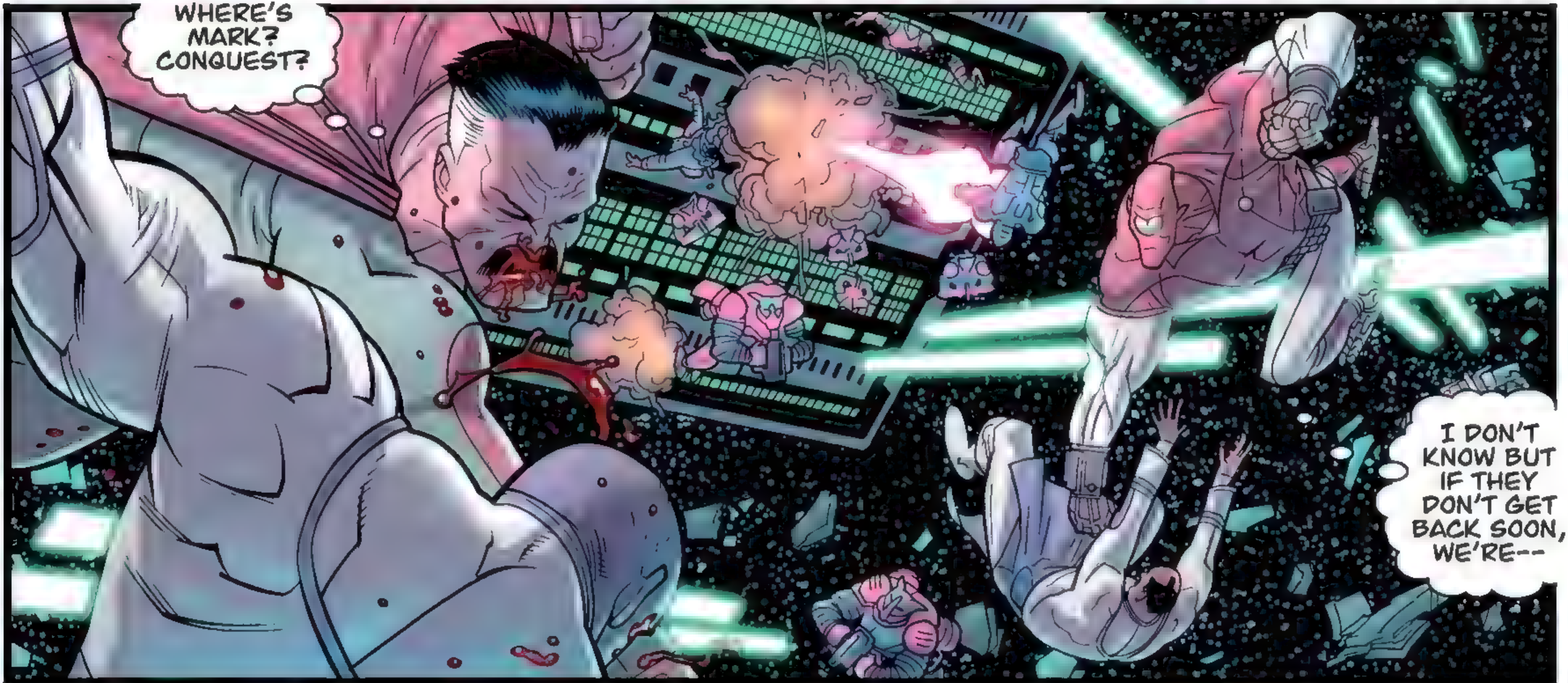


LOOKS LIKE
I'M CHANGING
THE DEATH
ORDER. YOU'RE
NUMBER ONE, KID.



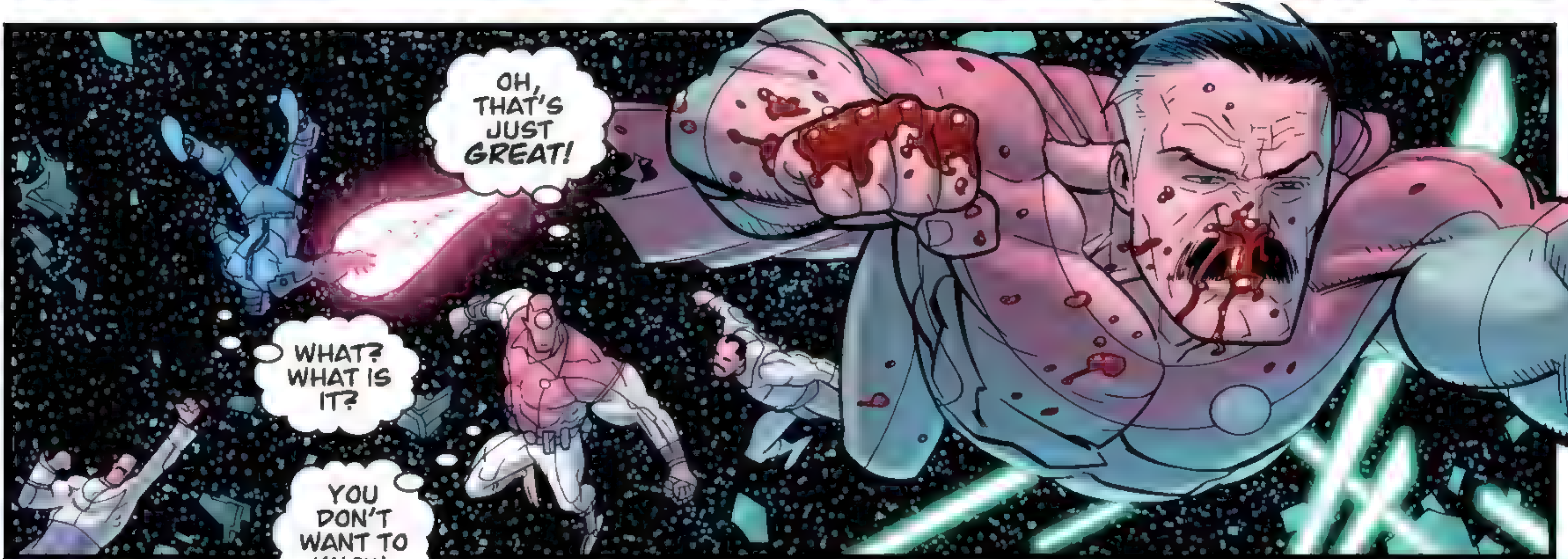
WHERE'D THEY---?

OH, CRAP.



WHERE'S MARK? CONQUEST?

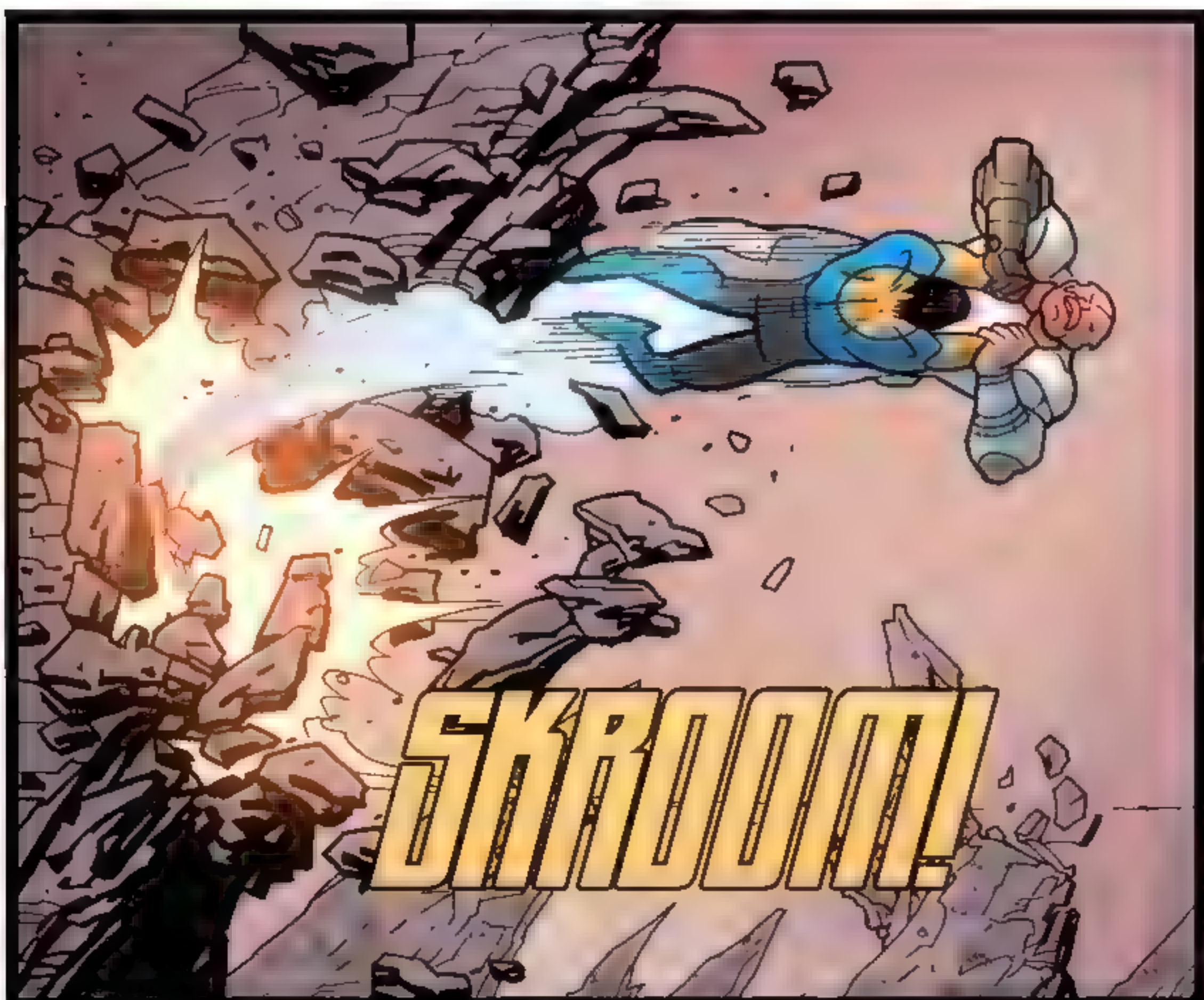
I DON'T KNOW BUT IF THEY DON'T GET BACK SOON, WE'RE---



OH, THAT'S JUST GREAT!

WHAT? WHAT IS IT?

YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW.



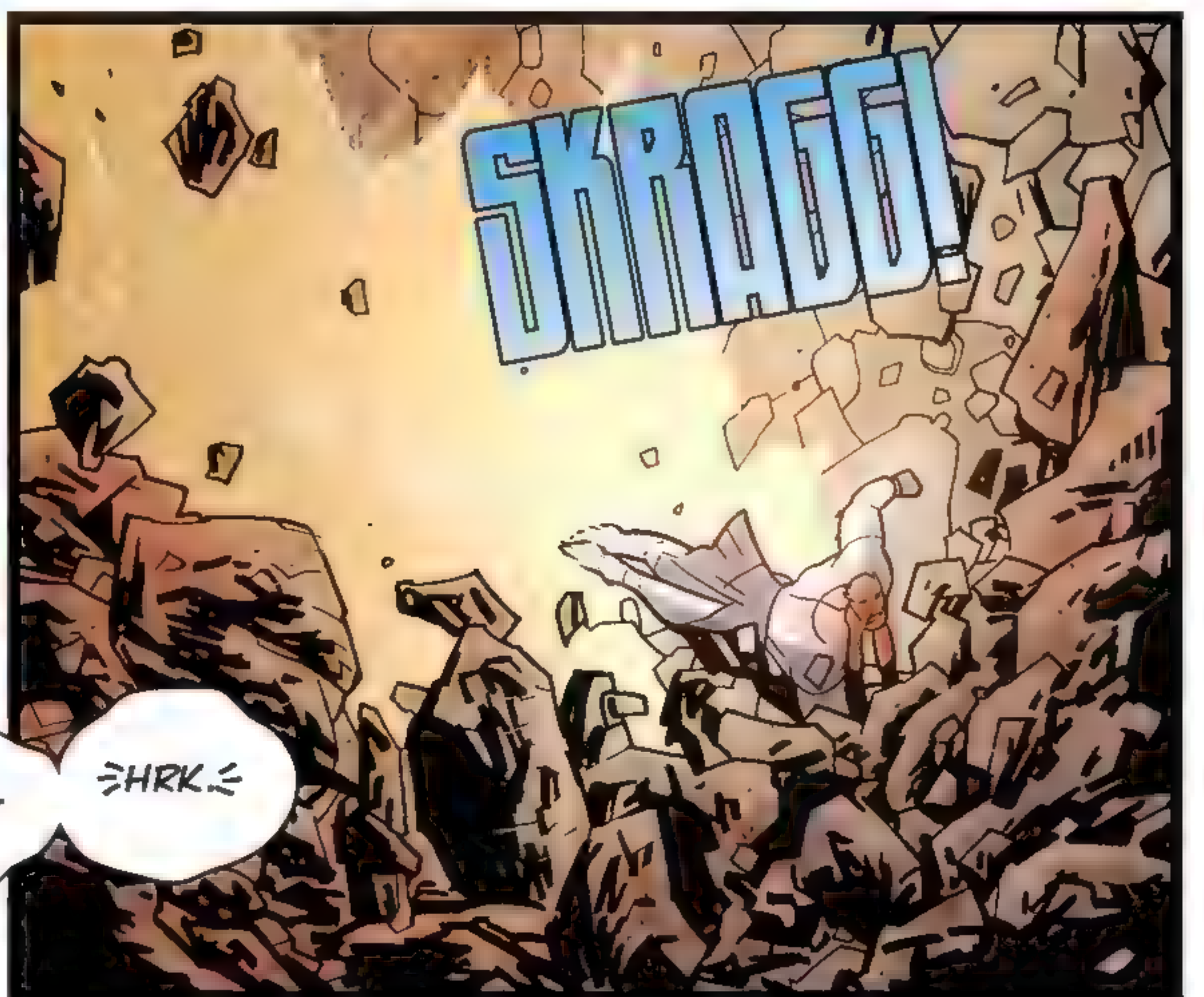
SKROOM!



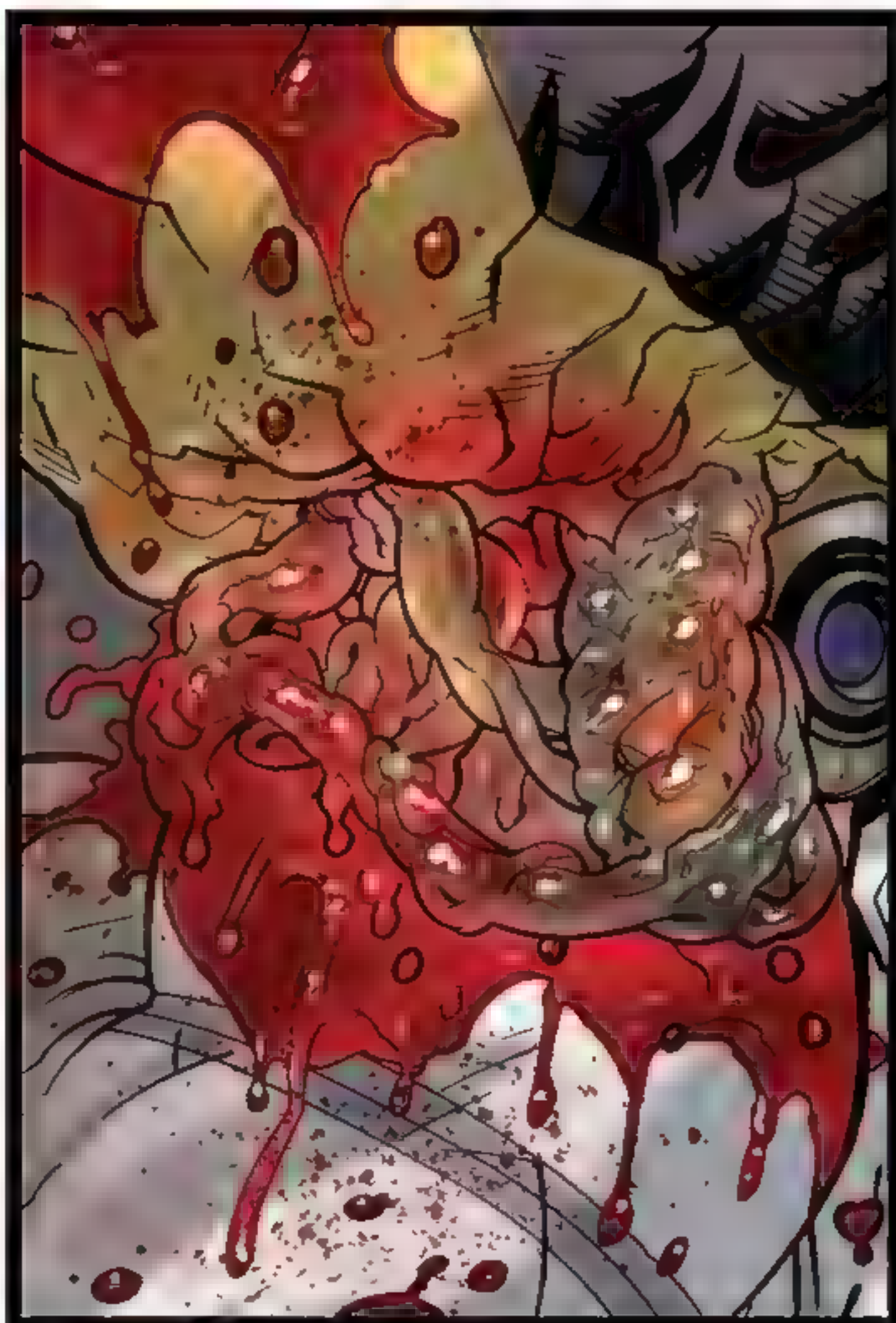
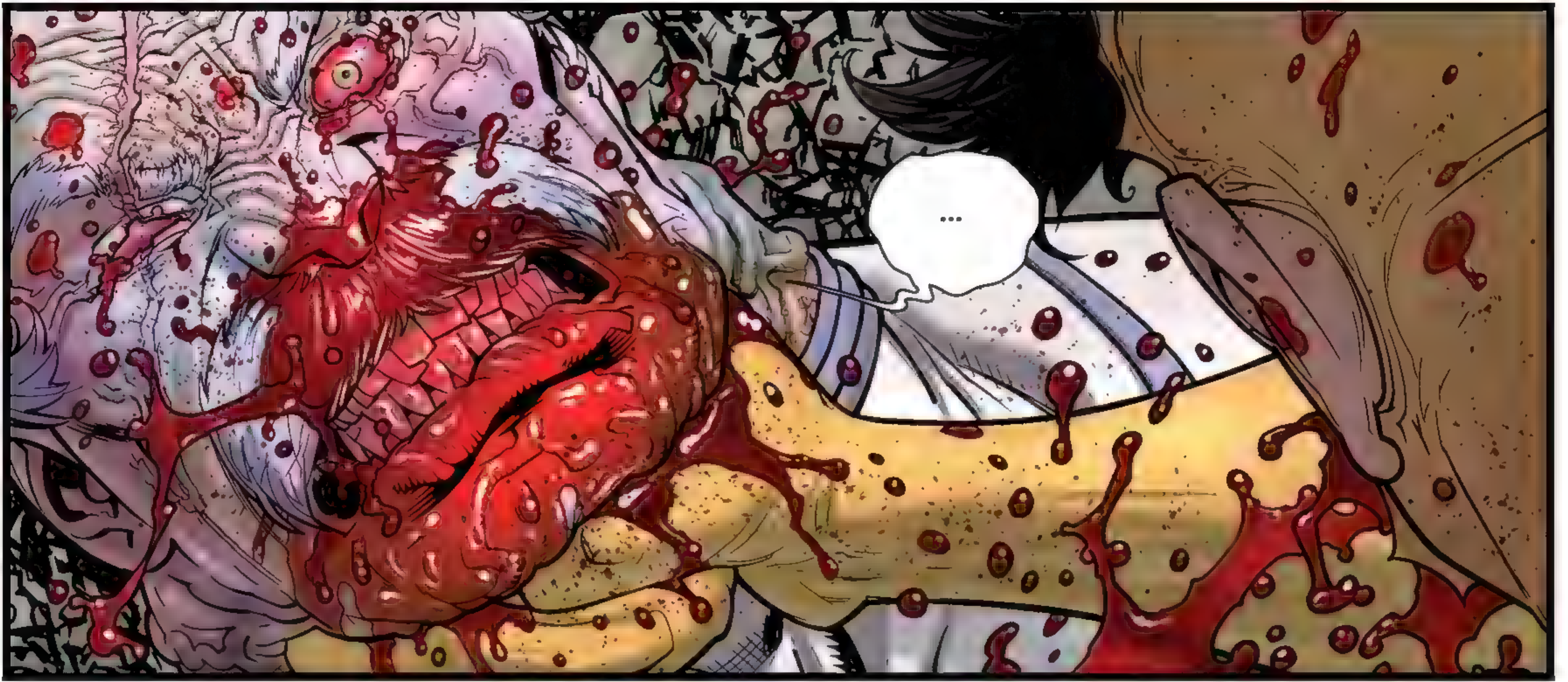
GETTING IT NOW, ARE YOU?! DONE SCREWING AROUND?! I'M NOT LETTING GO, CONQUEST!

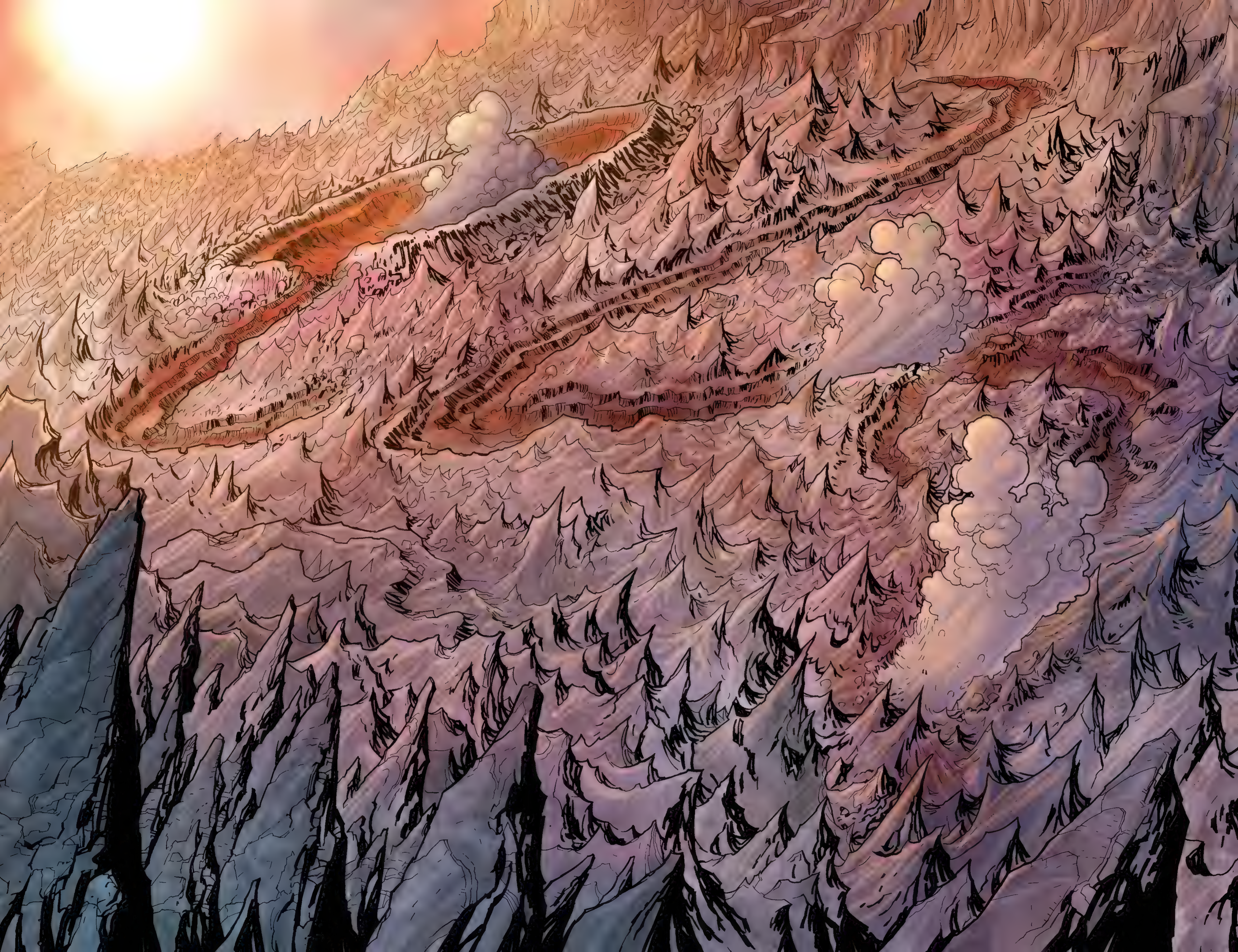
I'M NOT!

SKURGG!









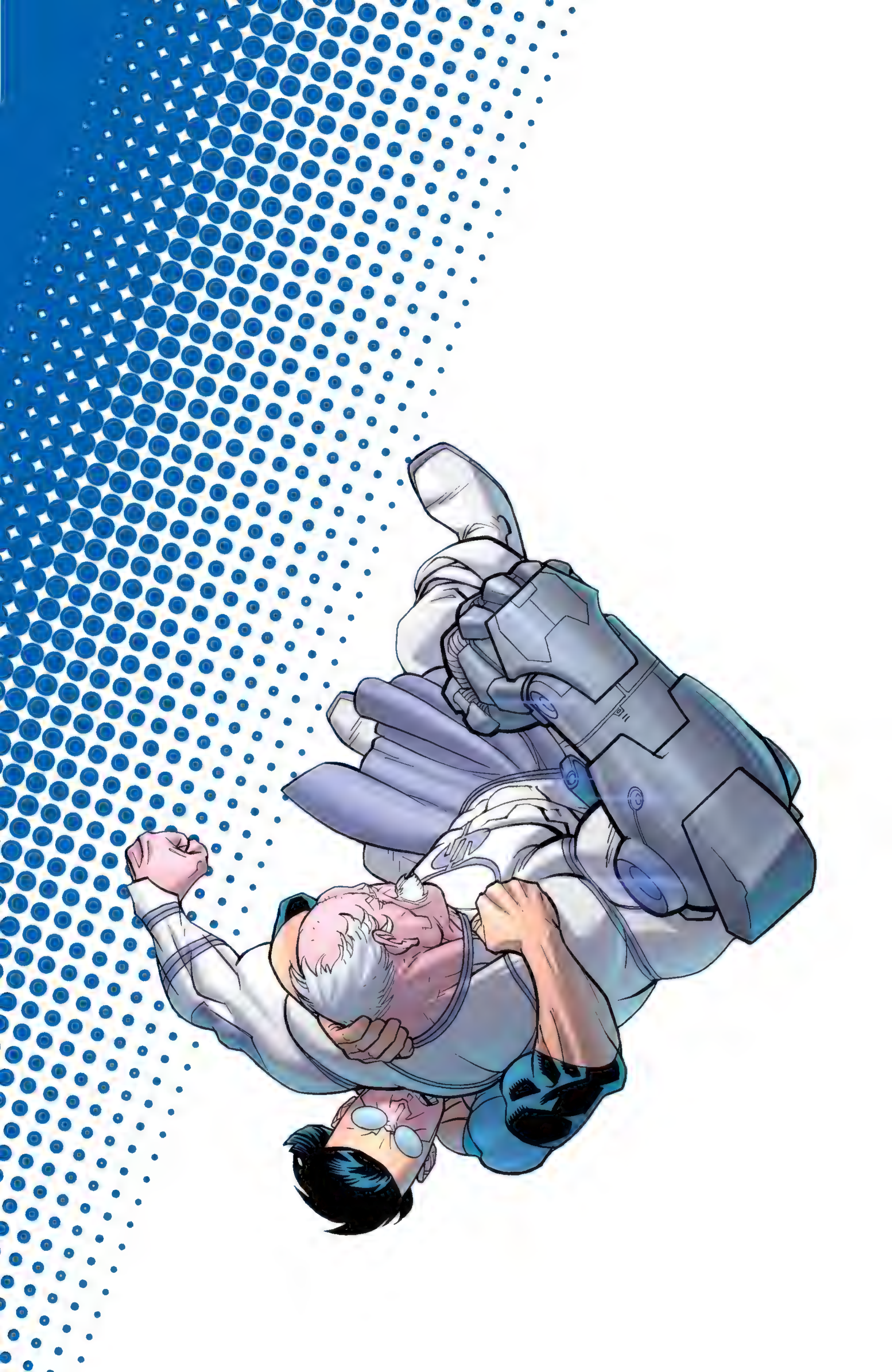


HUFF!

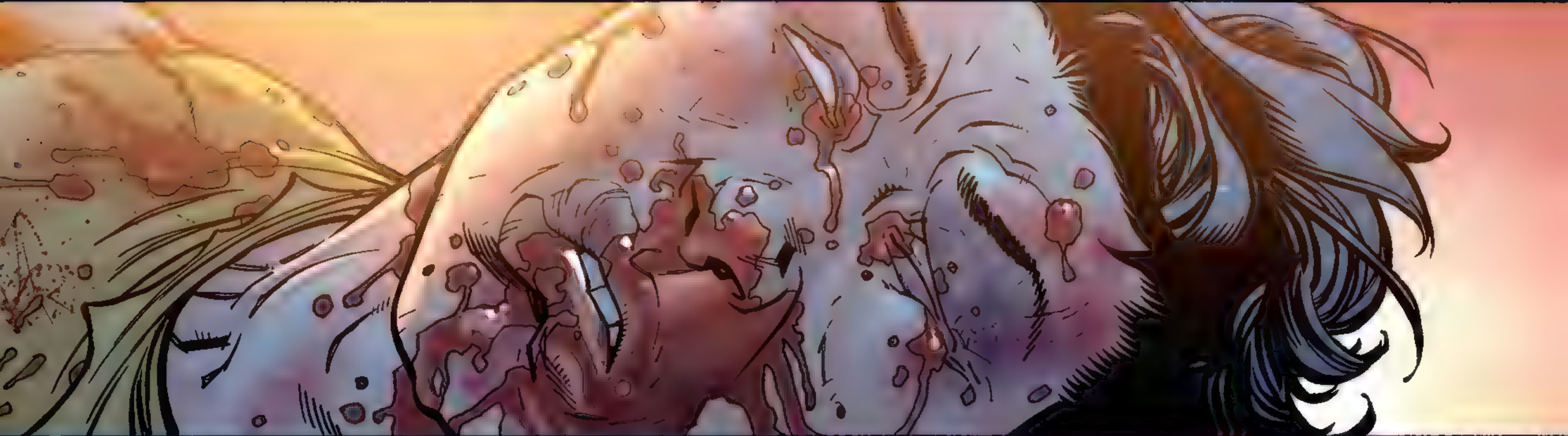
HUFF!

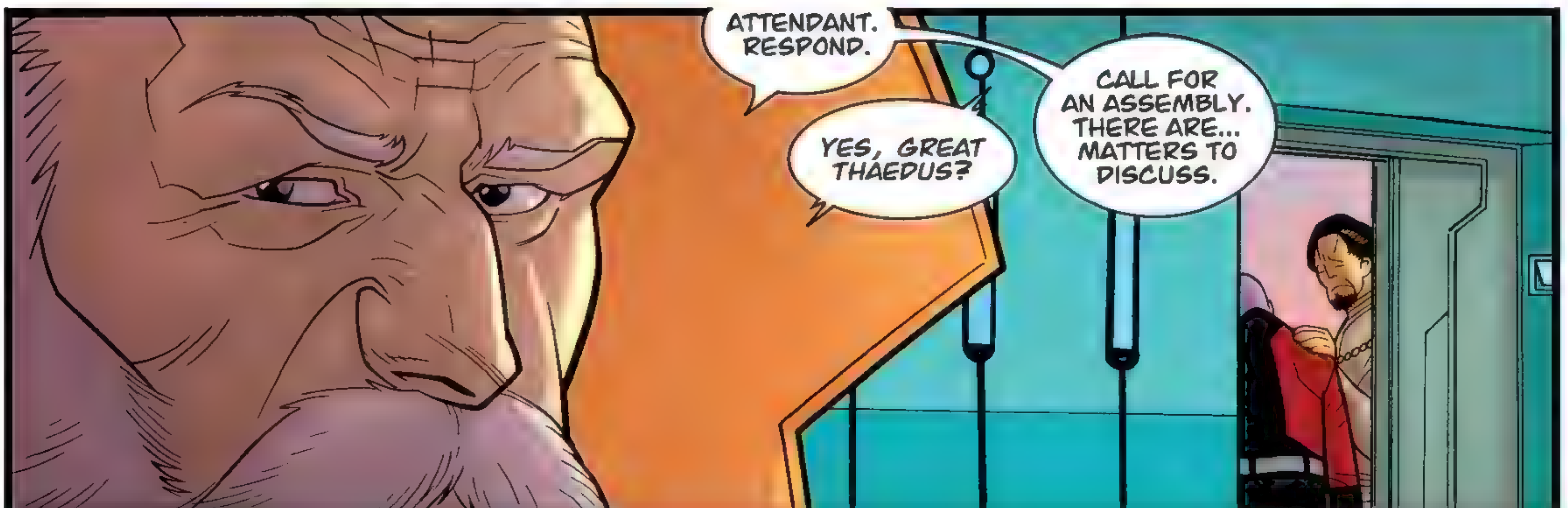
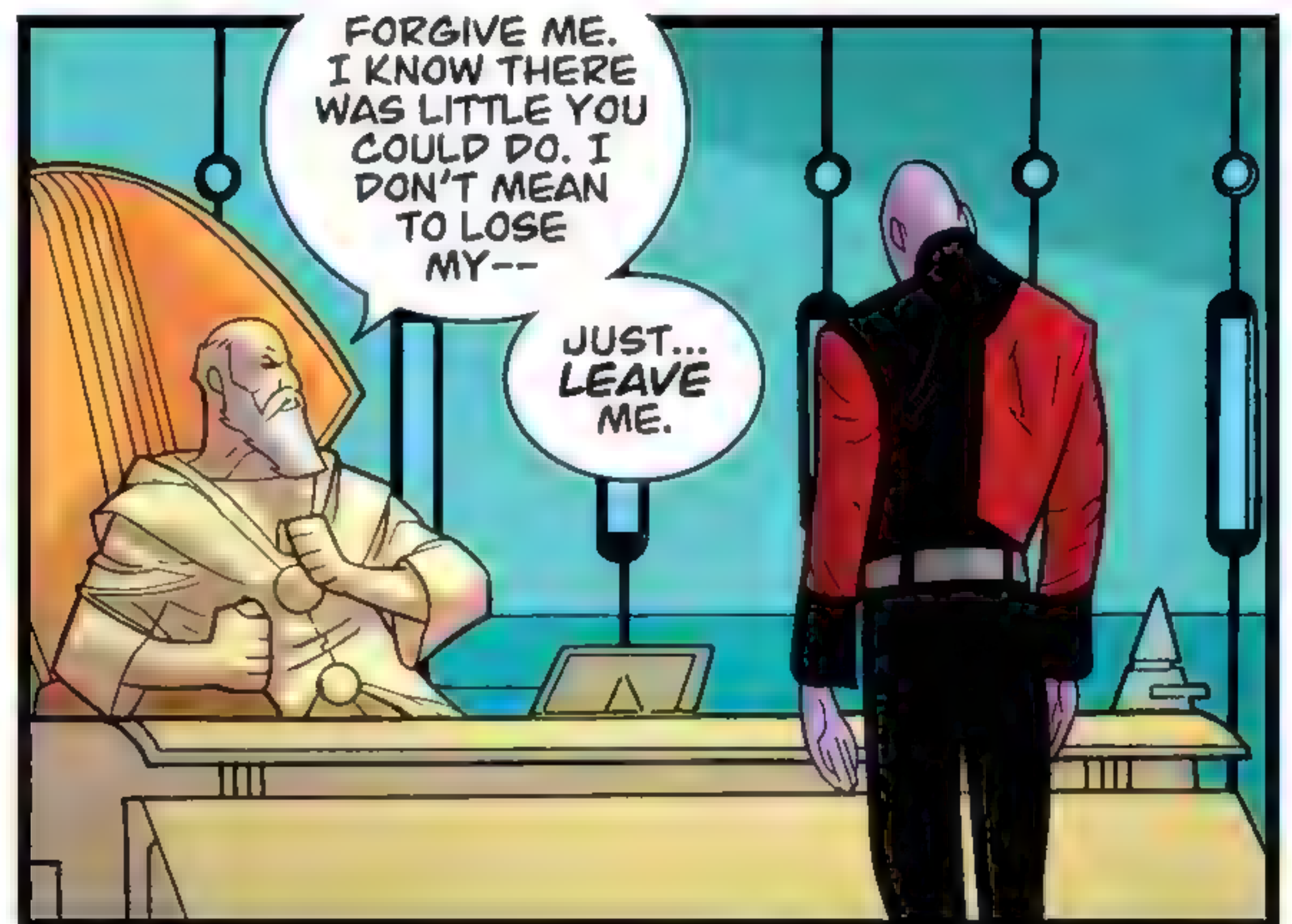
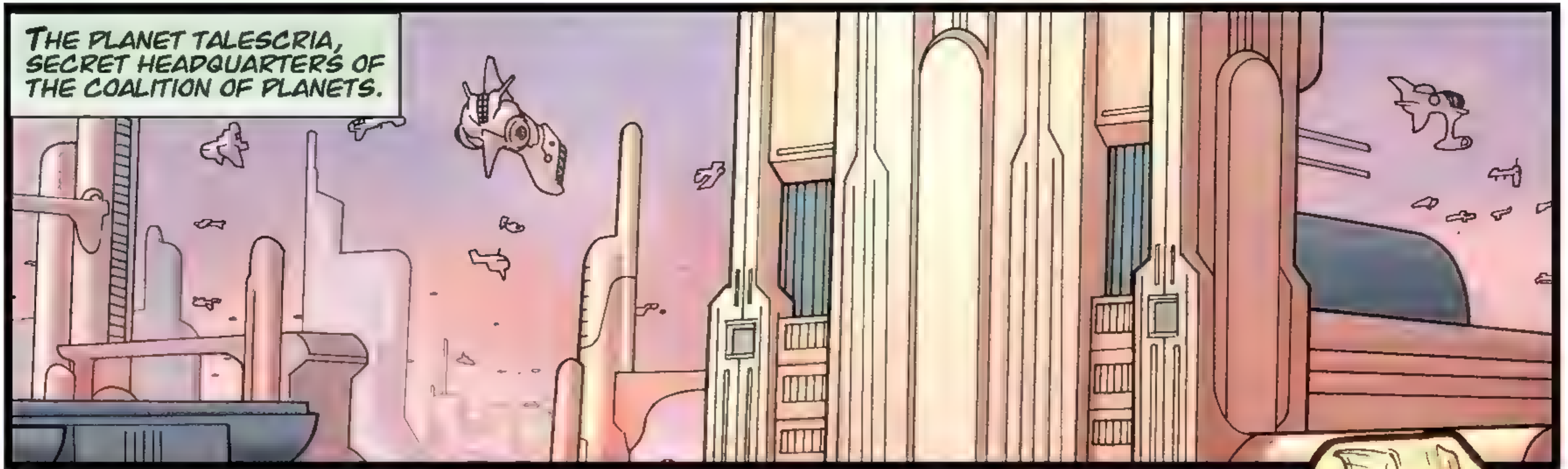
HUFF!

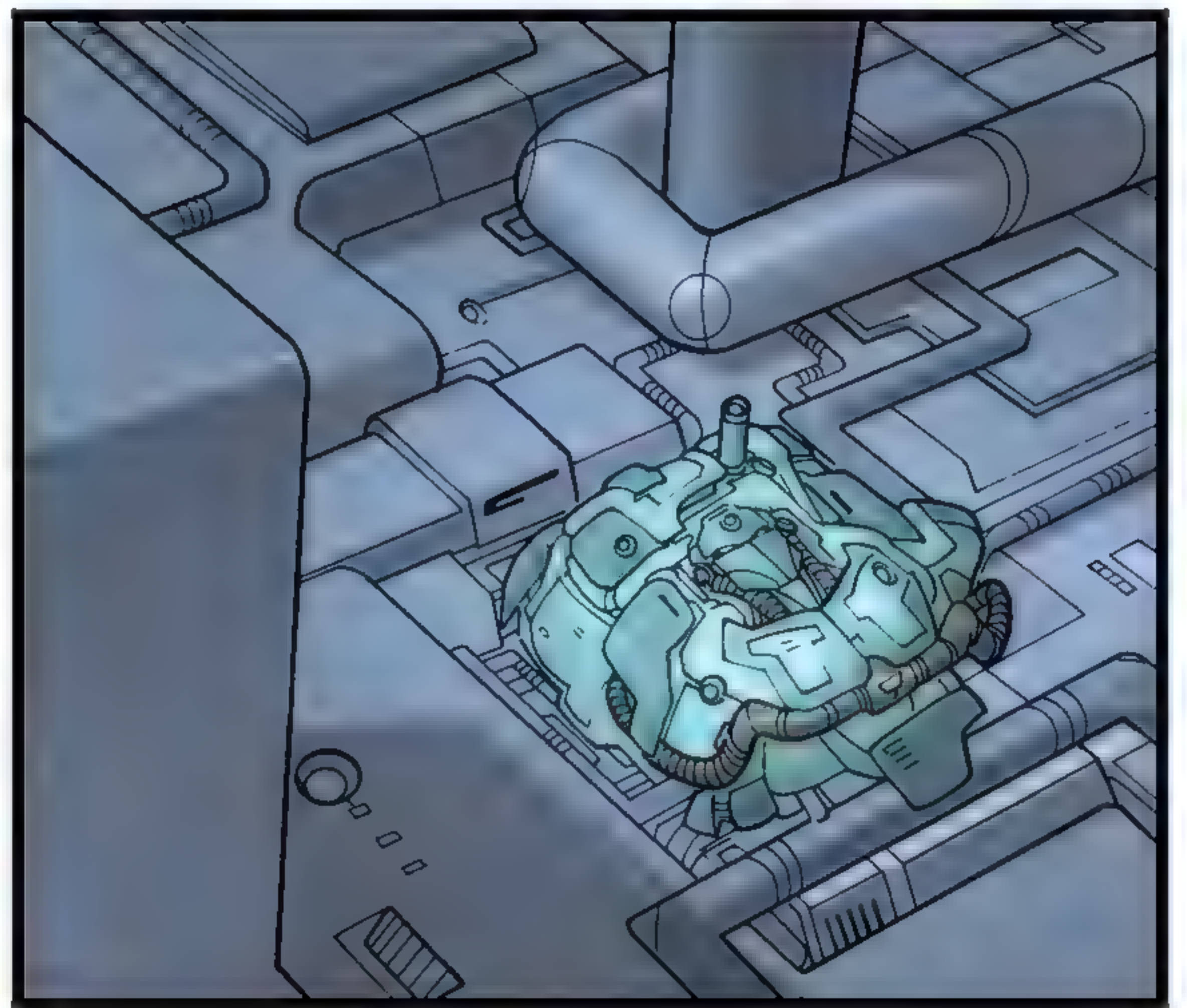
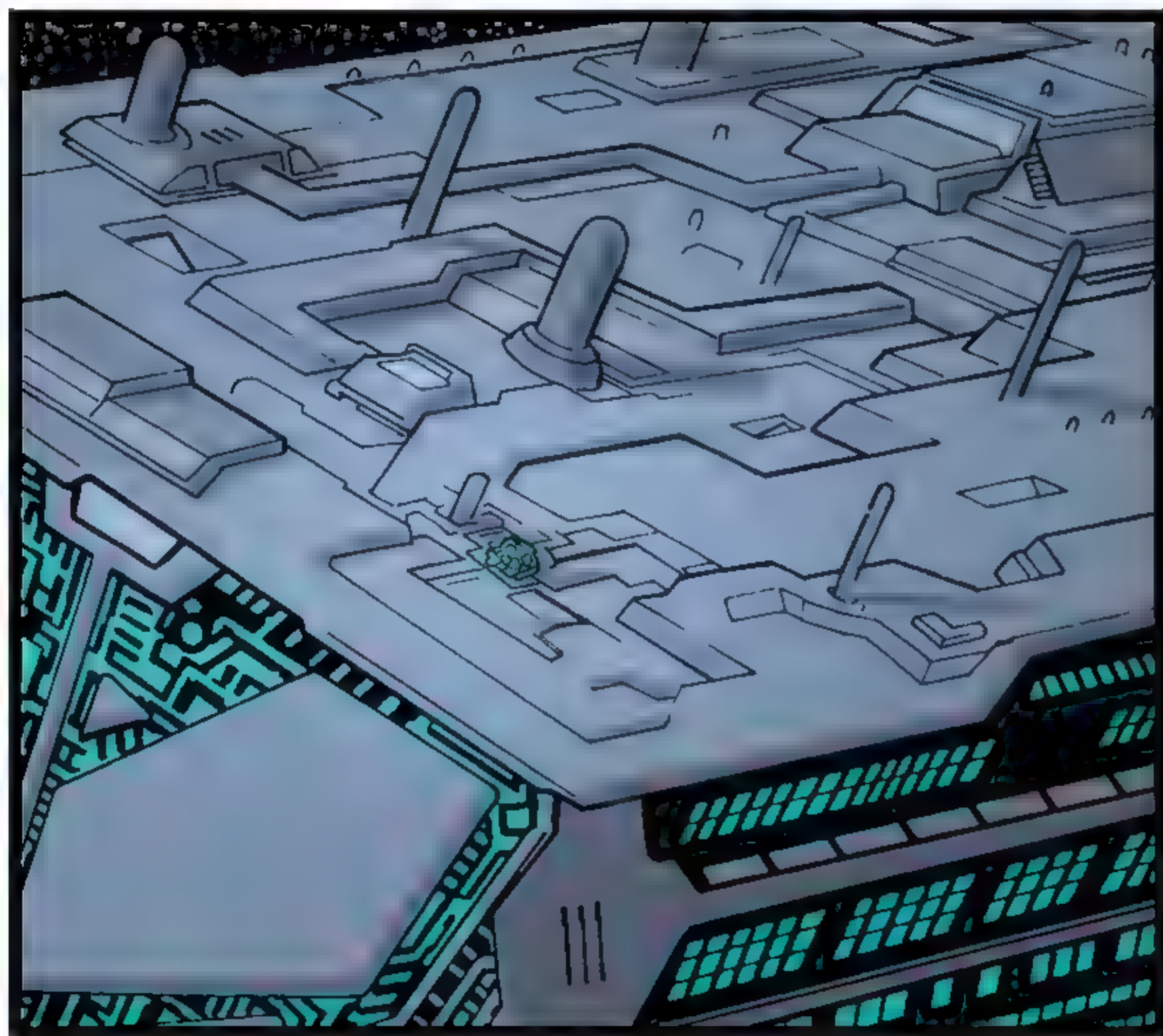
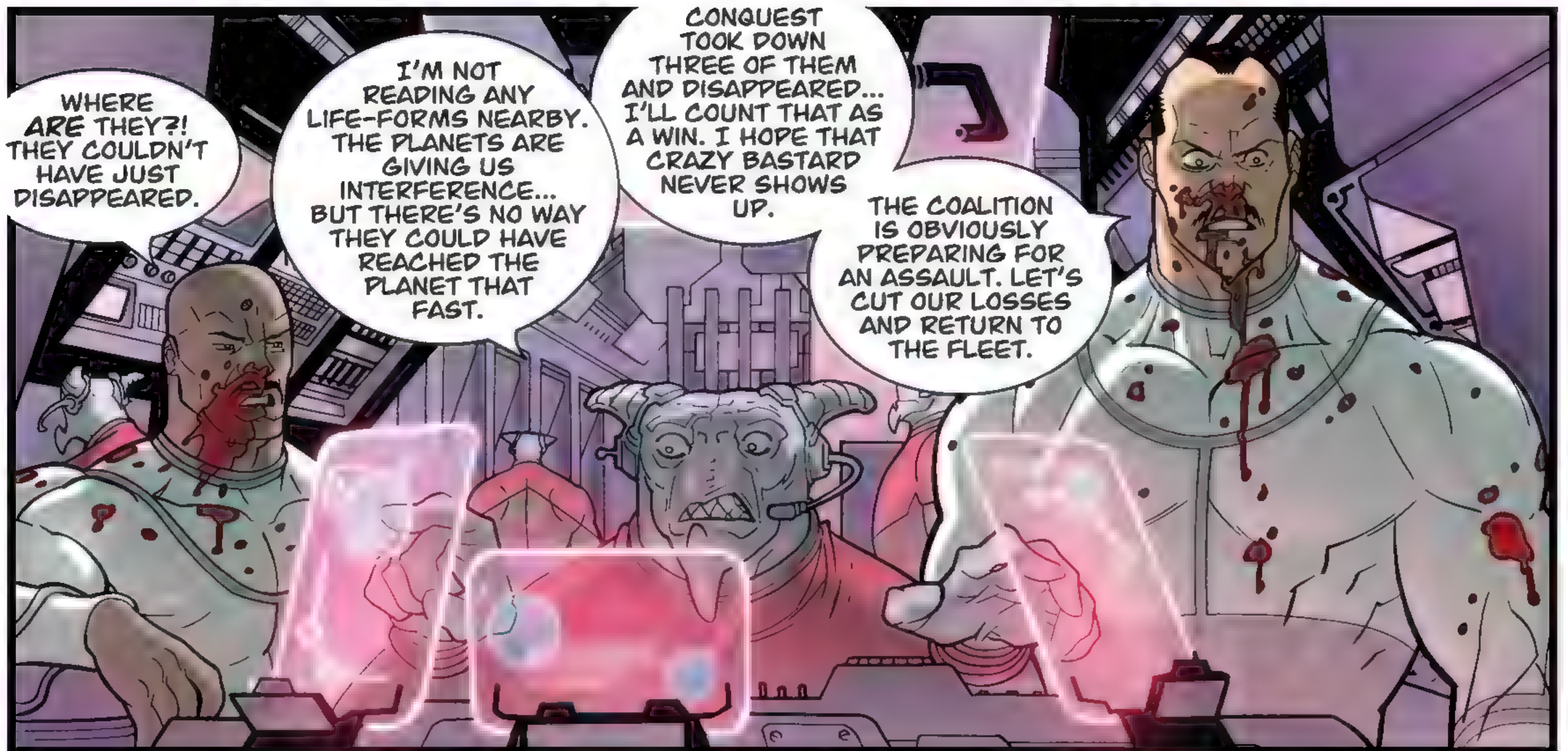
HELP.

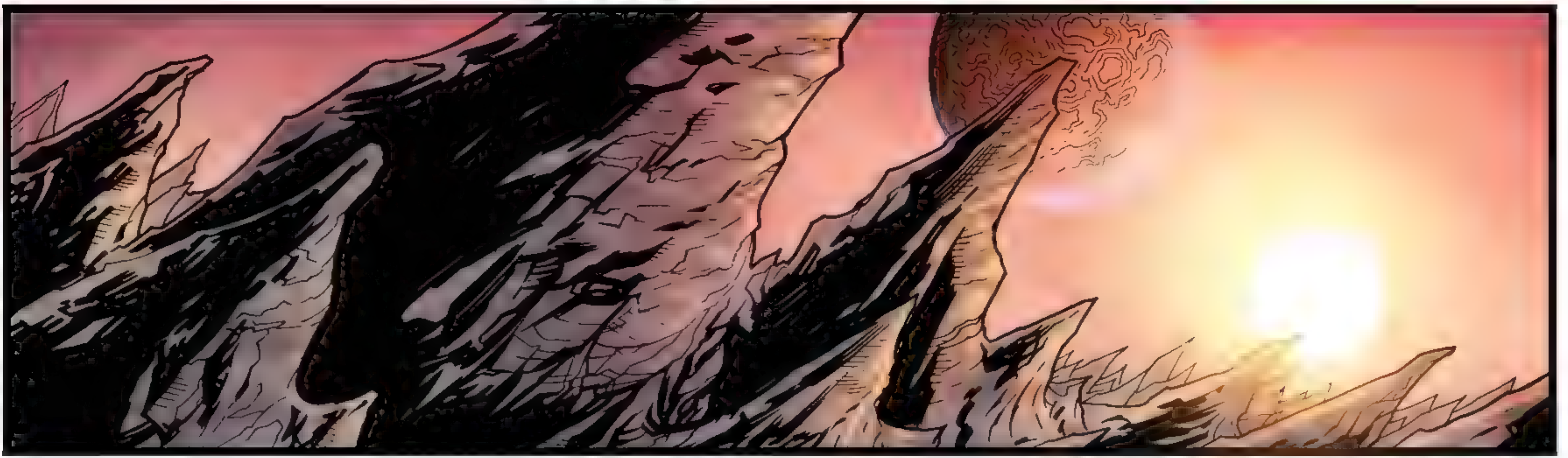


CHAPTER 73









CHOOM!

WHY DID YOU BOTHER BURYING HIM?

COULDN'T WE HAVE JUST THROWN HIM INTO SPACE?

ALTHOUGH HE LOST HIS WAY IN HIS LATER YEARS, CONQUEST WAS THE GREATEST OF VILTRUMITE WARRIORS.

THAT DEMANDS A CERTAIN LEVEL OF RESPECT, DESPITE HIS ACTIONS. HE DESERVED A PROPER BURIAL.

HE DESERVED TO ROT IN THE SUN.

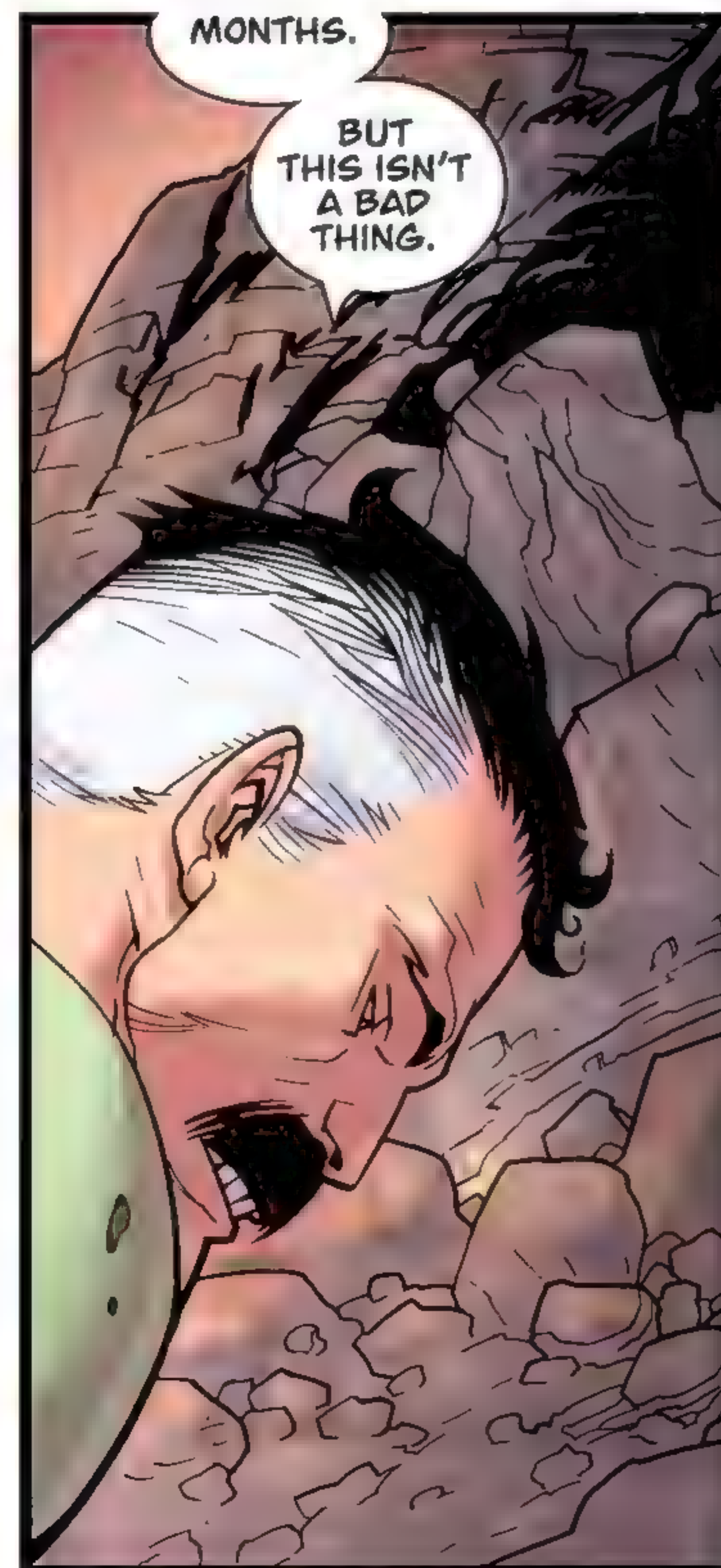
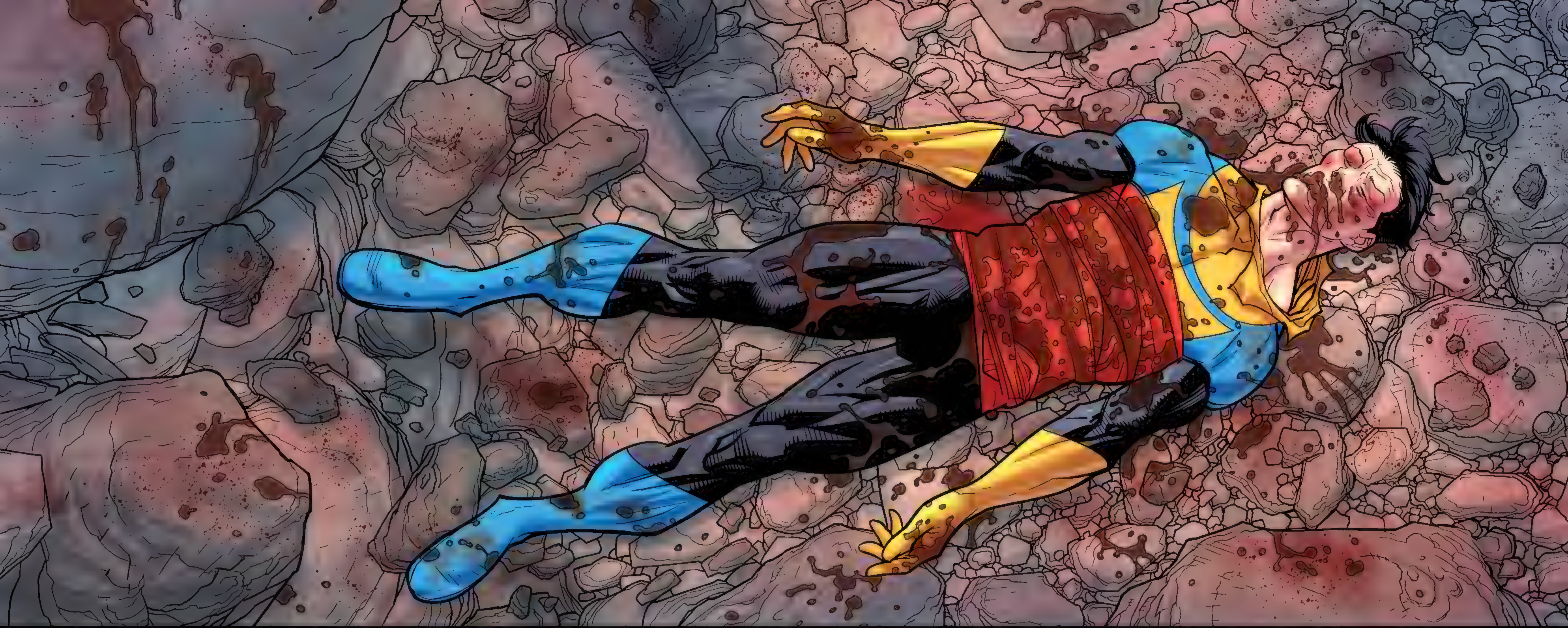
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS GUY'S DONE.

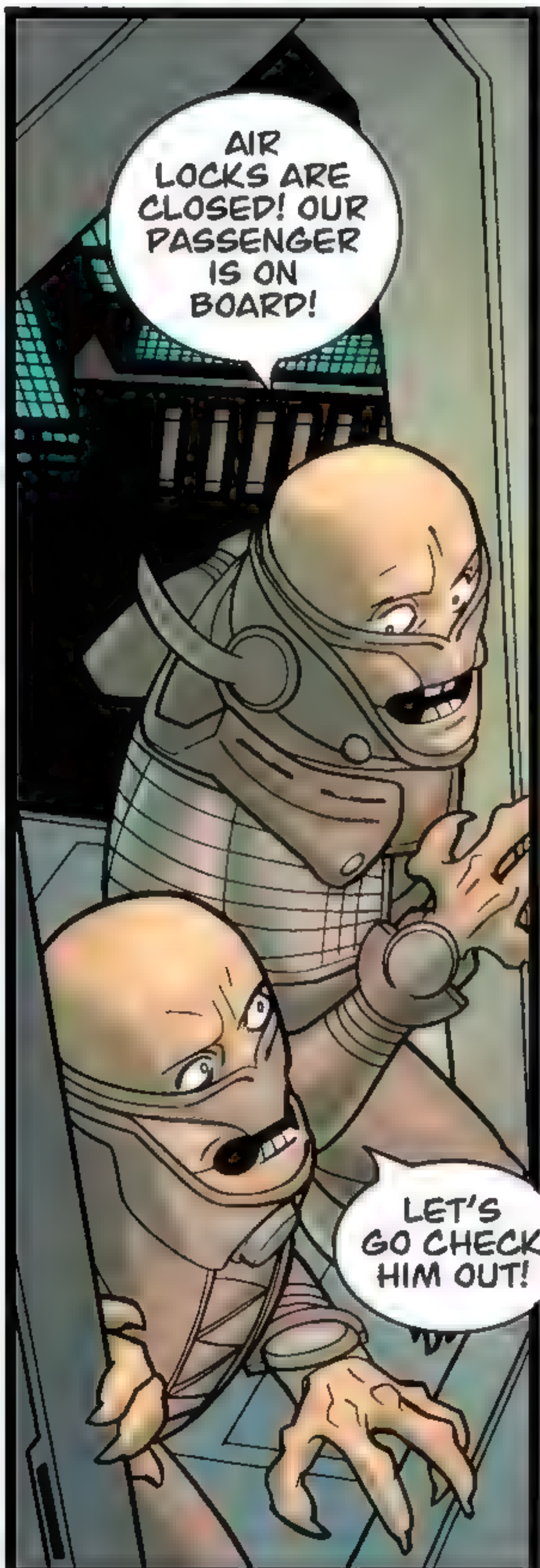
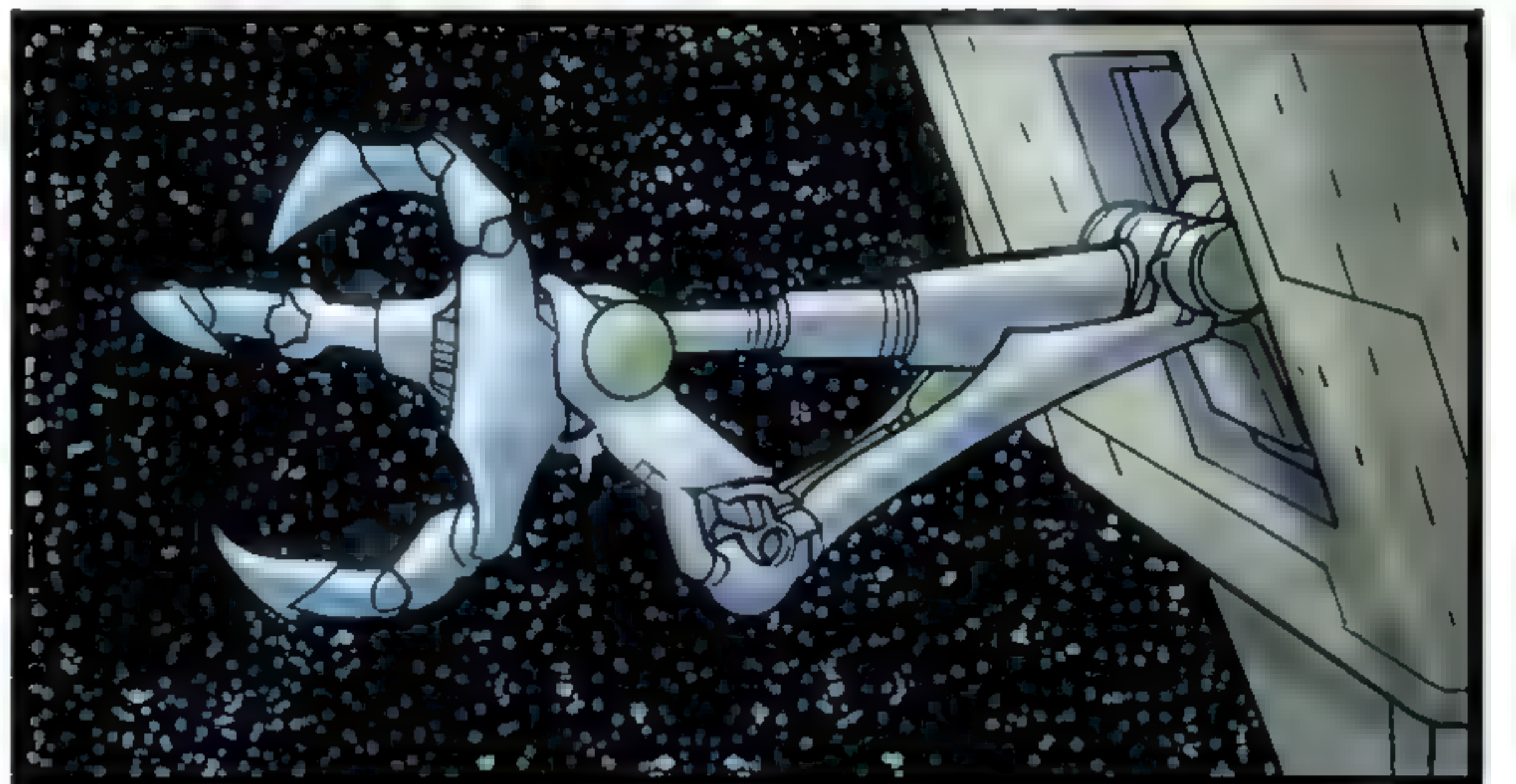
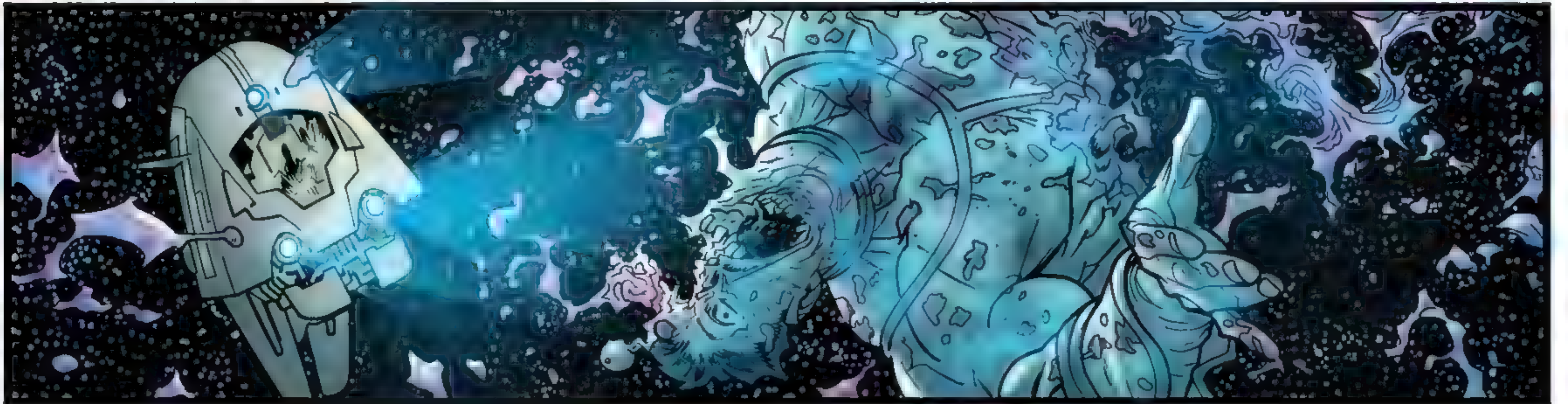
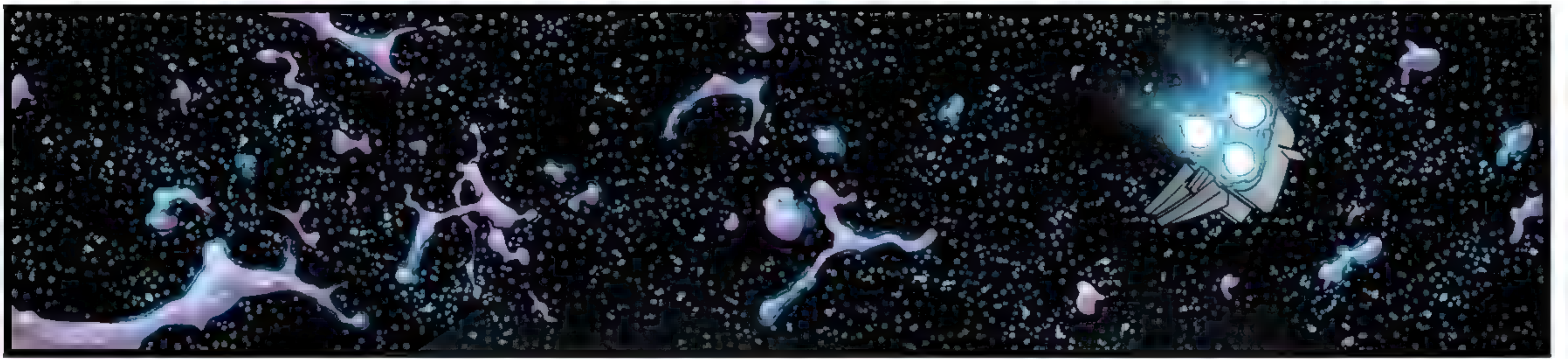
EVERYTHING HE'S DONE WAS IN SERVICE TO THE VILTRUMITE EMPIRE.

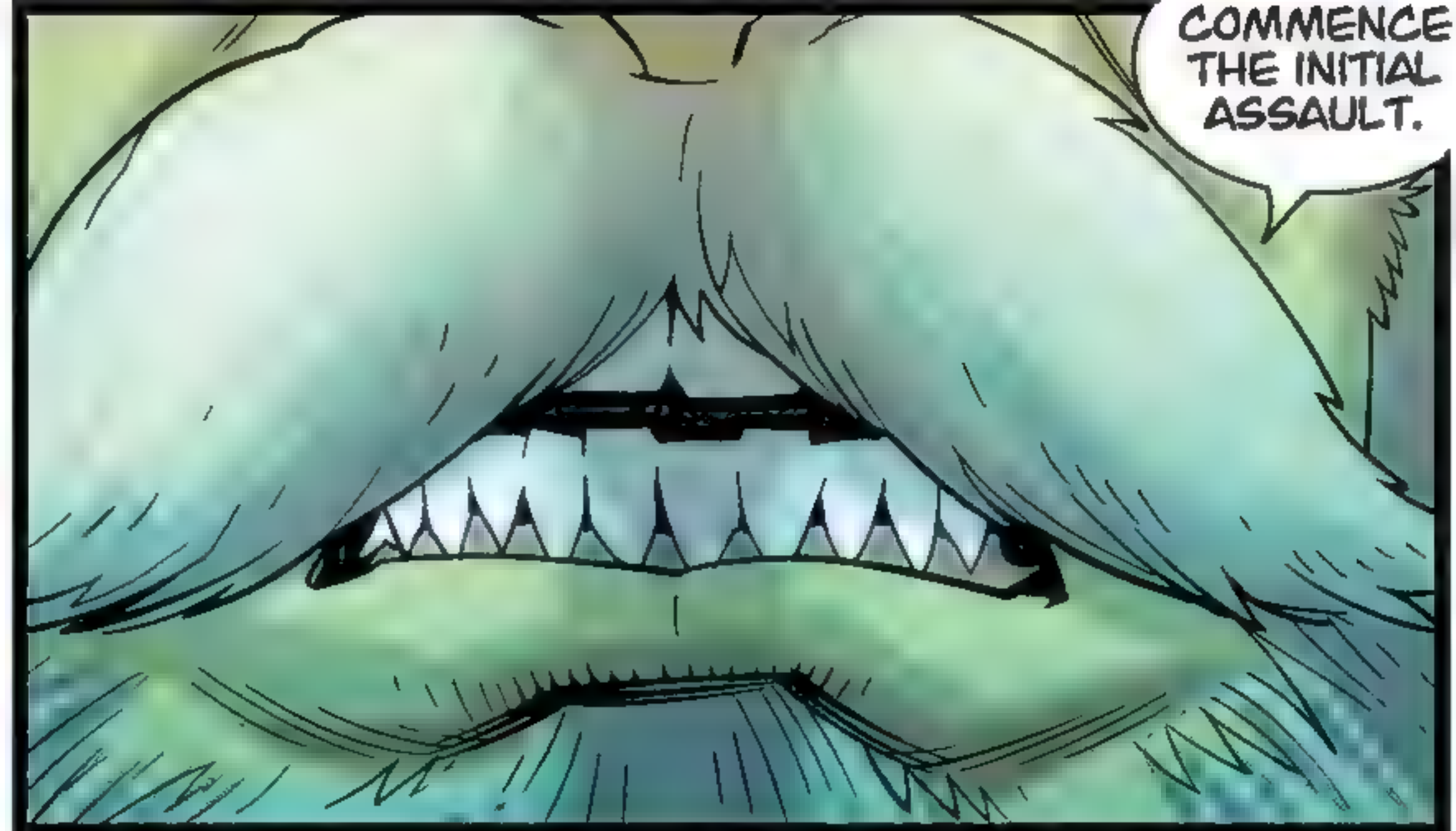
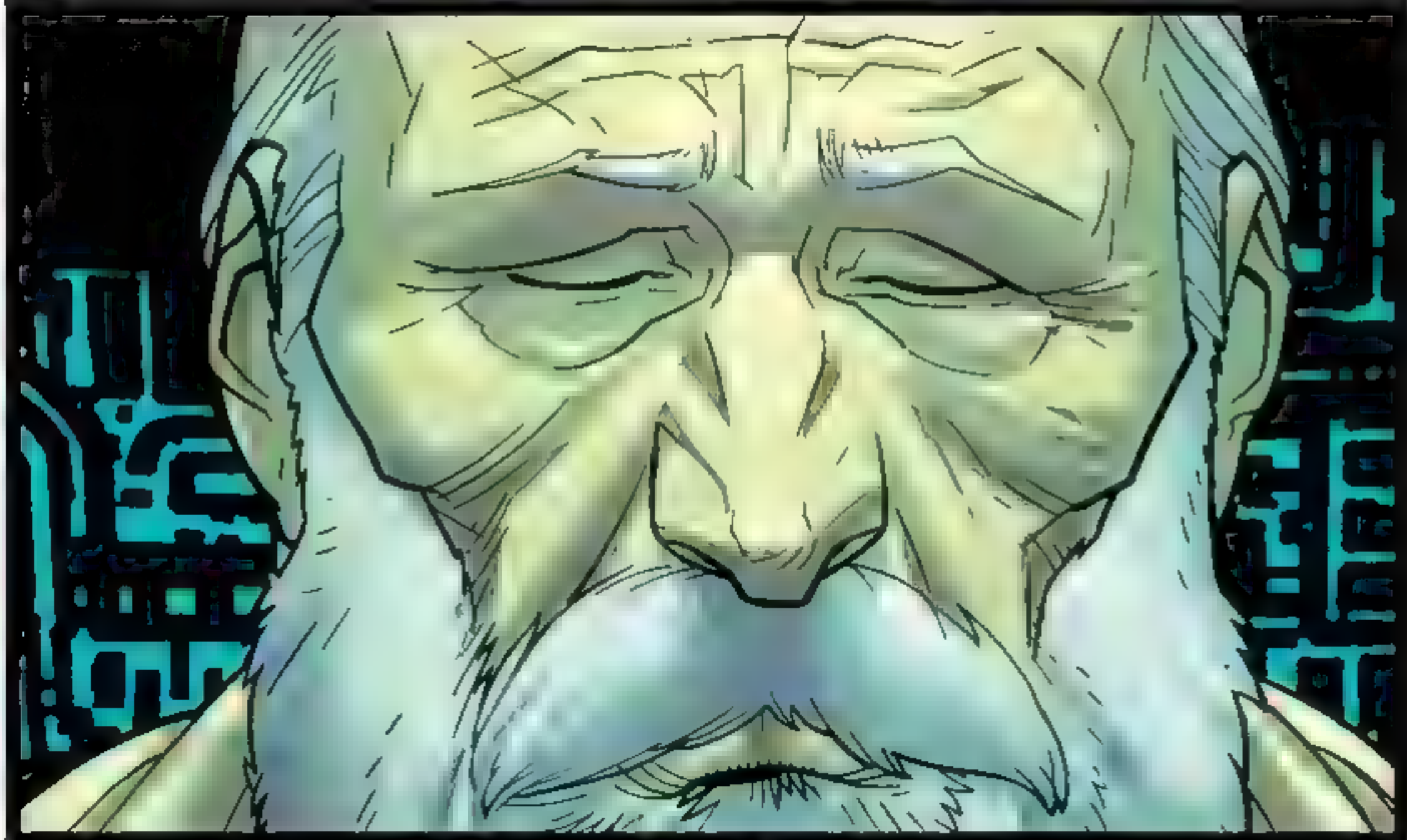
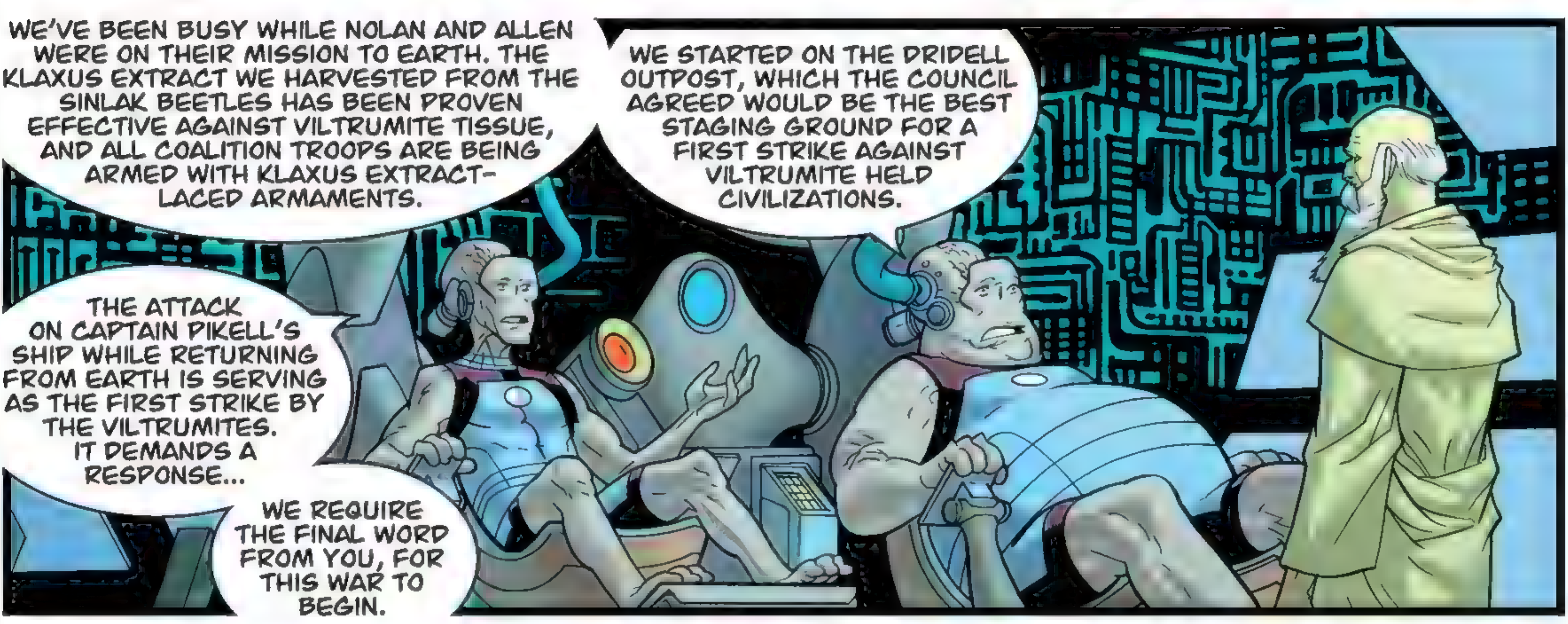
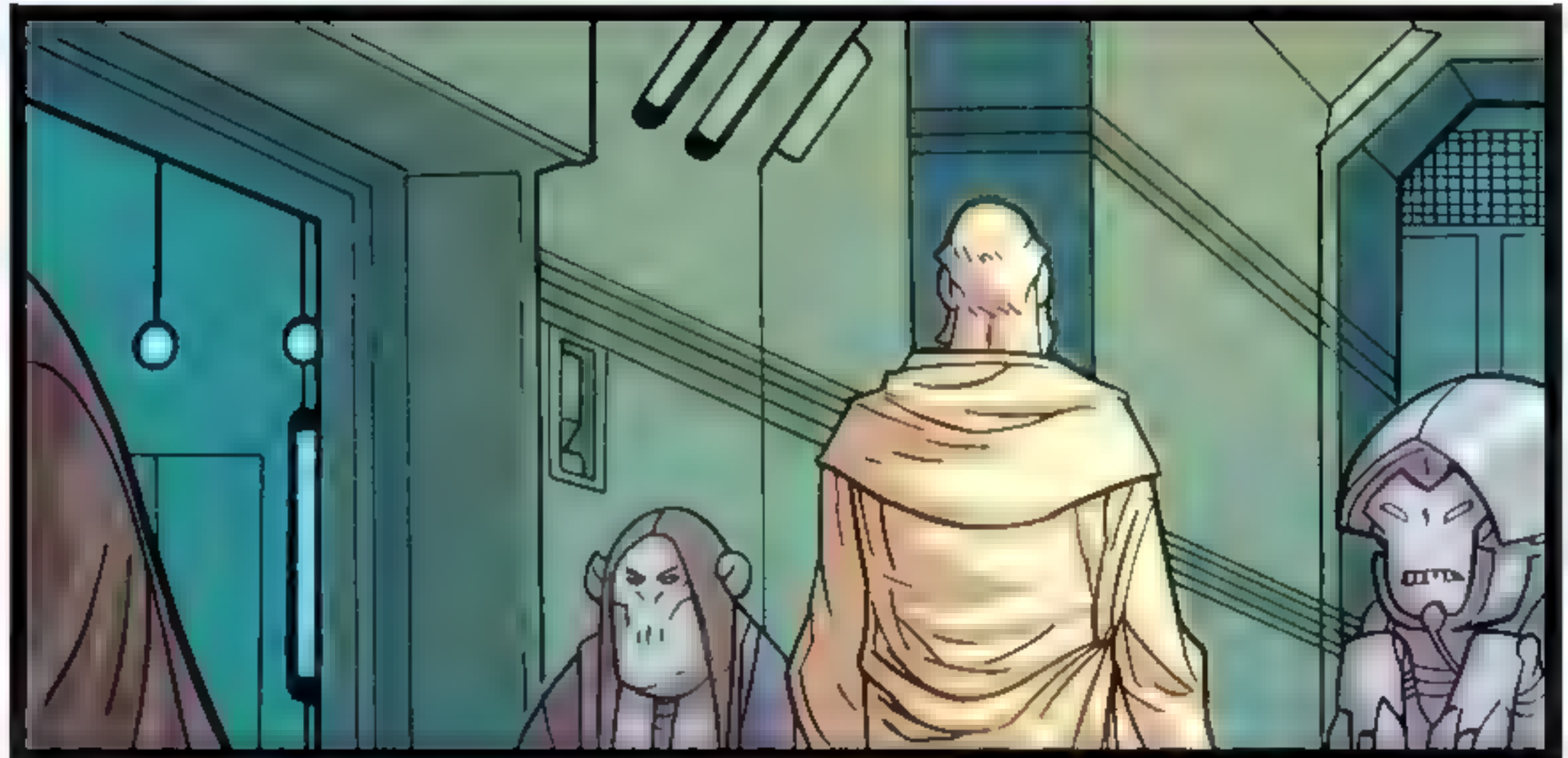
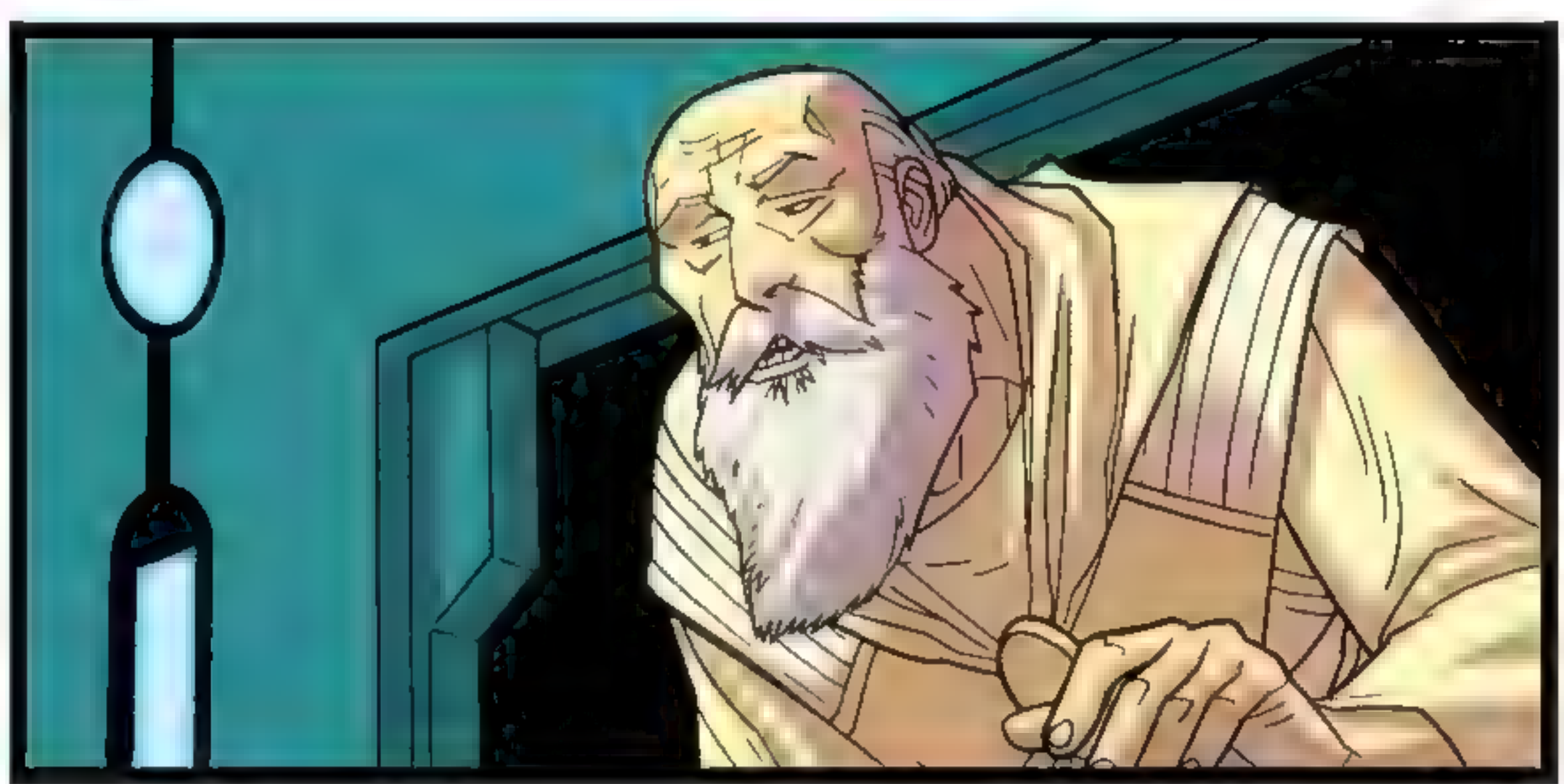
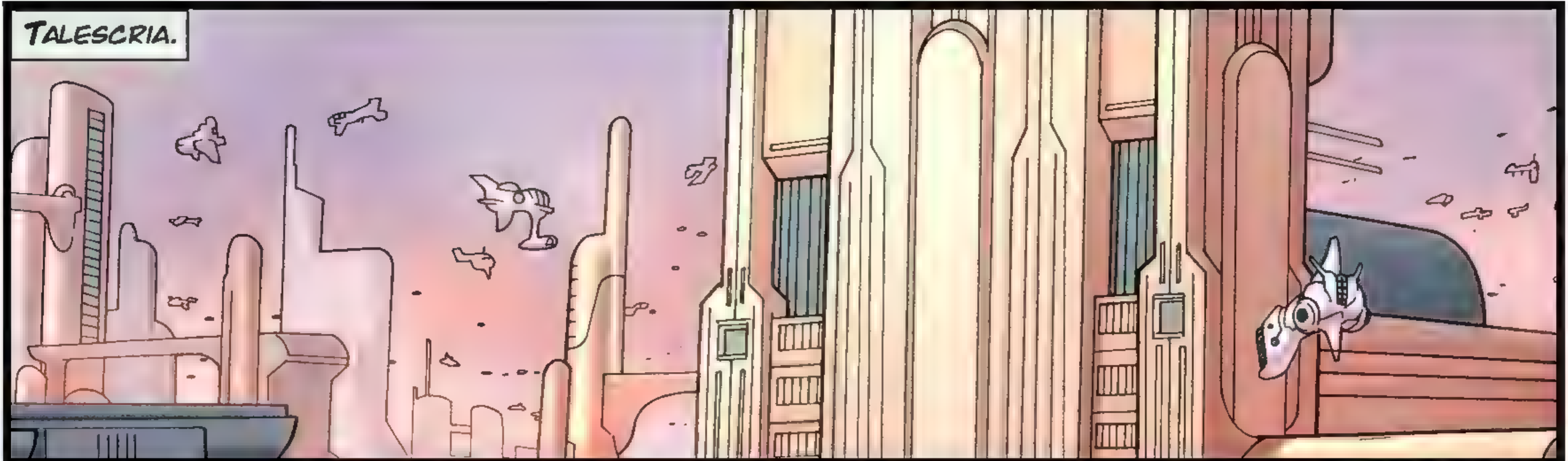
IN A WAY... THAT MADE HIM A GREATER MAN THAN I.

COME.

WE SHOULDN'T LEAVE MARK UNATTENDED FOR LONG.

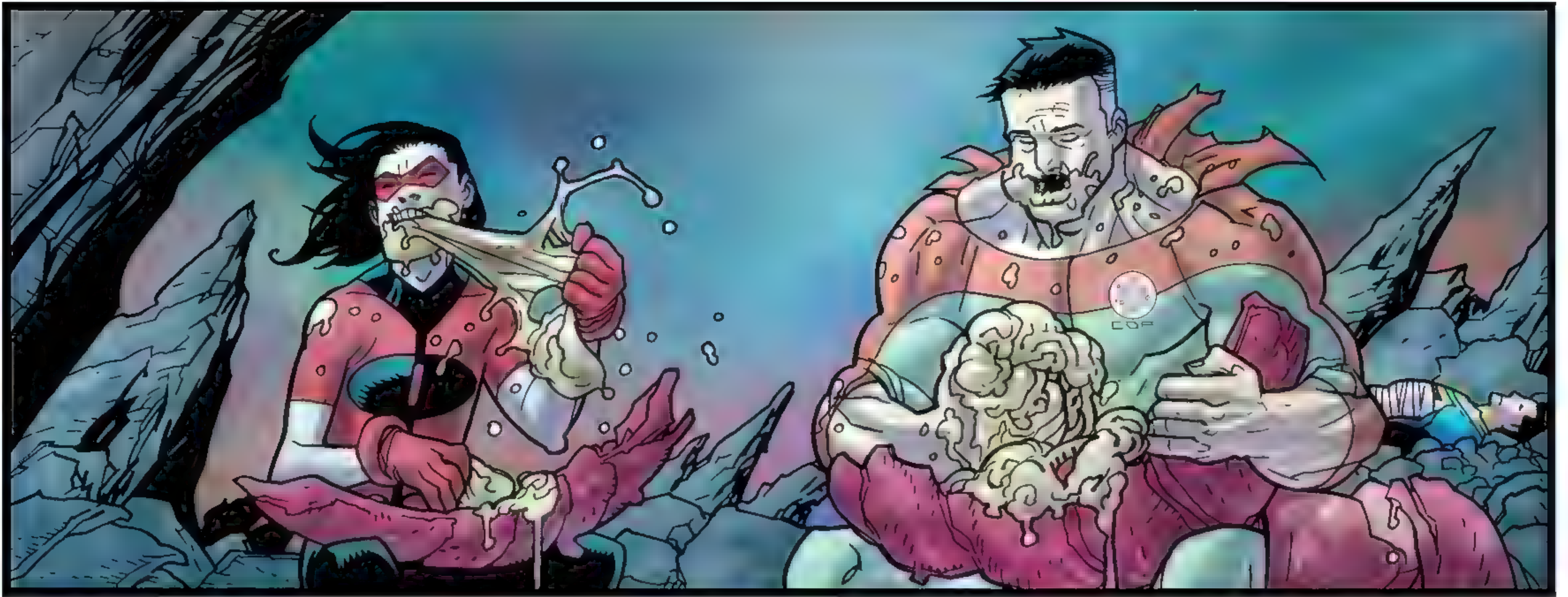


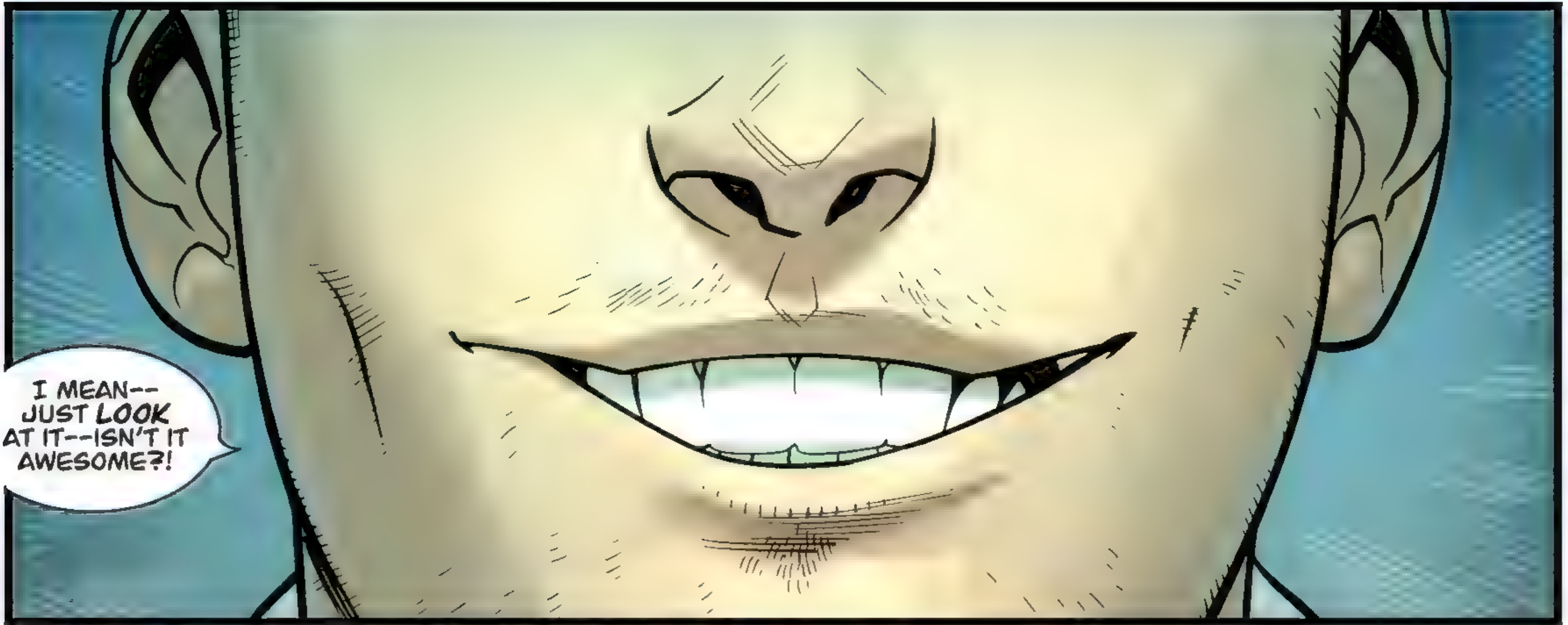










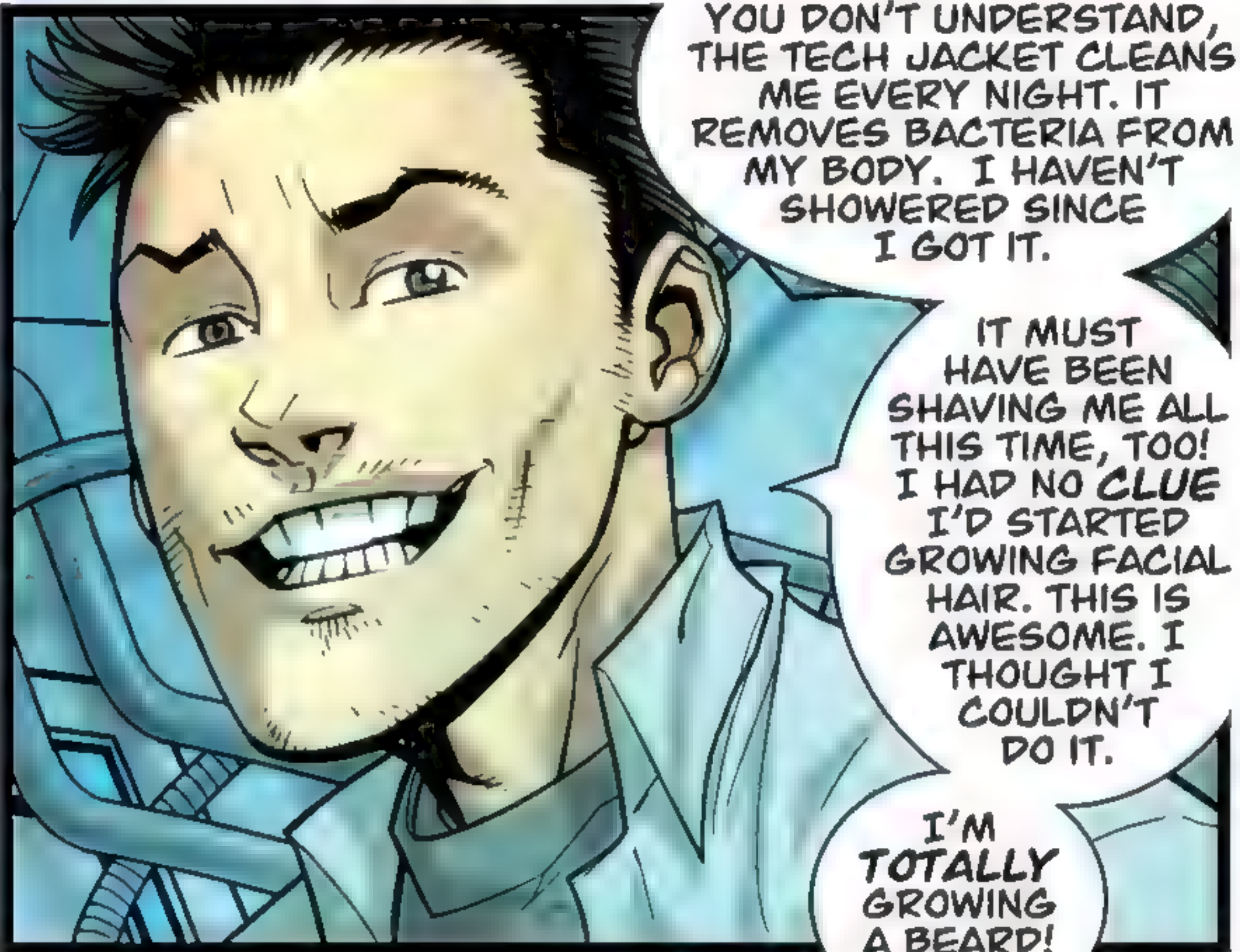


I MEAN---
JUST LOOK
AT IT---ISN'T IT
AWESOME?!



I CAN SEE IT, IT'S
GREAT... REALLY.
DO YOU HAVE TO
KEEP BRINGING IT
UP? IT'S JUST
FACIAL HAIR.

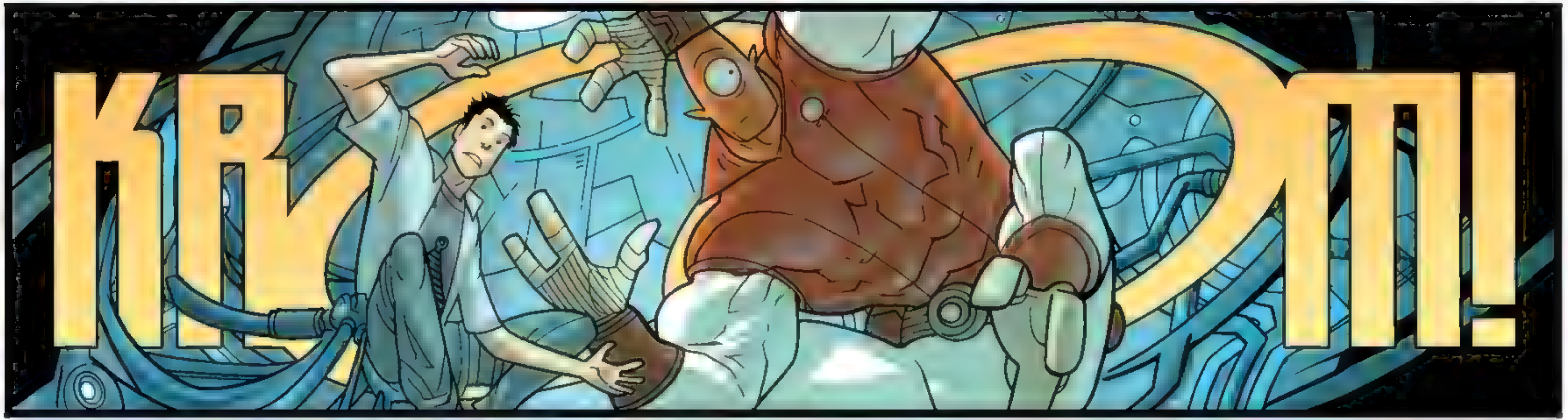
THIS IS
WORSE THAN
WHEN YOU WERE
EXPLAINING
WHERE YOUR
EXCREMENT
WENT...



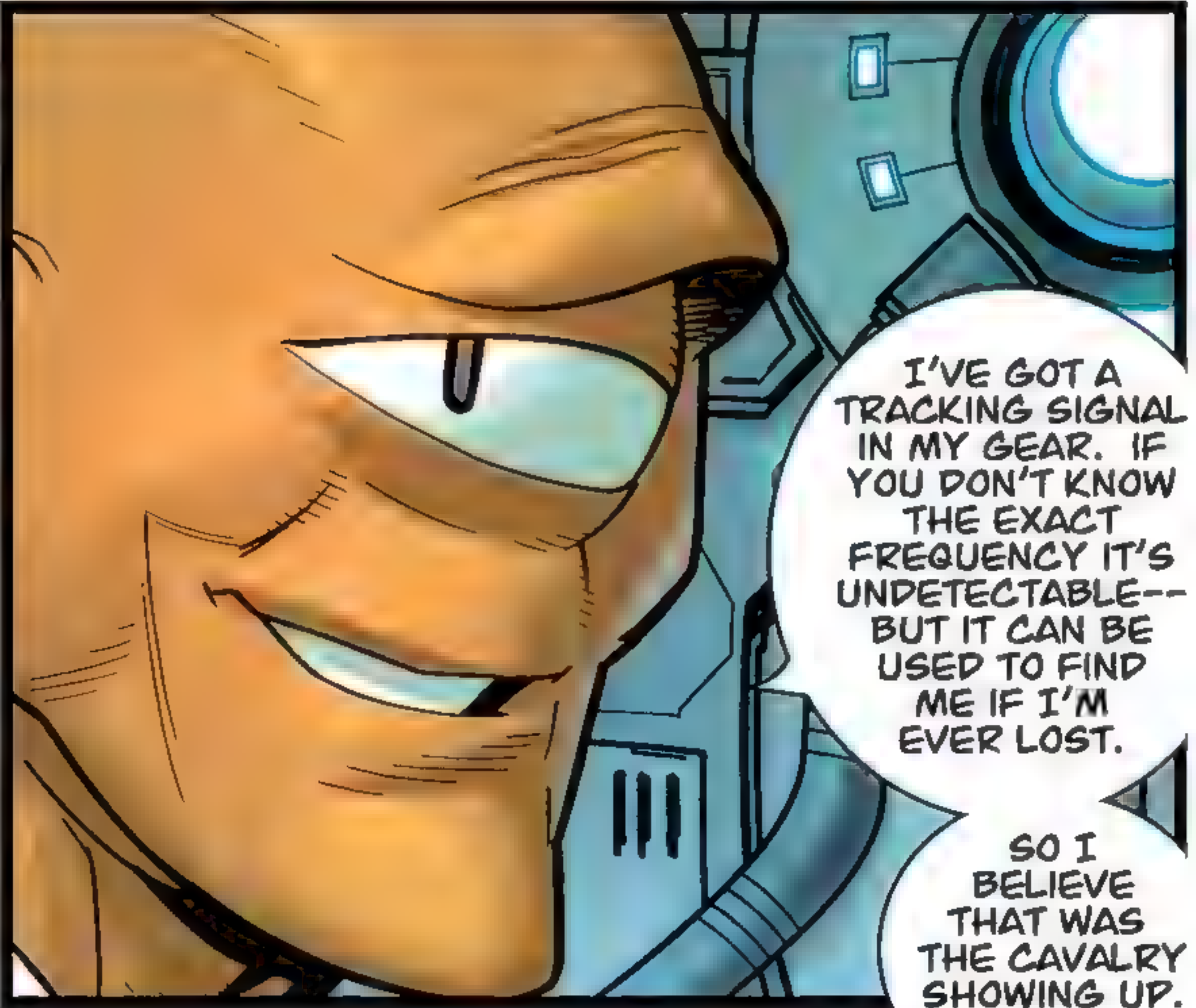
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND,
THE TECH JACKET CLEANS
ME EVERY NIGHT. IT
REMOVES BACTERIA FROM
MY BODY. I HAVEN'T
SHOWERED SINCE
I GOT IT.

IT MUST
HAVE BEEN
SHAVING ME ALL
THIS TIME, TOO!
I HAD NO CLUE
I'D STARTED
GROWING FACIAL
HAIR. THIS IS
AWESOME. I
THOUGHT I
COULDN'T
DO IT.

I'M
TOTALLY
GROWING
A BEARD!



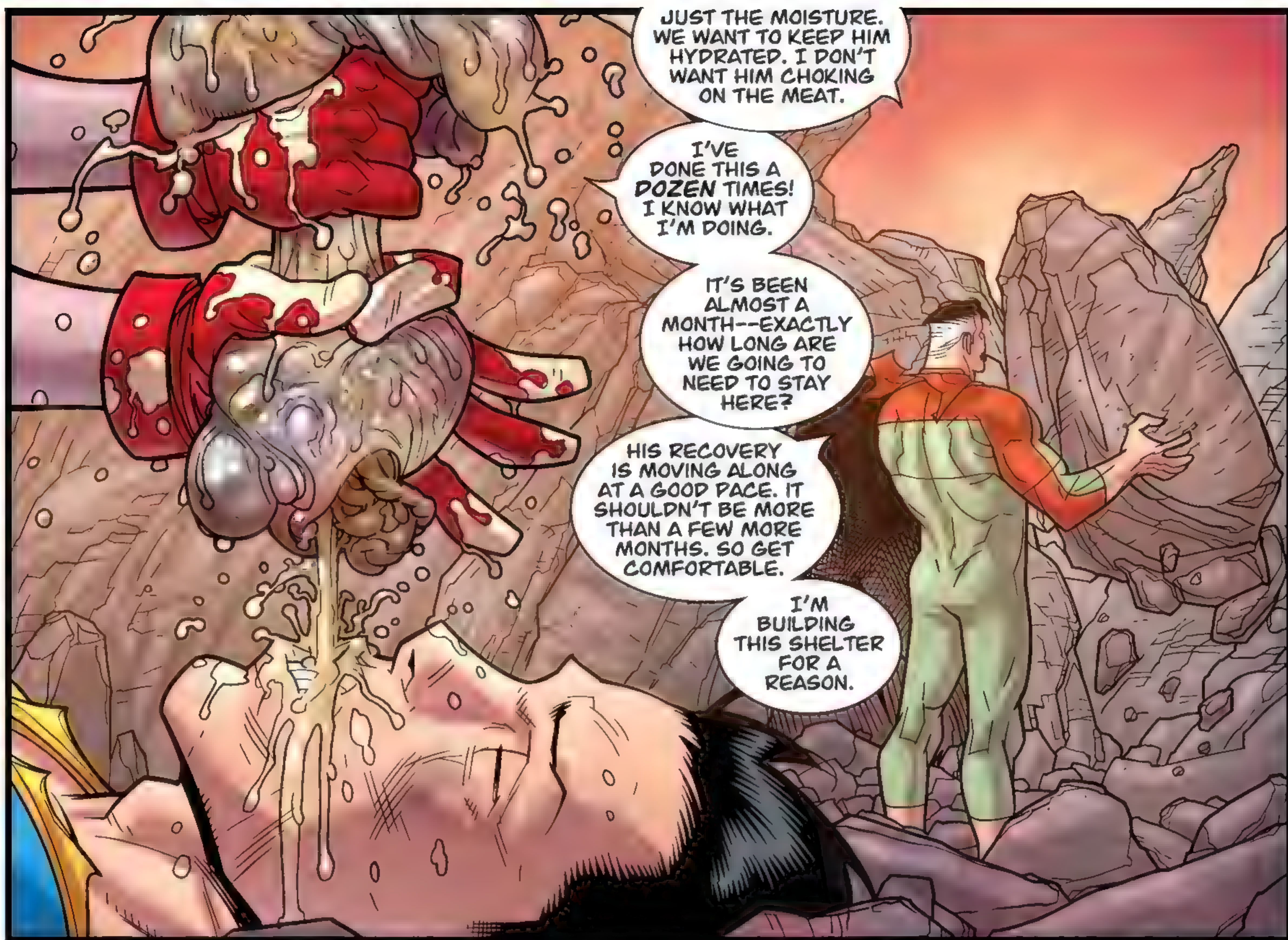
WHAT
THE HECK
WAS
THAT?!



I'VE GOT A
TRACKING SIGNAL
IN MY GEAR. IF
YOU DON'T KNOW
THE EXACT
FREQUENCY IT'S
UNDETECTABLE--
BUT IT CAN BE
USED TO FIND
ME IF I'M
EVER LOST.

SO I
BELIEVE
THAT WAS
THE CAVALRY
SHOWING UP.





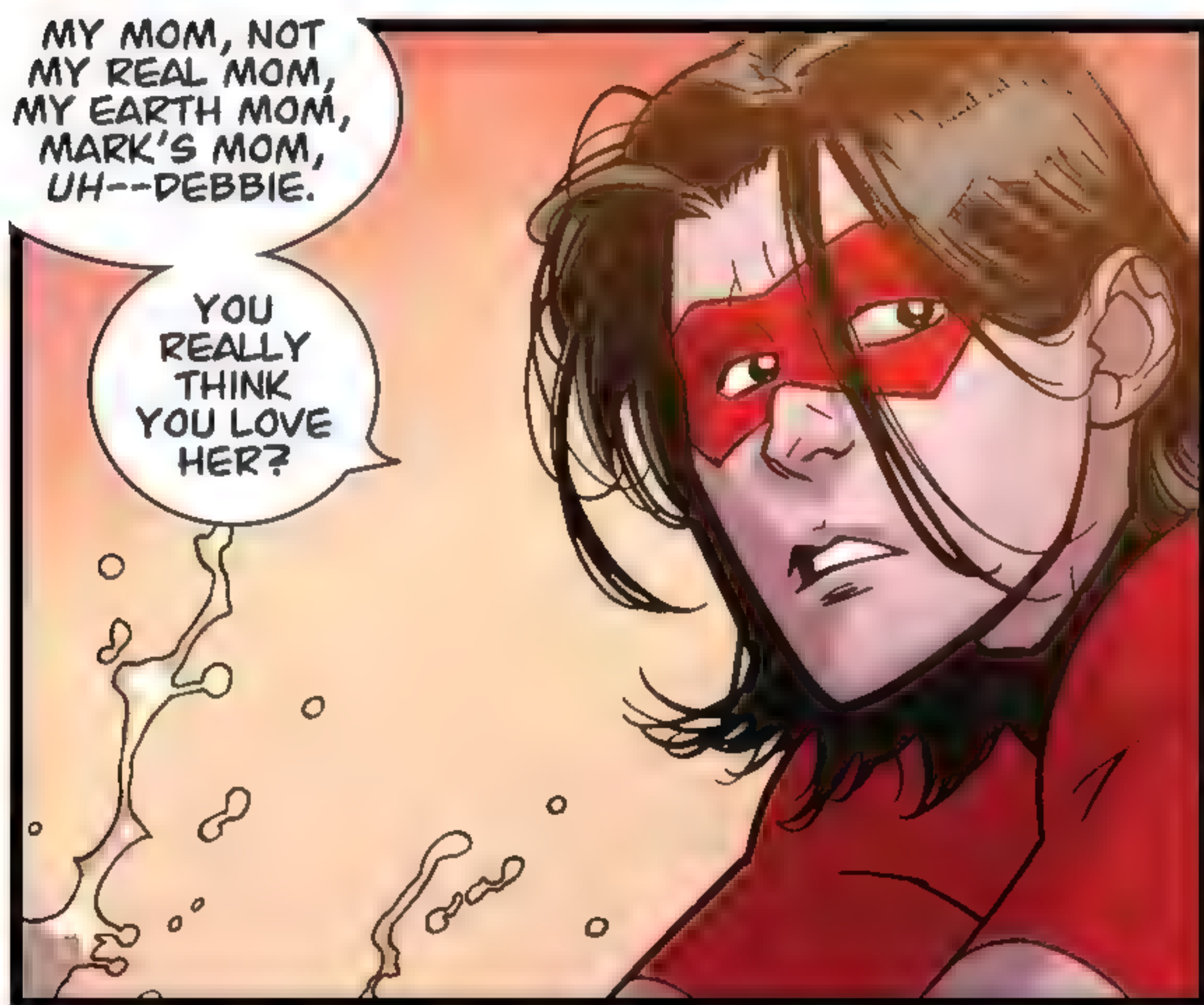
JUST THE MOISTURE. WE WANT TO KEEP HIM HYDRATED. I DON'T WANT HIM CHOKING ON THE MEAT.

I'VE DONE THIS A DOZEN TIMES! I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.

IT'S BEEN ALMOST A MONTH--EXACTLY HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO NEED TO STAY HERE?

HIS RECOVERY IS MOVING ALONG AT A GOOD PACE. IT SHOULDN'T BE MORE THAN A FEW MORE MONTHS. SO GET COMFORTABLE.

I'M BUILDING THIS SHELTER FOR A REASON.



MY MOM, NOT MY REAL MOM, MY EARTH MOM, MARK'S MOM, UH--DEBBIE.

YOU REALLY THINK YOU LOVE HER?



I KNOW I DO.

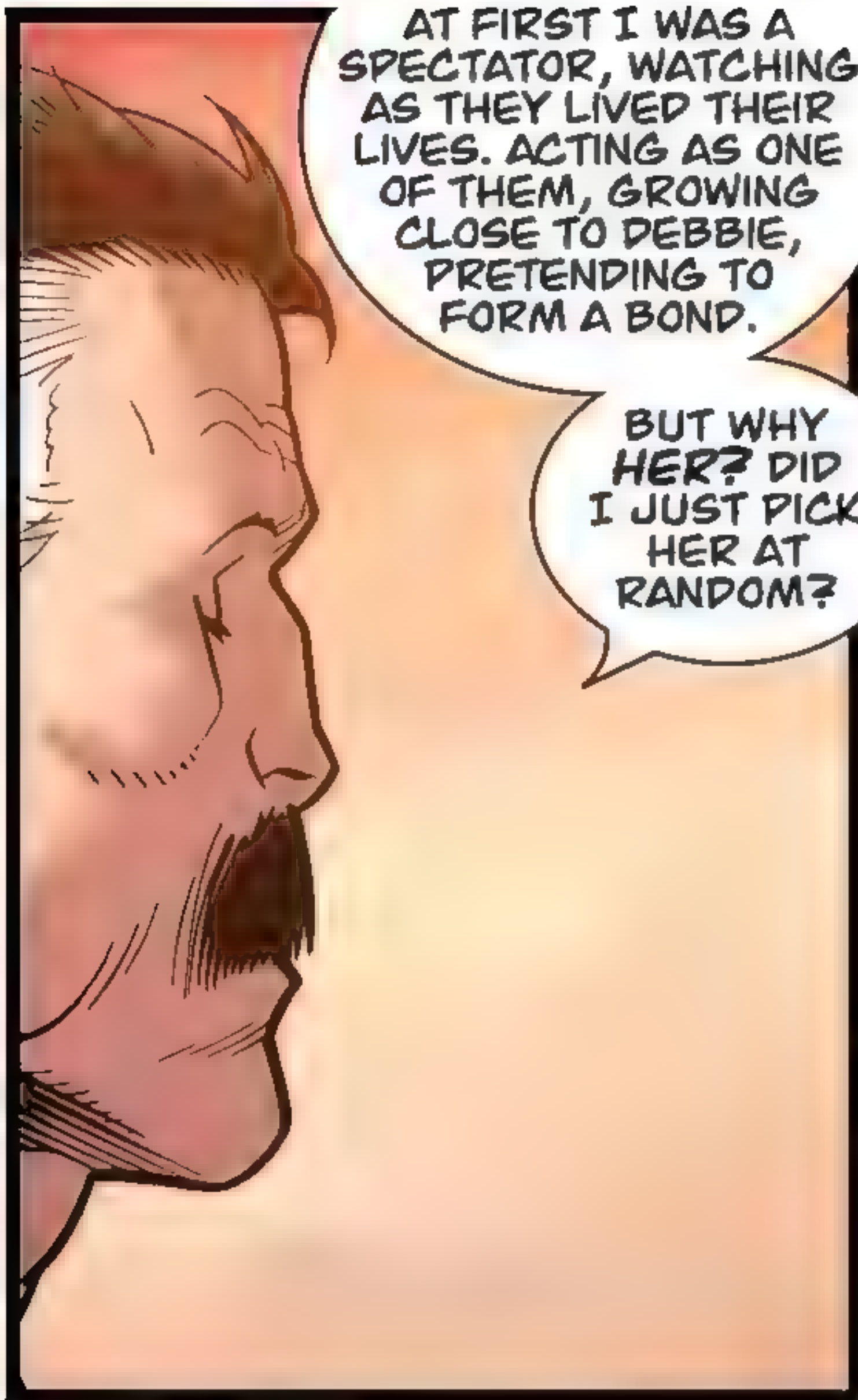
IT TOOK ME MONTHS OF HEALING IN A VILTRUMITE PRISON TO MAKE ME REALIZE IT... BUT YES, I DO.



WE HAVE AFFECTION, THE VILTRUMITES, BUT WE DON'T CARE FOR EACH OTHER LIKE HUMANS DO. OUR LIVES ARE SO LONG THAT OVER TIME WE GROW DISTANT, IT'S HARD TO FORM A BOND WITH SOMEONE OVER THAT MUCH TIME.

YOU'LL NEVER FIND ONE OF US WHO WILL ADMIT IT-- BUT WE LIVE VERY LONELY, SOLITARY LIVES. ESPECIALLY WITH OUR NUMBERS SO DEPLETED.

LIVING ON EARTH CHANGED ME. SEEING HUMANS GROW SO CLOSE TO EACH OTHER, CARING SO DEEPLY FOR THEIR LOVED ONES IN THE SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME ALLOTTED FOR THEM... IT WAS SPECIAL, SOMETHING TO BE ADMIRER.



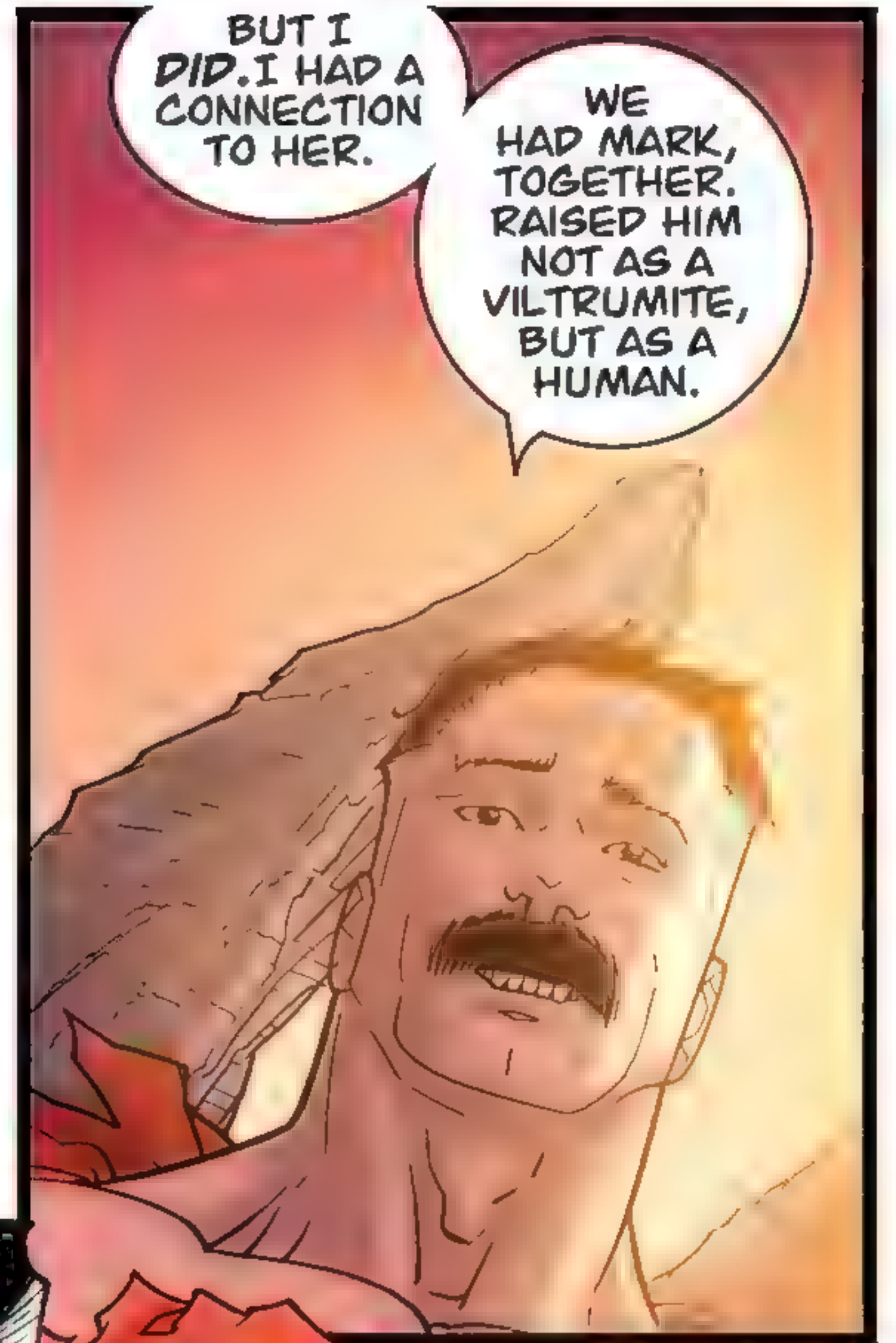
AT FIRST I WAS A SPECTATOR, WATCHING AS THEY LIVED THEIR LIVES. ACTING AS ONE OF THEM, GROWING CLOSE TO DEBBIE, PRETENDING TO FORM A BOND.

BUT WHY HER? DID I JUST PICK HER AT RANDOM?



AT FIRST I THOUGHT I HAD, I TOLD MYSELF THAT WAS THE ONLY WAY.

I COULDN'T ACTUALLY CARE FOR THIS FRAIL CREATURE.



BUT I DID. I HAD A CONNECTION TO HER.

WE HAD MARK, TOGETHER. RAISED HIM NOT AS A VILTRUMITE, BUT AS A HUMAN.



I THOUGHT I WAS BIDDING MY TIME, WAITING TO SEE IF MARK DEVELOPED POWERS... WAITING TO SEE HOW HUMAN DNA MIXED WITH VILTRUMITE DNA... IF HE'D HAVE POWERS AND IF SO, HOW CLOSE TO VILTRUMITE STRENGTH HE WAS.

BUT I NEVER LOOKED AT THAT LIFE AS A CHORE. I ENJOYED IT.

OVER TIME, I FELL INTO THE ROLE OF HUMAN HUSBAND, HUMAN FATHER... SO MUCH SO THAT WHEN MARK GOT HIS POWERS...

...IT WAS A GREAT BURDEN MORE THAN ANYTHING.



I HAD TO GO BACK TO BEING A VILTRUMITE. I HAD TO DO WHAT I WAS PUT THERE TO DO.

WHETHER I WANTED TO OR NOT.



I SPENT A LOT OF TIME ALONE, THEN... CONSIDERING IF I COULD IGNORE MY DUTY, CONTINUE LIVING THE LIE I'D ENJOYED SO MUCH... WITH THE WOMAN I'D GROWN TO LOVE.

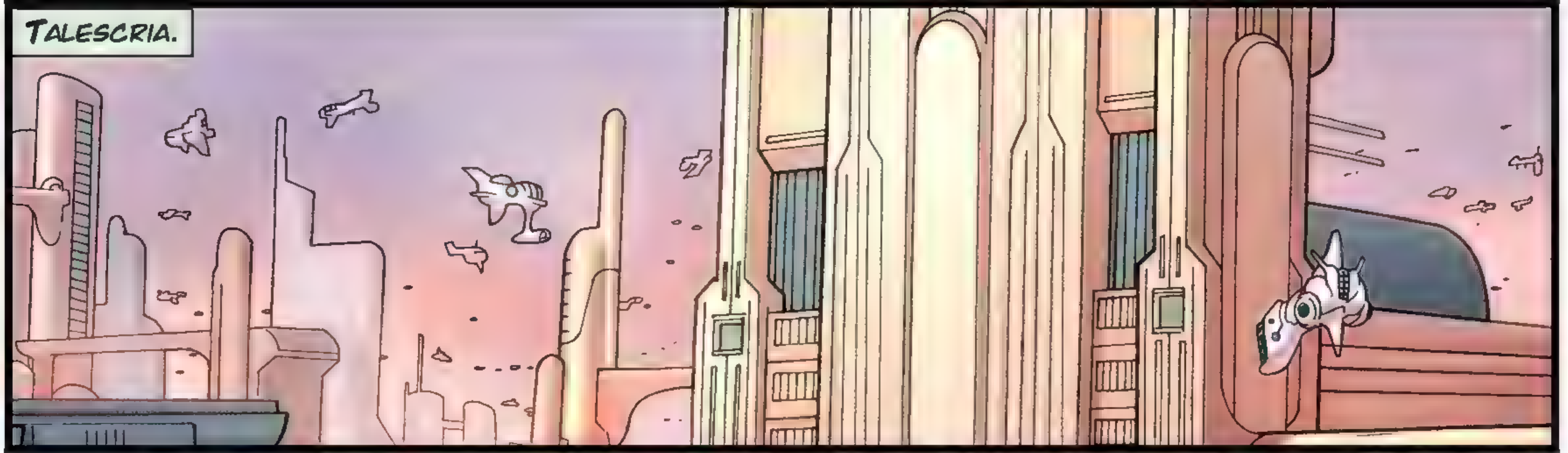
IN THE END... I CHOSE TO CARRY OUT MY MISSION... DESPITE HOW CONFLICTED I WAS.

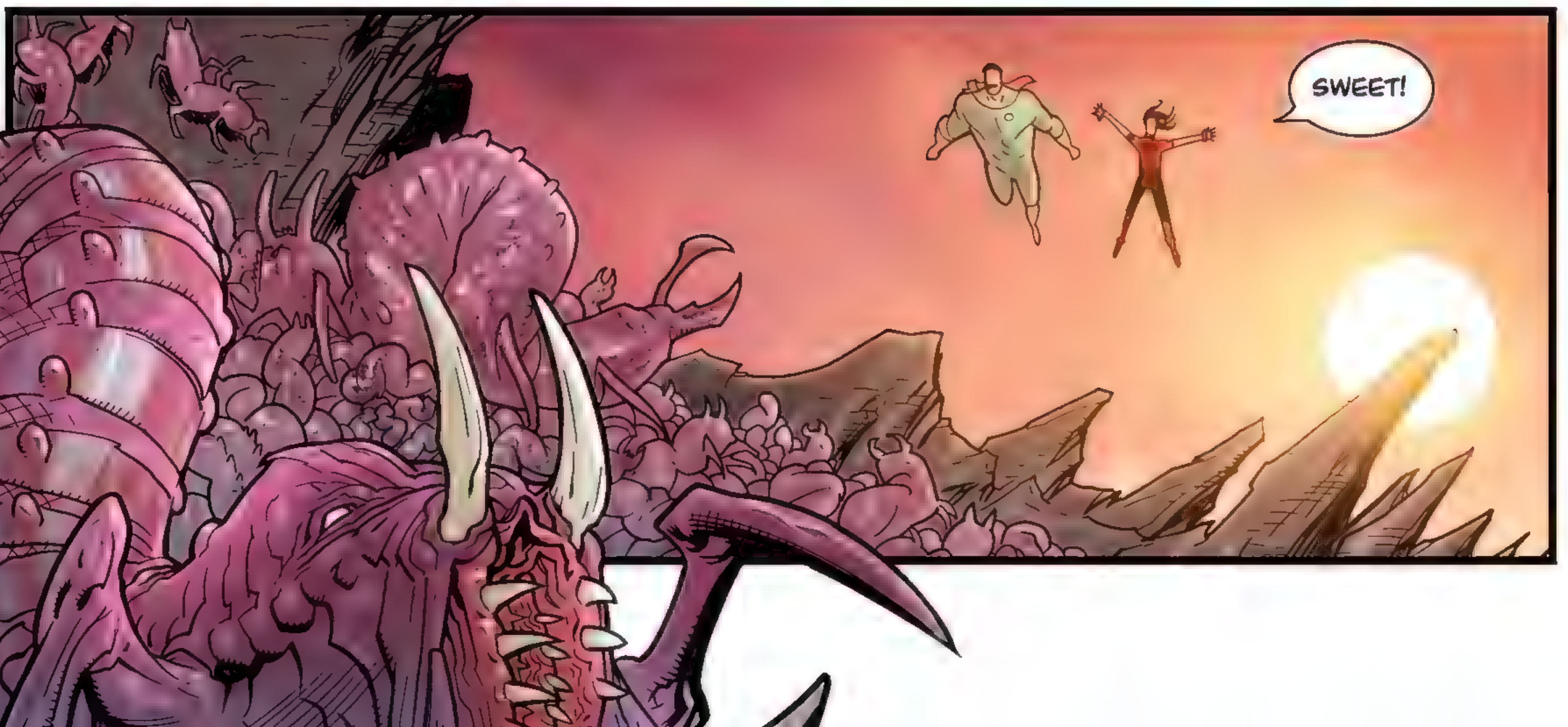
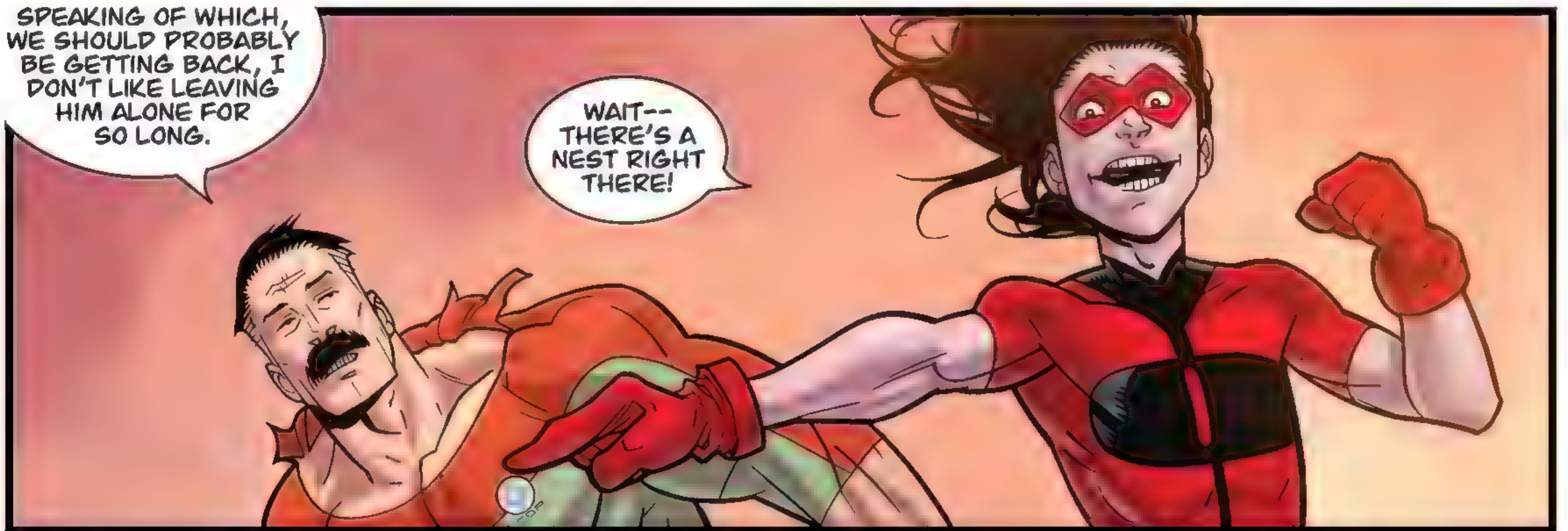
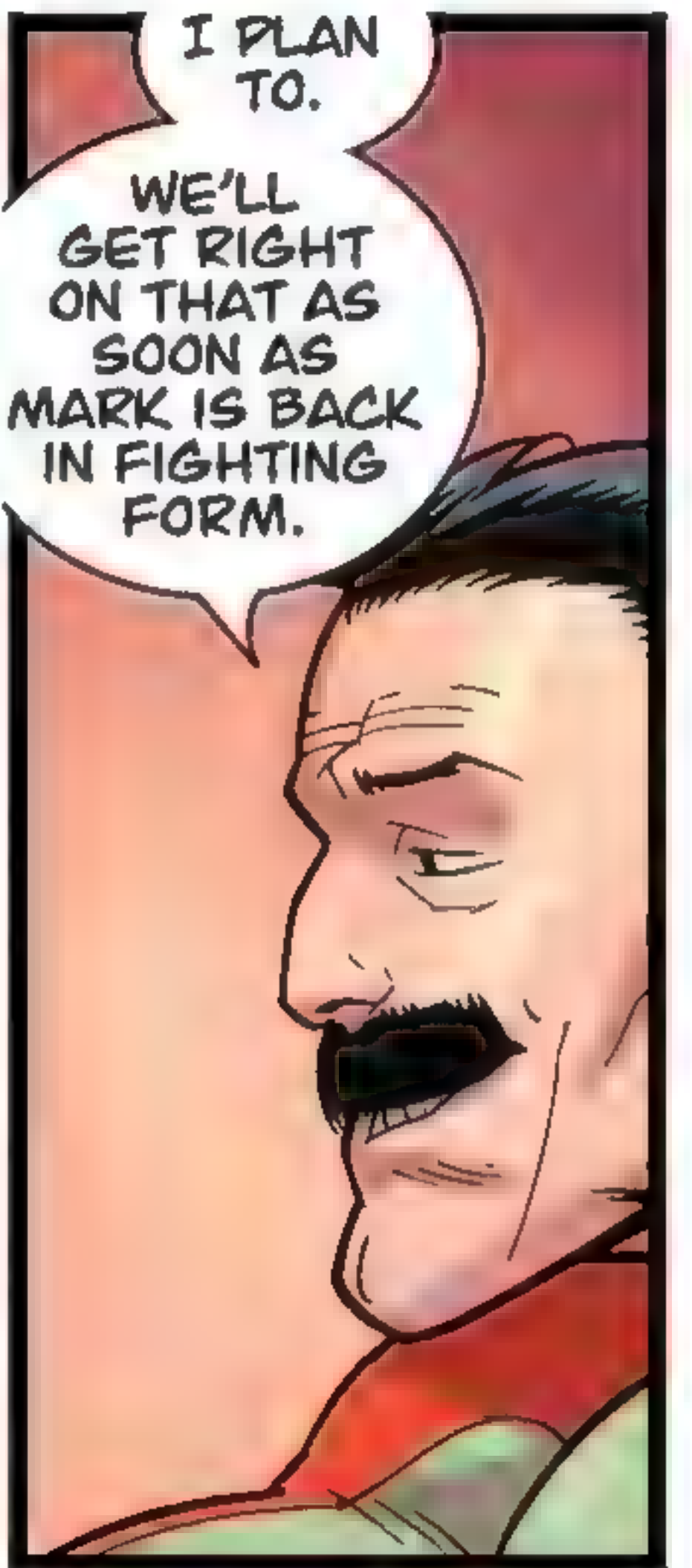
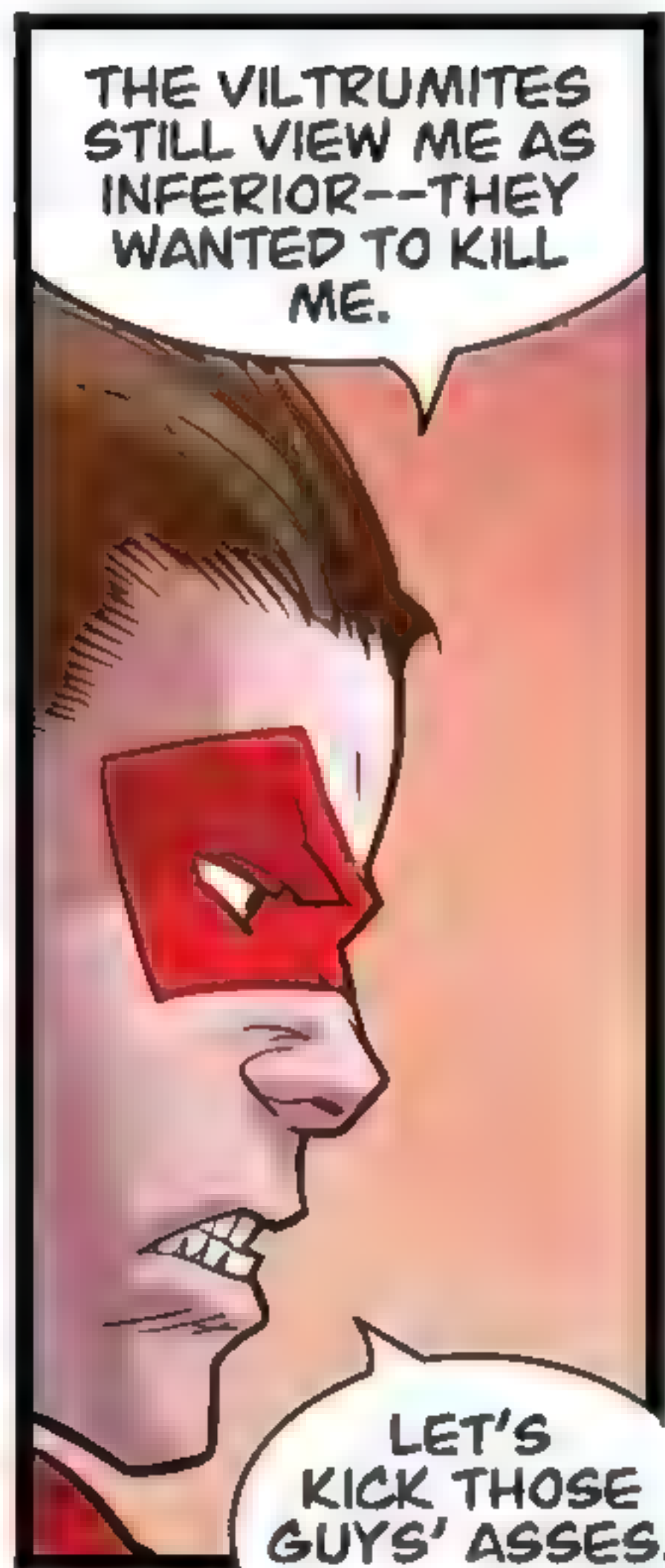
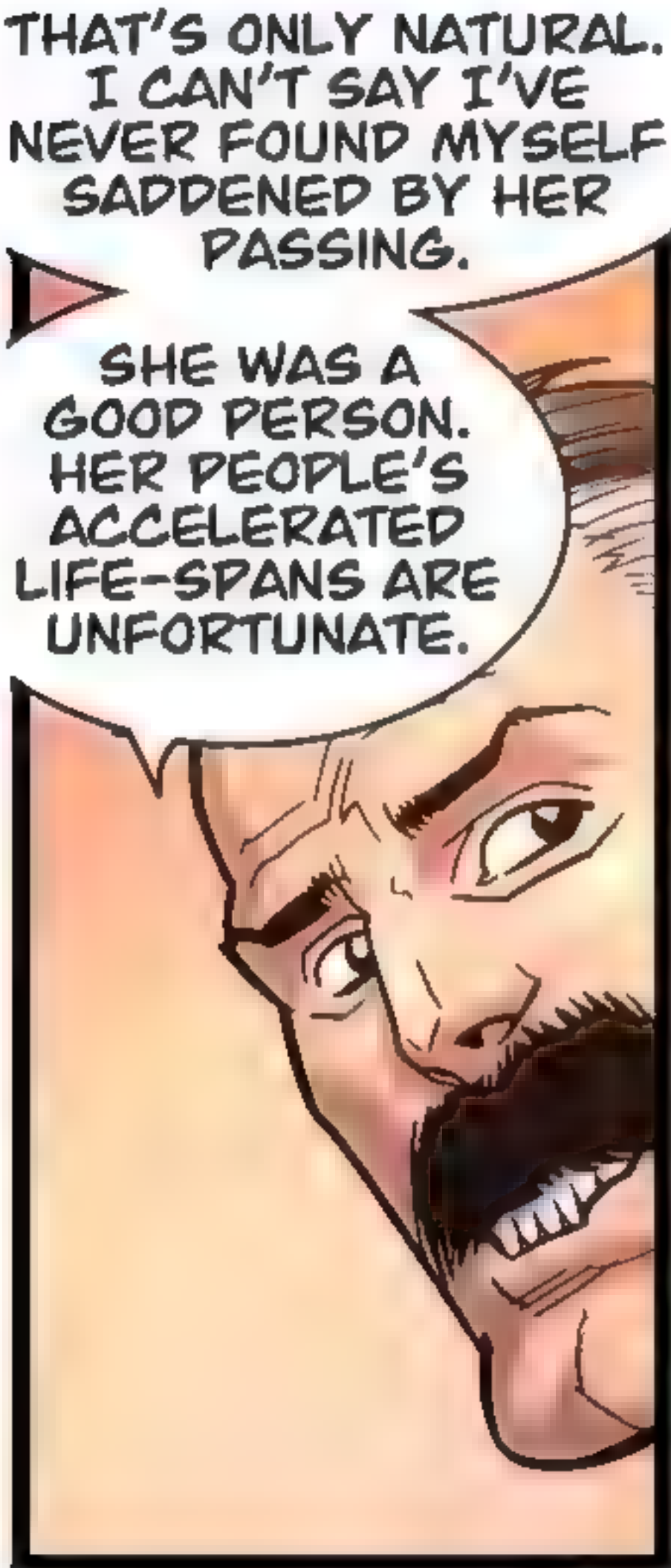


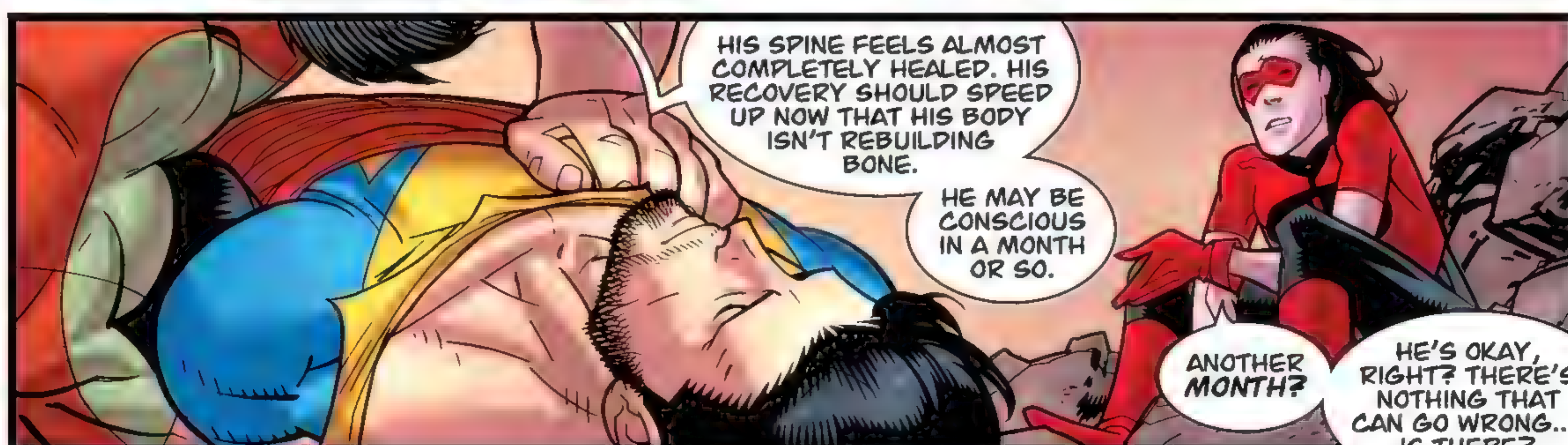
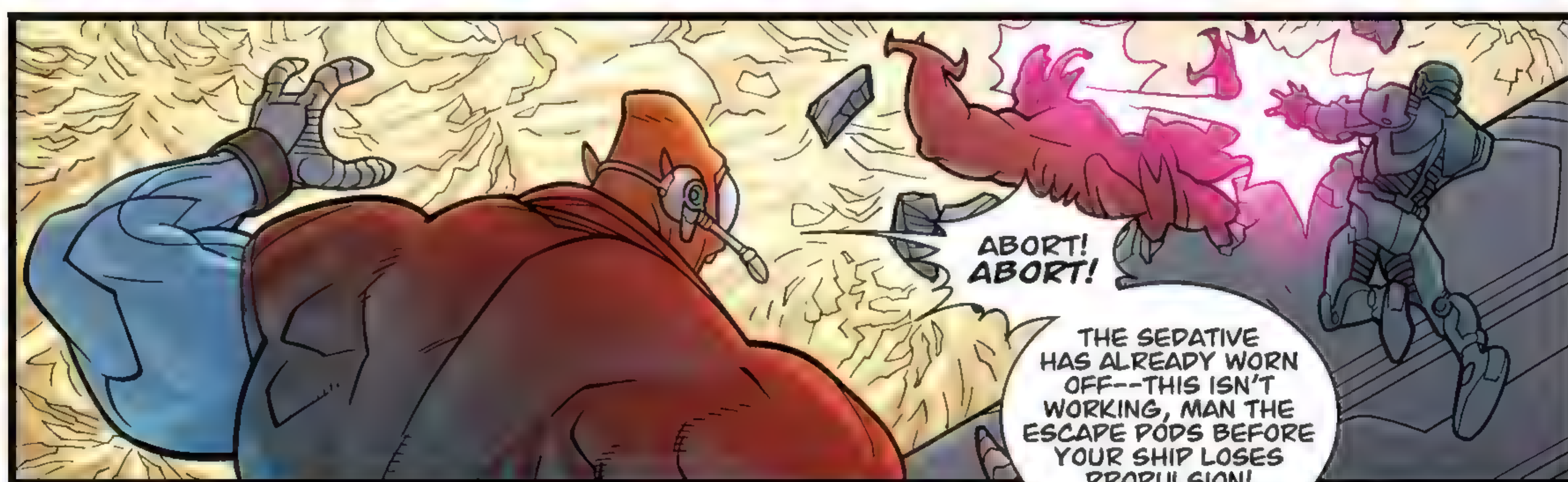
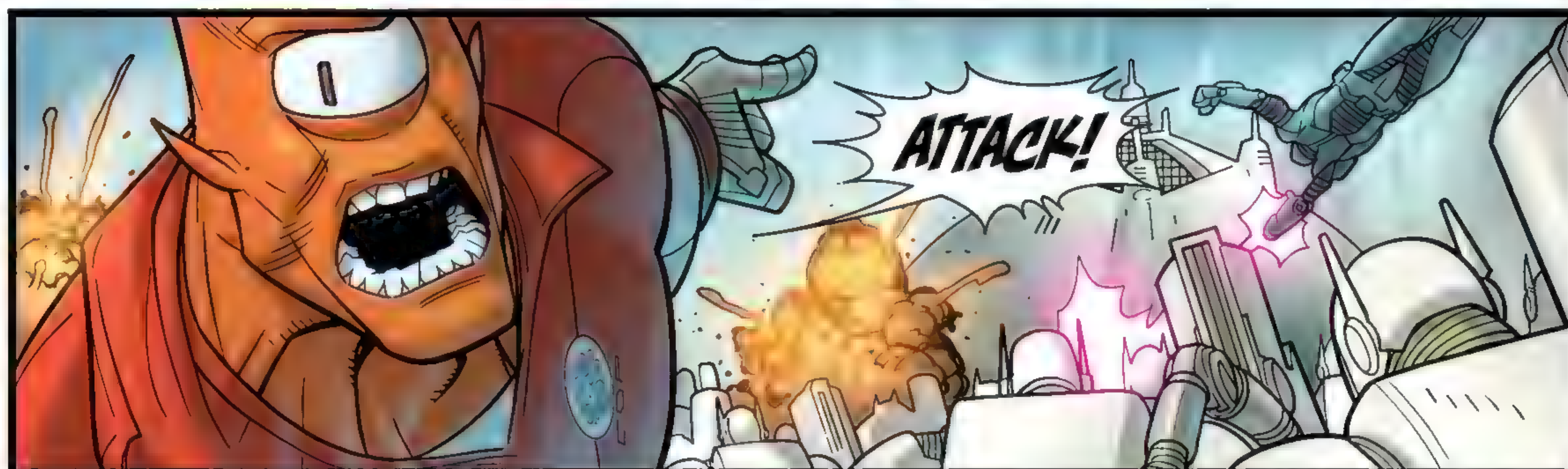
THE DAMAGE I'VE DONE... THE PAIN I'VE CAUSED...

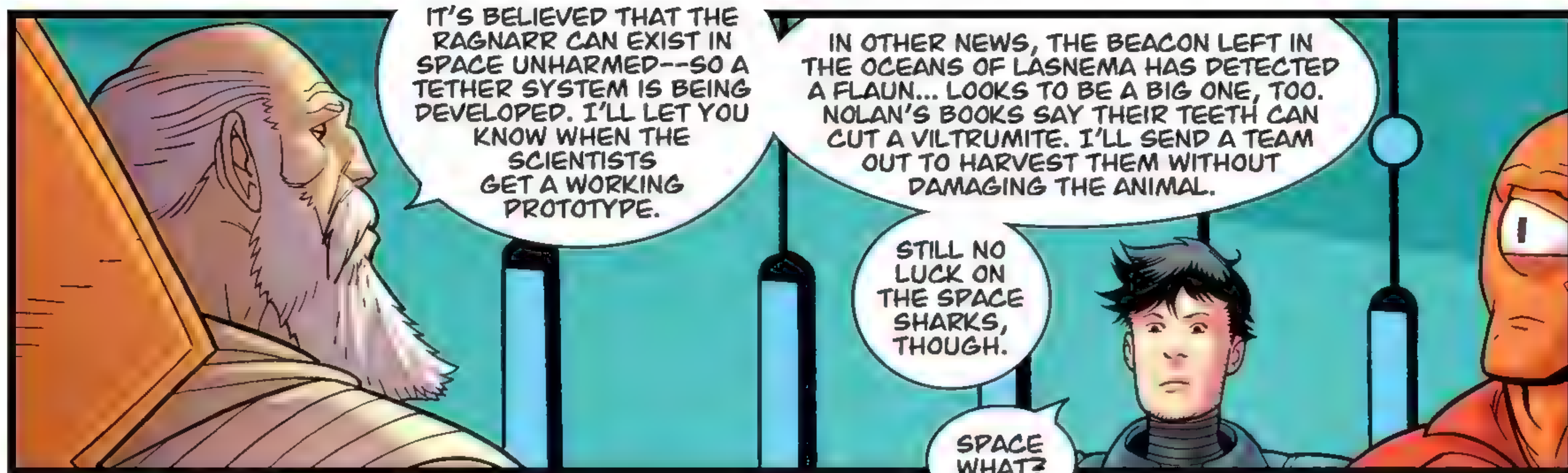
WHEN I LOOKED DOWN AT MARK, SAW HIM... BEATEN BY MY OWN HAND... A VILTRUMITE WOULD HAVE FELT NOTHING... BUT I WAS DEVASTATED.

I KNEW THEN THAT I'D MADE A MISTAKE... BUT I'D ALREADY GONE TOO FAR... IT WAS TOO LATE.







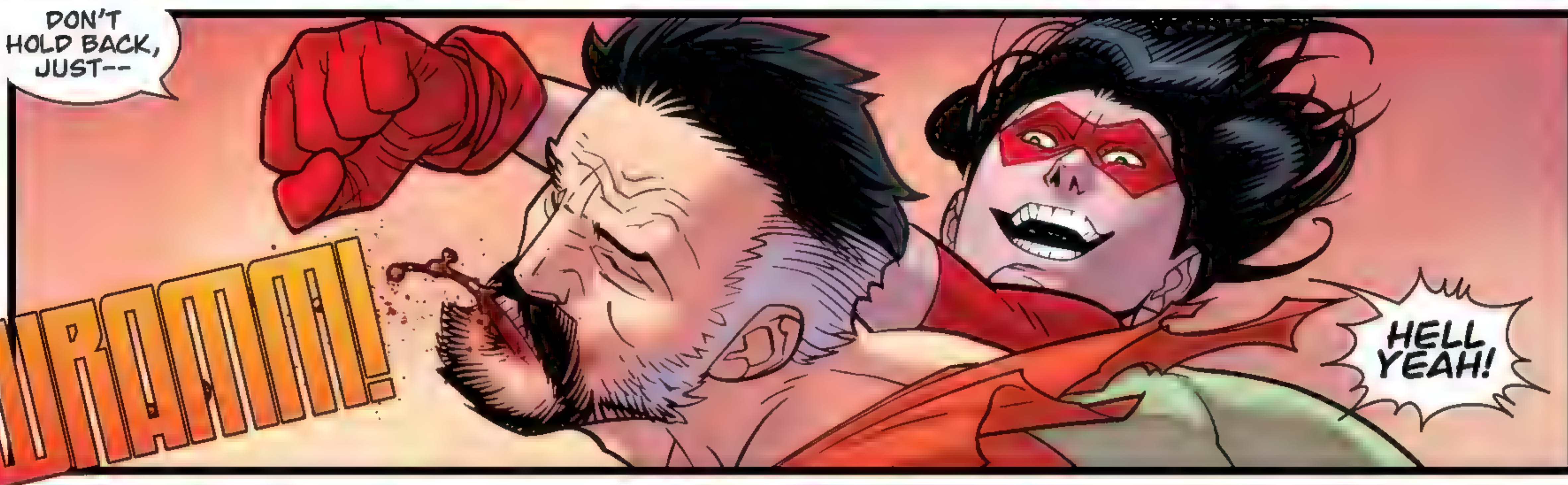


IT'S BELIEVED THAT THE RAGNARR CAN EXIST IN SPACE UNHARMED--SO A TETHER SYSTEM IS BEING DEVELOPED. I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHEN THE SCIENTISTS GET A WORKING PROTOTYPE.

IN OTHER NEWS, THE BEACON LEFT IN THE OCEANS OF LASNEMA HAS DETECTED A FLAUN... LOOKS TO BE A BIG ONE, TOO. NOLAN'S BOOKS SAY THEIR TEETH CAN CUT A VILTRUMITE. I'LL SEND A TEAM OUT TO HARVEST THEM WITHOUT DAMAGING THE ANIMAL.

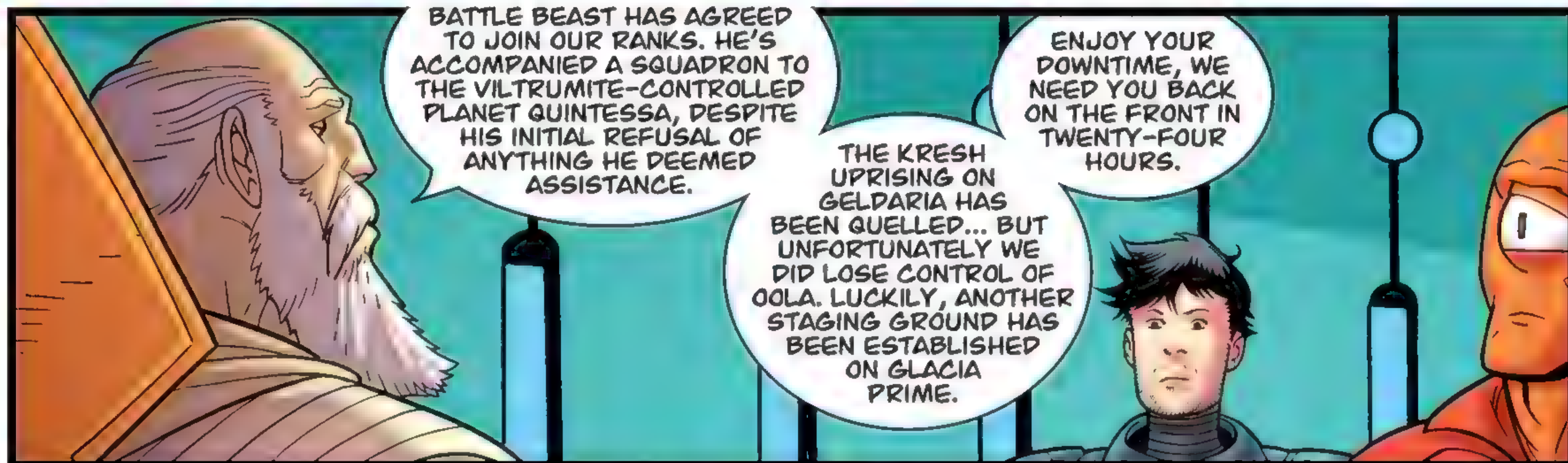
STILL NO LUCK ON THE SPACE SHARKS, THOUGH.

SPACE WHAT?



DON'T HOLD BACK, JUST--

HELL YEAH!



BATTLE BEAST HAS AGREED TO JOIN OUR RANKS. HE'S ACCOMPANIED A SQUADRON TO THE VILTRUMITE-CONTROLLED PLANET QUINTESSA, DESPITE HIS INITIAL REFUSAL OF ANYTHING HE DEEMED ASSISTANCE.

THE KRESH UPRISING ON GELDARIA HAS BEEN QUELLED... BUT UNFORTUNATELY WE DID LOSE CONTROL OF OOLA. LUCKILY, ANOTHER STAGING GROUND HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED ON GLACIA PRIME.

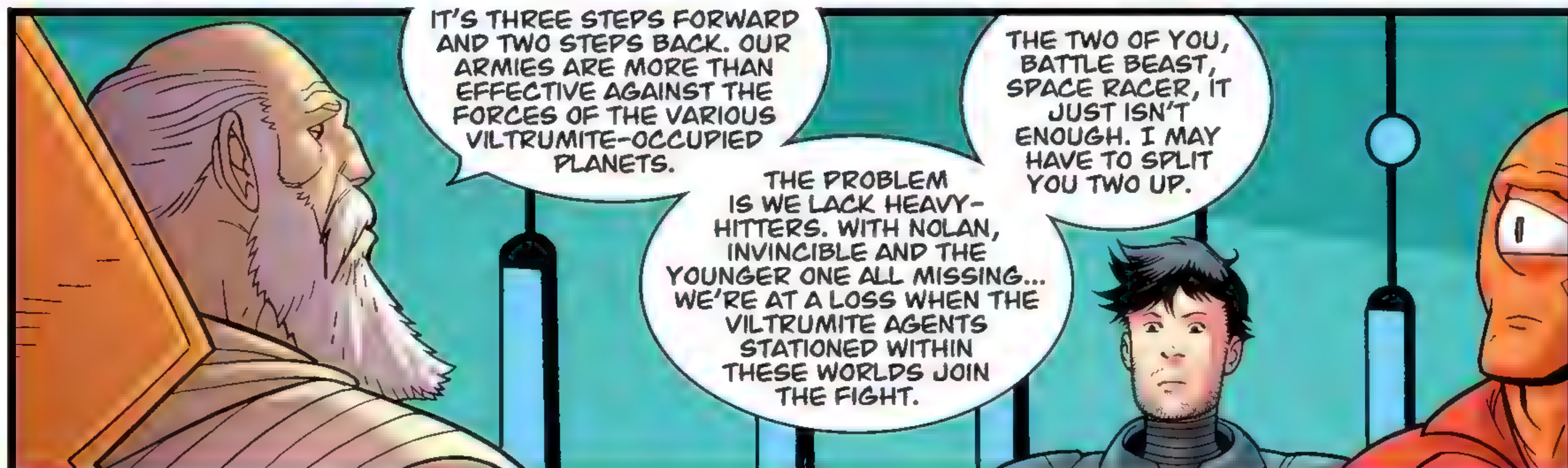
ENJOY YOUR DOWNTIME, WE NEED YOU BACK ON THE FRONT IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.



CAN'T--

DON'T TELL ME THAT--LOOK AT YOU--LOOK AT HOW MUCH STRONGER YOU'VE GOTTEN OVER THE LAST MONTH! YOU'VE GOT THIS!

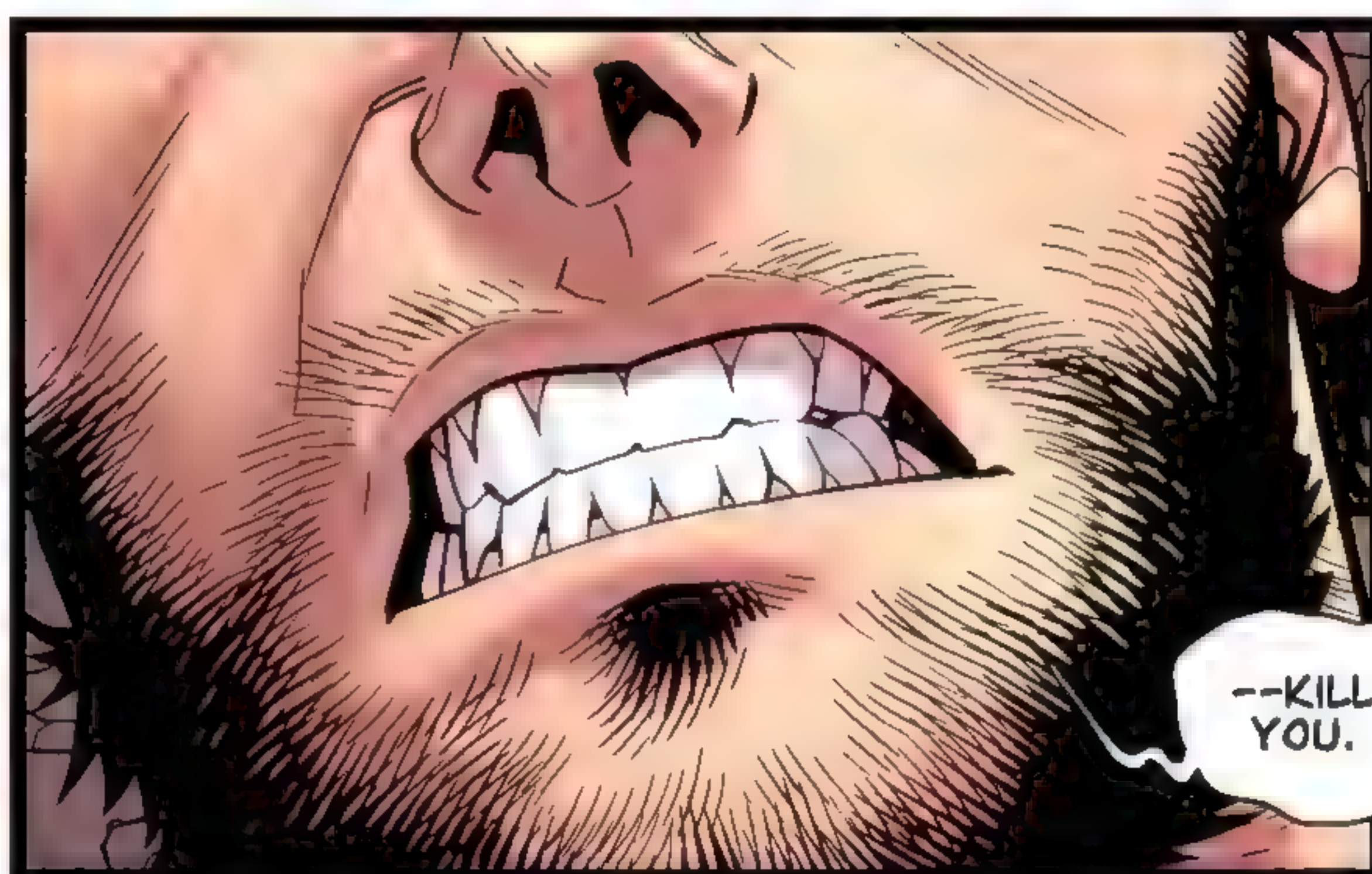
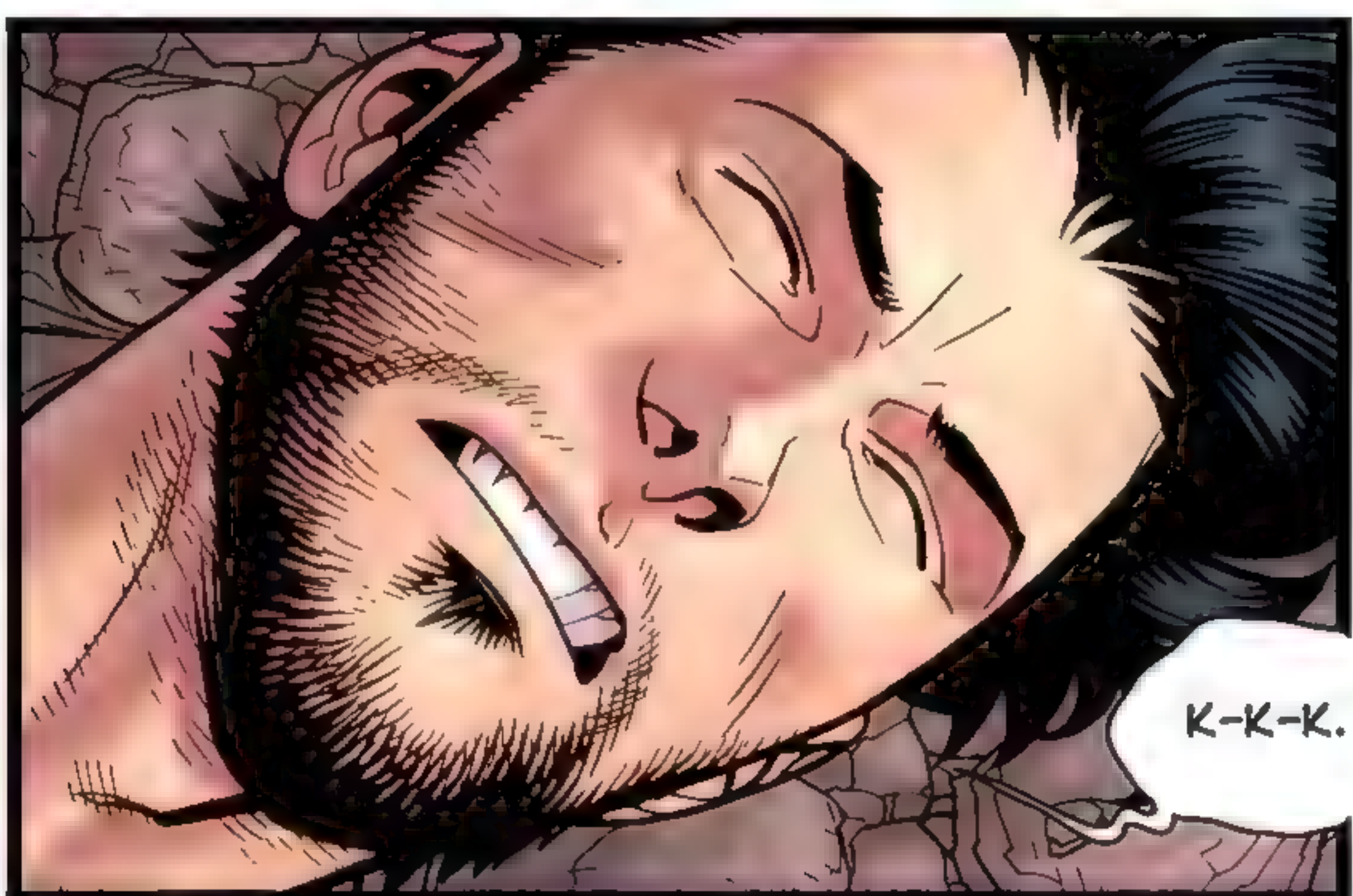
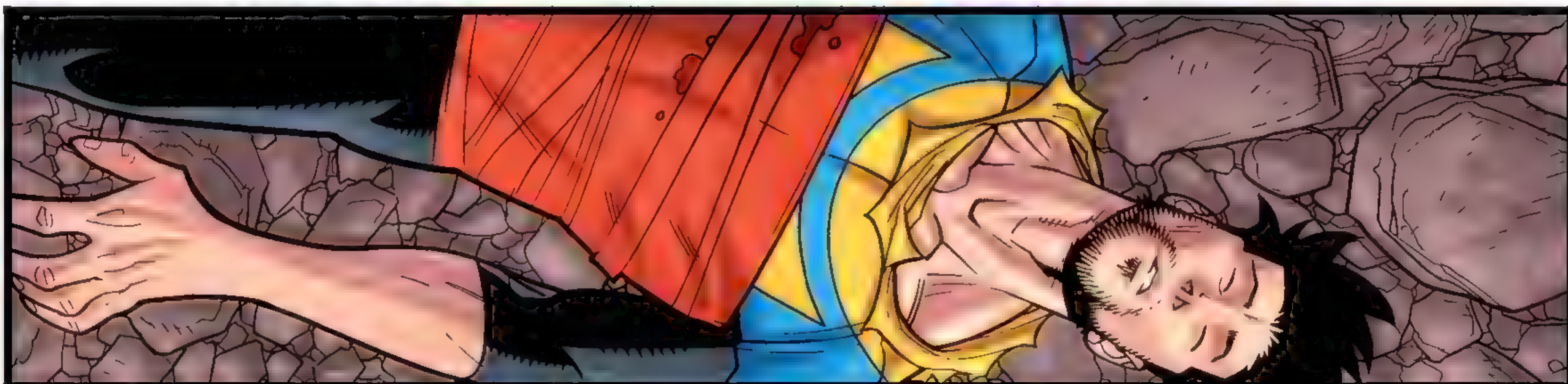
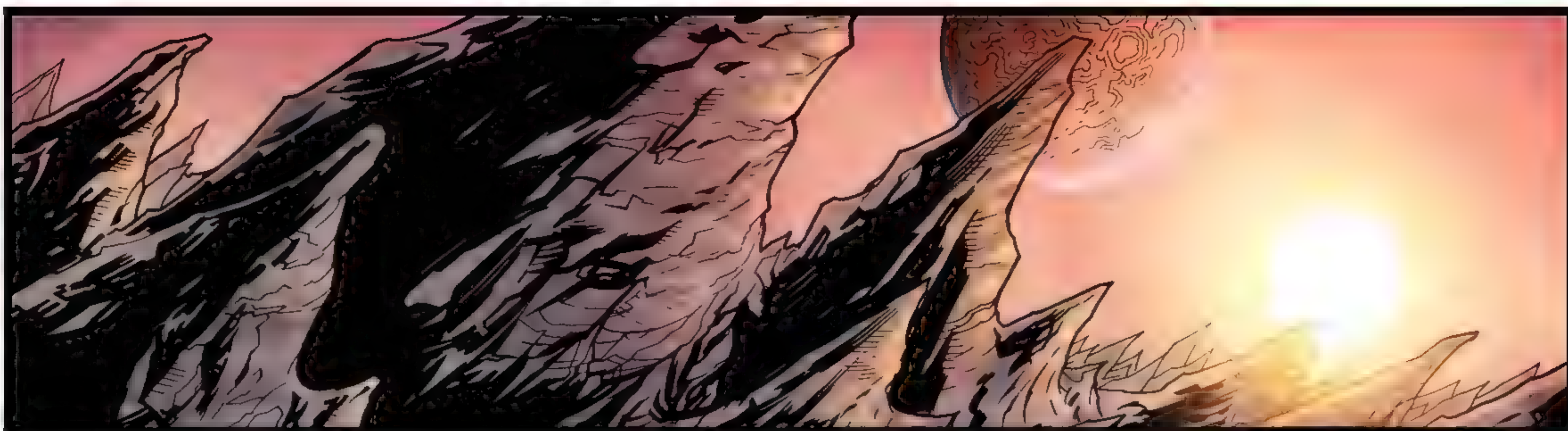
KEEP GOING, OLIVER! YOU CAN DO IT!



IT'S THREE STEPS FORWARD AND TWO STEPS BACK. OUR ARMIES ARE MORE THAN EFFECTIVE AGAINST THE FORCES OF THE VARIOUS VILTRUMITE-OCCUPIED PLANETS.

THE PROBLEM IS WE LACK HEAVY-HITTERS. WITH NOLAN, INVINCIBLE AND THE YOUNGER ONE ALL MISSING... WE'RE AT A LOSS WHEN THE VILTRUMITE AGENTS STATIONED WITHIN THESE WORLDS JOIN THE FIGHT.

THE TWO OF YOU, BATTLE BEAST, SPACE RACER, IT JUST ISN'T ENOUGH. I MAY HAVE TO SPLIT YOU TWO UP.



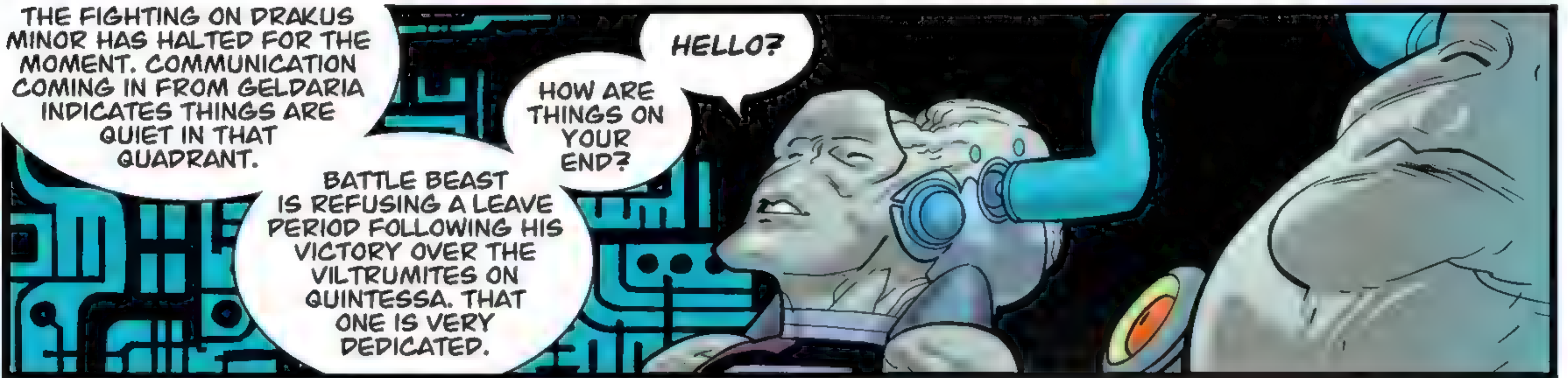


THE FIGHTING ON DRAKUS MINOR HAS HALTED FOR THE MOMENT. COMMUNICATION COMING IN FROM GELDARIA INDICATES THINGS ARE QUIET IN THAT QUADRANT.

BATTLE BEAST IS REFUSING A LEAVE PERIOD FOLLOWING HIS VICTORY OVER THE VILTRUMITES ON QUINTESSA. THAT ONE IS VERY DEDICATED.

HELLO?

HOW ARE THINGS ON YOUR END?



YOU'VE BEEN FEEDING US INFORMATION FOR YEARS-- BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH. WE ARE STILL LOSING PLANETS TO THE COALITION.

THAT IS UNACCEPTABLE.

WE WILL STRIKE THE COALITION HEADQUARTERS ON TALESERIA. YOU WILL SHUT DOWN THEIR DEFENSES AT THE TIME BEING TRANSMITTED TO YOU.

RESPOND.



IT WILL BE DONE.

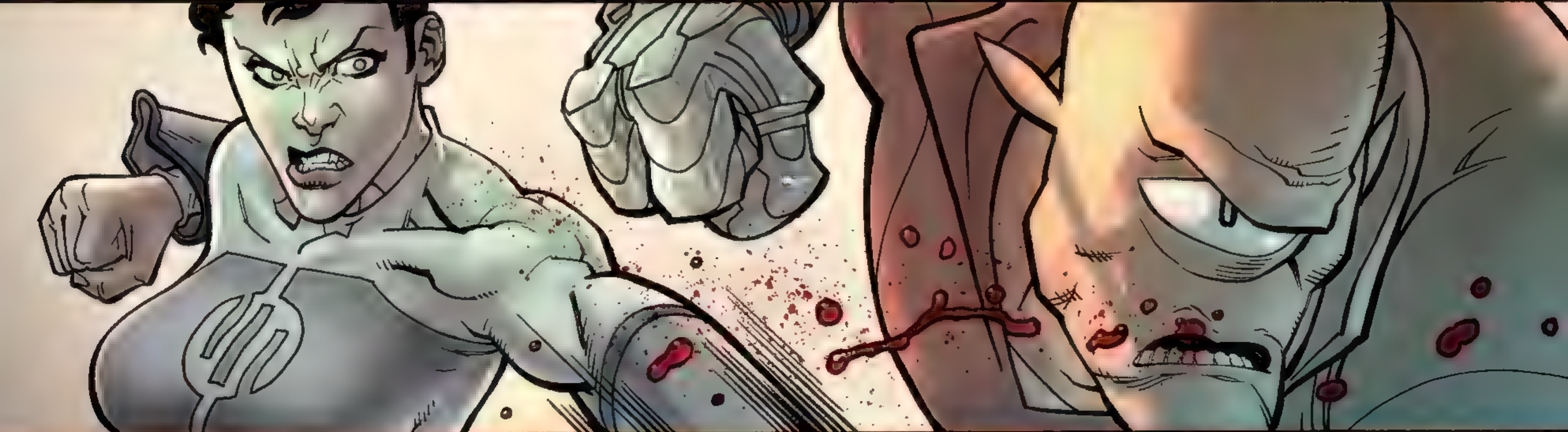
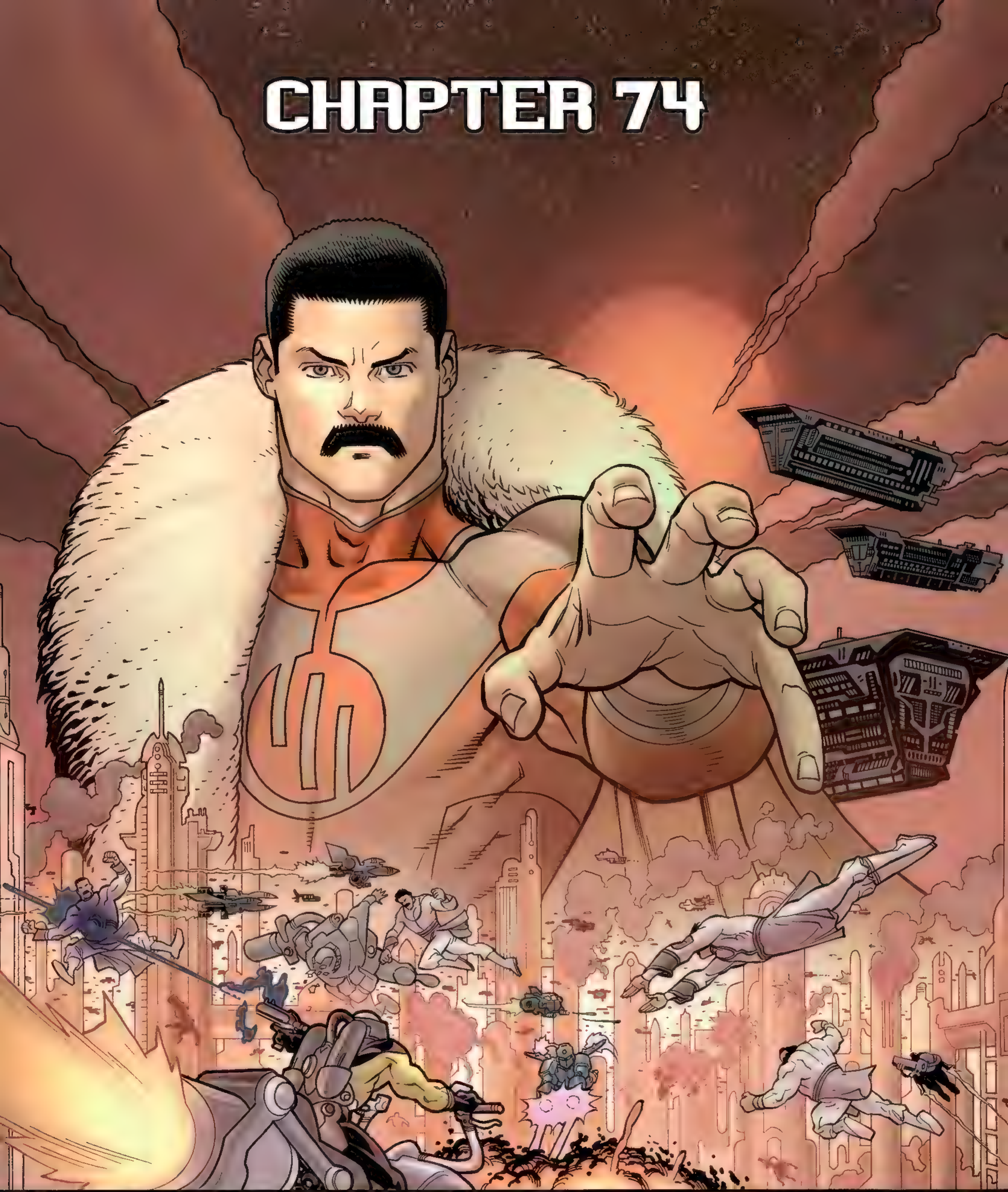
WHAT? WHAT WILL BE DONE?

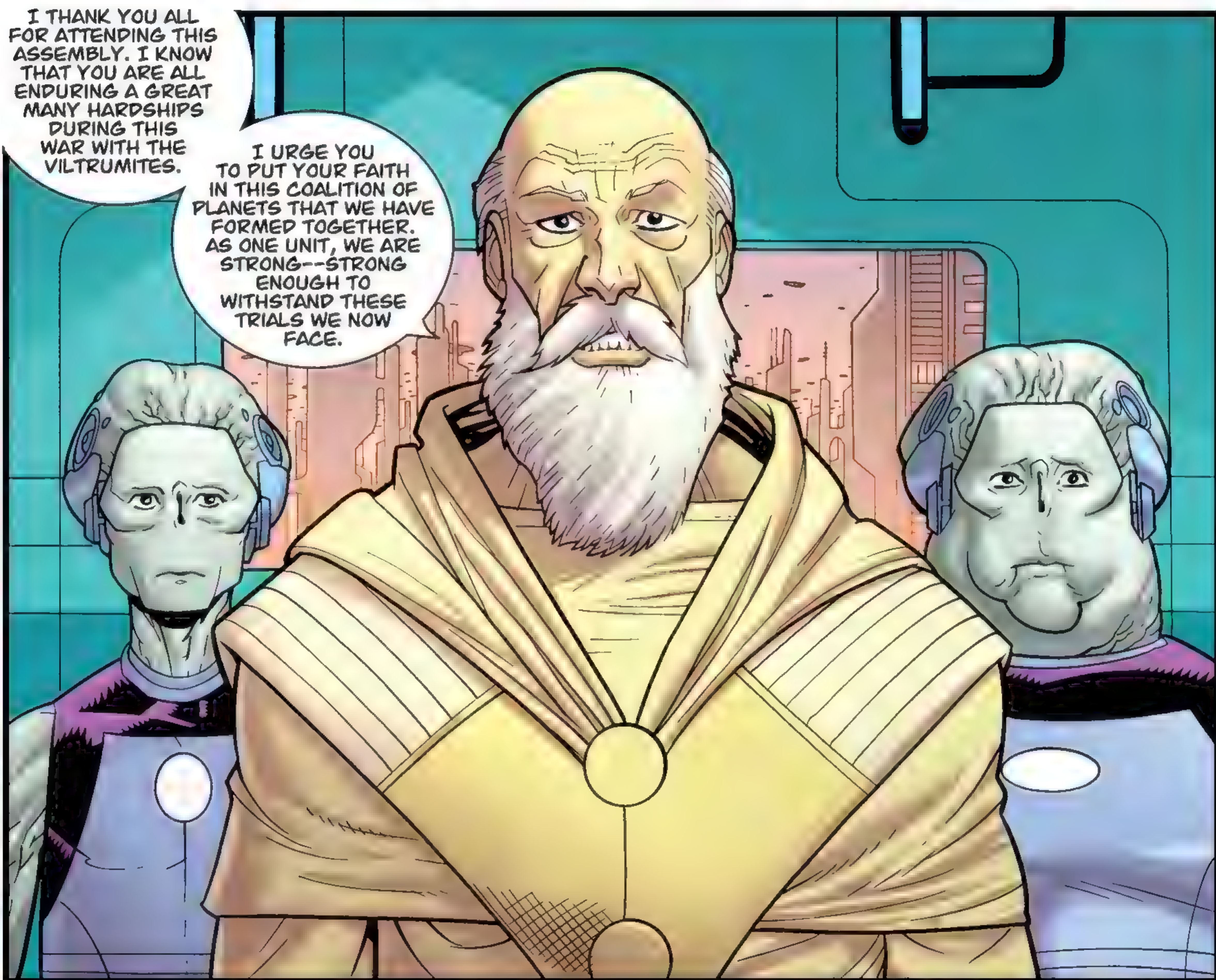
WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?





CHAPTER 74





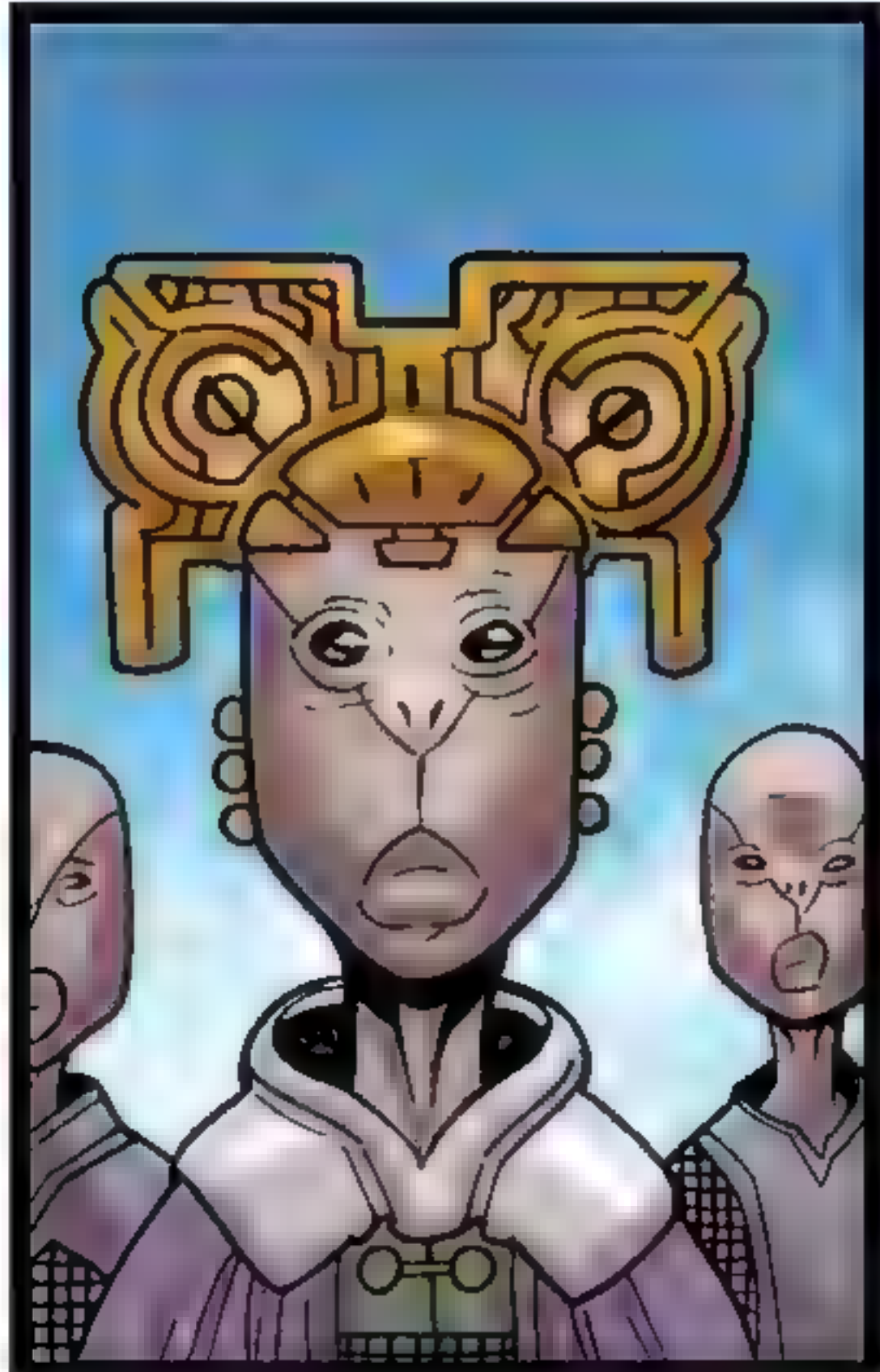
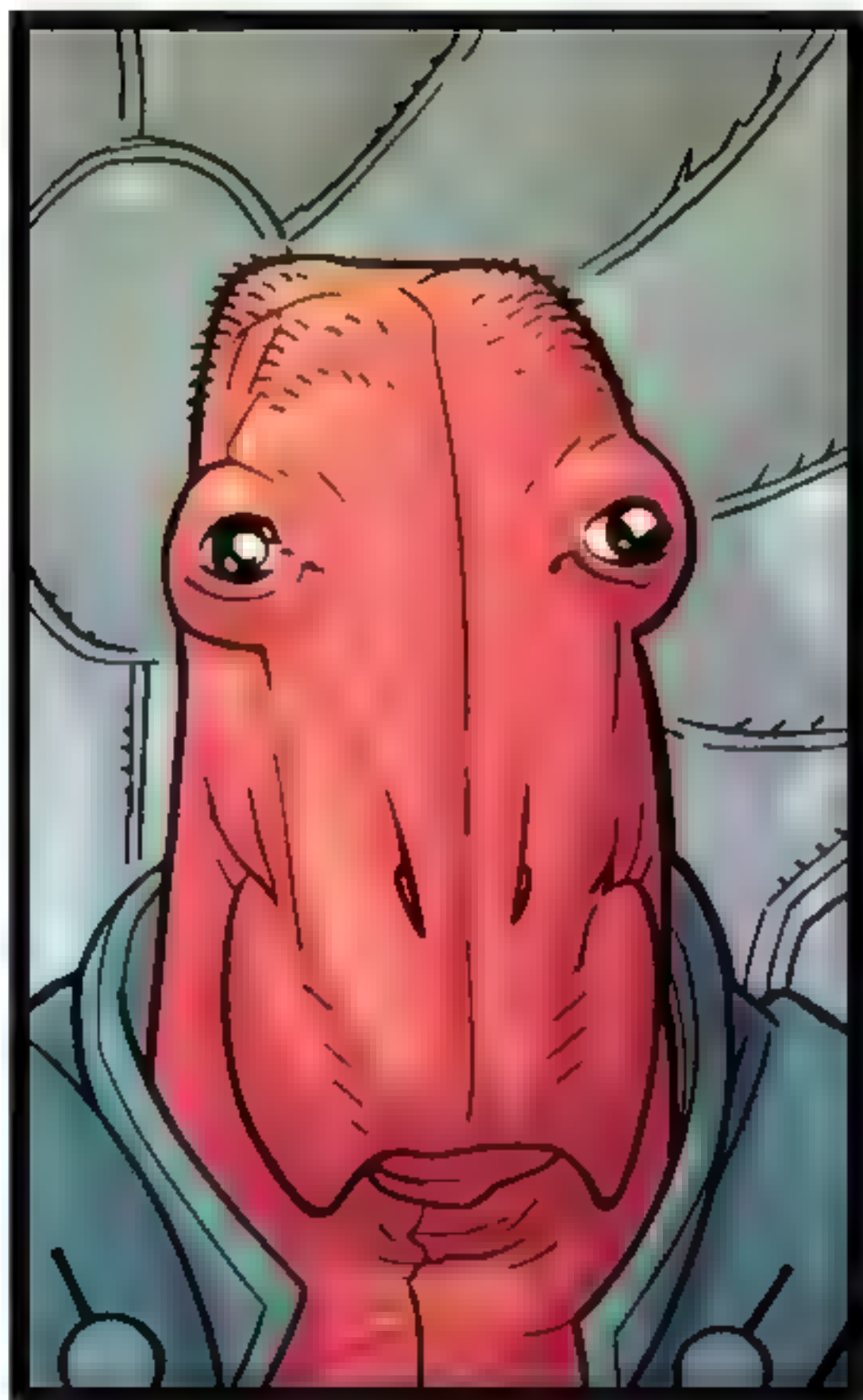
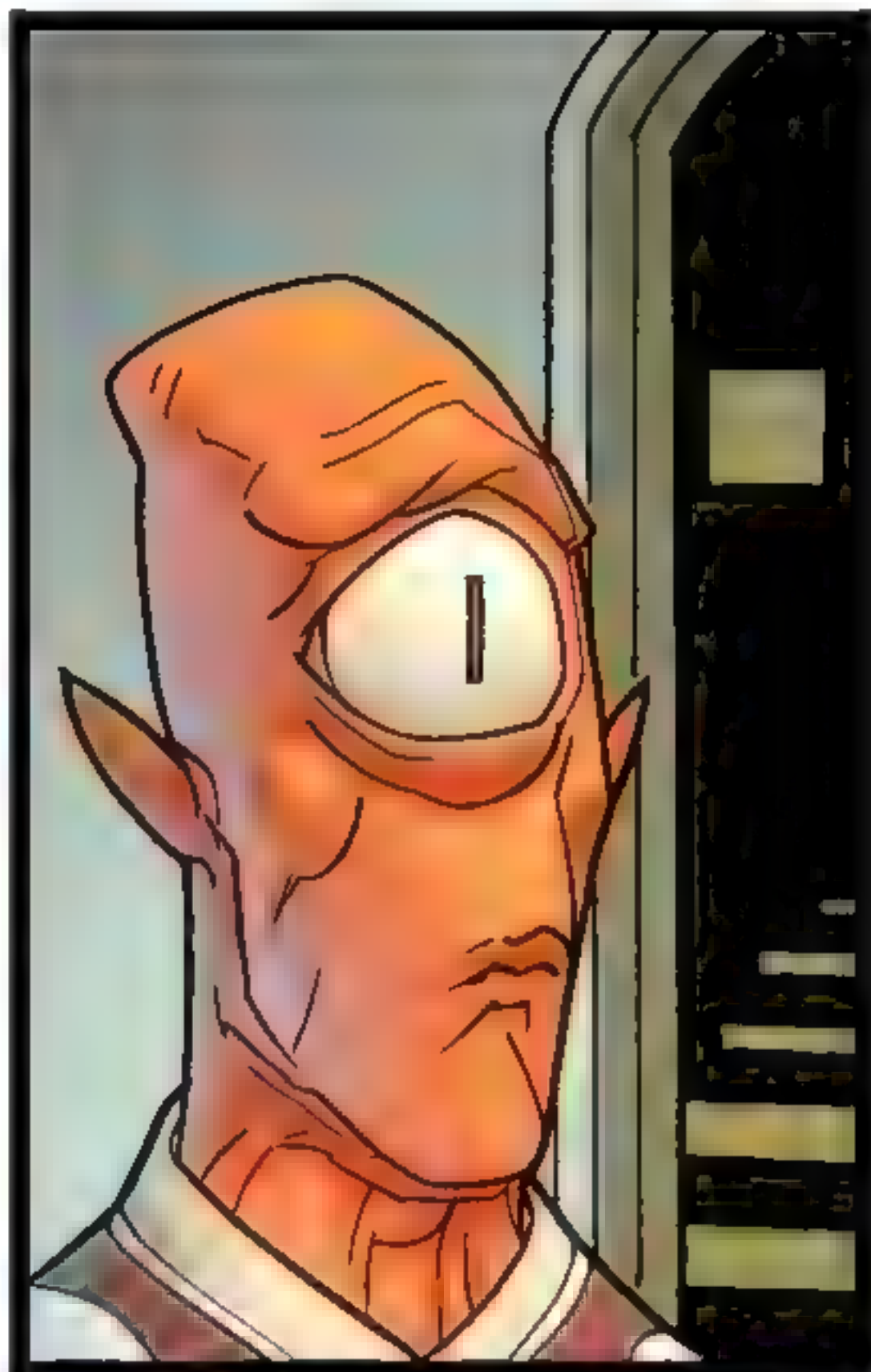
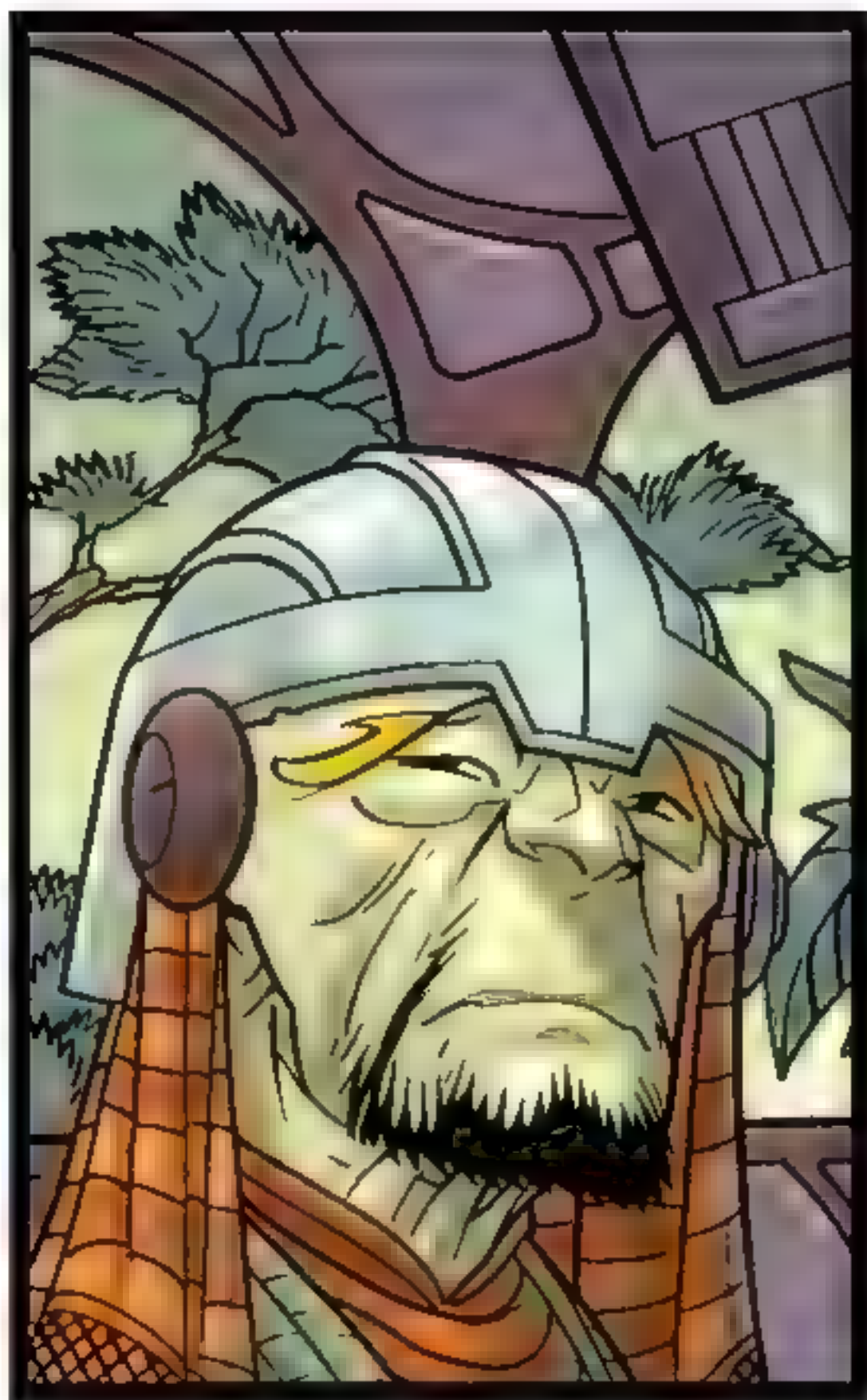
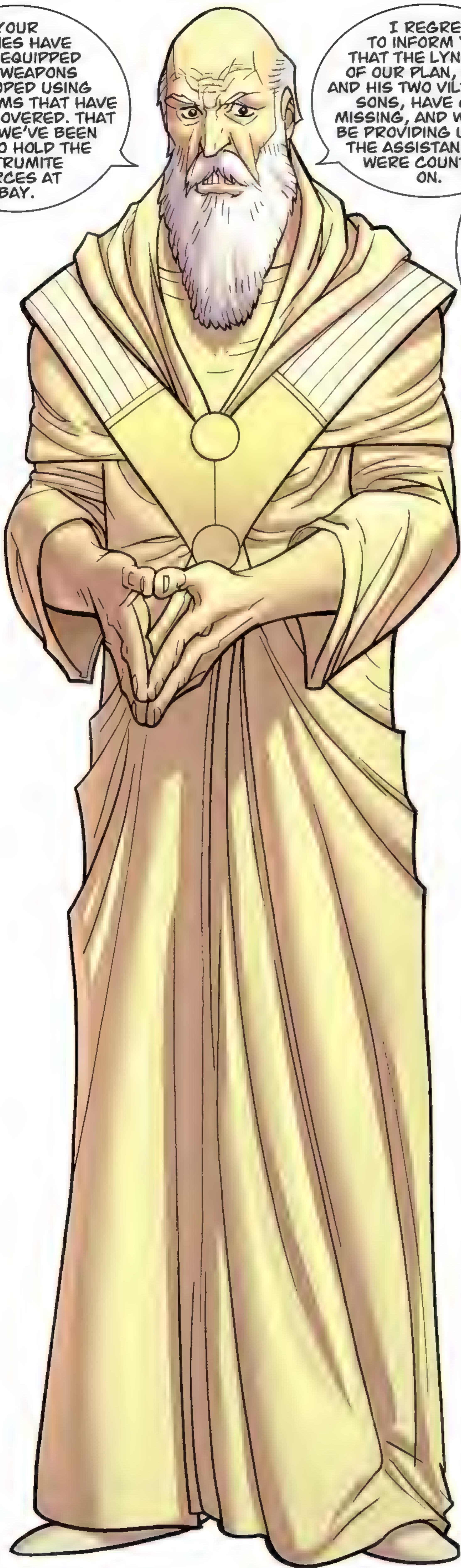
YOUR
ARMIES HAVE
BEEN EQUIPPED
WITH WEAPONS
DEVELOPED USING
THESE ITEMS THAT HAVE
BEEN RECOVERED. THAT
IS HOW WE'VE BEEN
ABLE TO HOLD THE
VILTRUMITE
FORCES AT
BAY.

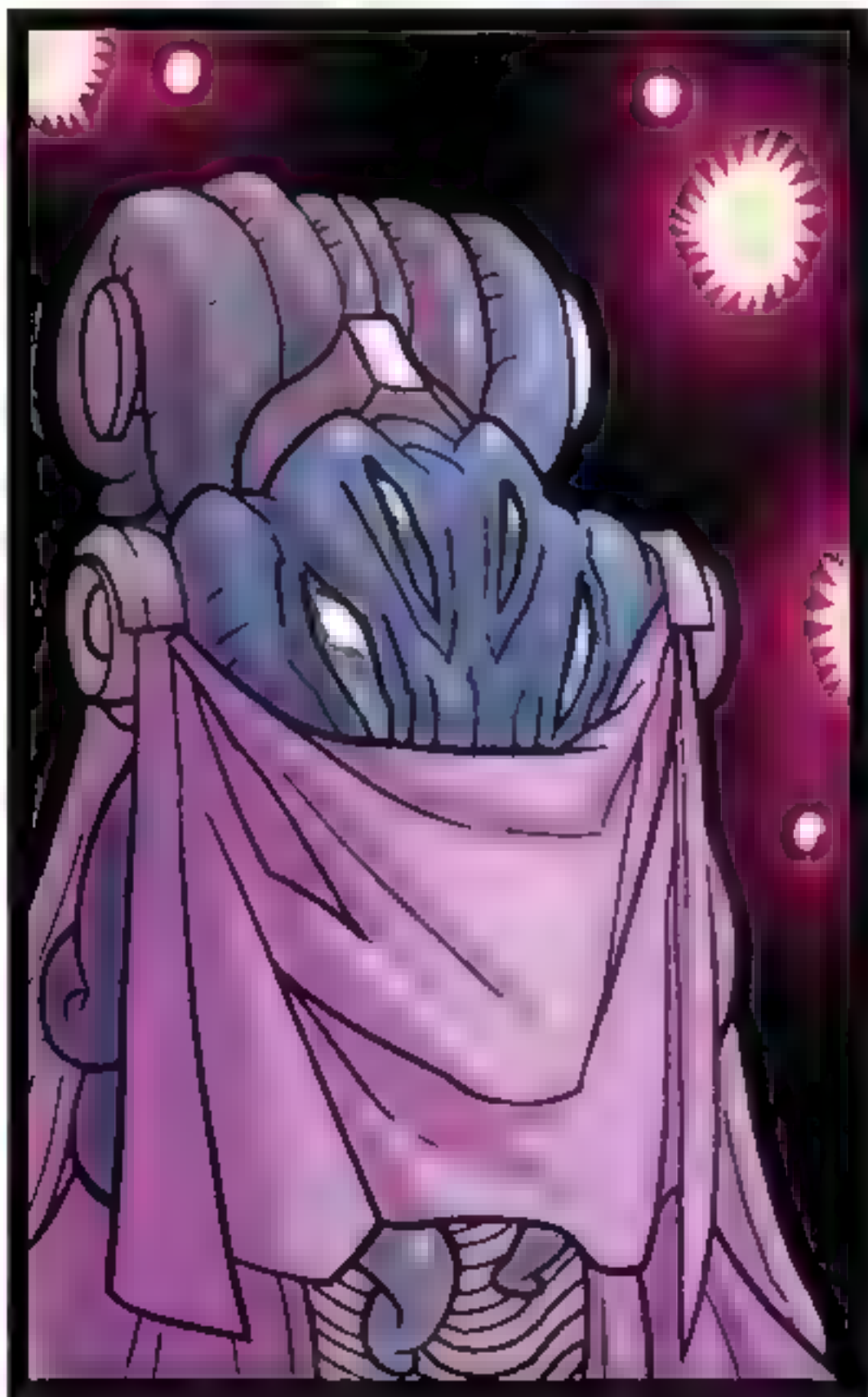
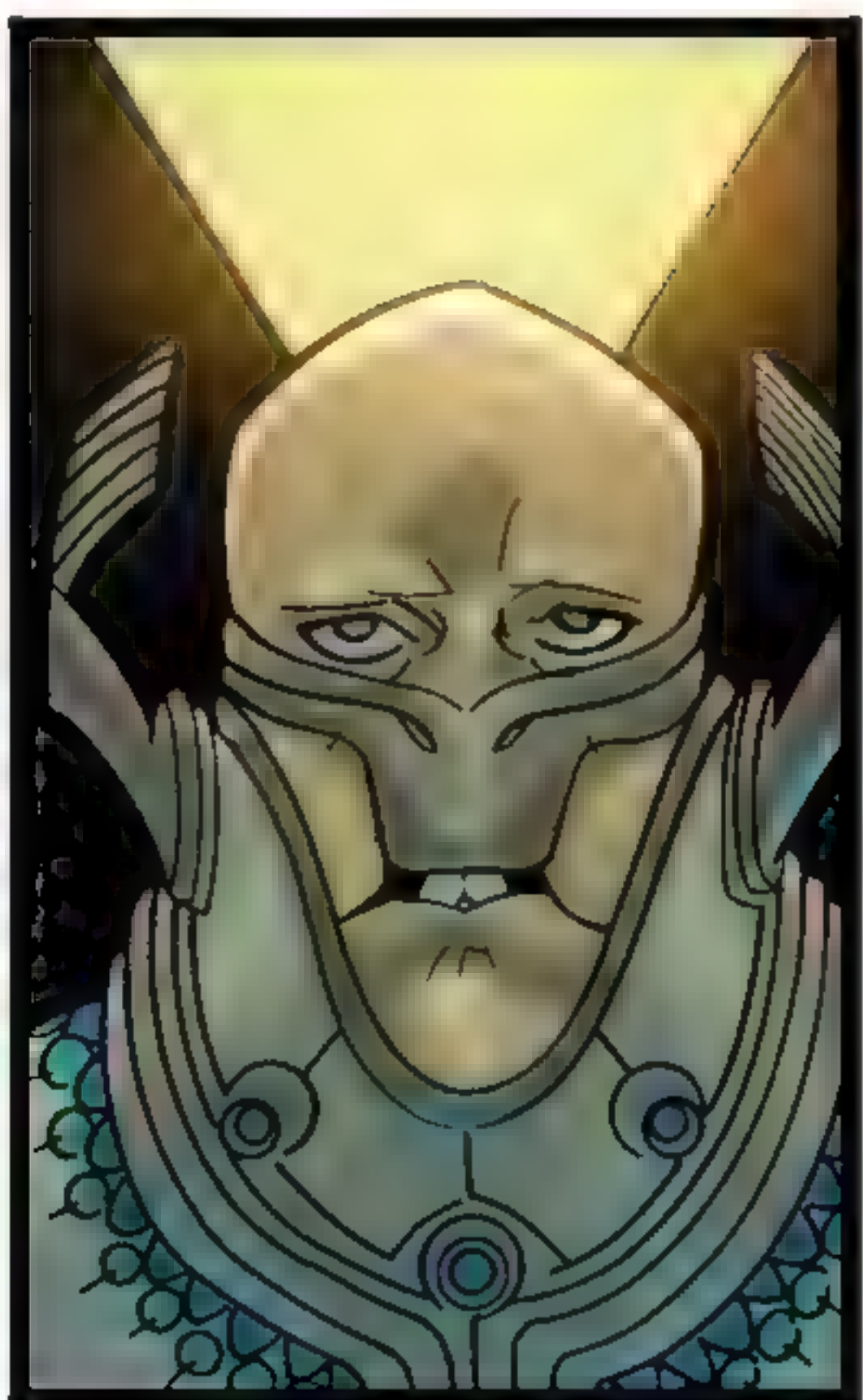
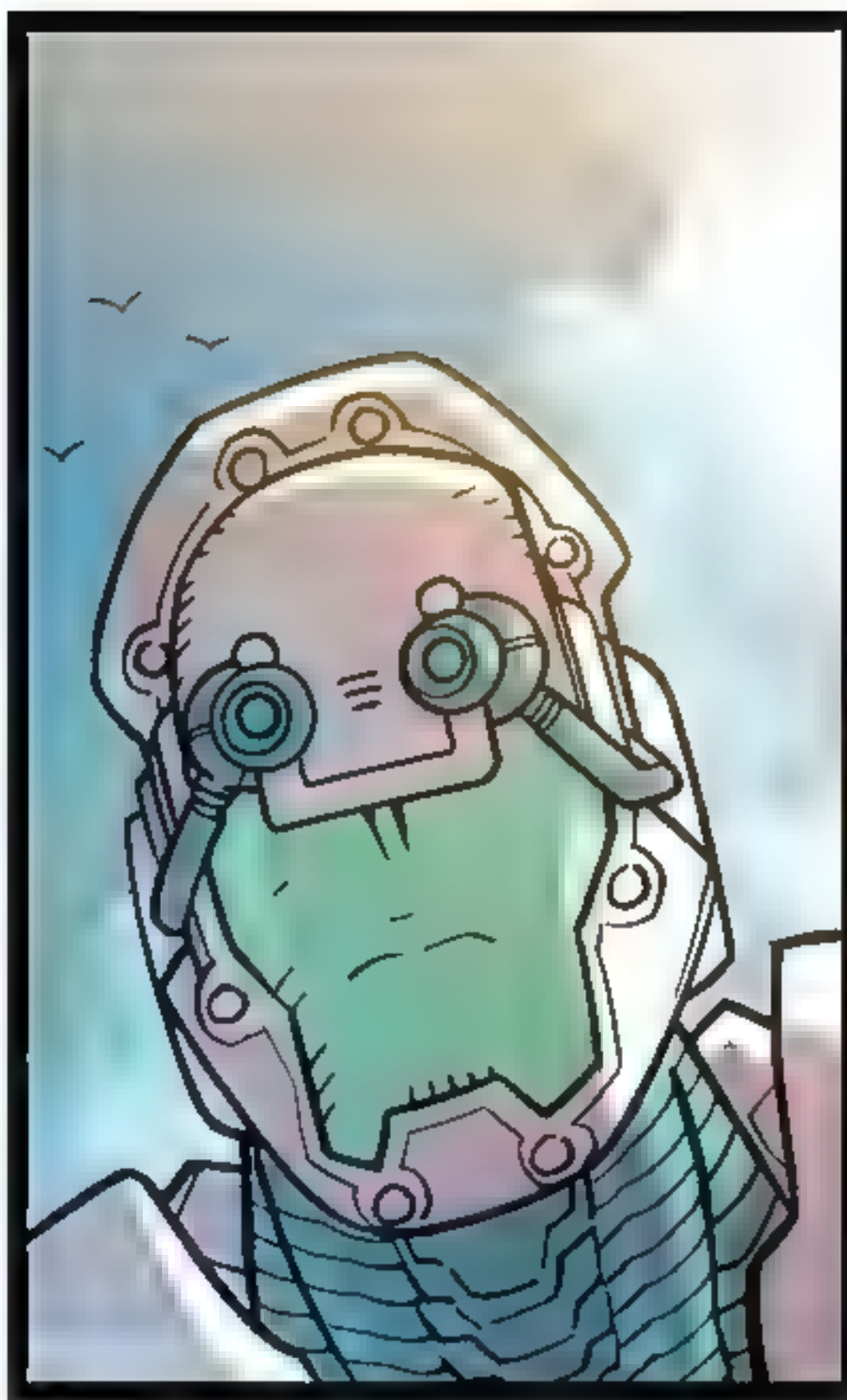
I REGRET
TO INFORM YOU
THAT THE LYNCHPIN
OF OUR PLAN, NOLAN
AND HIS TWO VILTRUMITE
SONS, HAVE GONE
MISSING, AND WILL NOT
BE PROVIDING US WITH
THE ASSISTANCE WE
WERE COUNTING
ON.

BUT FEAR
NOT, AS LONG
AS WE CONTINUE
TO WORK
TOGETHER, AS A
UNIFIED FRONT
AGAINST THE
VILTRUMITES--
WE WILL
SUCCEED.

WE WILL
FINALLY RID
THE UNIVERSE
OF THIS
SCOURGE
ONCE AND
FOR ALL.

WE--









...I'M STILL VERY YOUNG BY THEIR STANDARDS, NOT THAT HUMAN KIDS MY CURRENT AGE DON'T HAVE RELATIONSHIPS OF SOME KIND. IT'S JUST... THEIR PARAMETERS OF ATTRACTION ARE SO NARROW.

I REMEMBER MY TIME ON THRAXA... I REMEMBER THOSE PEOPLE... FINDING SOME OF THEM TO BE ATTRACTIVE, EVEN AS YOUNG AS I WAS.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THAT ON EARTH. I FIND SOME EARTH PEOPLE ATTRACTIVE, BUT IT'S ONLY THE MOST UNIQUE AMONG THEM.

MOTHER TOOK ME TO A RESTAURANT ONE TIME THAT HAD A LOBSTER TANK...

I MEAN, I STILL ATE ONE... BUT I THOUGHT IT WAS... BEAUTIFUL.

THERE ARE SOME GIRLS I COULD INTRODUCE YOU TO ON TALESCRIA. THE DAUGHTER OF THE WOMAN WHO LIVES NEXT TO ME IN MY BUILDING HAS A... SIMILAR APPEARANCE.

HAVE YOU ENJOYED YOUR WALK?

I GET THAT YOU GREW FOND OF THIS DURING YOUR TIME ON EARTH... BUT FOR ME, I DID A LOT OF THIS BEFORE I COULD FLY.

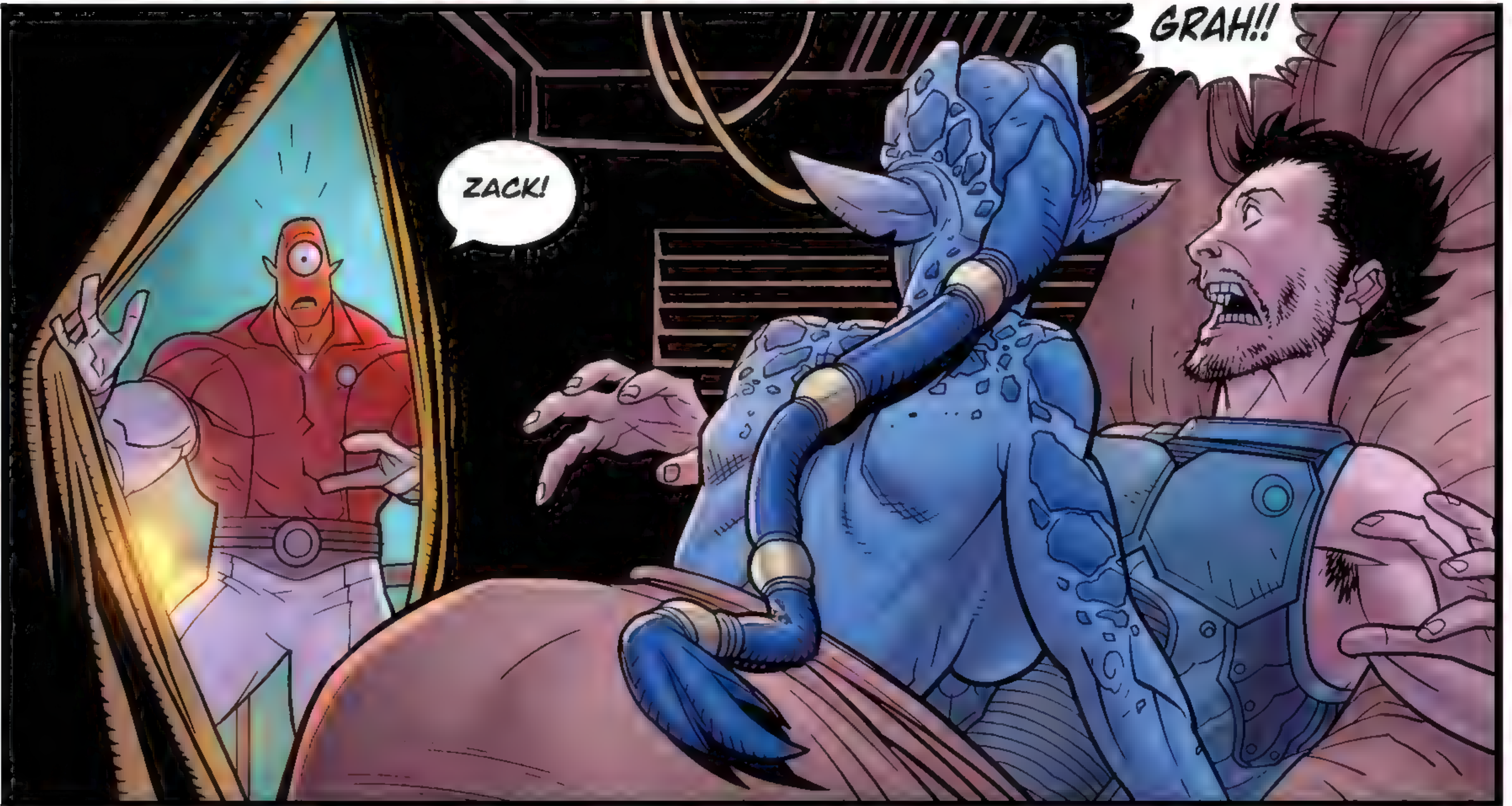
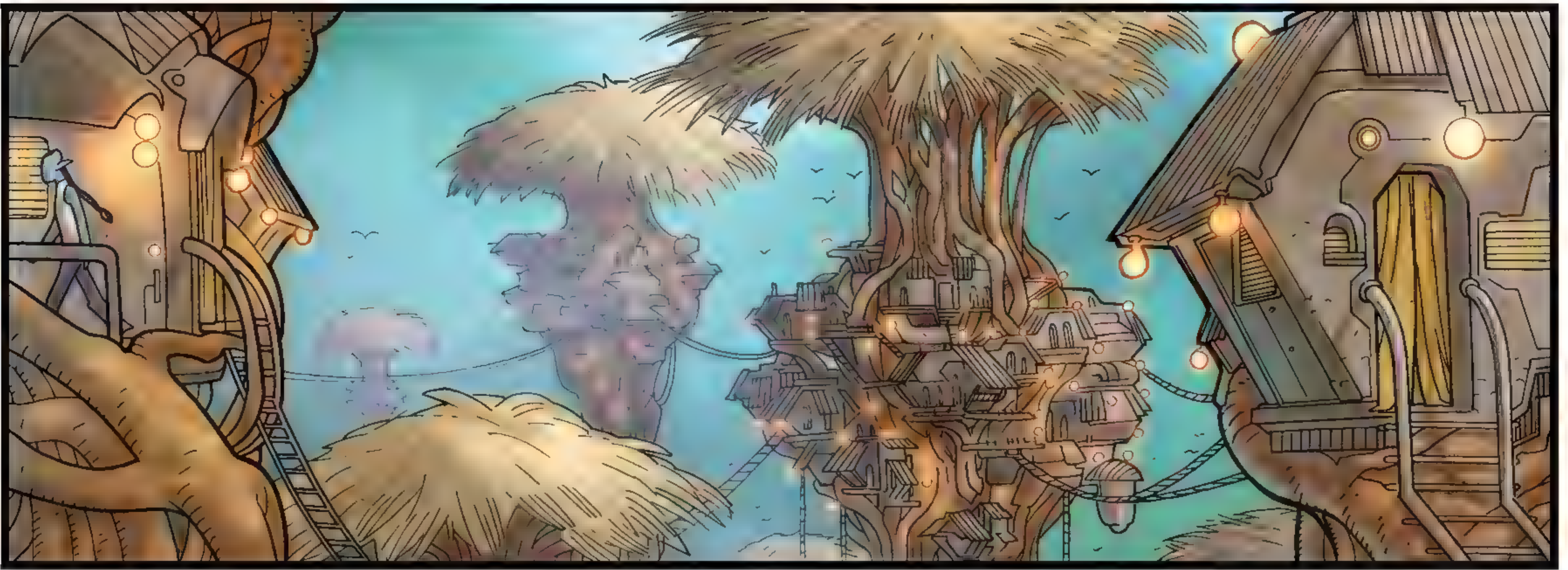
NOW THAT I KNOW I CAN FLY... I JUST DON'T SEE THE POINT.

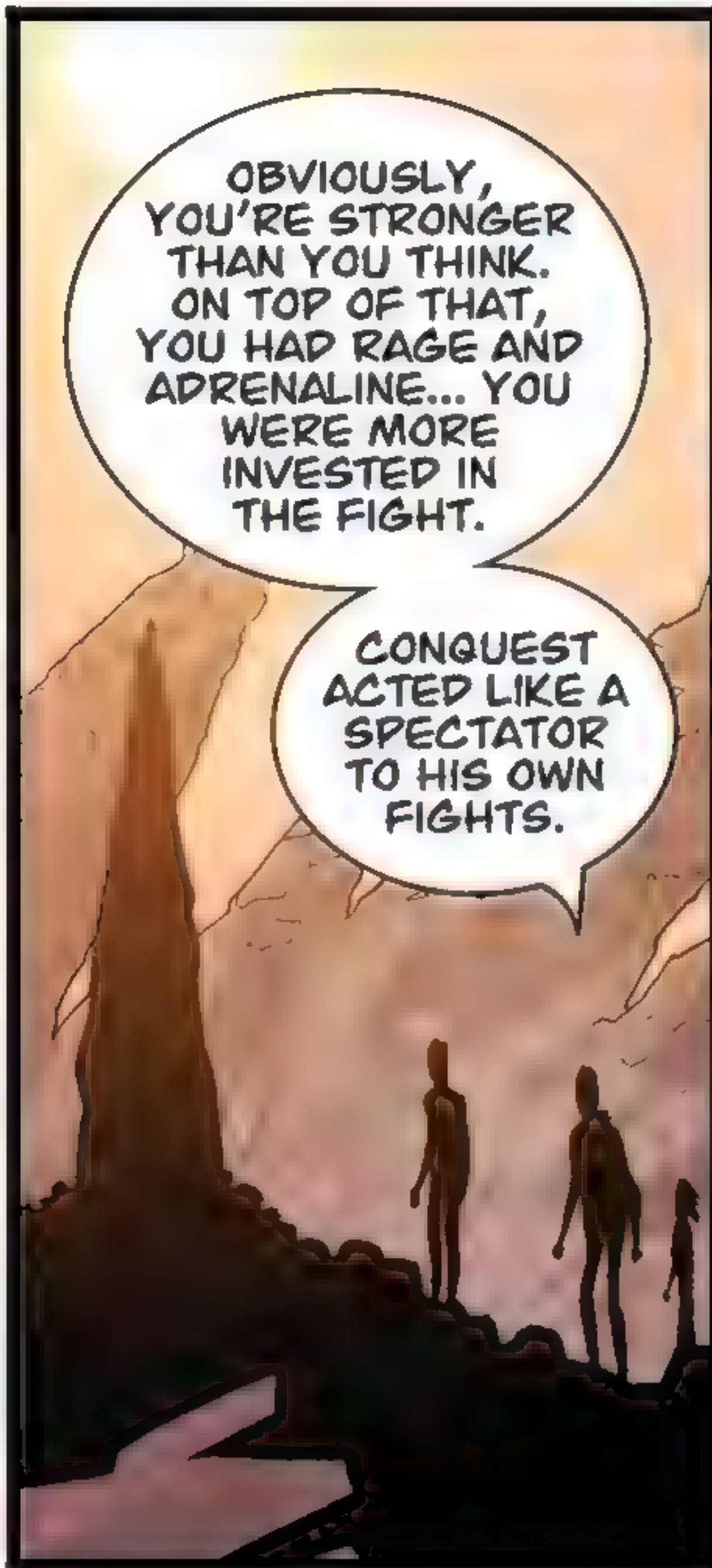
IT'S ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE. YOU SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY WHEN--

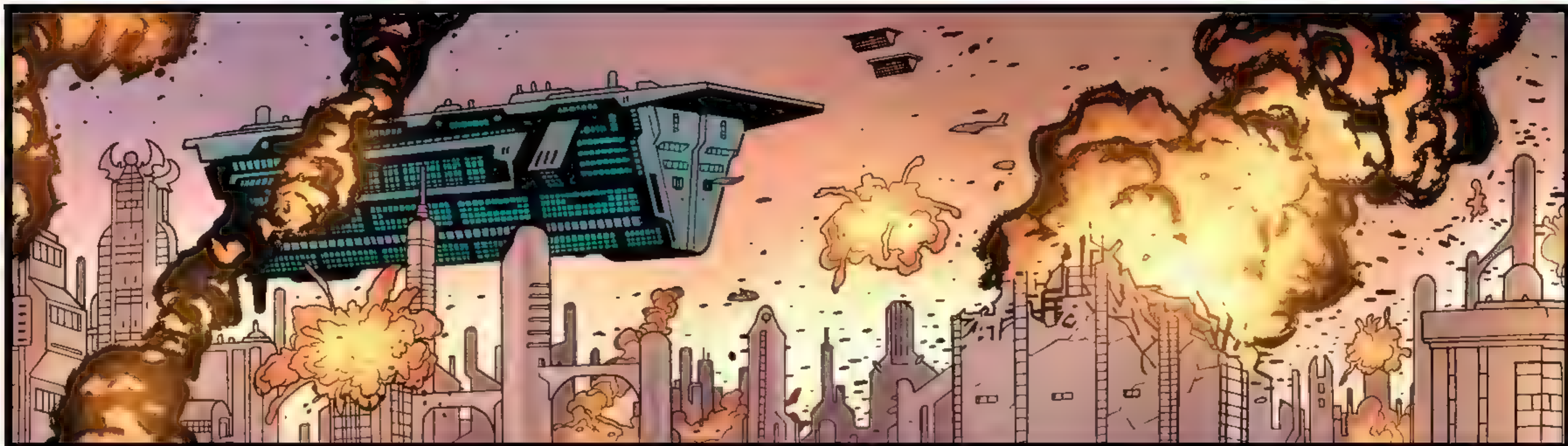
DAD?

AHEAD, IN THE CAMP. WHAT IS--?!









THE
COALITION OF
PLANETS...

FOR
THOUSANDS
OF YEARS WE
REIGNED
UNOPPOSED
ACROSS THE
GALAXY, UNTIL
HIM...

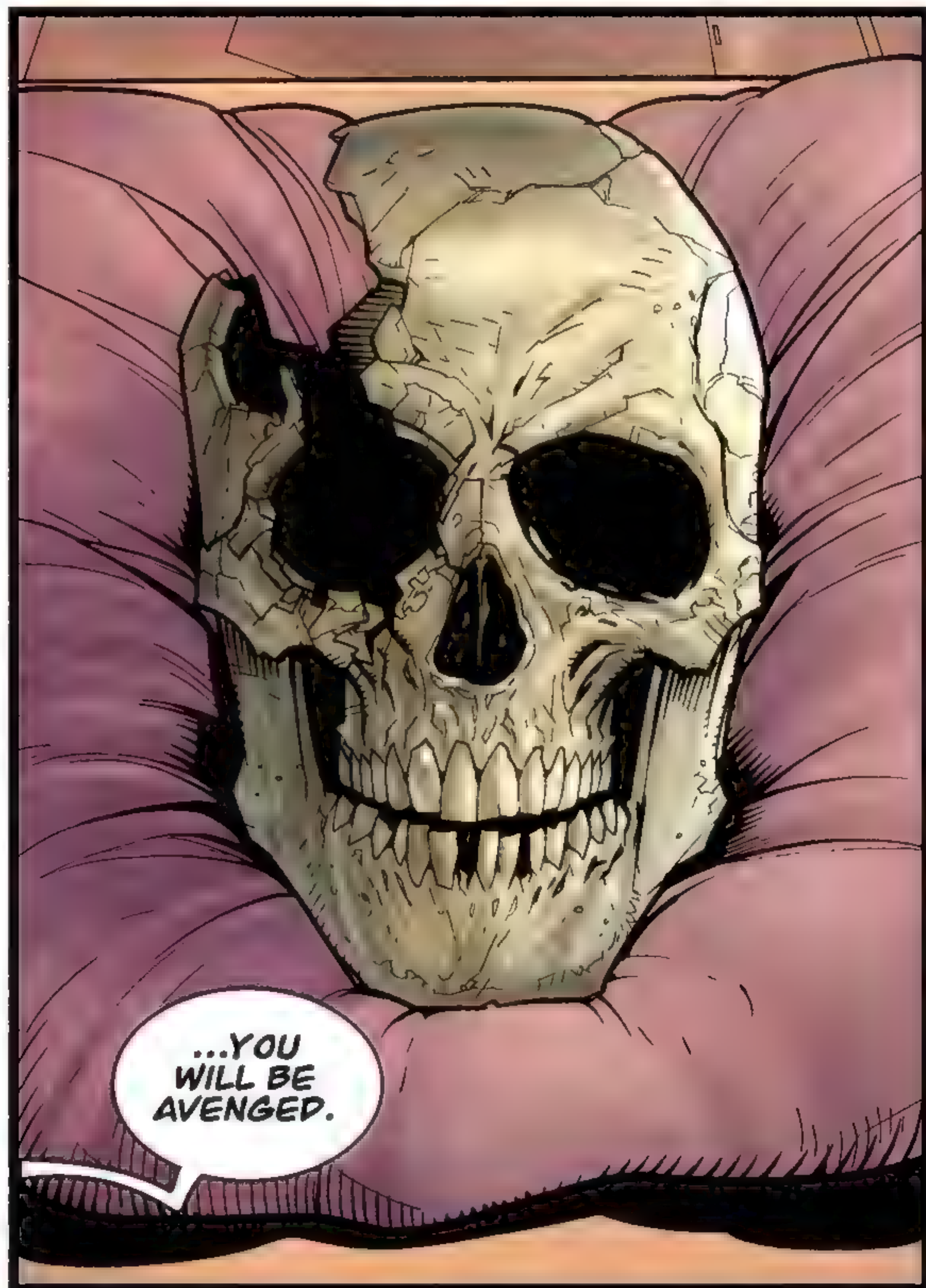
...UNTIL
THAEDUS.

THE
BETRAIDER ON
EARTH AND HIS SON...
IT ALL STARTED WITH
THAEDUS--WITH HIS
BETRAYAL. HE WAS
THE PROGENITOR OF
OUR DEMISE... WHAT'S
BROUGHT US TO
THIS CURRENT...
SORRY... STATE.

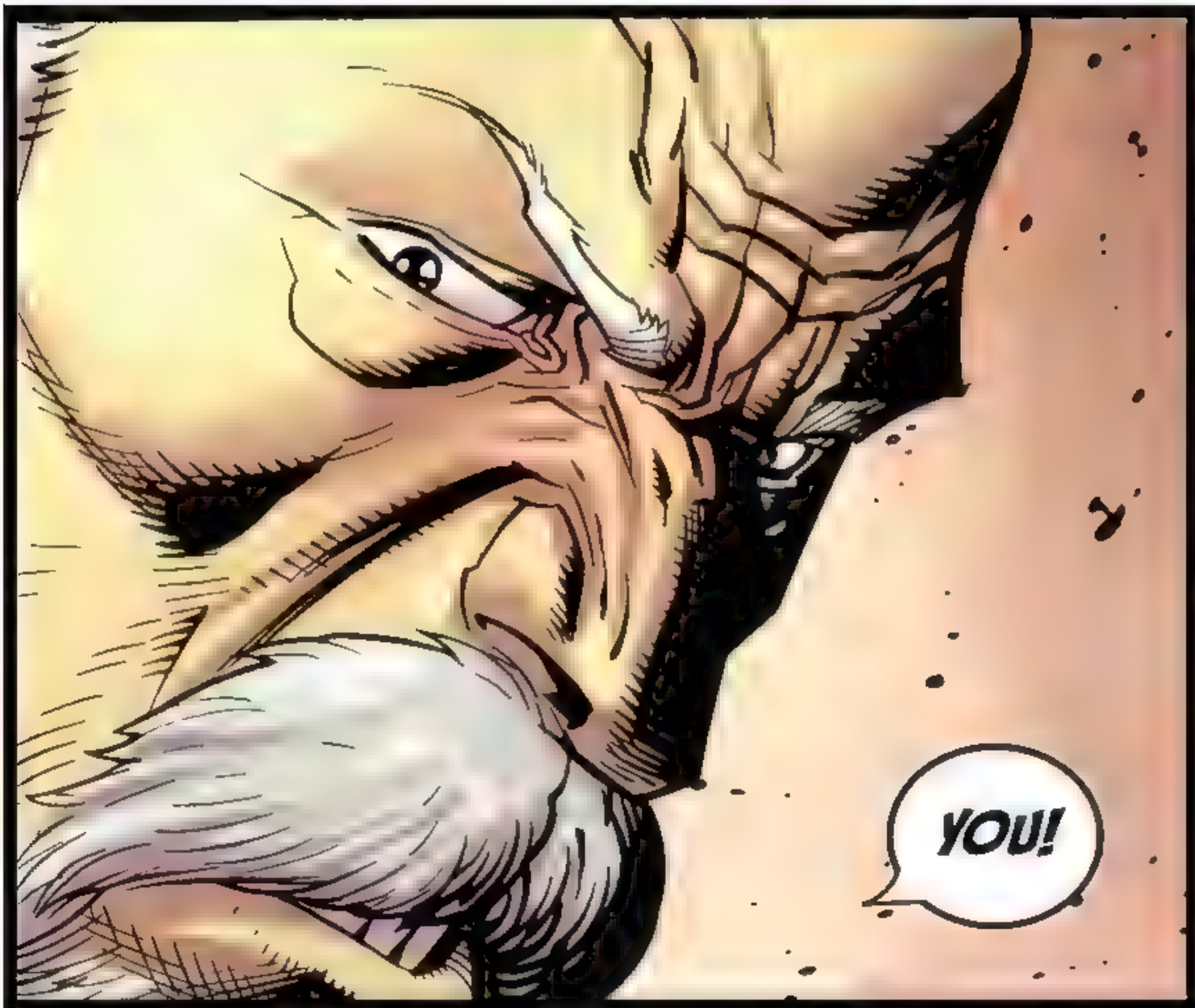
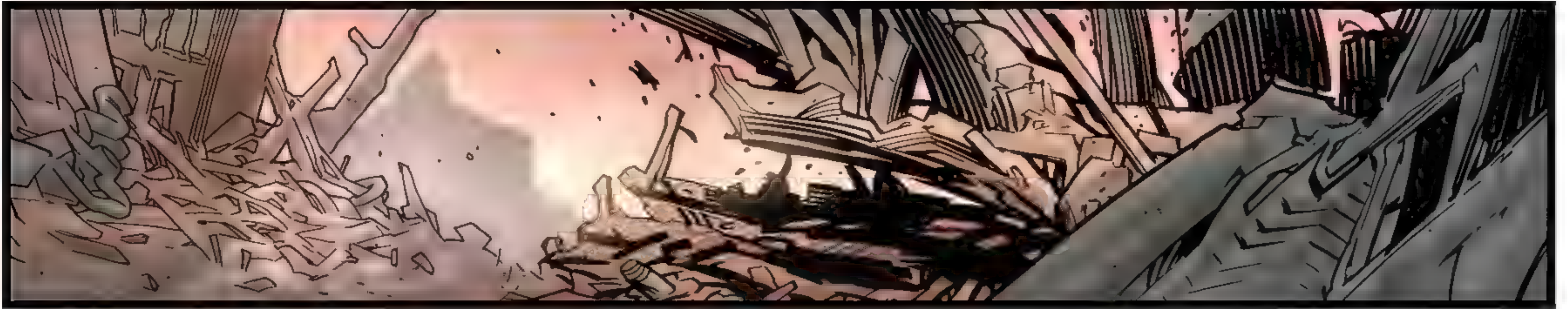
AS THE BATTLE RAGES
ACROSS OUR PLANETS--
OUR CONTROL OF THE
GALAXY BEGINS SLIPPING
THROUGH OUR GRASP--
WE HAVE BROUGHT
THE FIGHT TO HIM...
TO TALESCRIA.

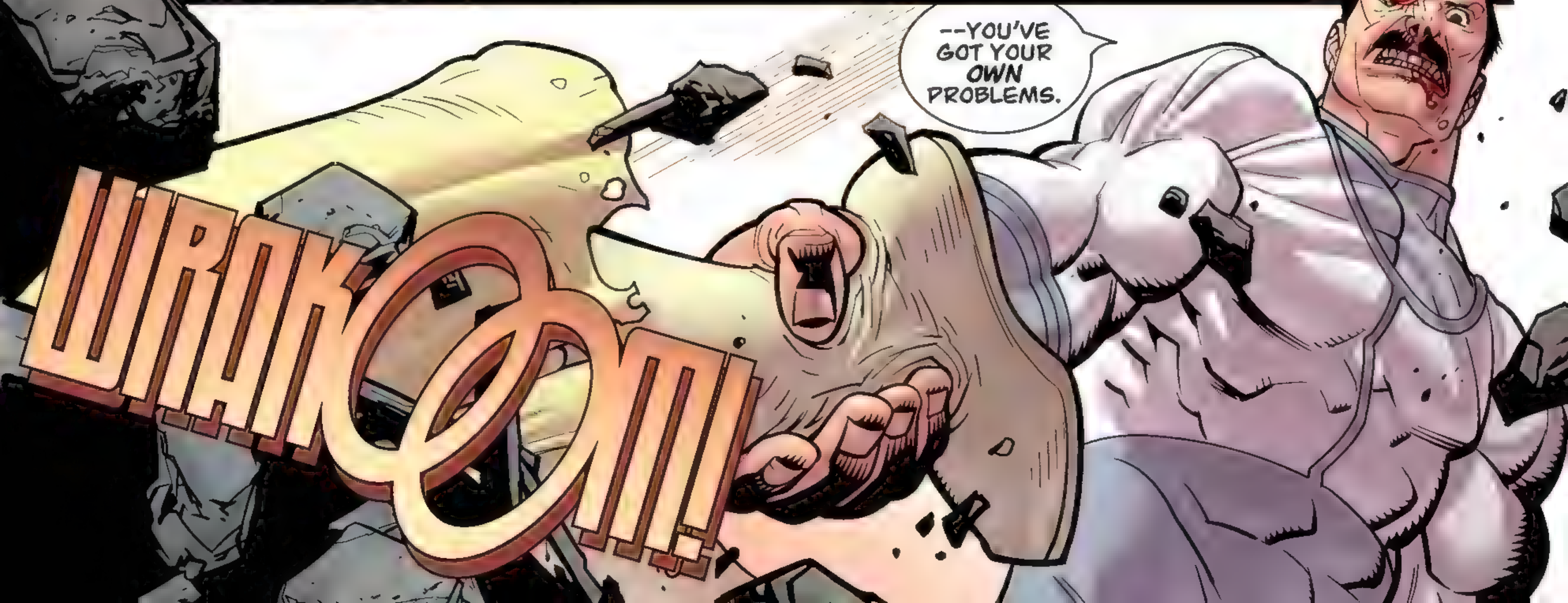
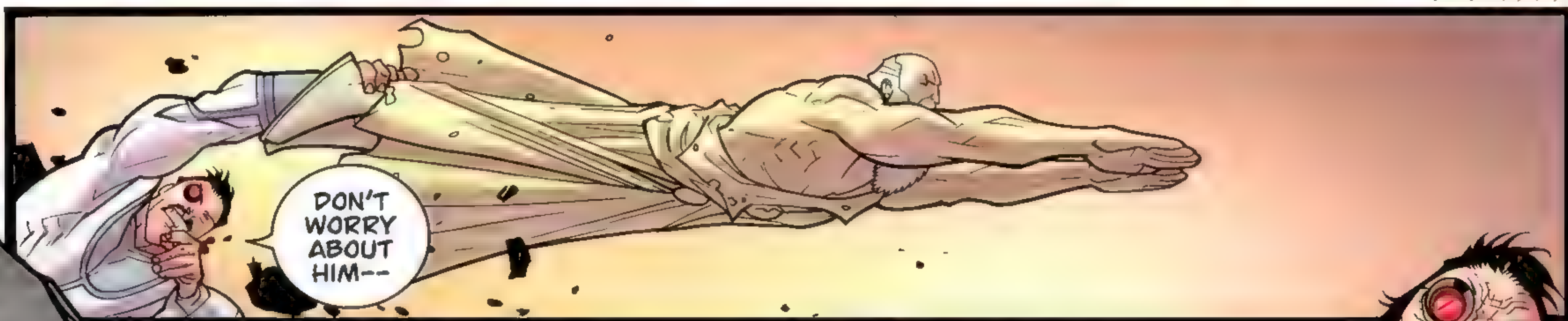
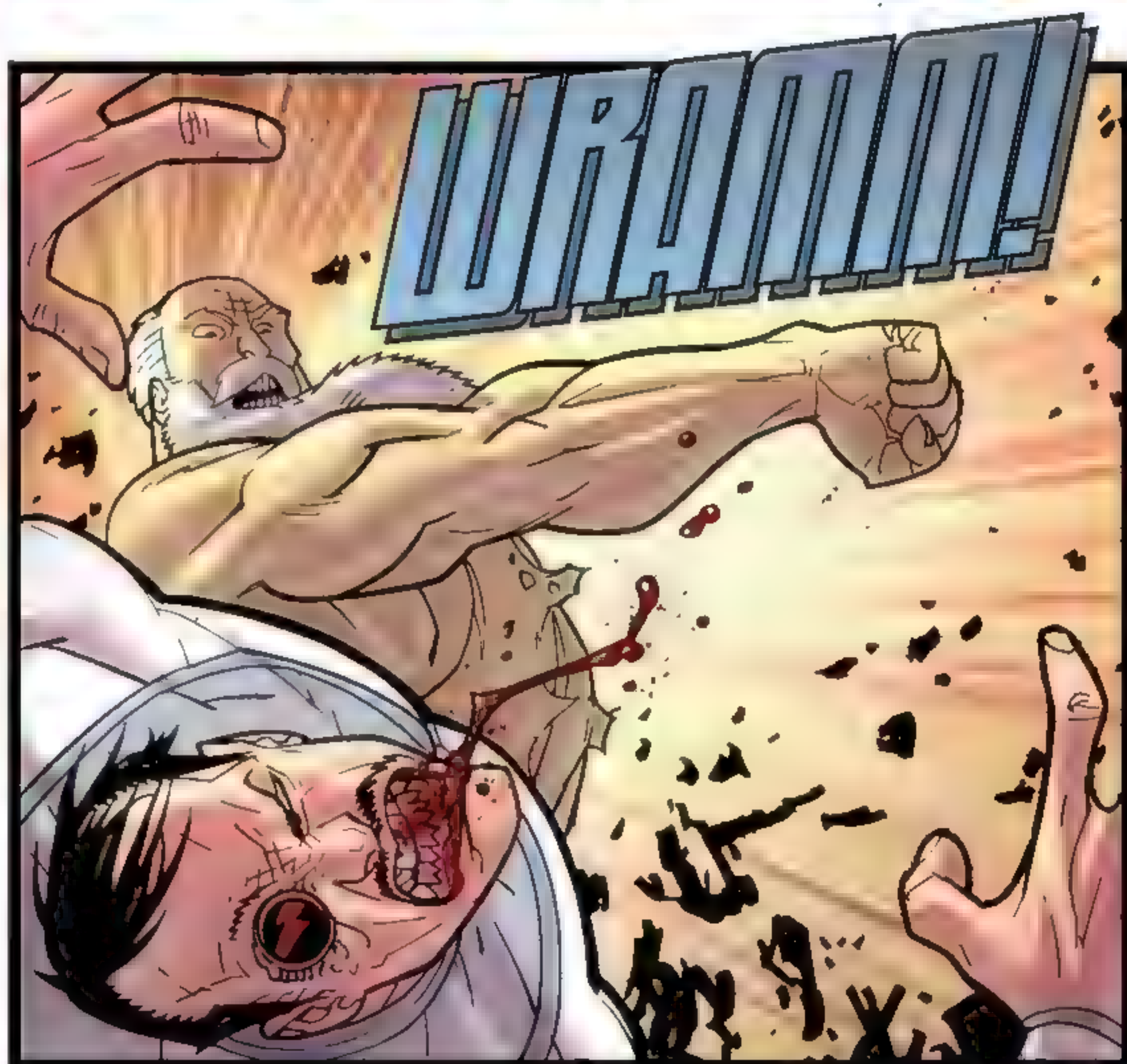
WITH THAEDUS
DEAD AND THE
COALITION IN DISARRAY,
THIS WAR WILL BE
OVER, WE WILL BE
THE VICTORS.

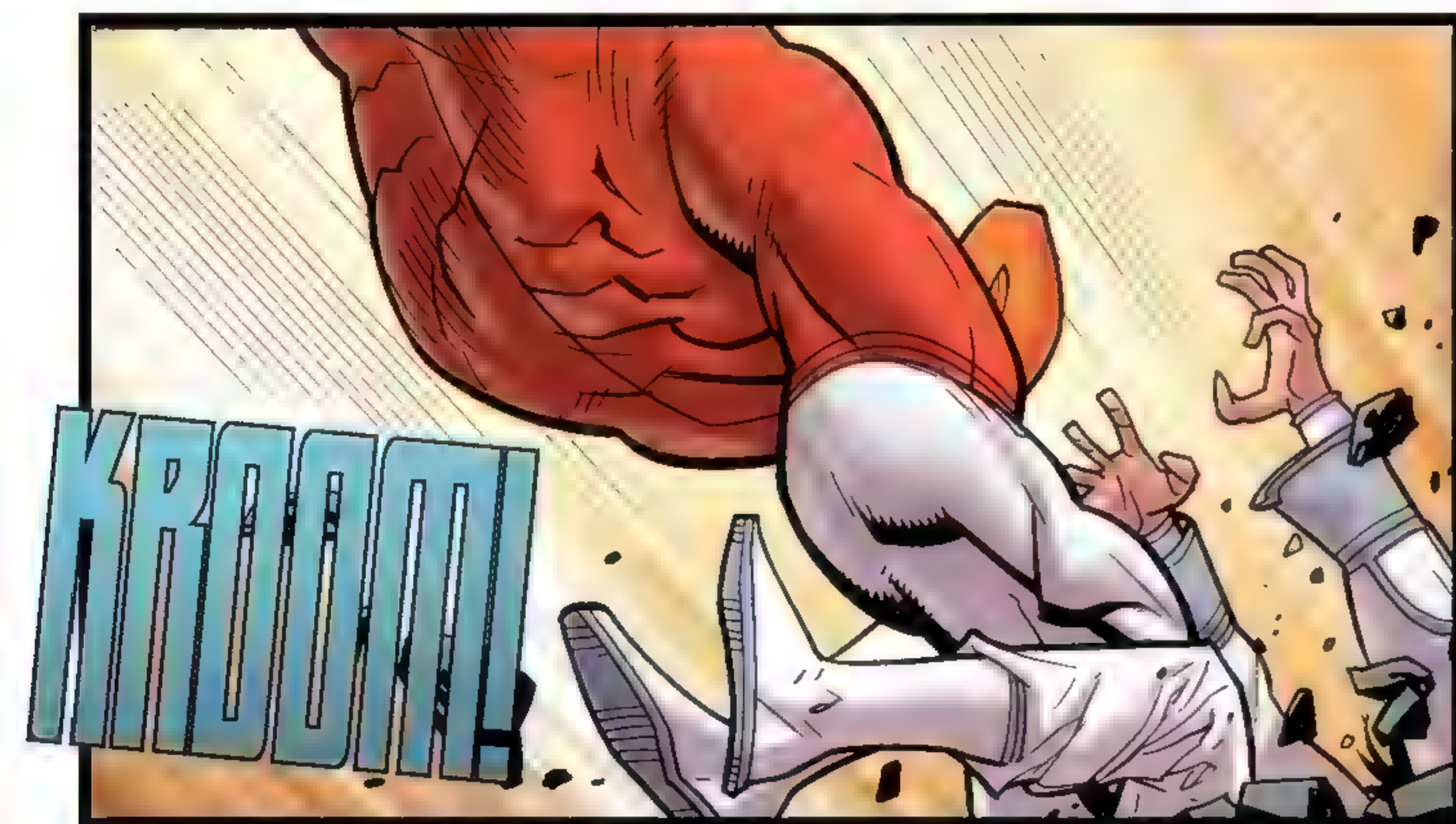
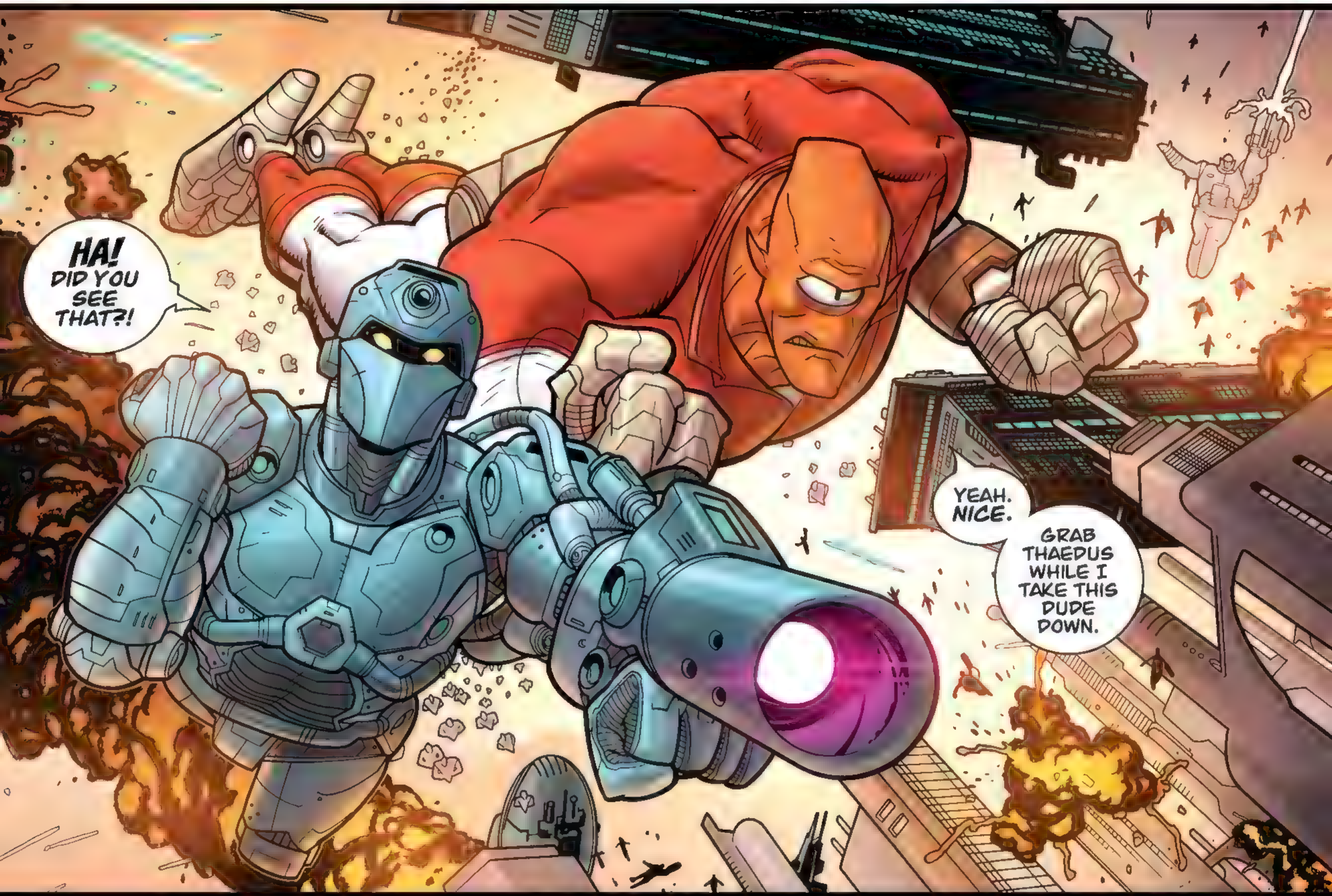
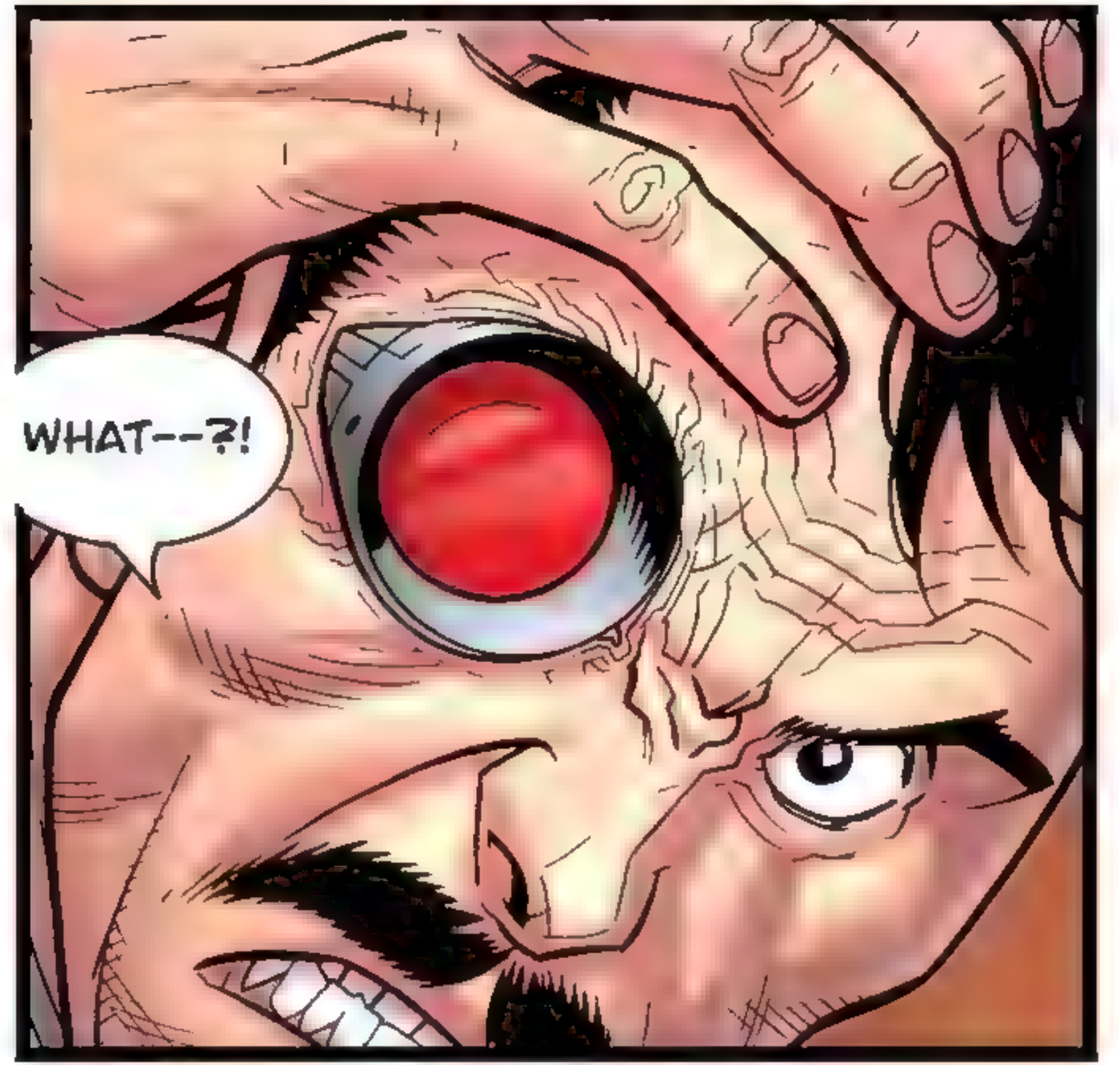
AND
YOU, MY
LIEGE...



...YOU
WILL BE
AVENGED.



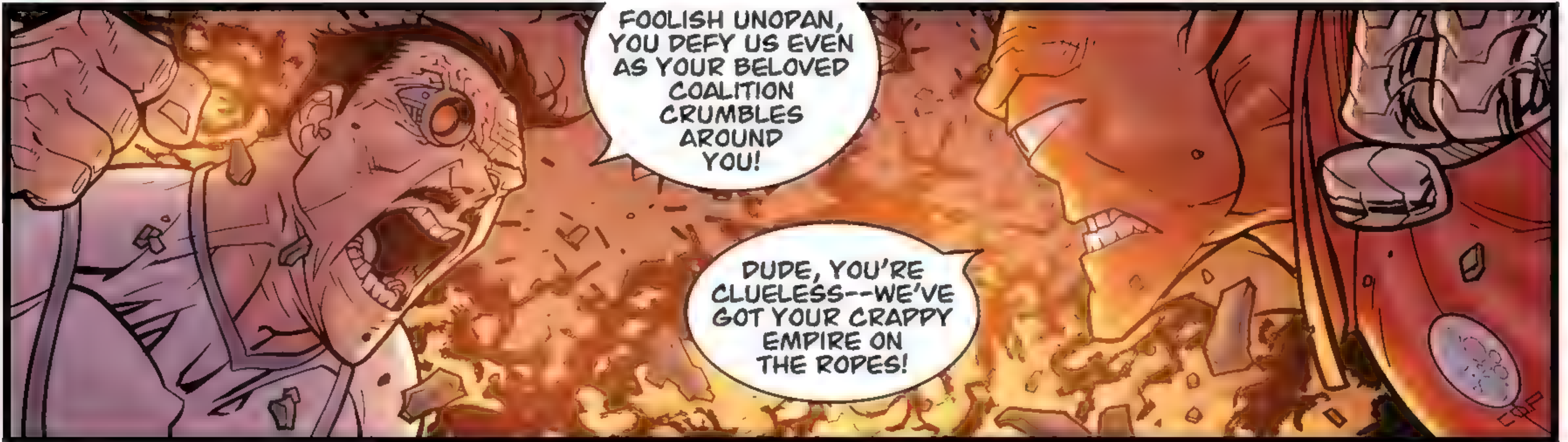
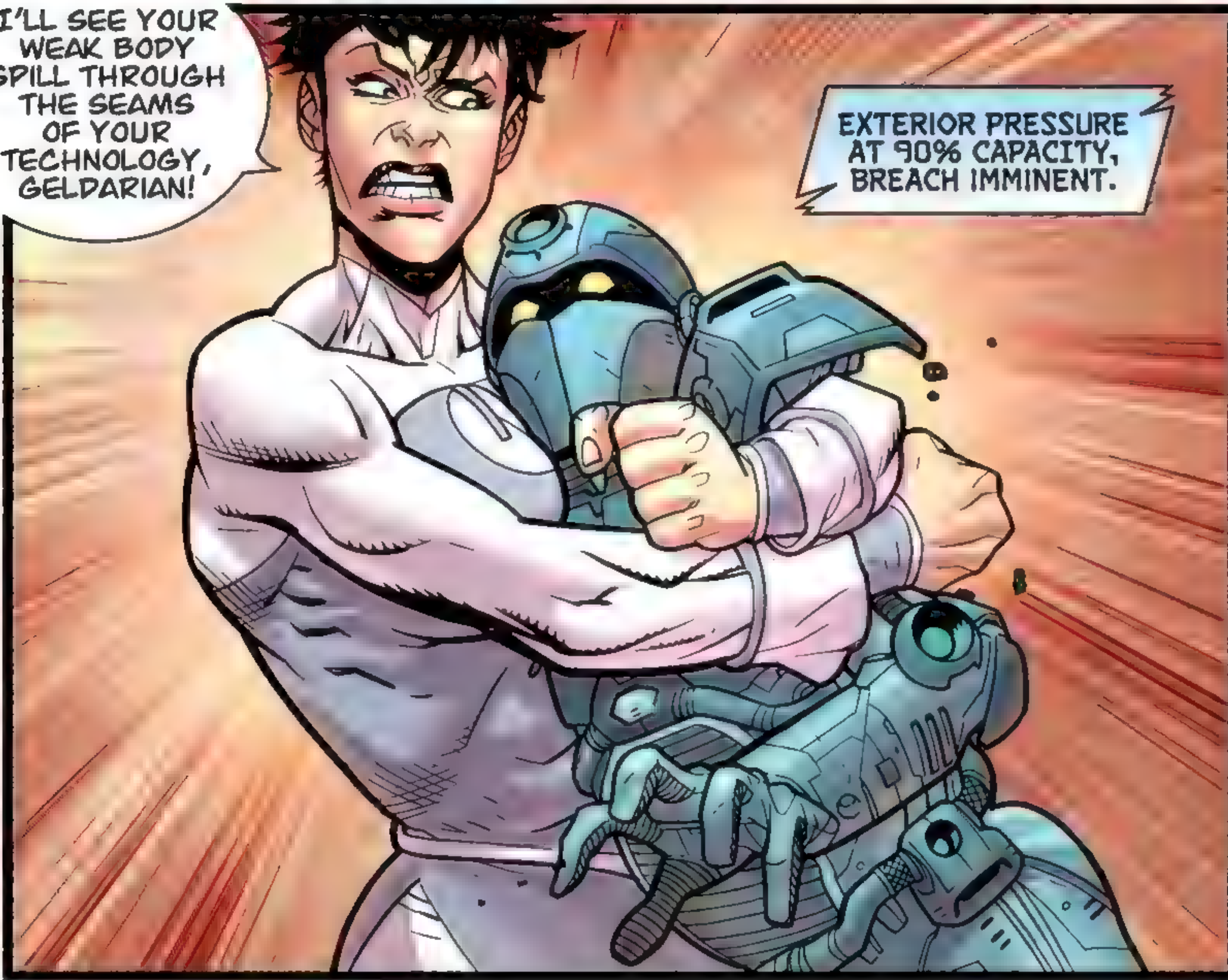






I'LL SEE YOUR WEAK BODY SPILL THROUGH THE SEAMS OF YOUR TECHNOLOGY, GELDARIAN!

EXTERIOR PRESSURE AT 90% CAPACITY, BREACH IMMINENT.



FOOLISH UNOPAN, YOU DEFY US EVEN AS YOUR BELOVED COALITION CRUMBLES AROUND YOU!

DUDE, YOU'RE CLUELESS--WE'VE GOT YOUR CRAPPY EMPIRE ON THE ROPES!



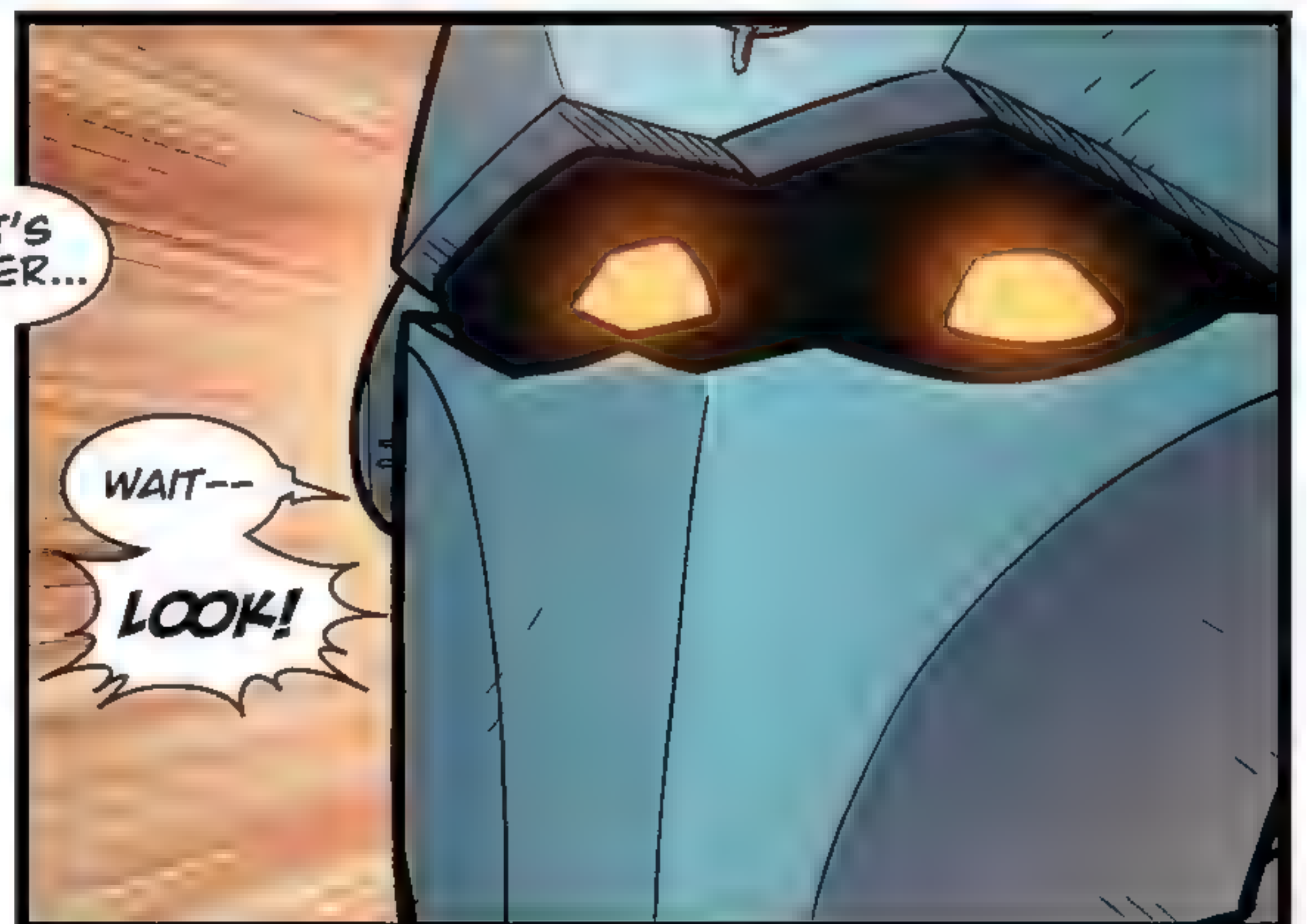
BEFORE SHE GETS UP--WE GOTTA HELP ALLEN.

NO, ALLEN CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF. WE MUST FLEE, GATHER WHAT TROOPS WE CAN TO REGROUP. OUR CAUSE IS ALL BUT LOST.

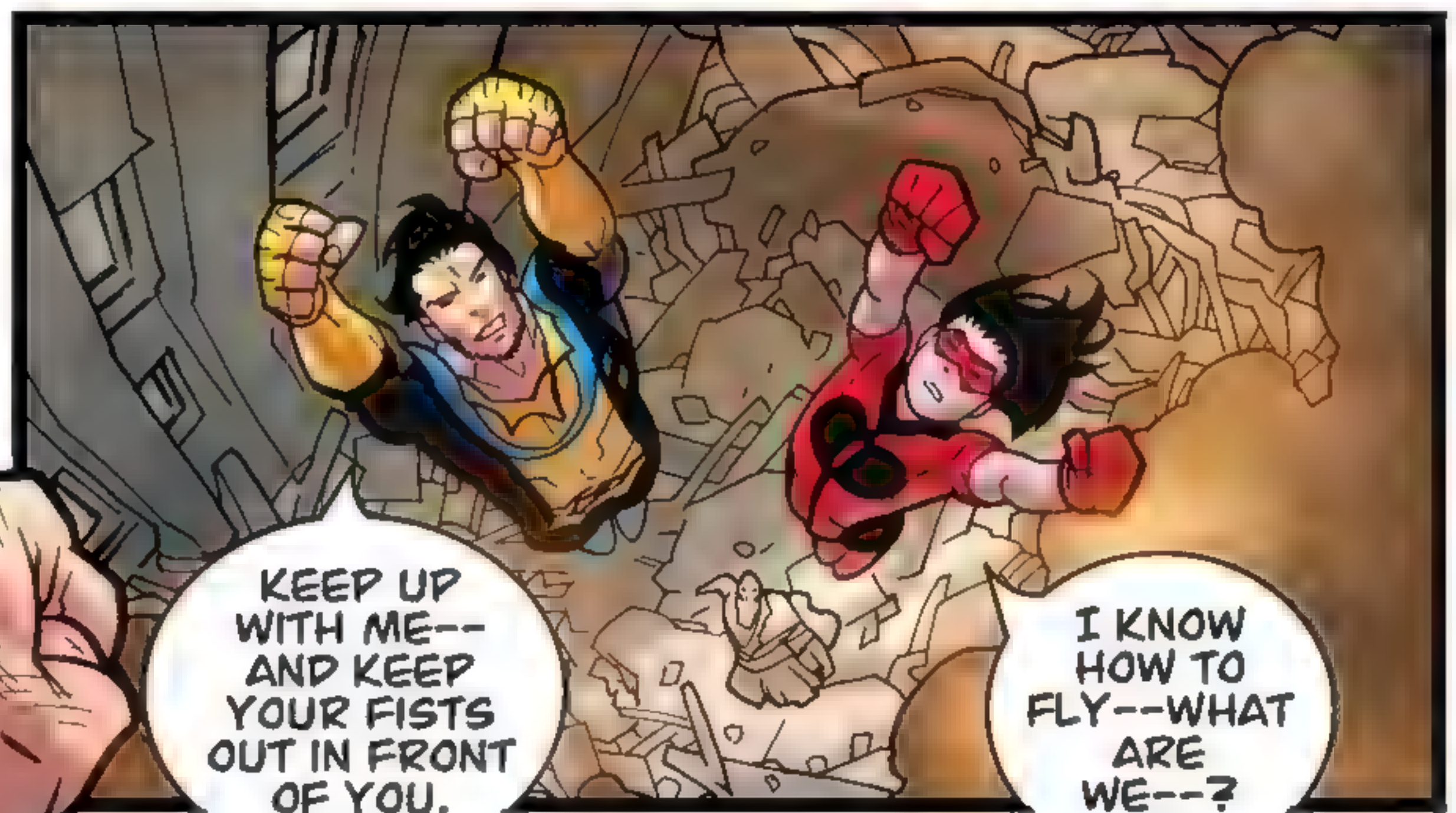
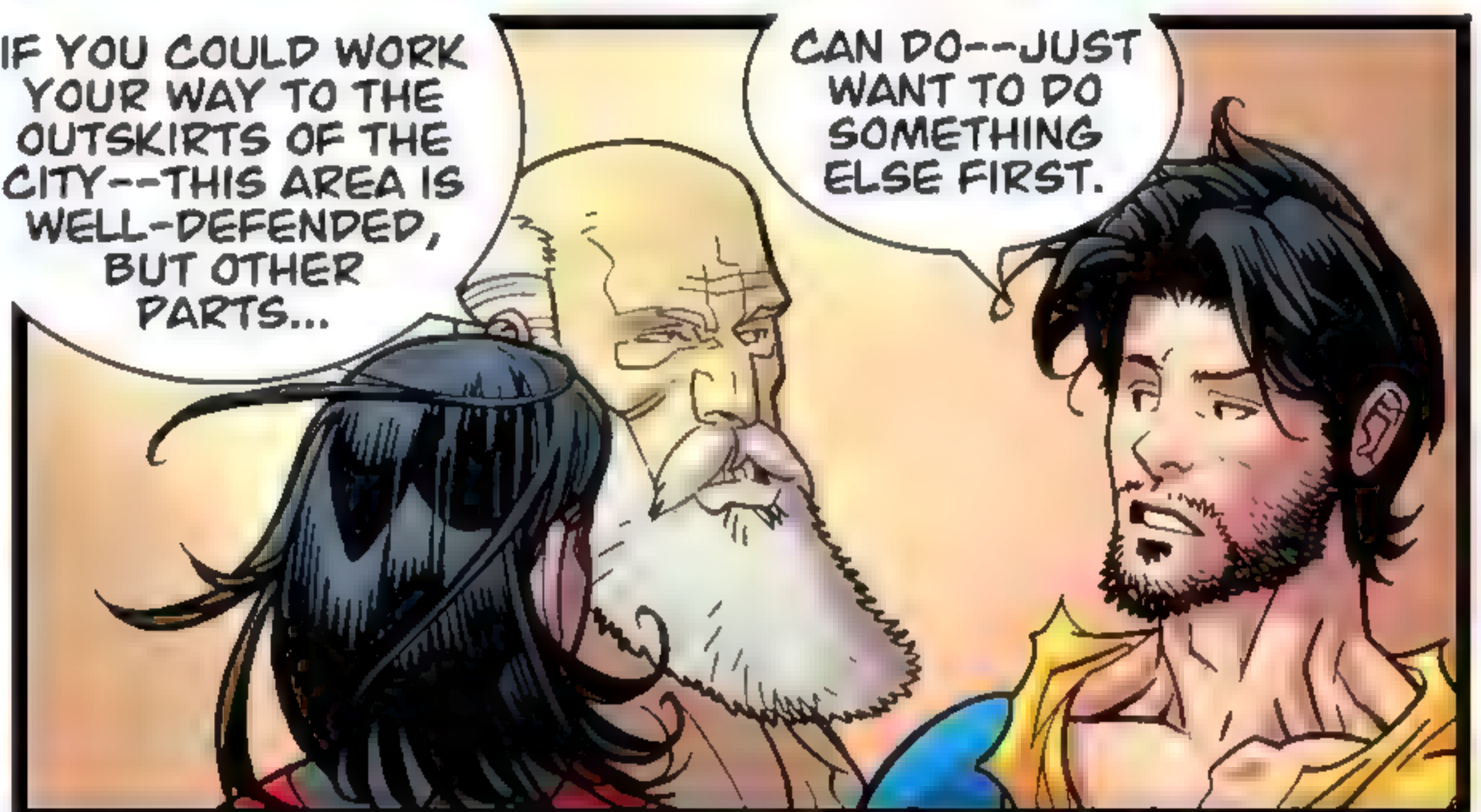
I NEVER CONSIDERED THEY'D FIND US HERE-- I'VE SPREAD US TOO THIN...

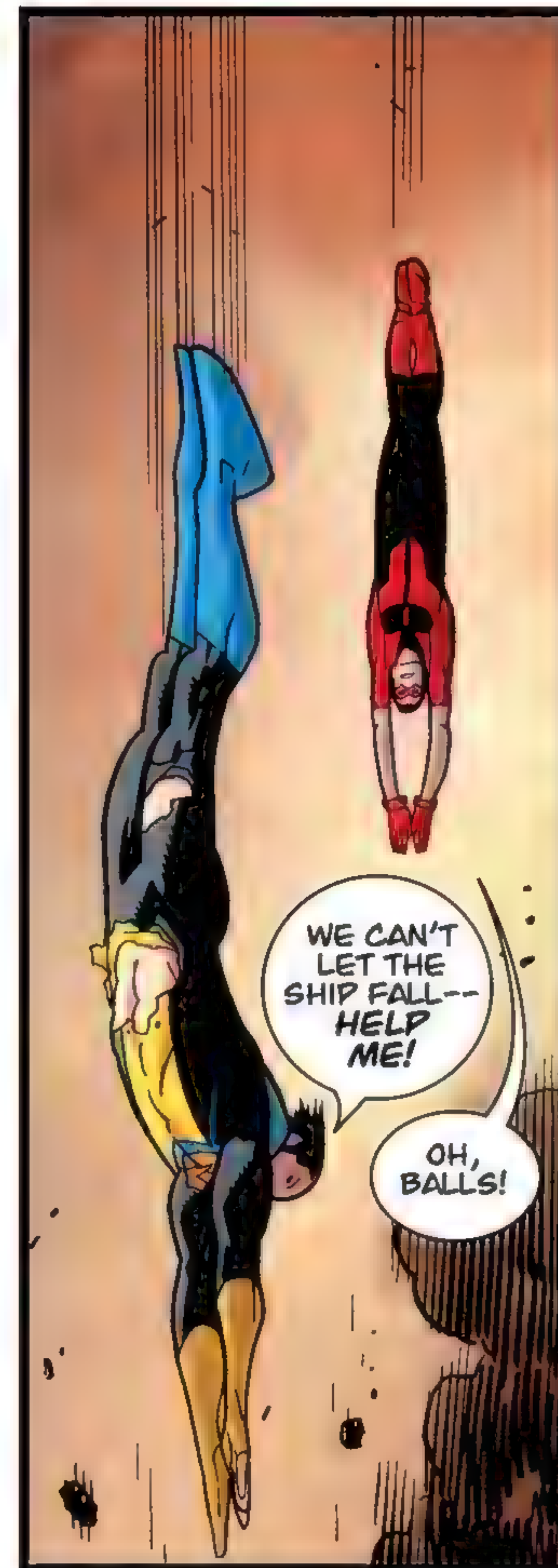
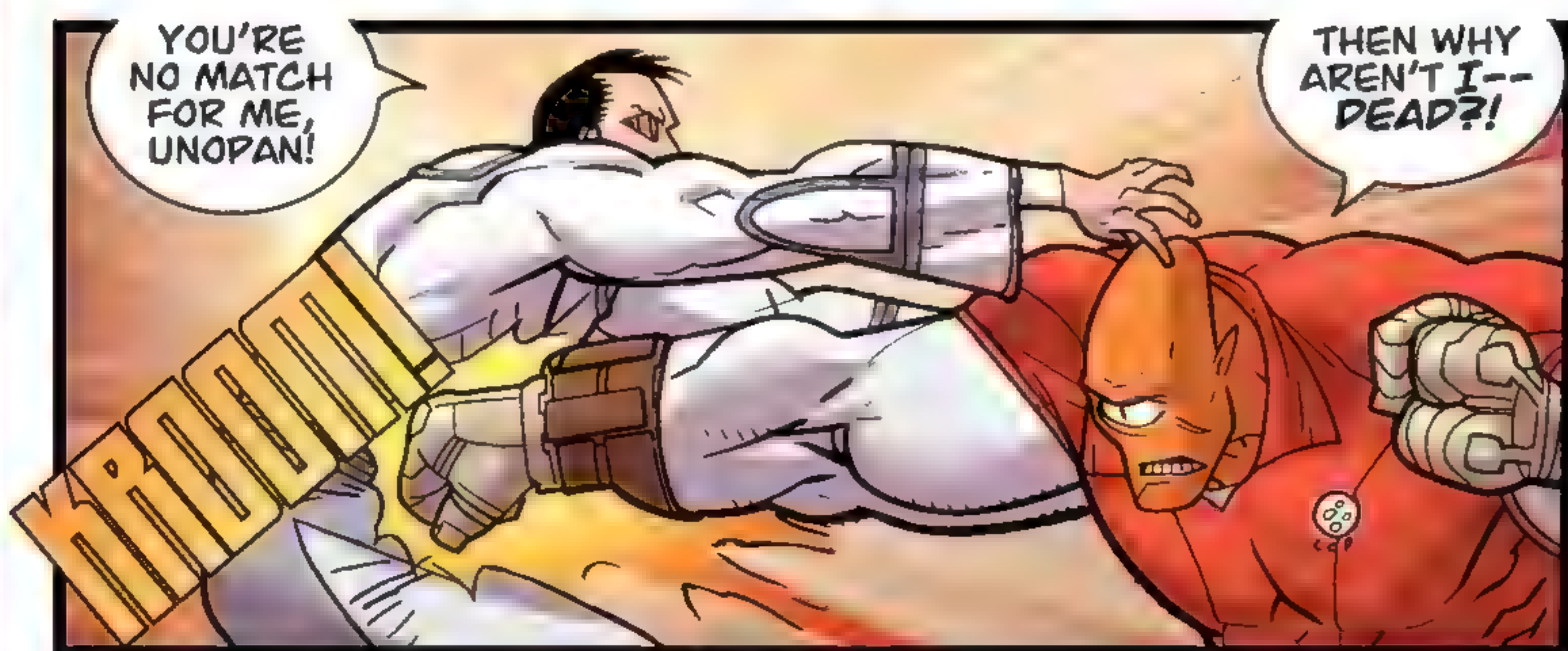
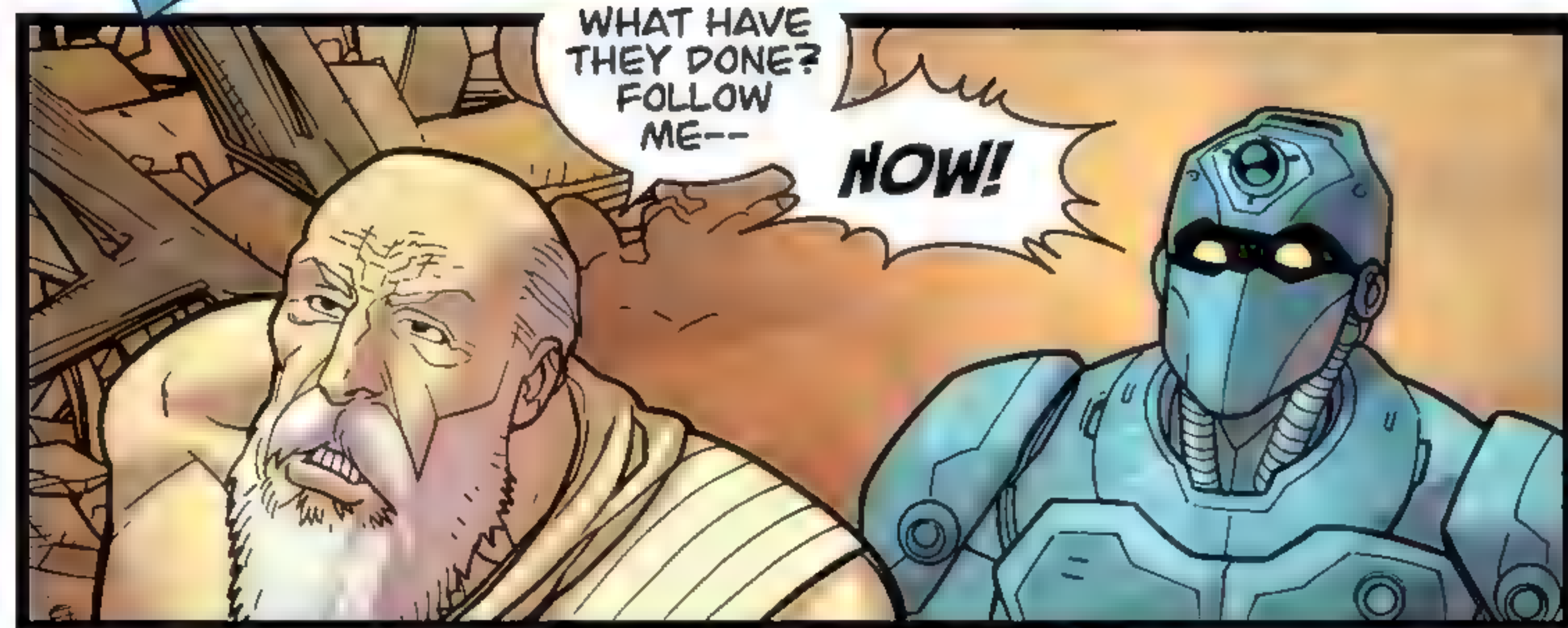
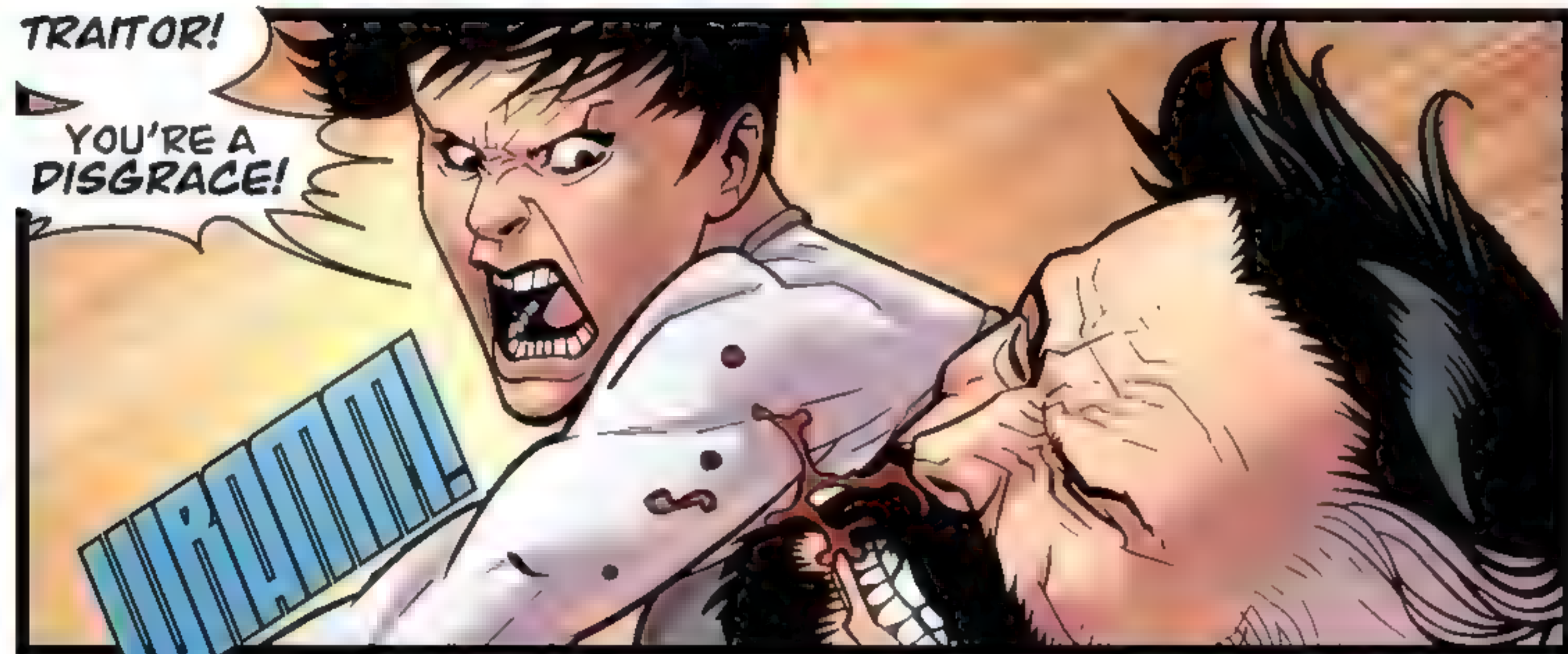
IT'S OVER...

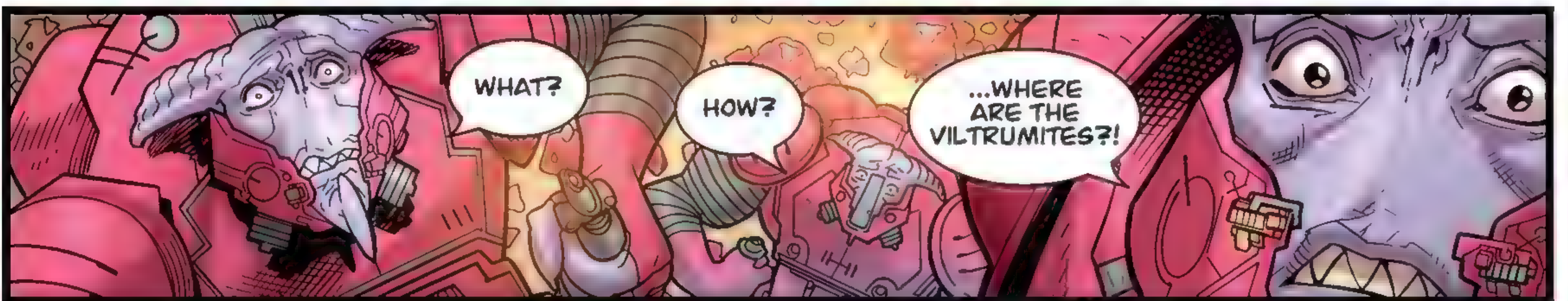
WAIT--
LOOK!















LOOK WHAT YOU MADE ME DO! YOU THINK I WANTED THIS?! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WERE WORKING FOR THEM!

TALK! TELL ME WHAT THE VILTRUMITES' PLANS ARE! TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW.



DON'T MAKE ME SHOOT YOU AGAIN!



ENOUGH.

LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE-- YOU BROUGHT THEM HERE, YOU CAUSED THIS DESTRUCTION--YOU'VE BETRAYED US ALL.

YOU WILL PAY FOR THESE CRIMES--BUT FIRST, TELL US WHERE THE VILTRUMITES ARE GOING--RIGHT NOW.

DOESN'T MATTER NOW--DOESN'T MATTER AT ALL.

IT'S TOO LATE, YOU'VE GOT NO HOPE OF WINNING THIS WAR. THEY SAID-- THEY--

IF THIS BATTLE WAS LOST, THEY WERE TO RECONVENE ON THE PLANET VILTRUM TO STAGE A COUNTER-ATTACK.

YOU DON'T STAND A CHANCE. THEY'RE ALL GOING THERE--

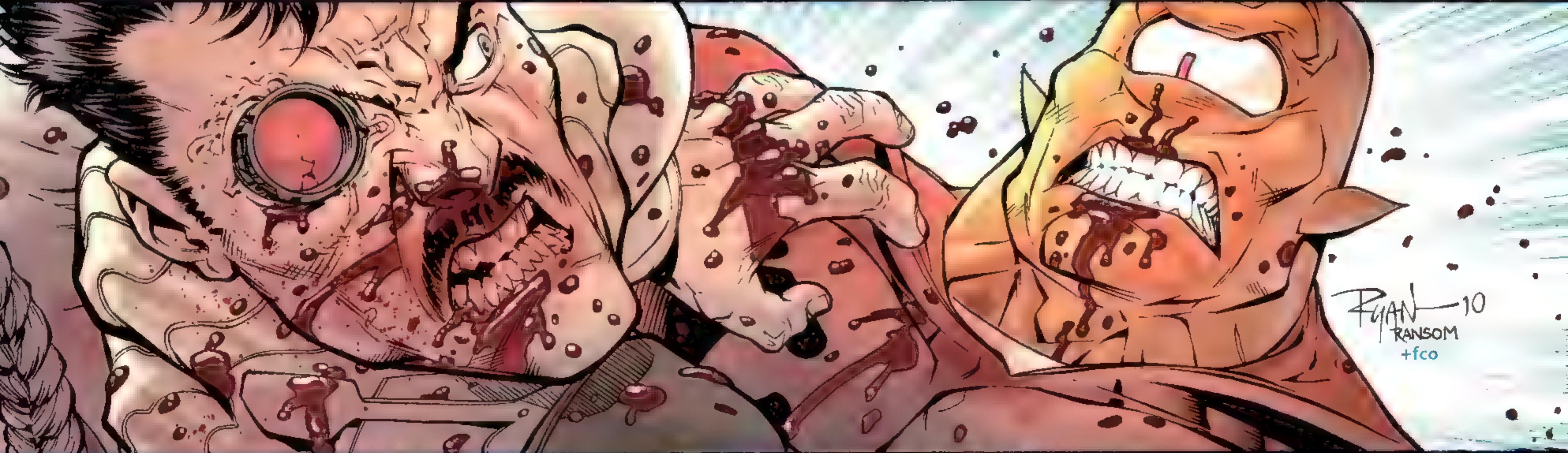
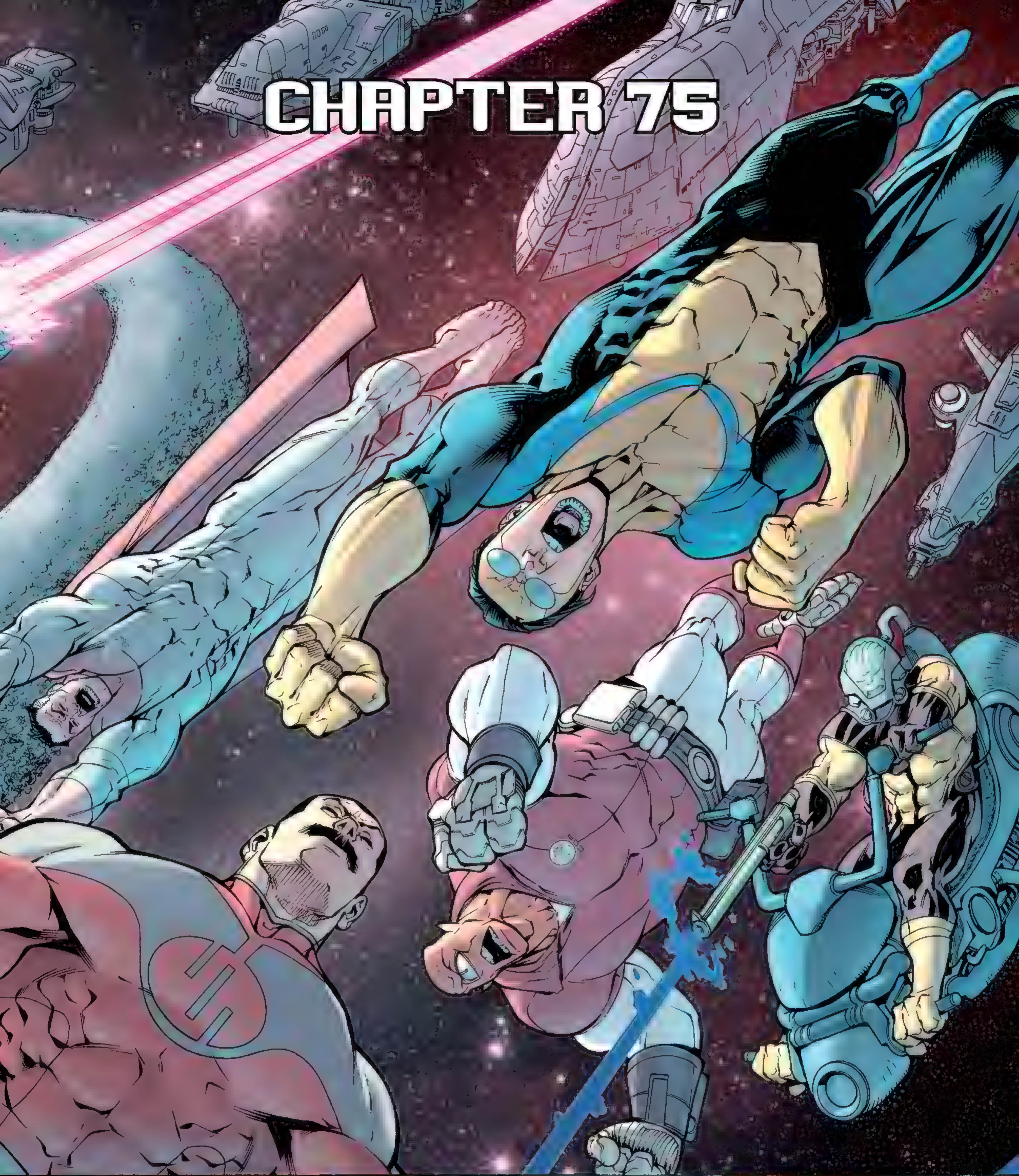
ALL OF THEM.

IT'S OVER.



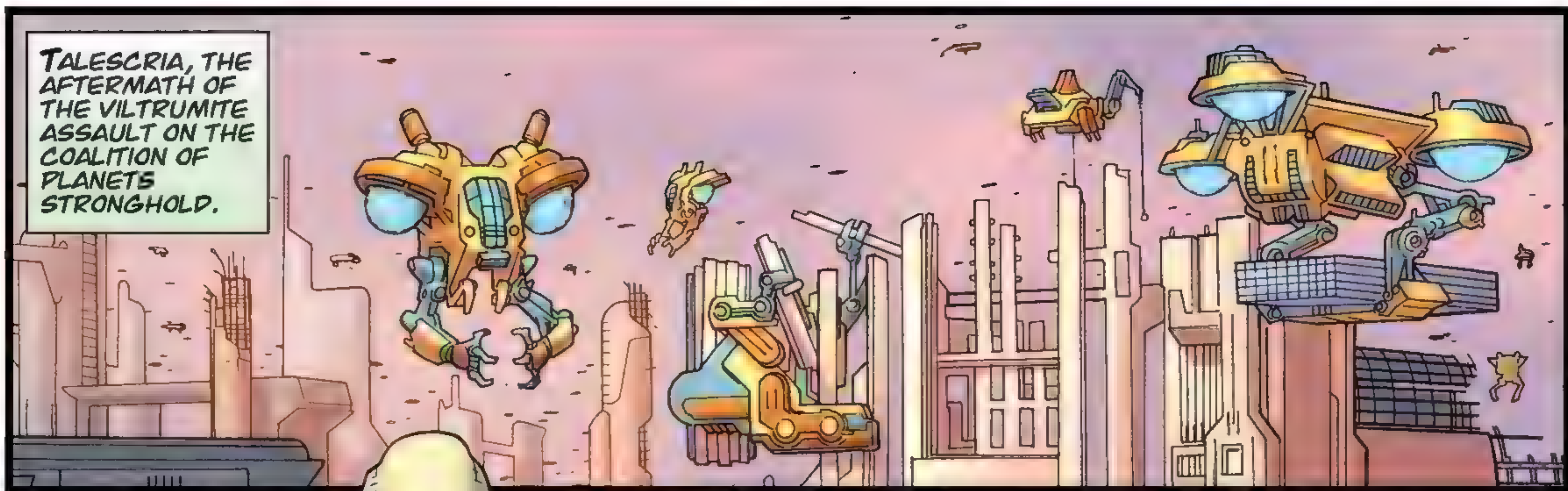


CHAPTER 75



RYAN-10
RANSOM
+fco

TALESCRIA, THE AFTERMATH OF THE VILTRUMITE ASSAULT ON THE COALITION OF PLANETS STRONGHOLD.



THE VILTRUMITE WAR IS OVER.

OVER THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS WE'VE RECEIVED WORD FROM NEARLY EIGHTY-PERCENT OF THE WORLDS COUNTED AS PART OF THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

THEY'VE BEEN ABANDONED BY THEIR VILTRUMITE OVERLORDS. SEEING THAT WE NOW HAVE VILTRUMITES ON OUR SIDE HAS TURNED THEM TO OUR FAVOR.

THEY SEE THE COALITION AS BEING **STRONGER** THAN THE EMPIRE, AND WITHOUT THEIR BOSSES WATCHING OVER THEM...

...THEY'VE SWITCHED SIDES.



BUT WHERE HAVE THESE VILTRUMITES GONE?

THEIR RECENT DISAPPEARANCE SEEMS TO CORROBORATE MY ASSISTANT'S INTEL ABOUT THE VILTRUMITES REGROUPING ON VILTRUM, STAGING ONE FINAL STRIKE AGAINST US.

THIS IS THEIR LAST GASP--AND IT WILL NOT SUCCEED.

WE WILL LAUNCH A COUNTER-ATTACK. WE WILL STRIKE BEFORE THEY HAVE TIME TO DO ANY PLANNING.

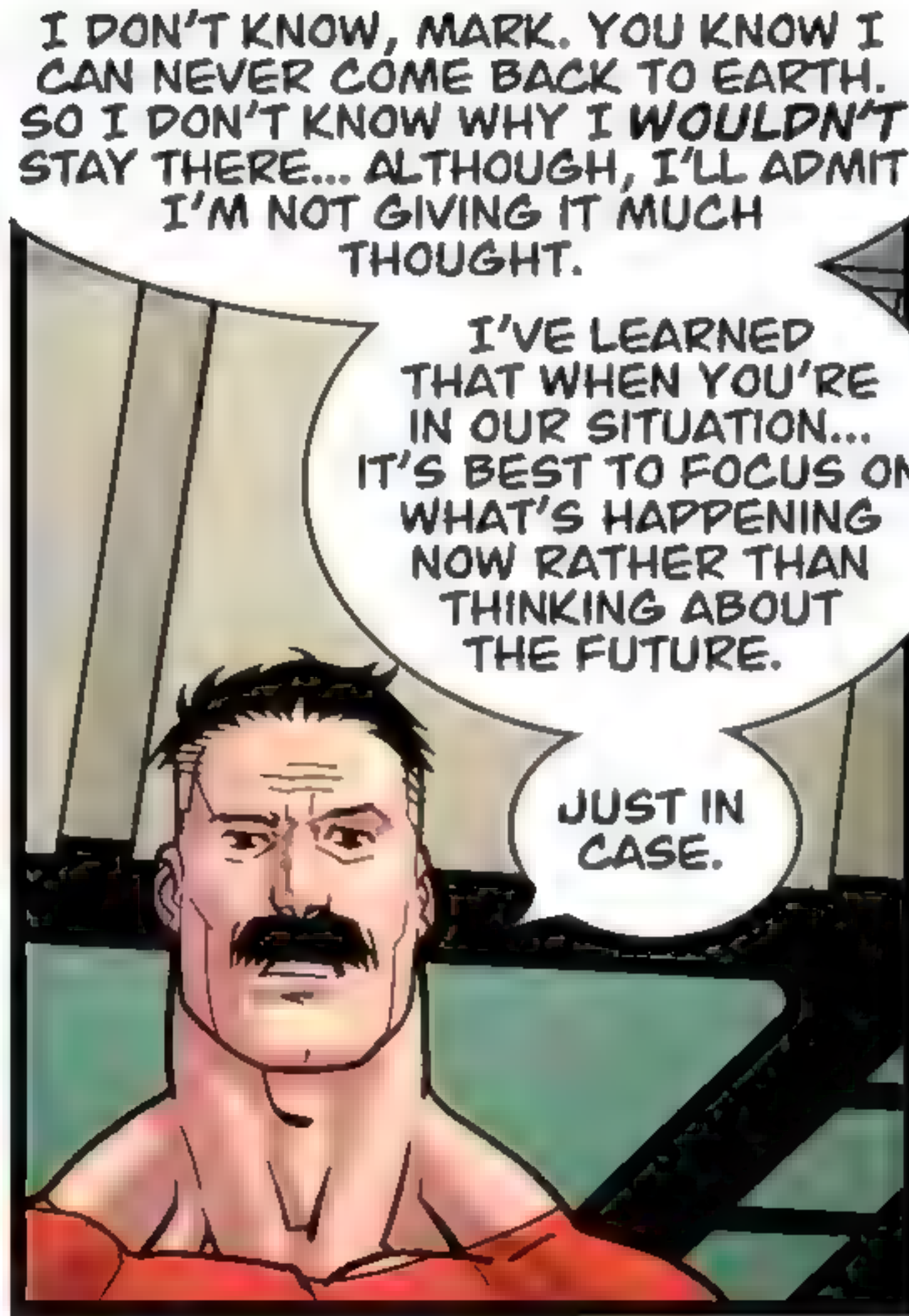
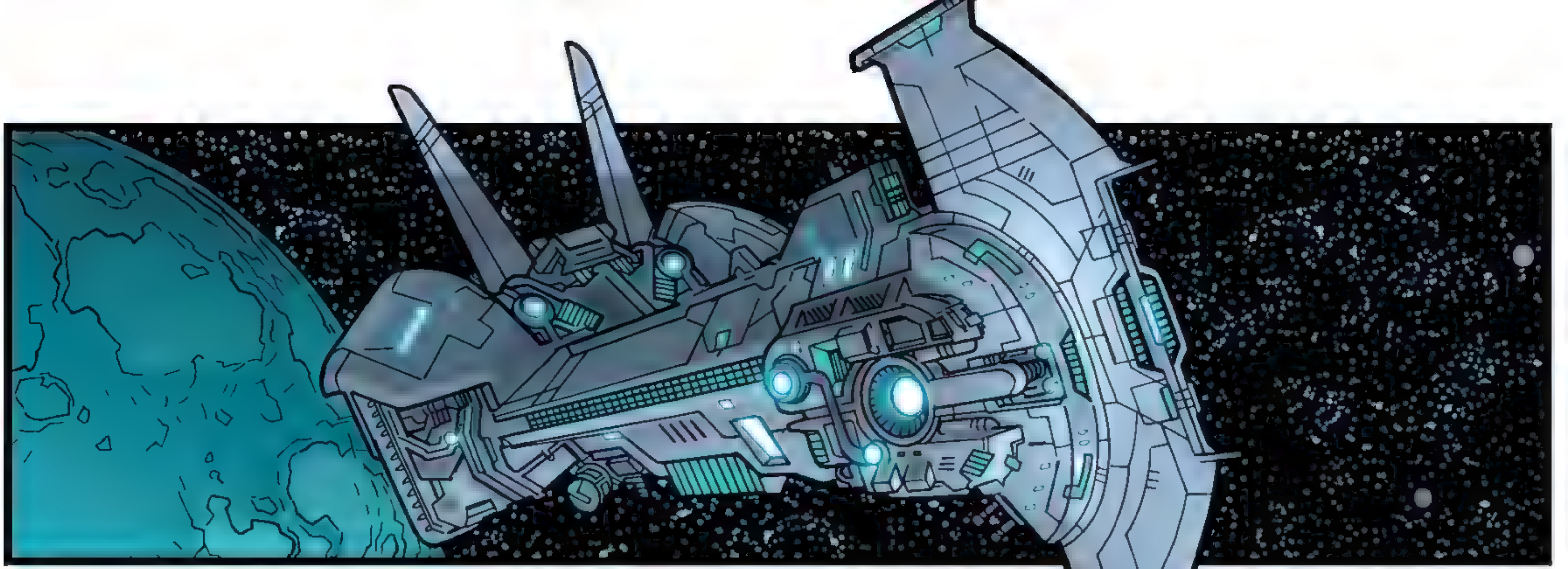
WE WILL MEET THEM ON THEIR HOME TURF AND DESTROY WHAT LITTLE HOPE THEY HAVE OF SUCCEEDING.

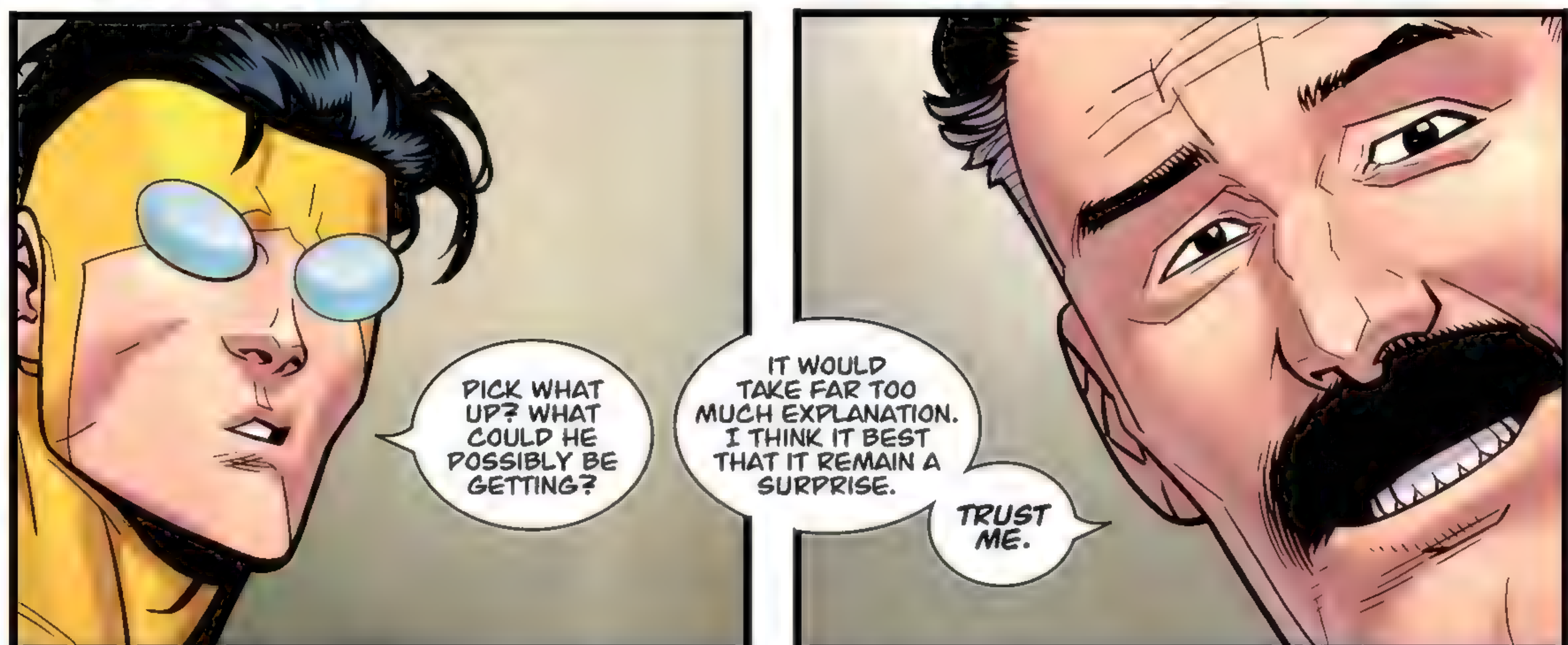


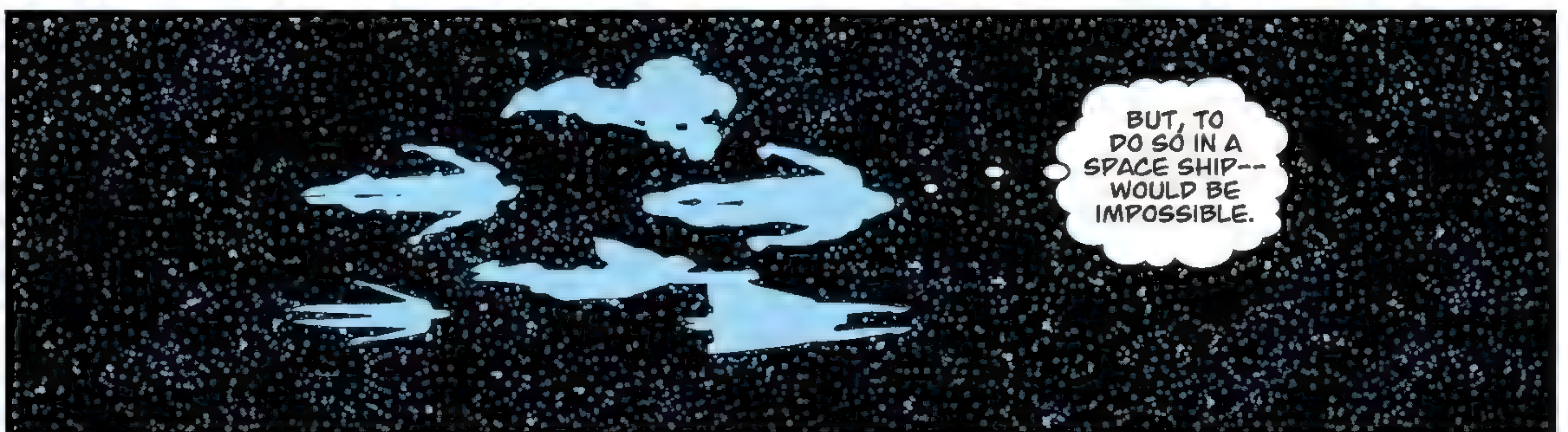
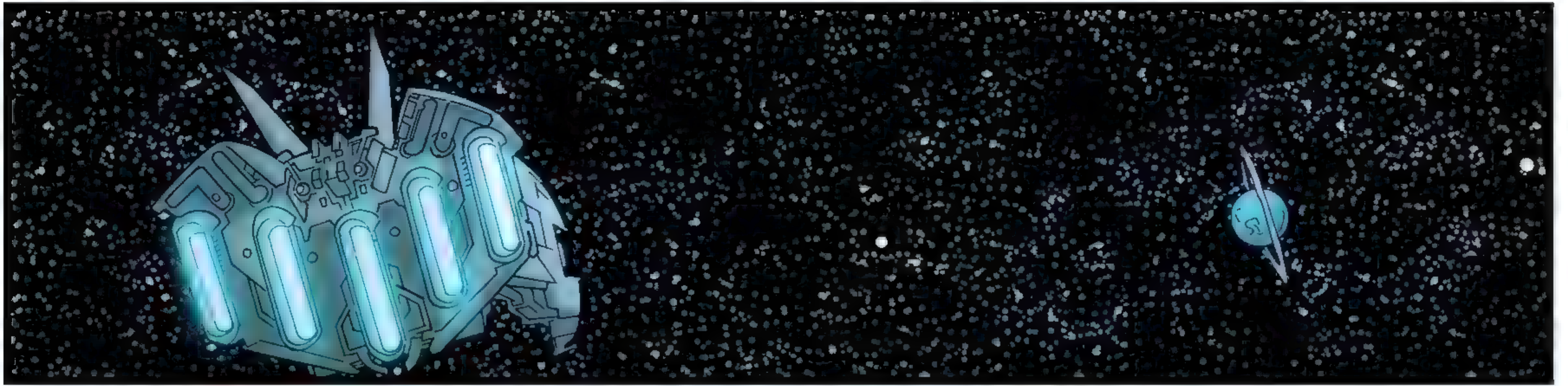
ARE YOU
READY
TO FINISH
THIS?

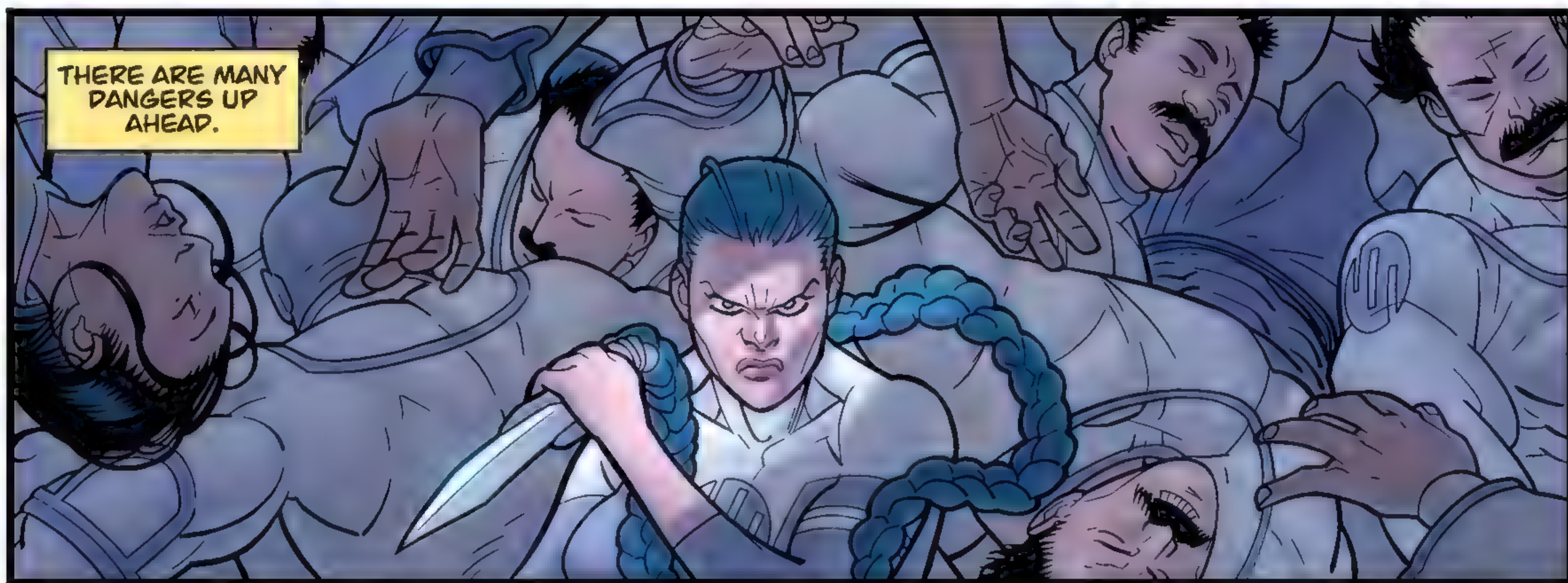
HELL
YEAH!

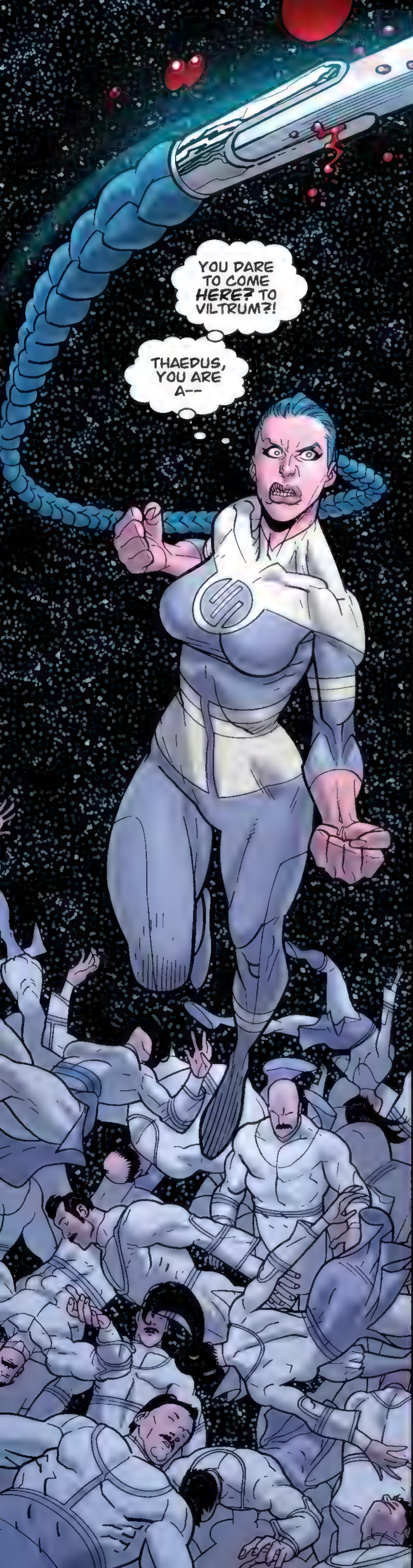






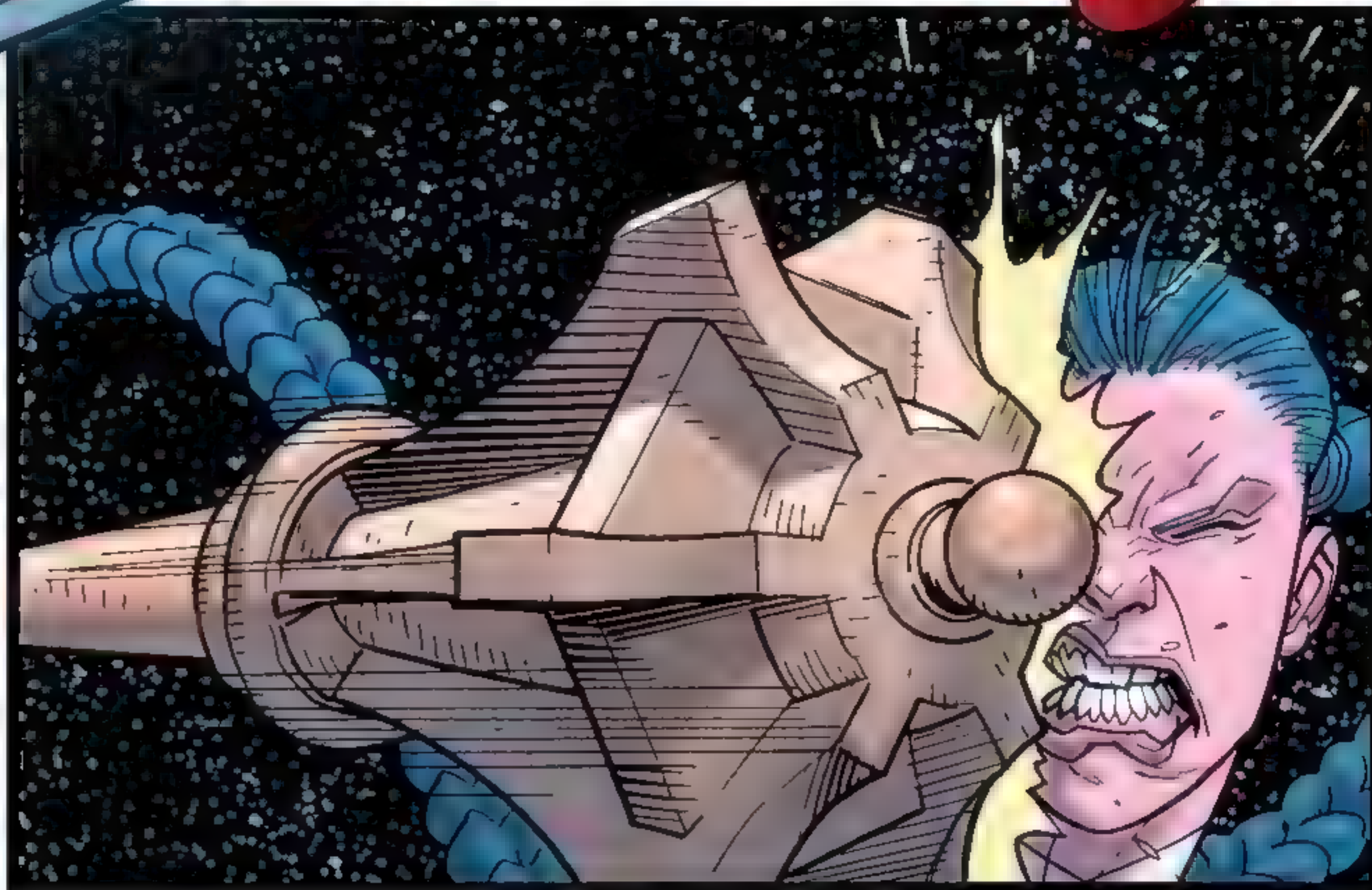






YOU DARE
TO COME
HERE? TO
VILTRUM?!

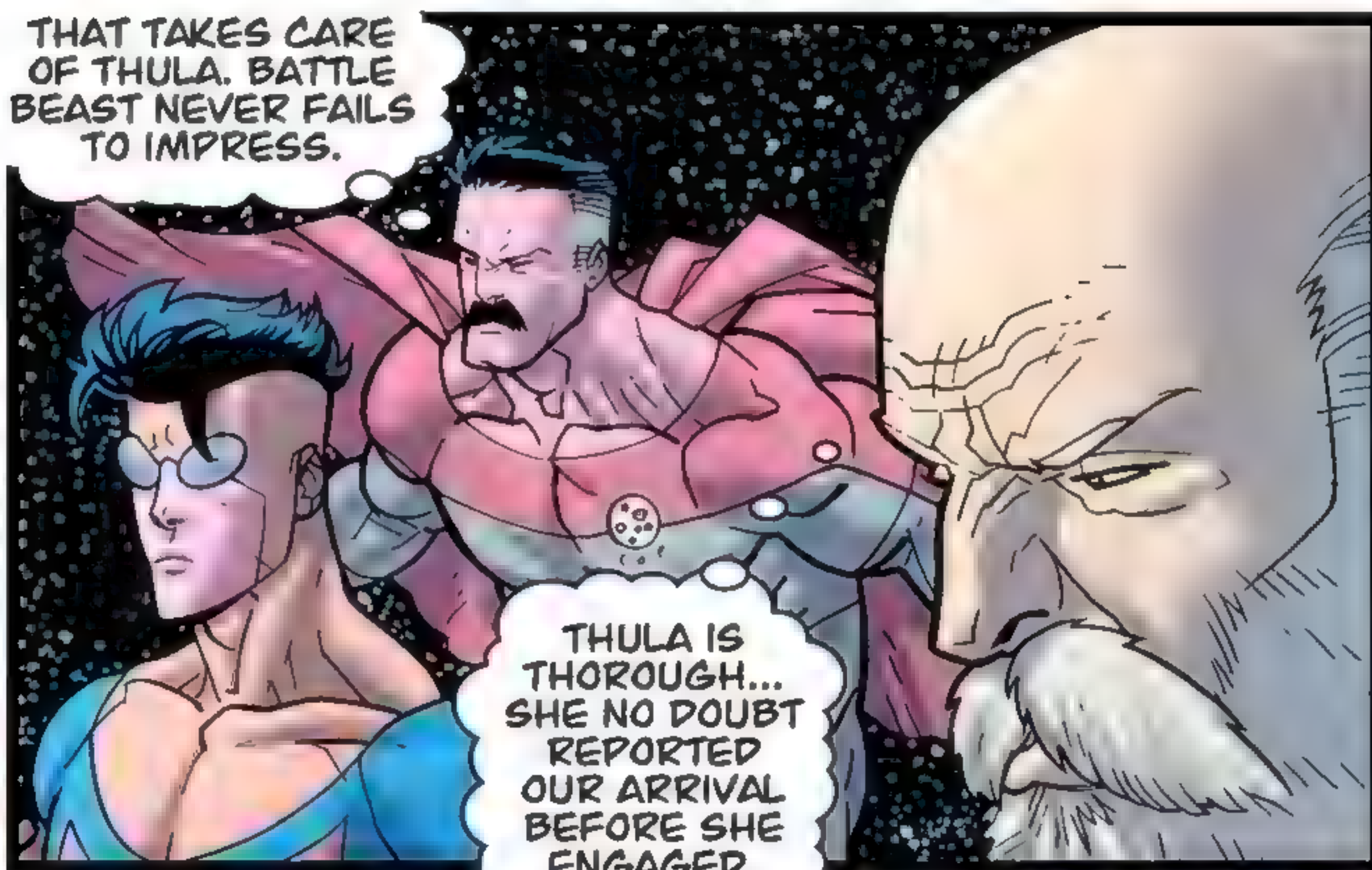
THAEDUS,
YOU ARE
A--



TOO MUCH
THINKING!
MORE
FIGHTING!

MORE!

THAT TAKES CARE
OF THULA. BATTLE
BEAST NEVER FAILS
TO IMPRESS.



THULA IS
THOROUGH...
SHE NO DOUBT
REPORTED
OUR ARRIVAL
BEFORE SHE
ENGAGED.

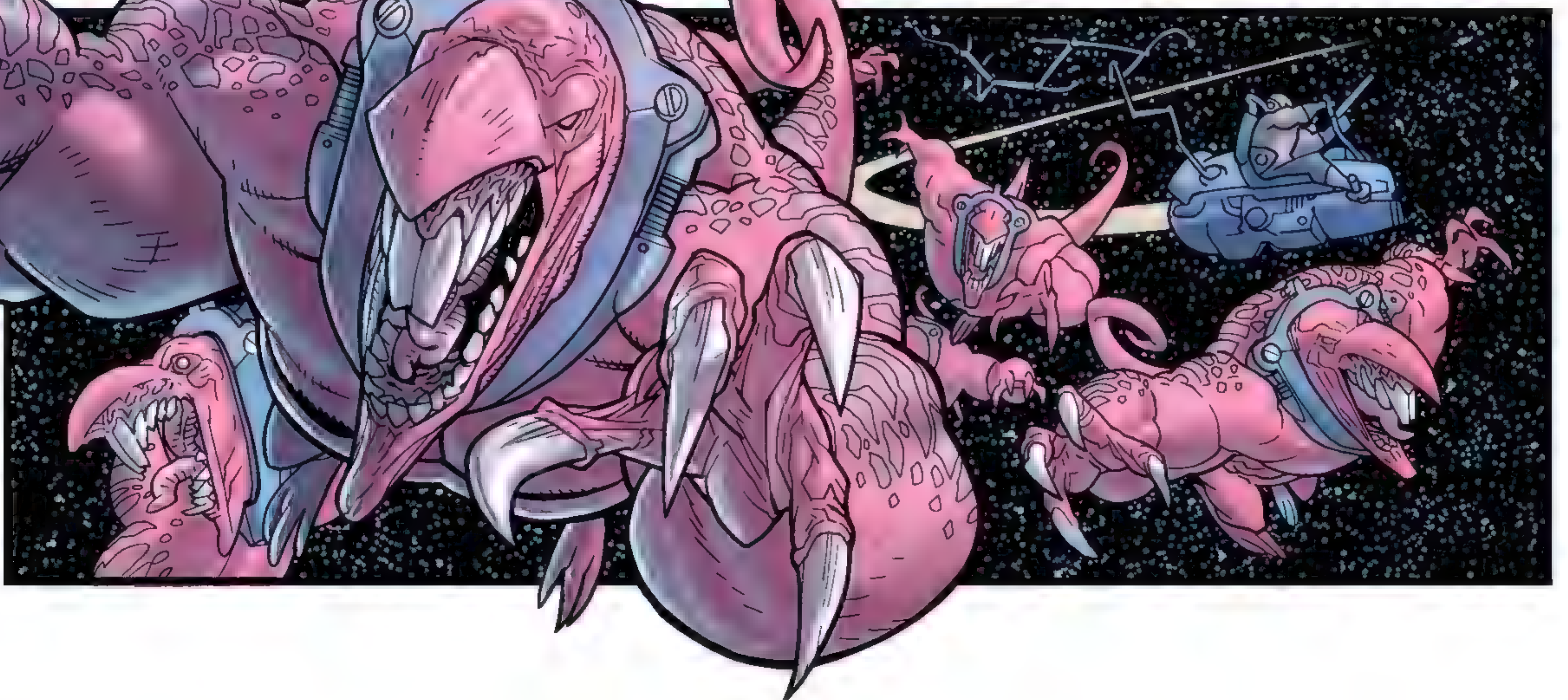


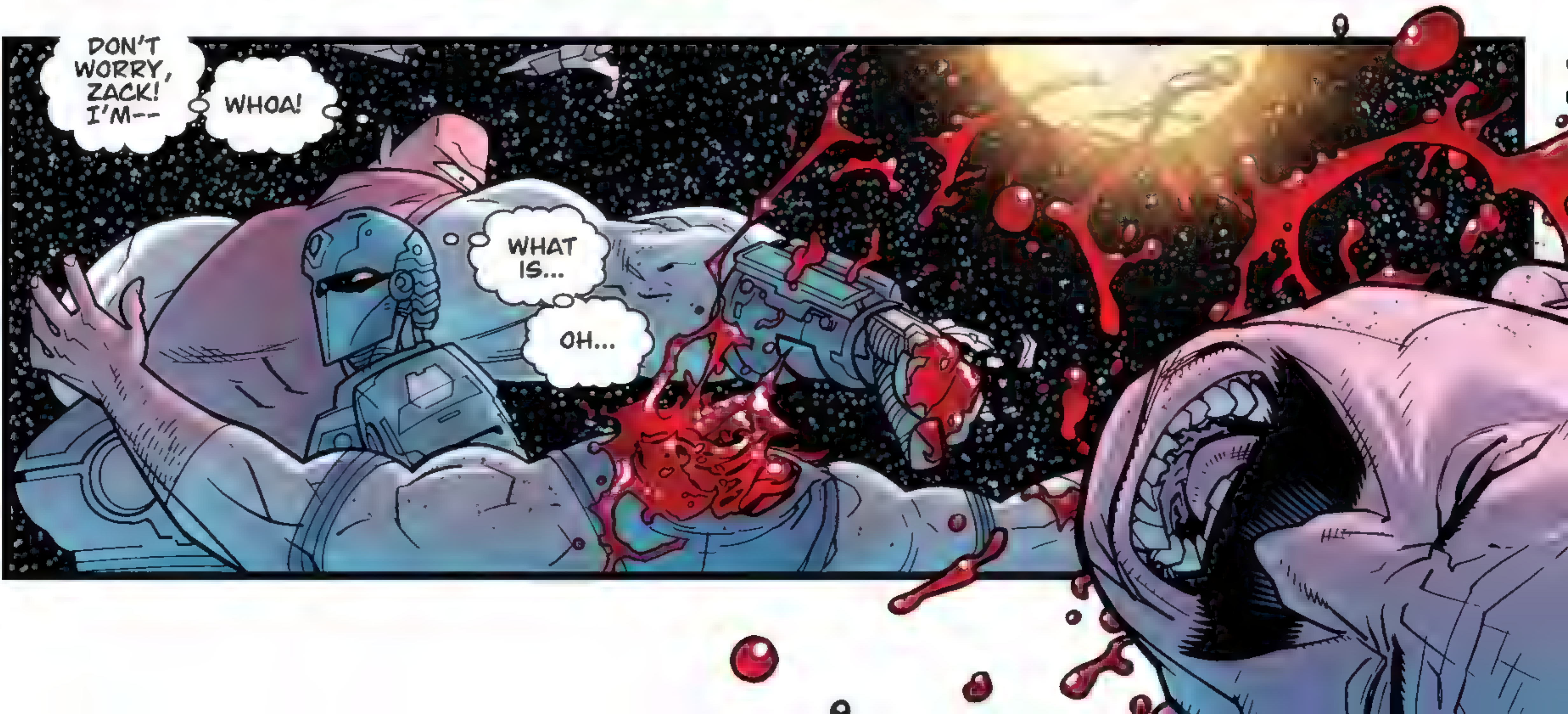
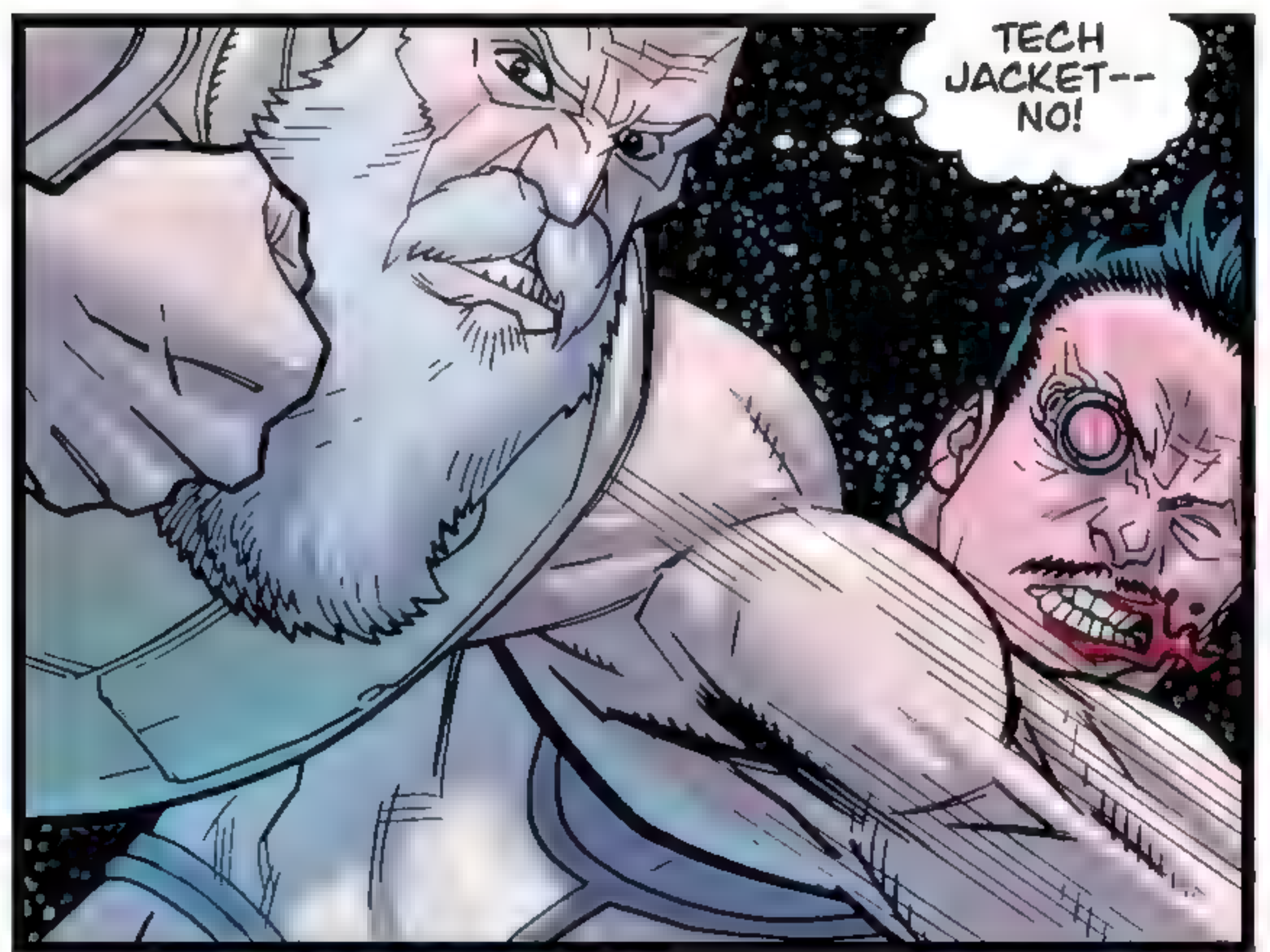
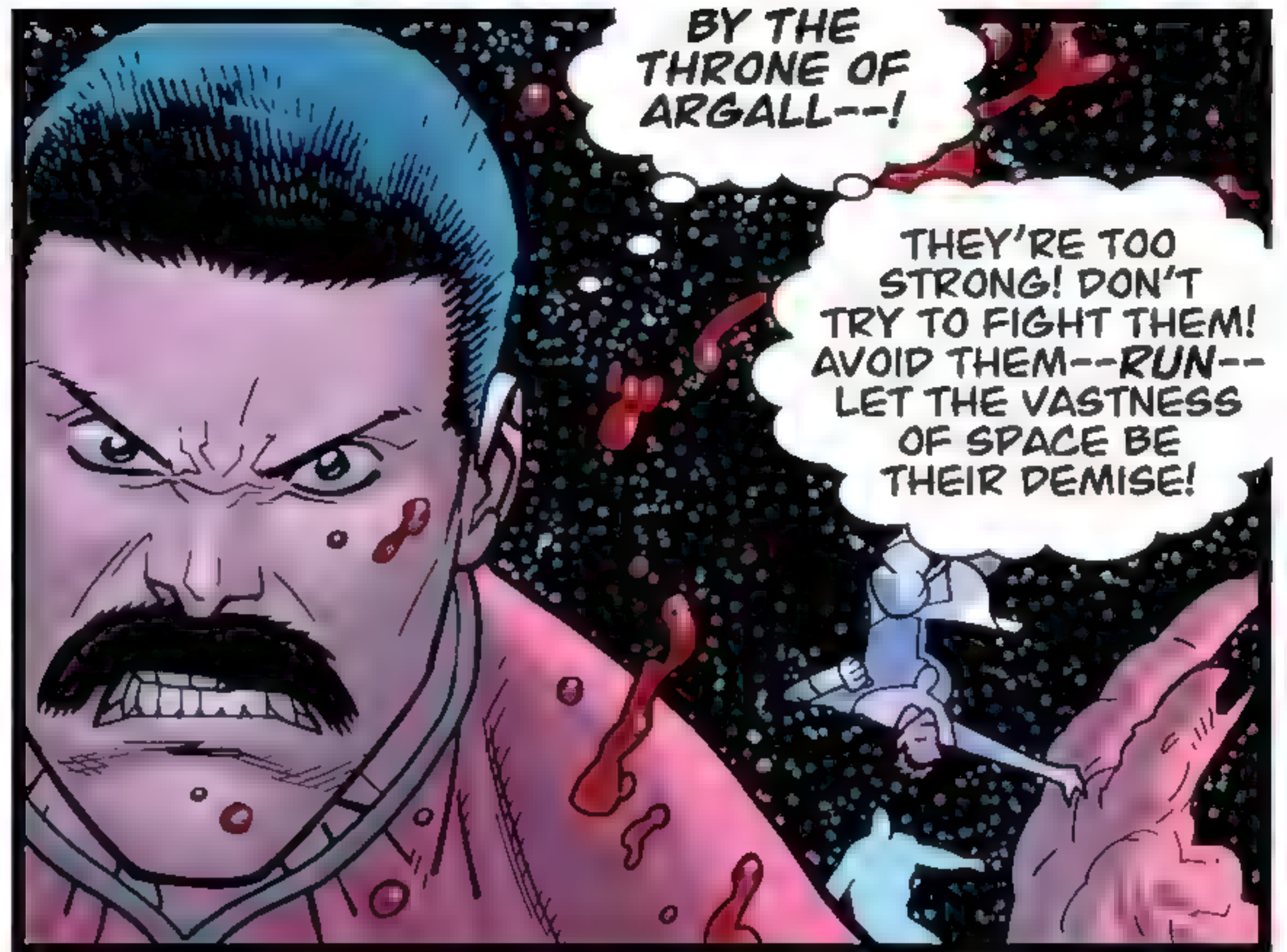
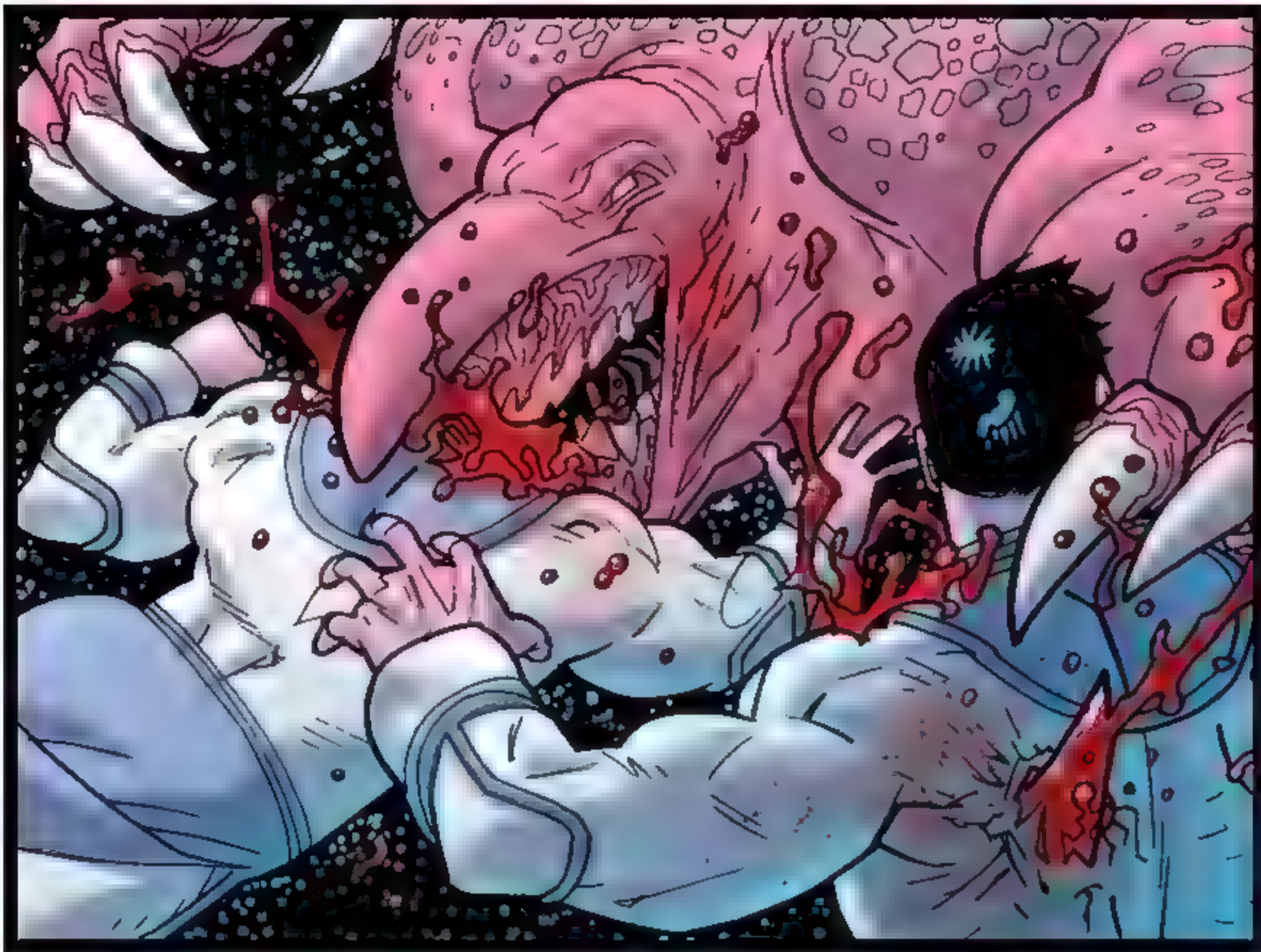
LOOKS
LIKE IT!

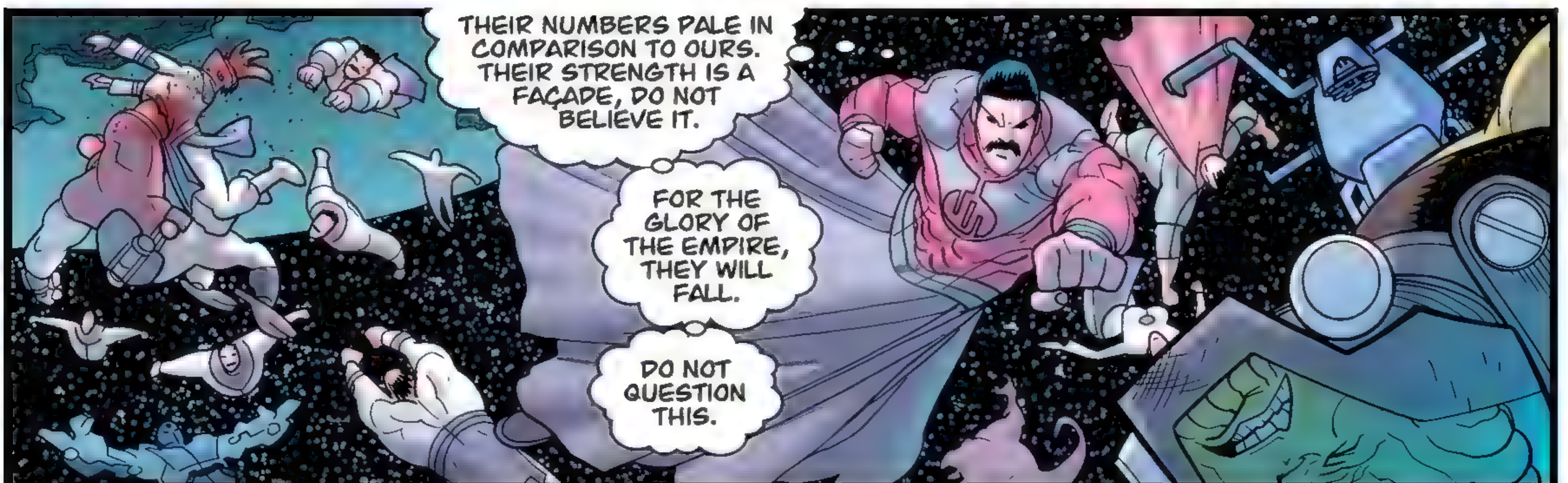
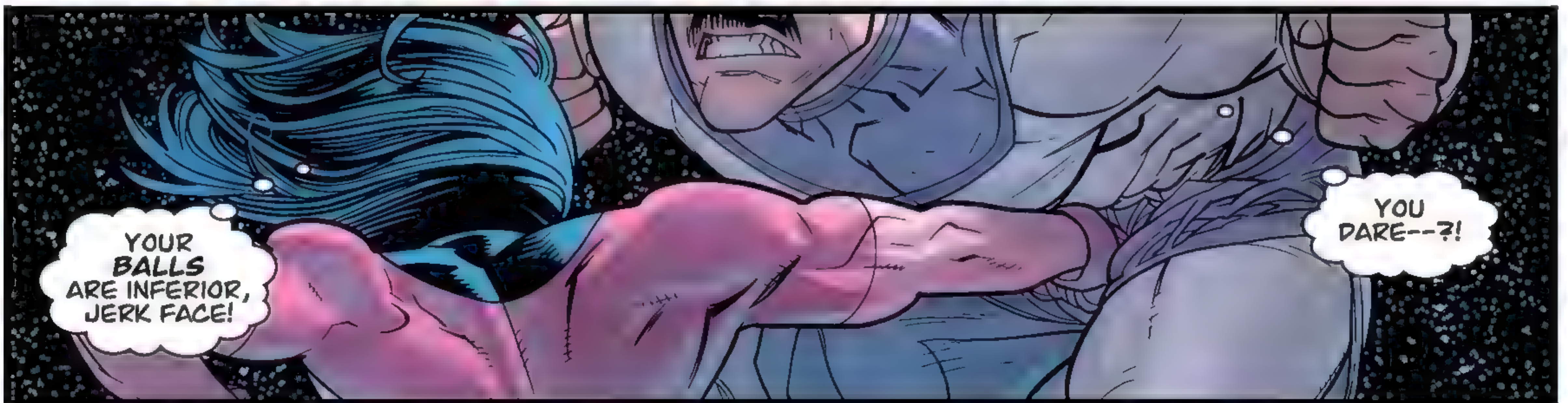
OKAY...
THIS IS IT,
EVERYONE.

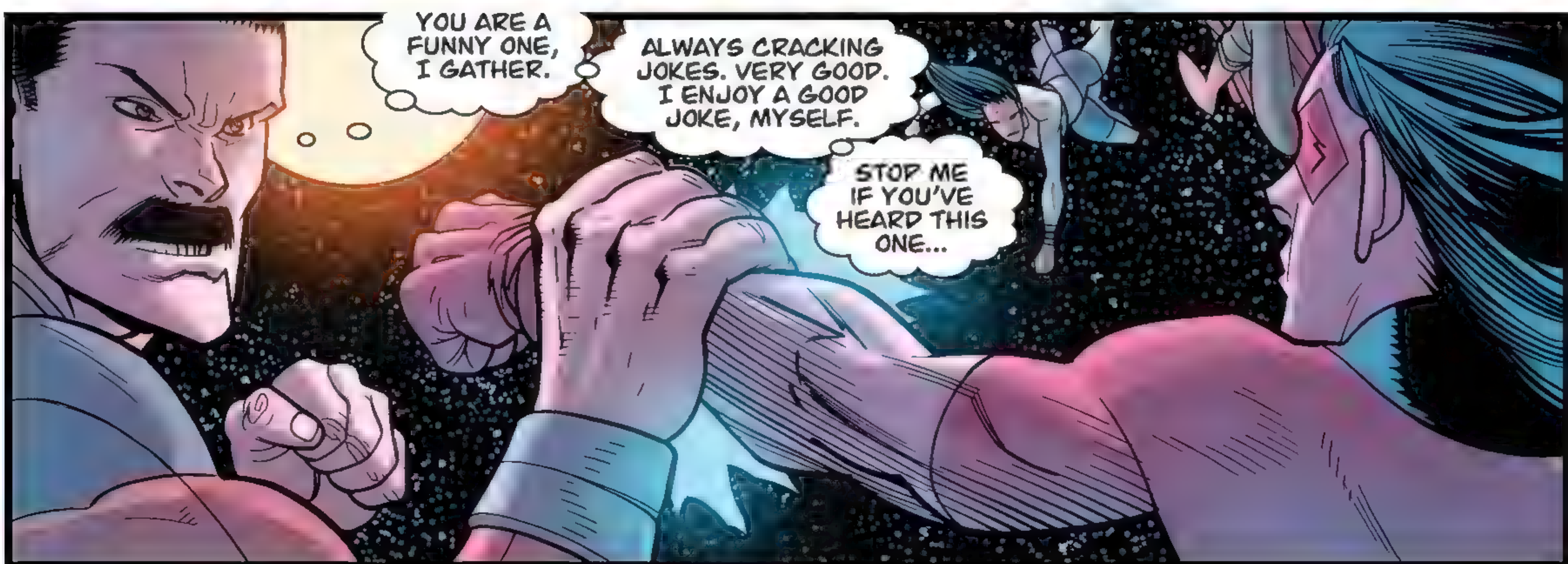
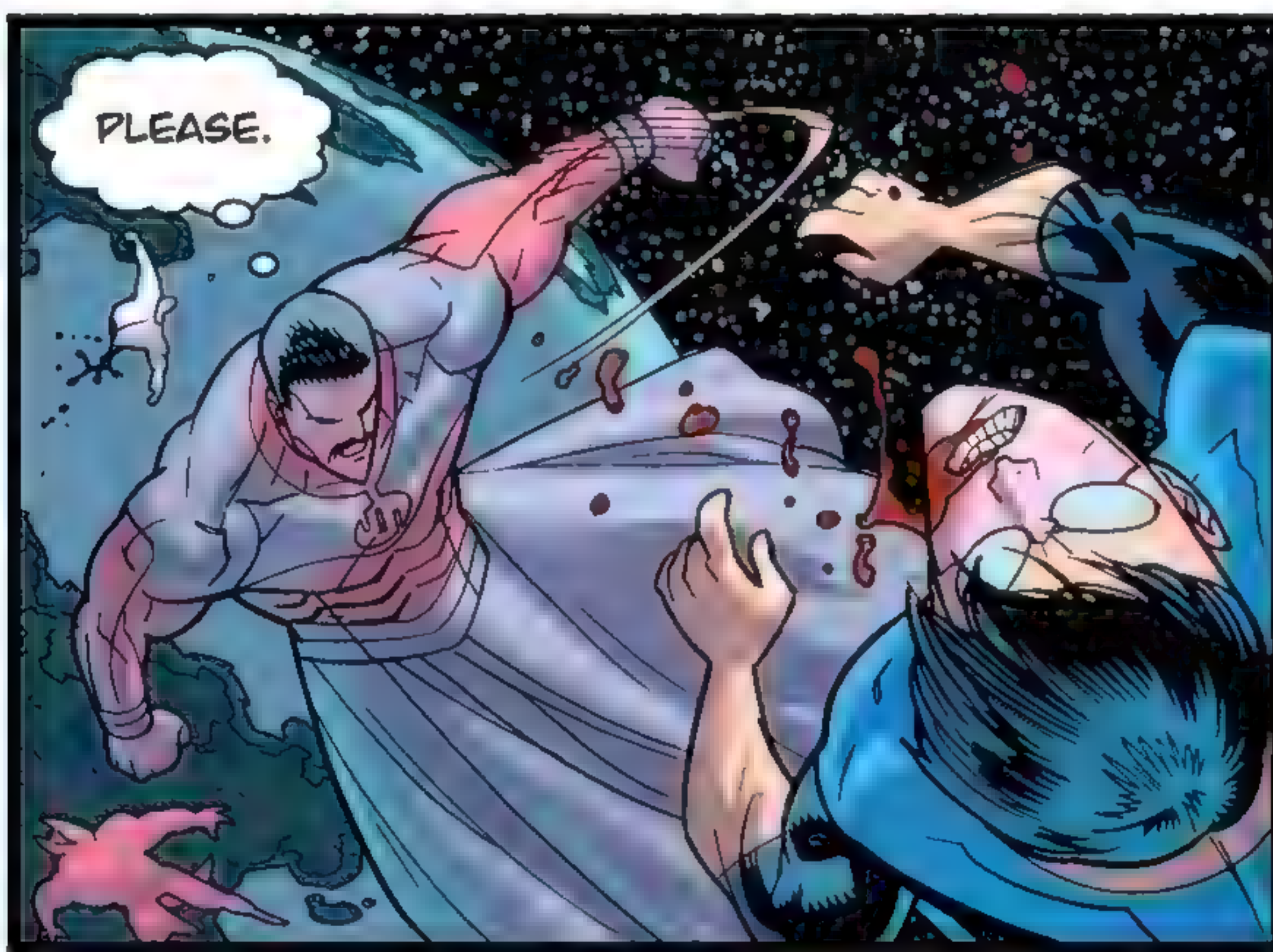
GET
READY.

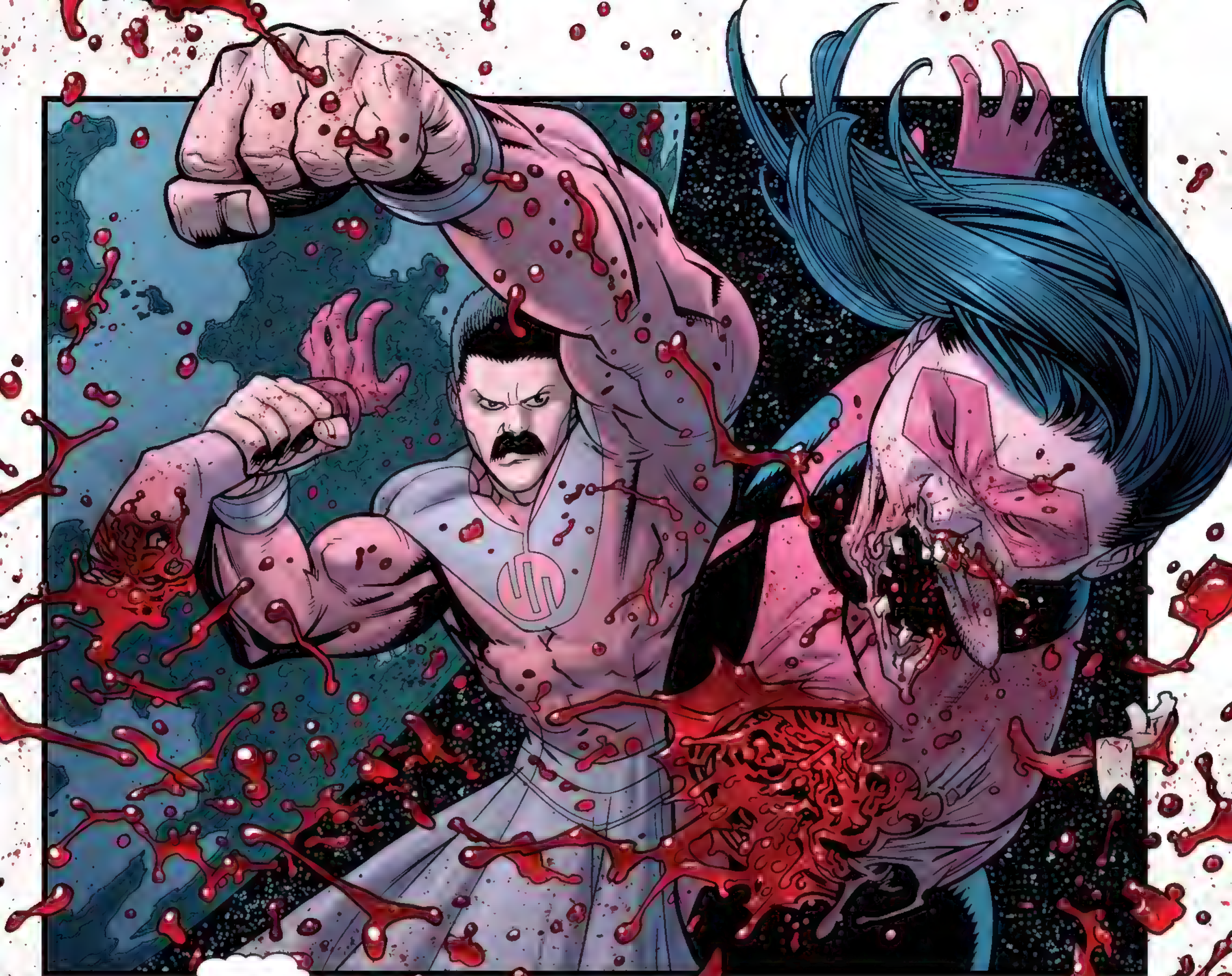












OLIVER!

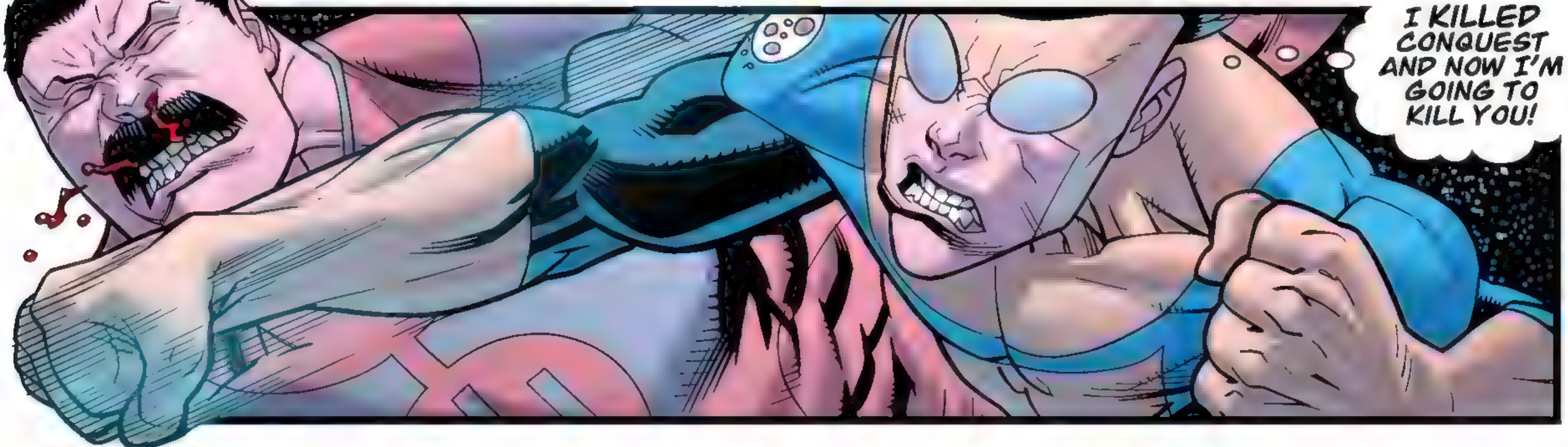
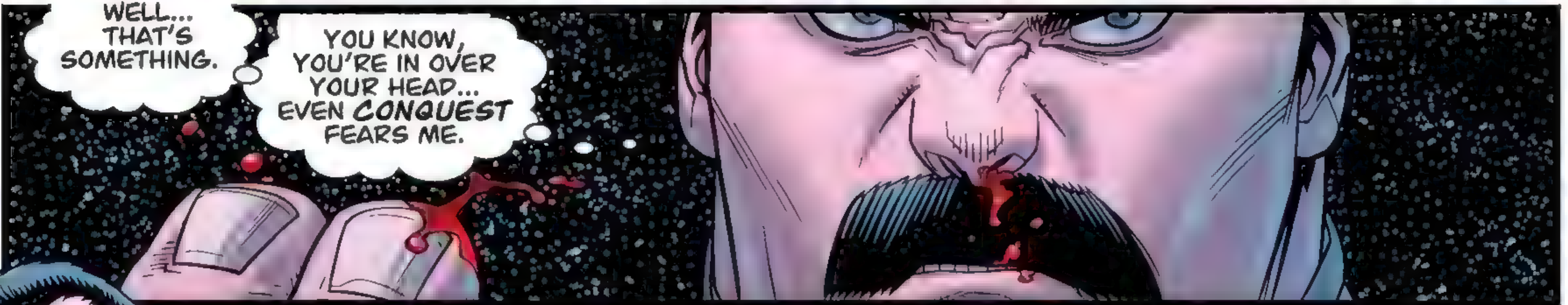
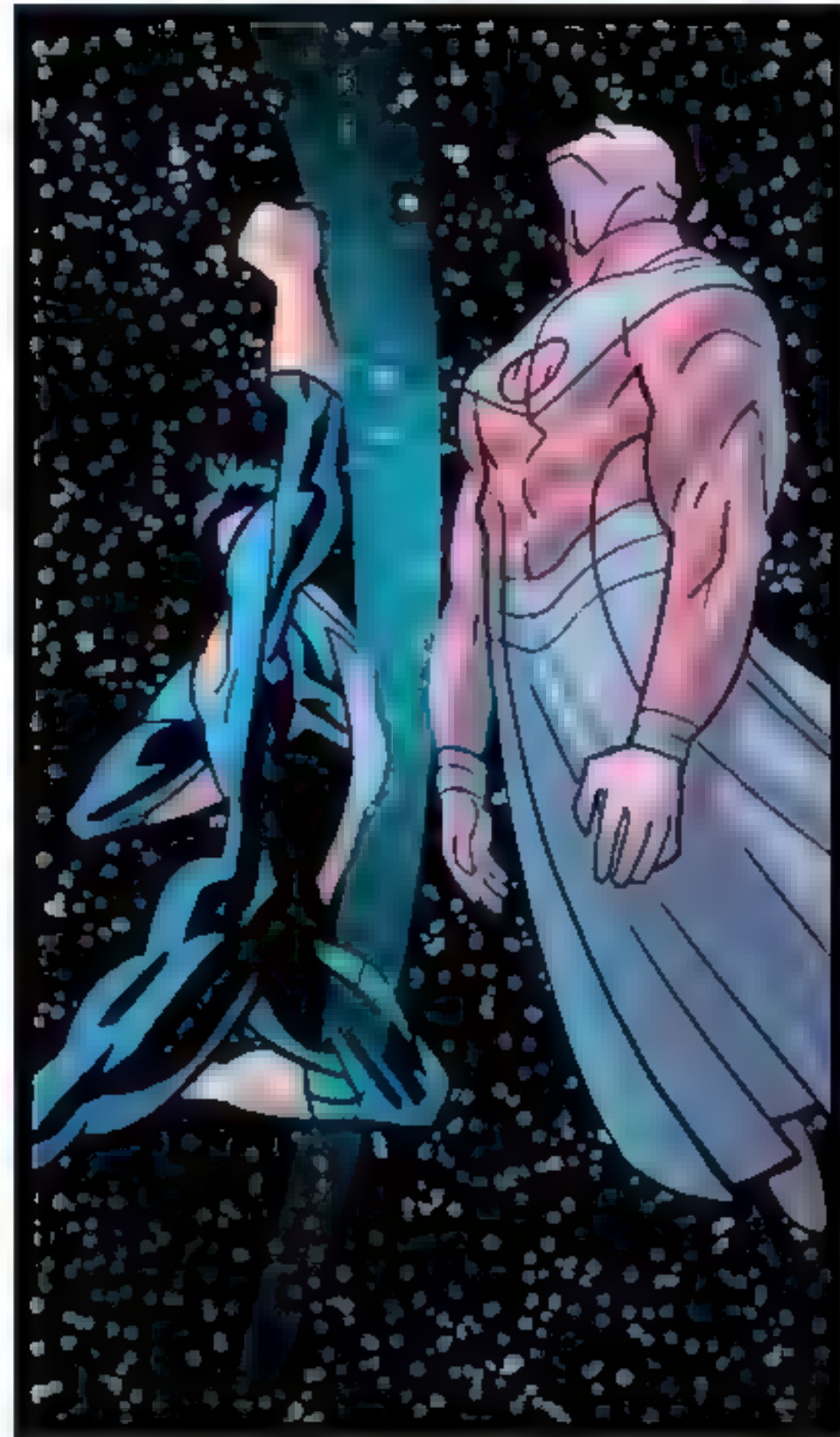
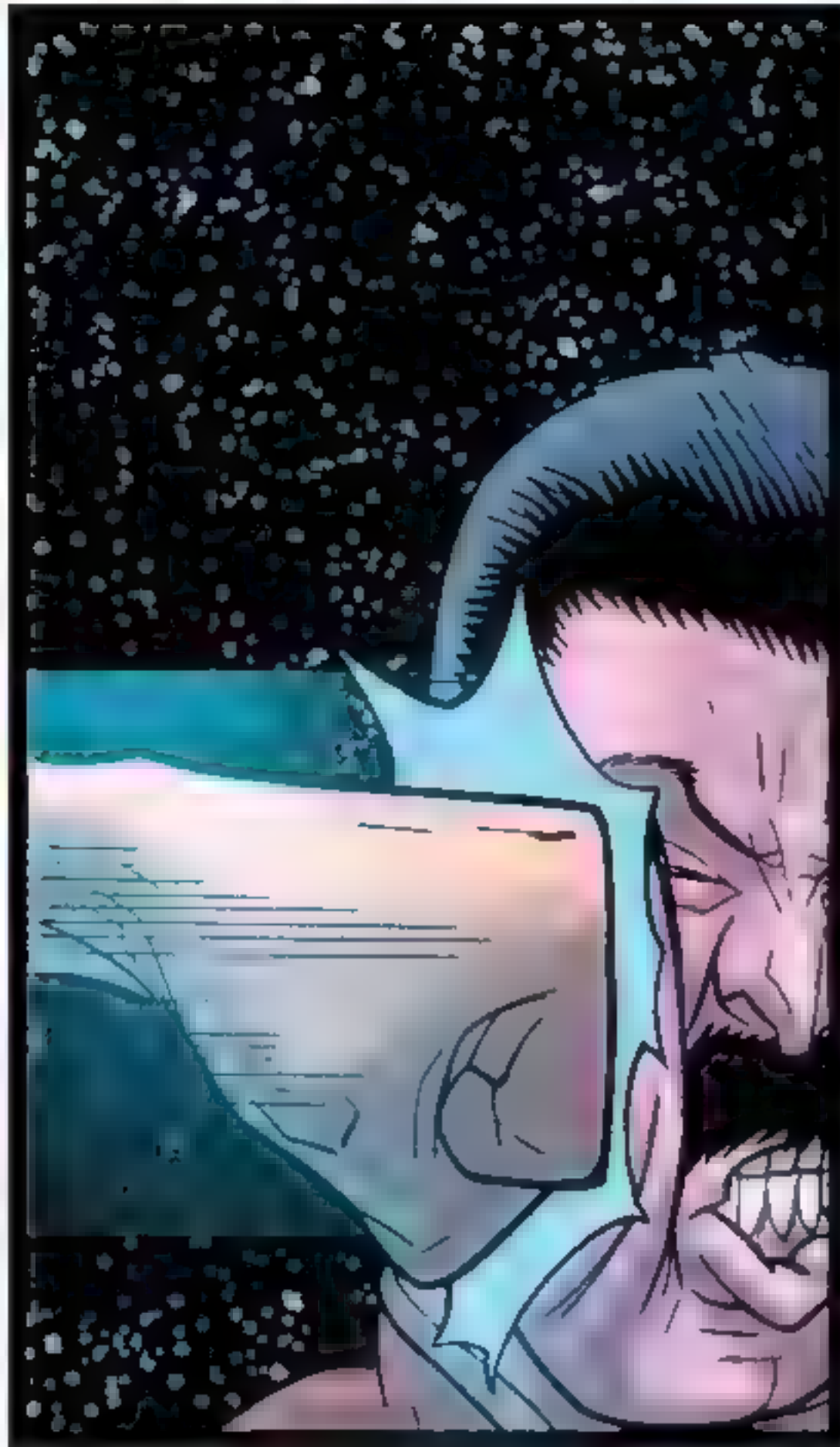
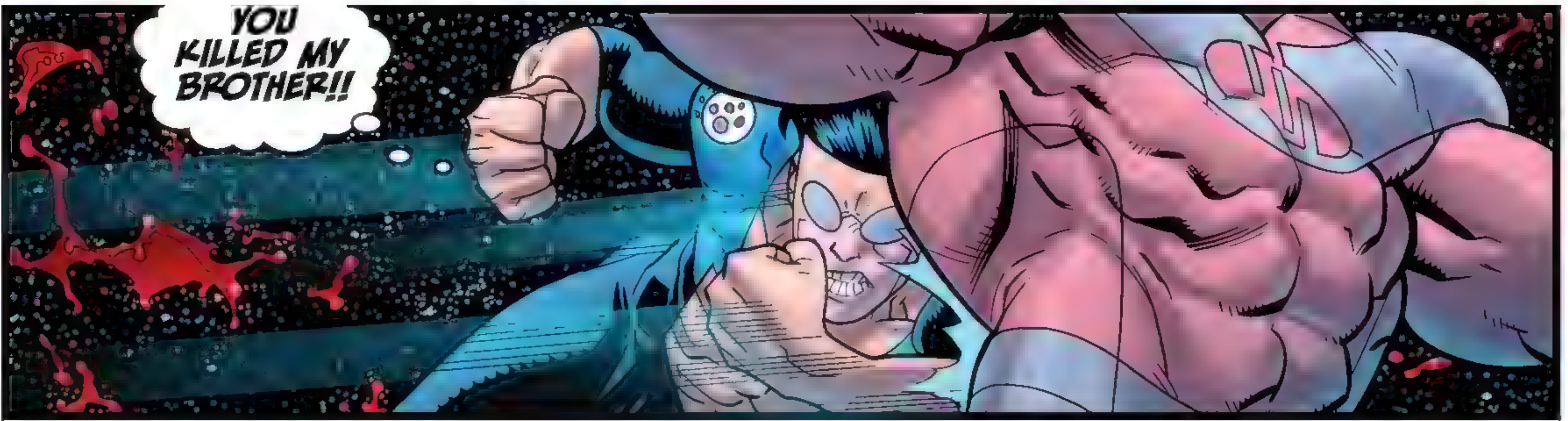


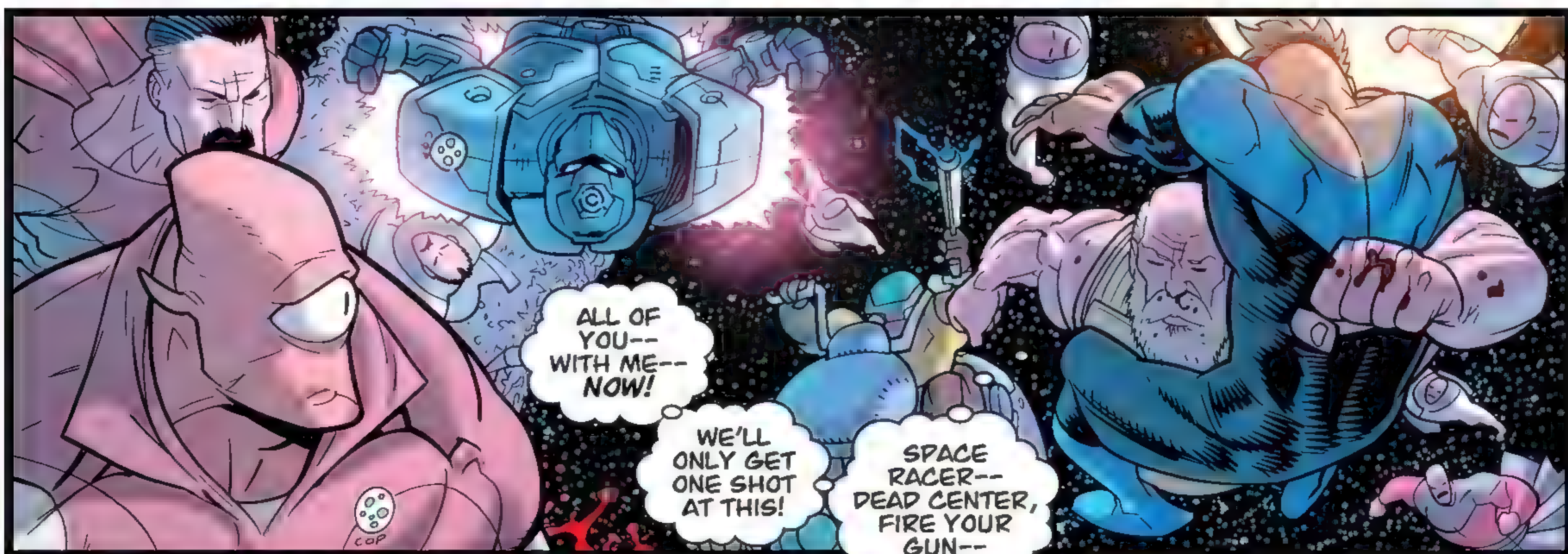
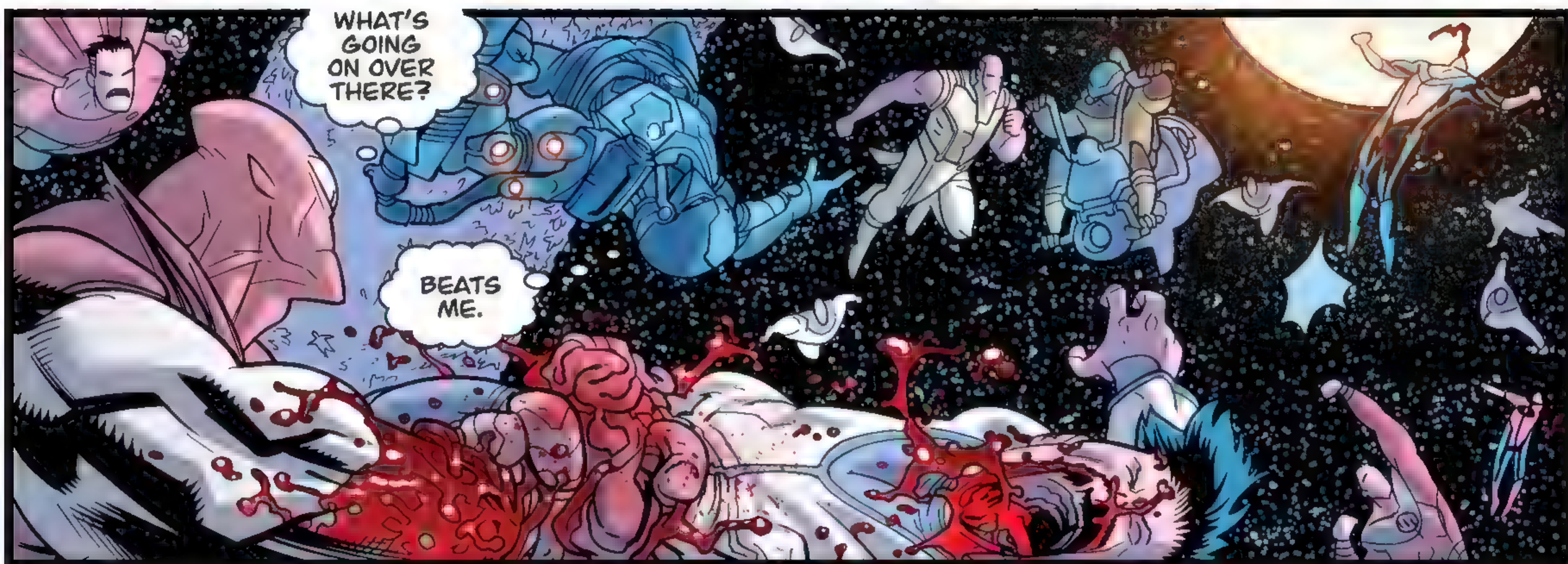
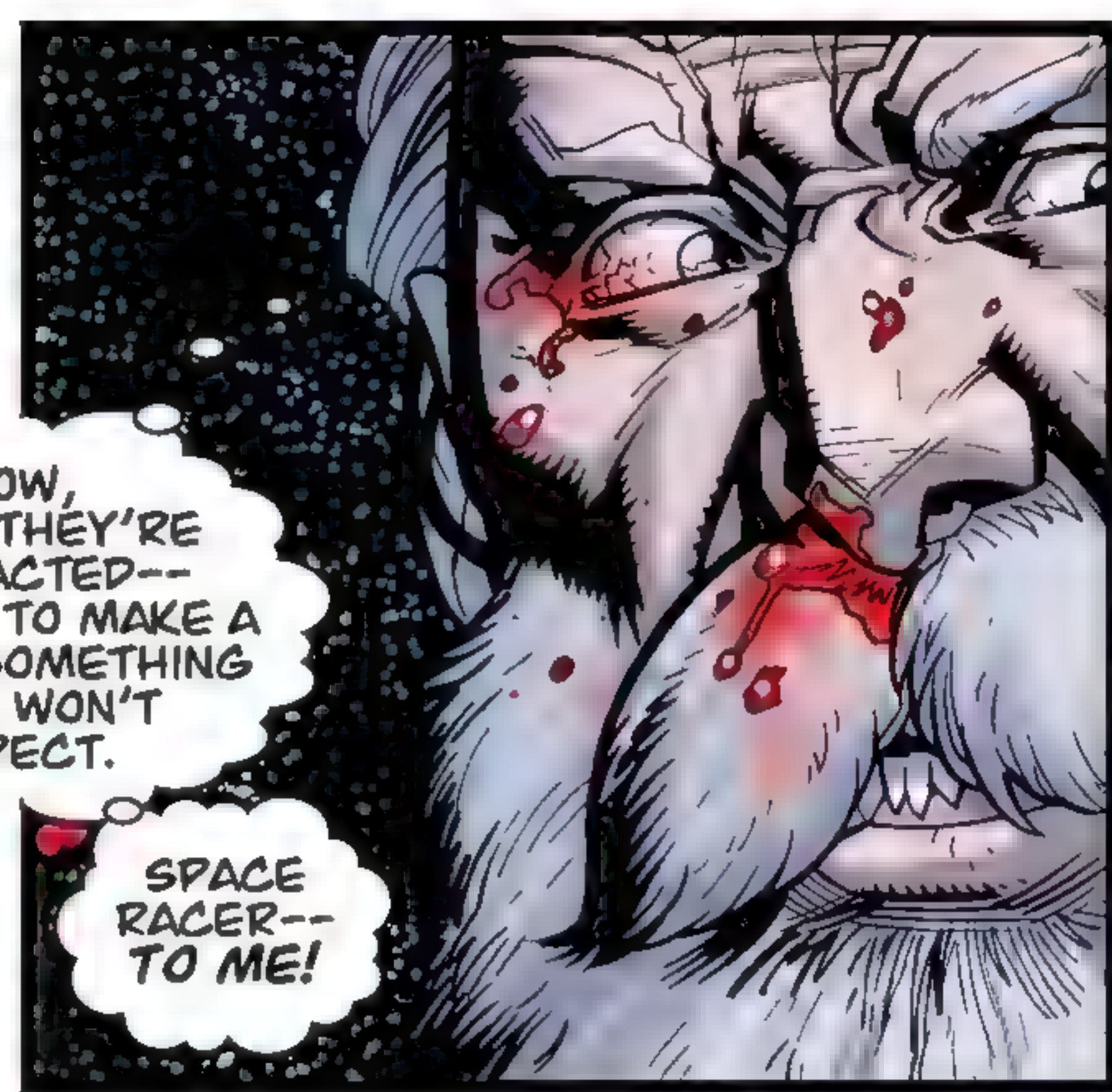
GET
BACK
HERE!

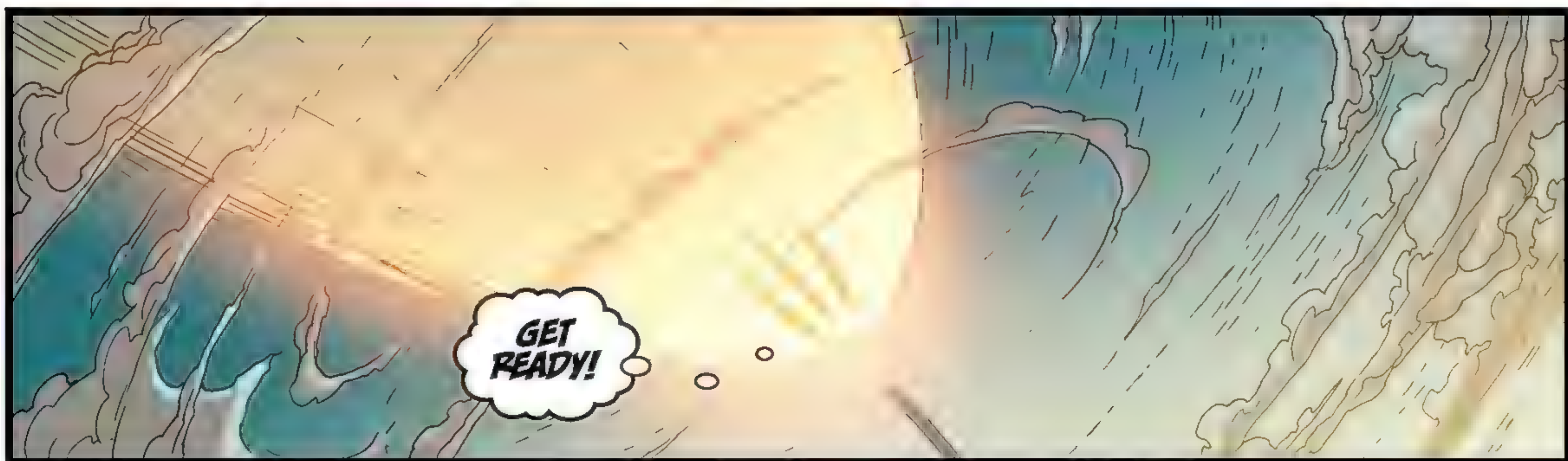
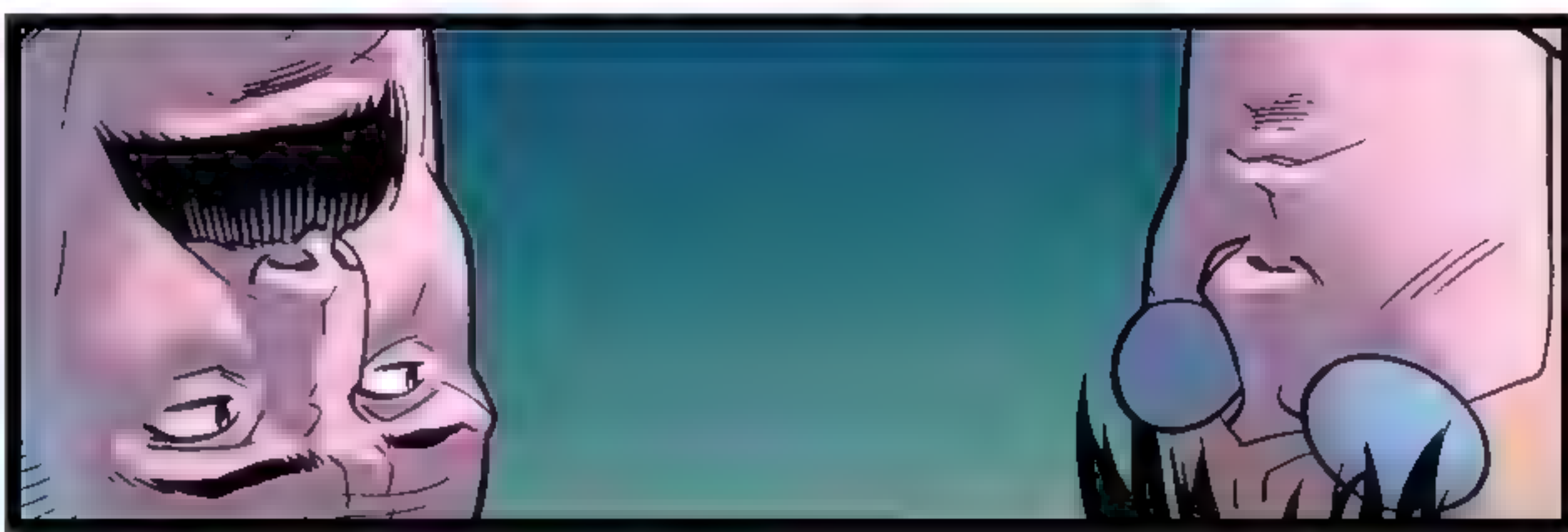
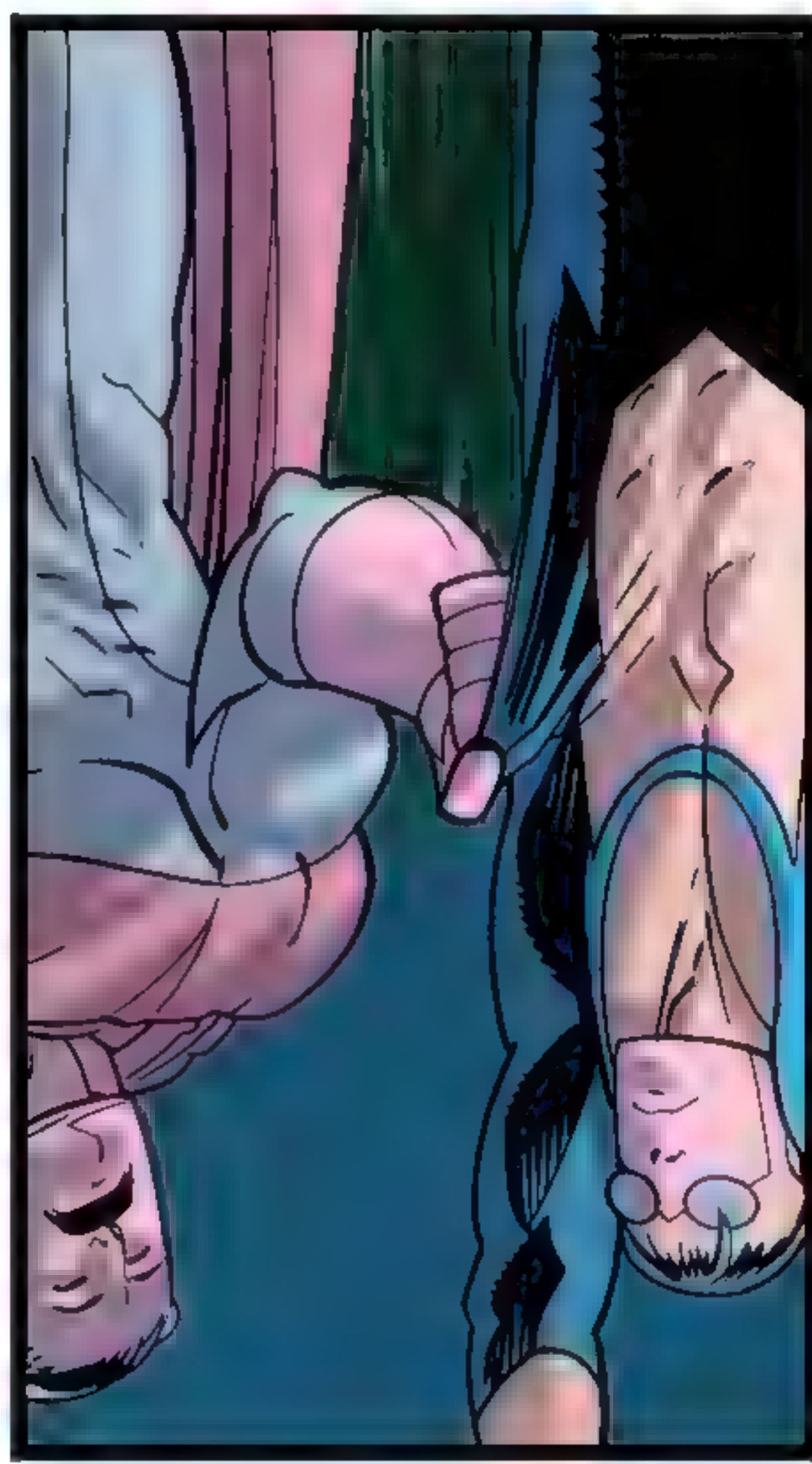
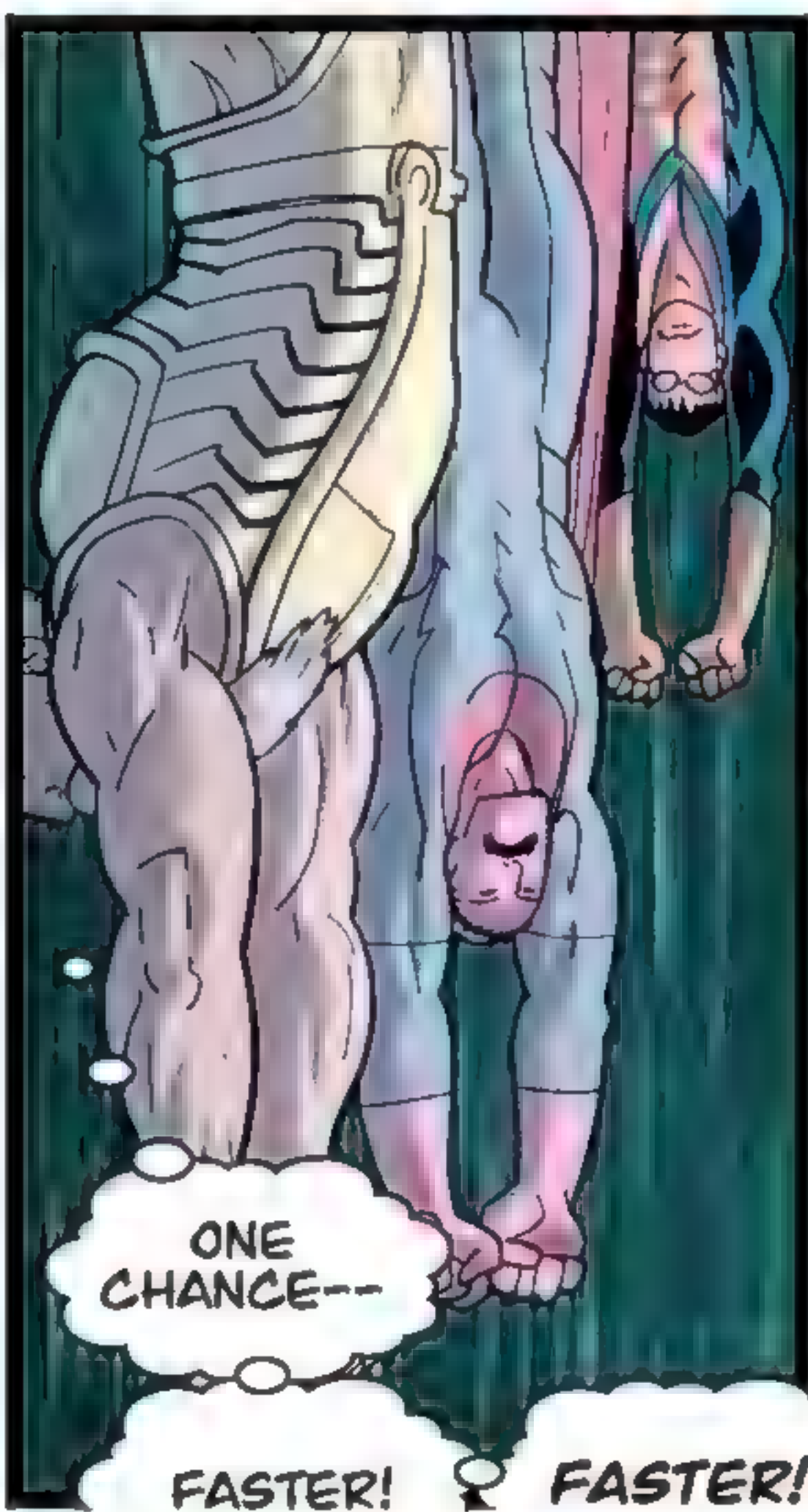
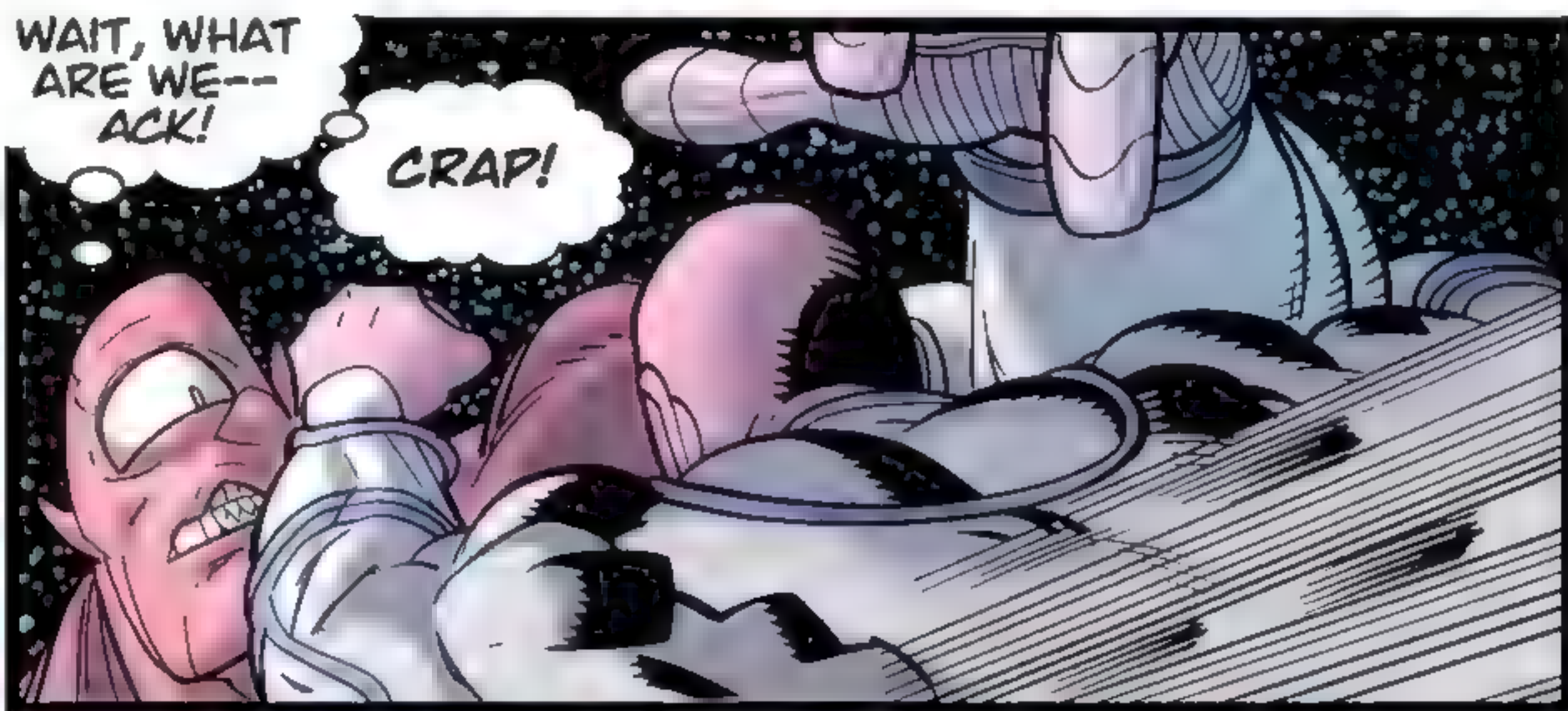
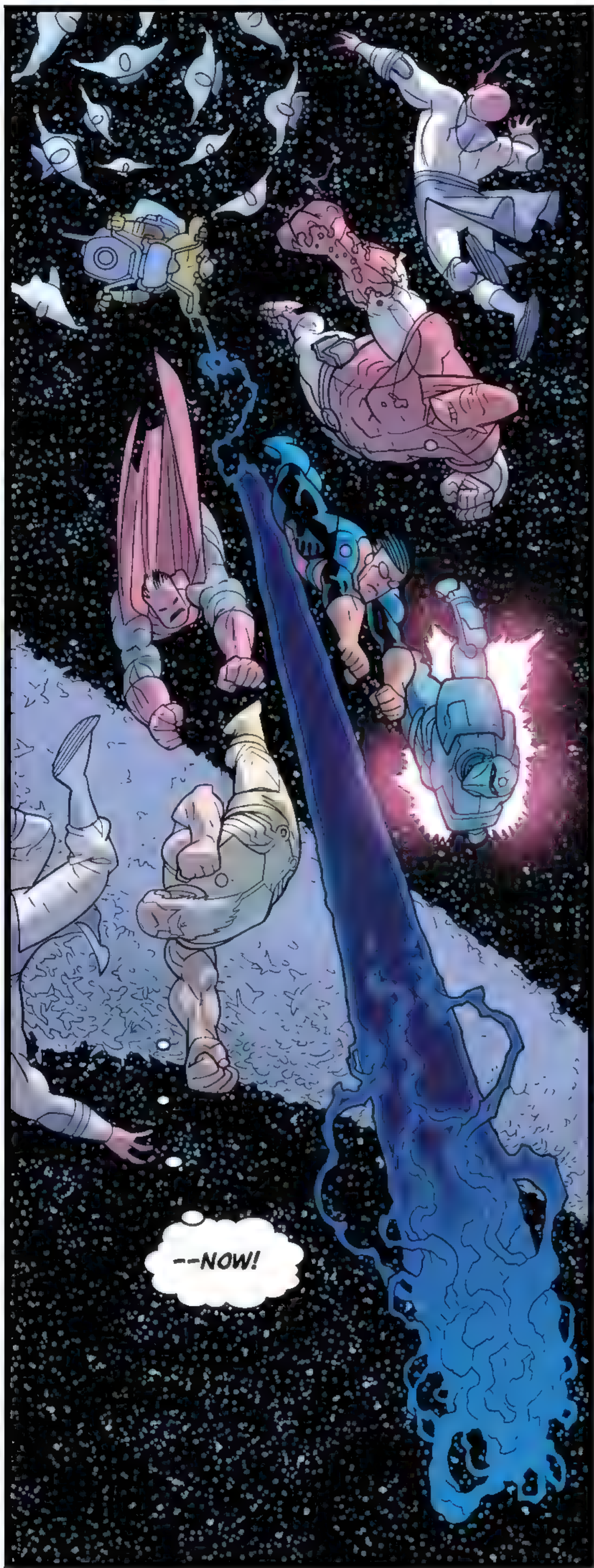


SEEMED
LIKE SUCH
A NICE
BOY...

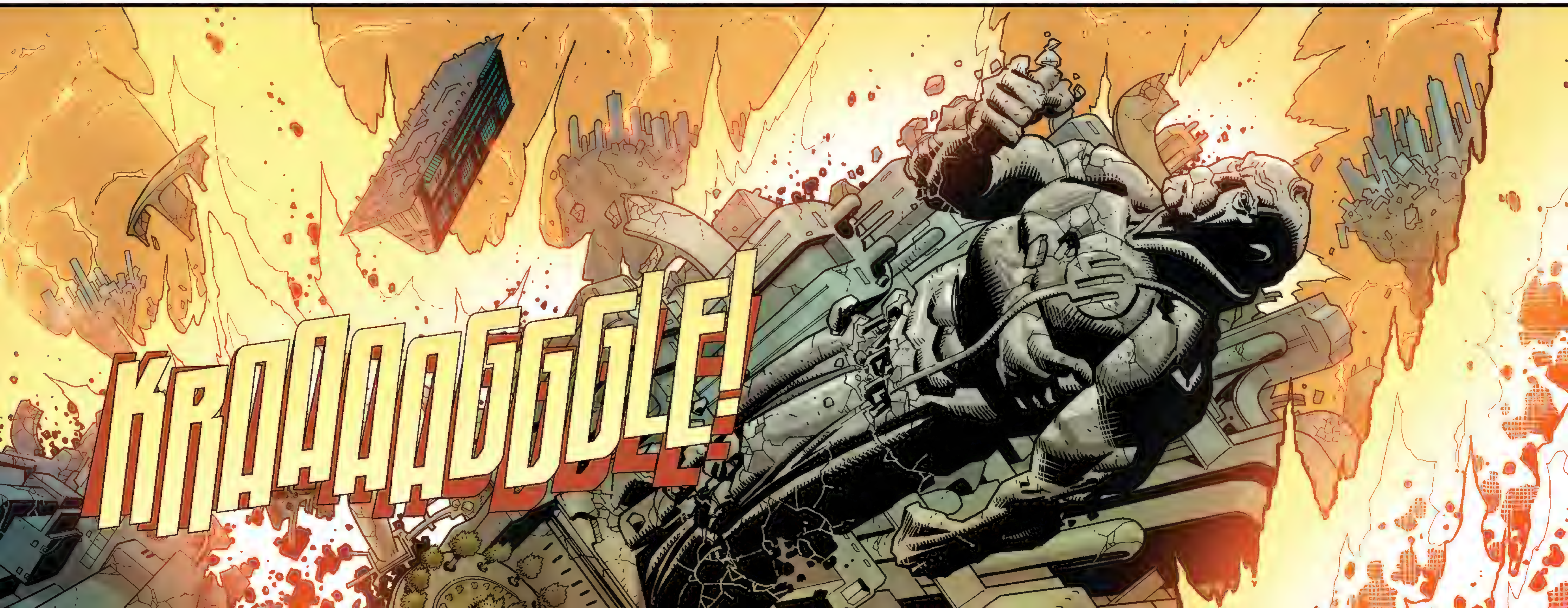
MY
BROTHER...







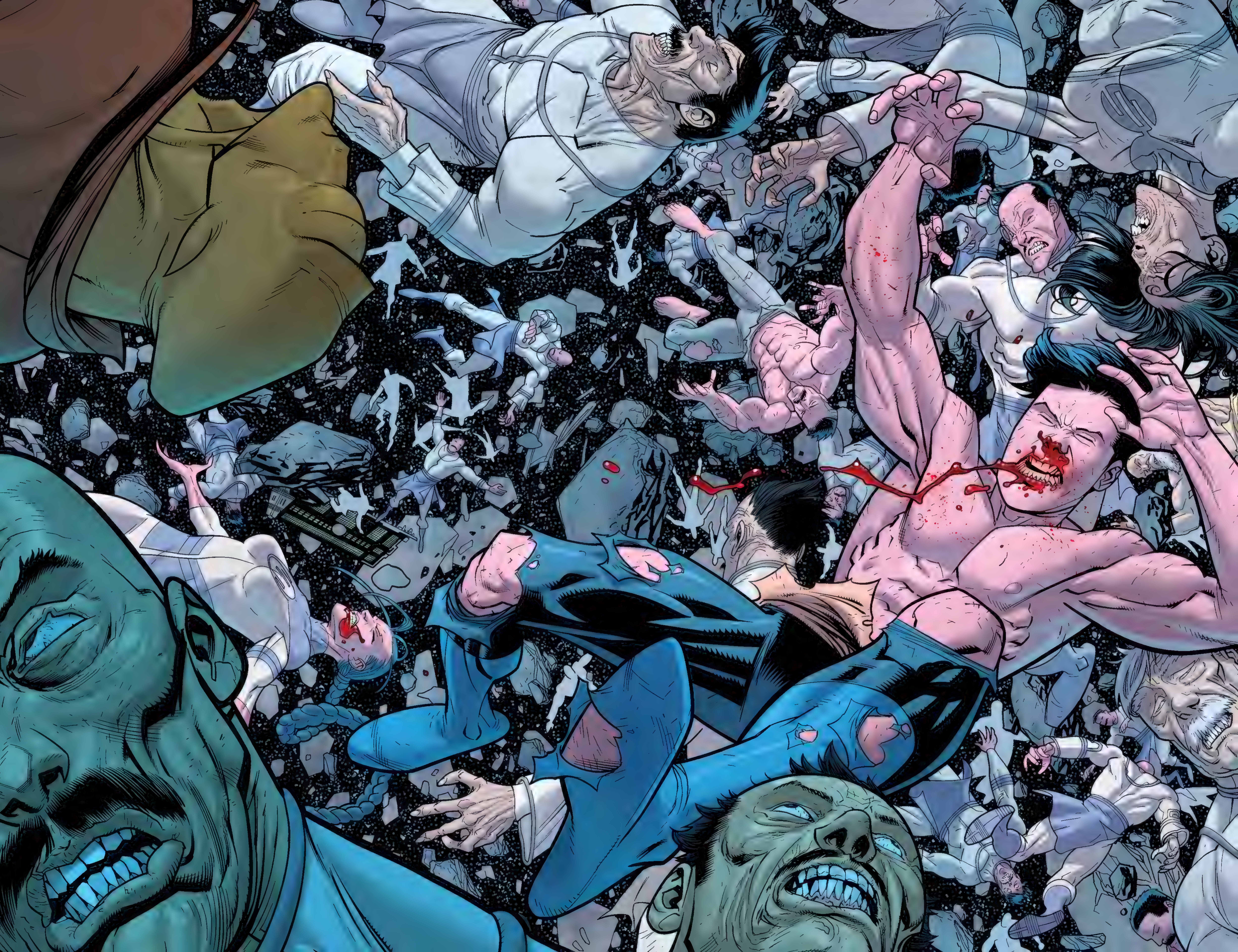


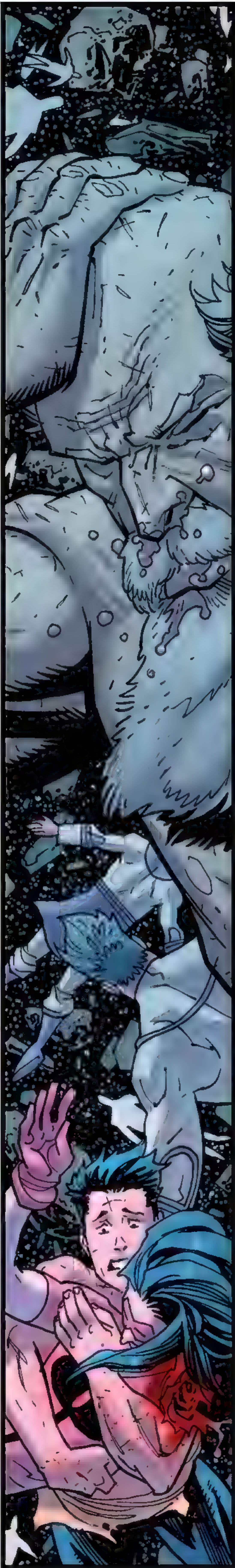














YOU BROUGHT
THIS UPON US ALL--
IT IS YOU WHO SET
THIS IN MOTION--
CARRIED IT OUT--
THAEDUS OF VILTRUM...
BETRAYER.

YOU HAVE
TAKEN IT ALL FROM
US. OUR HERITAGE,
OUR HOME...
OUR HISTORY...
DESTROYED.

THE VILTRUM
EMPIRE WILL
NOT STAND FOR
THIS!



YOU WILL DO WHAT
YOU WILL AND I AM
PREPARED FOR YOUR
WRATH. BUT KNOW
THIS, THRAGG,
WHATEVER HAPPENS
HERE...

...YOU
HAVE NO
EMPIRE.

SURRENDER
YOUR--



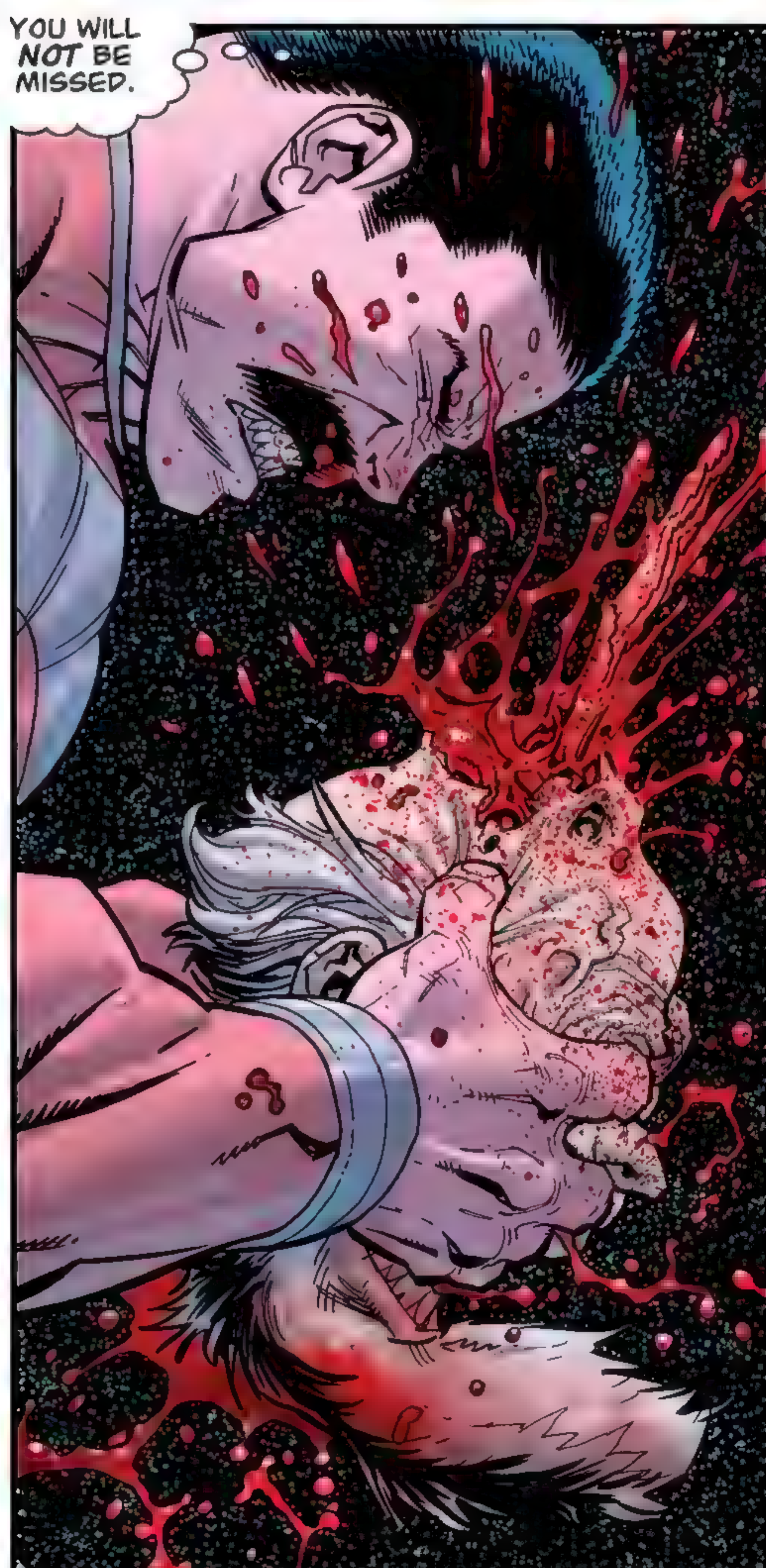
SURRENDER?!

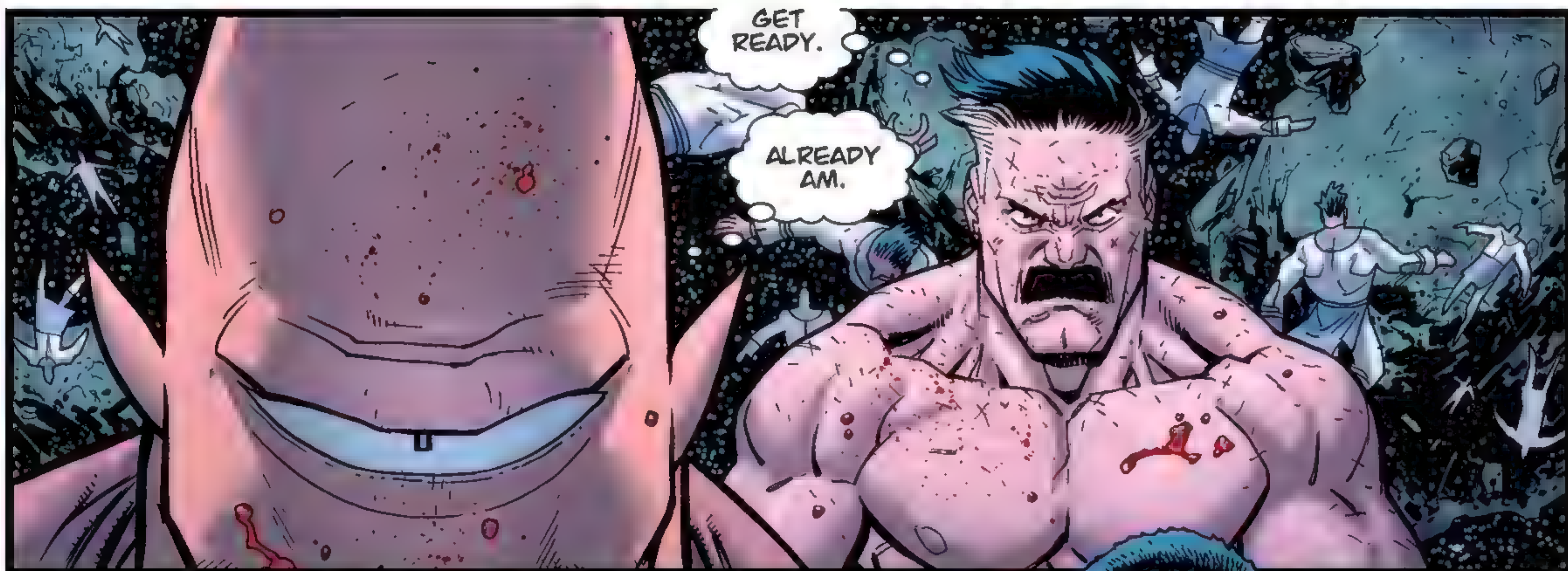
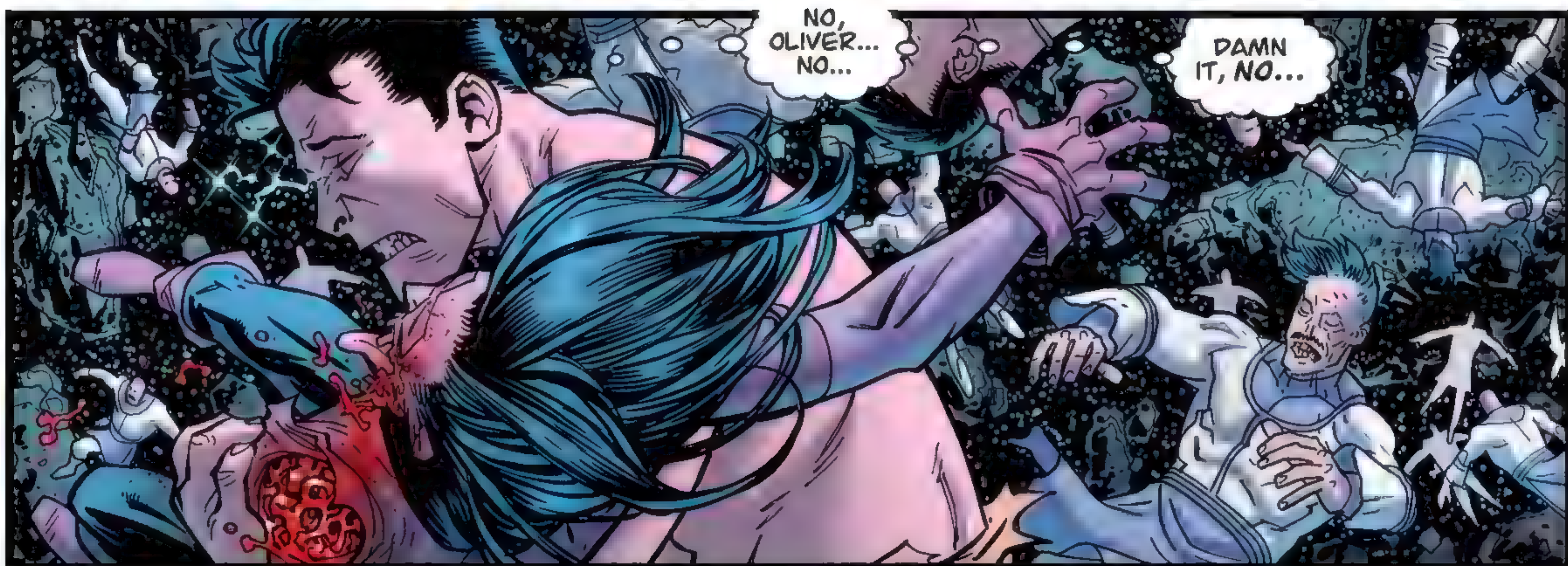
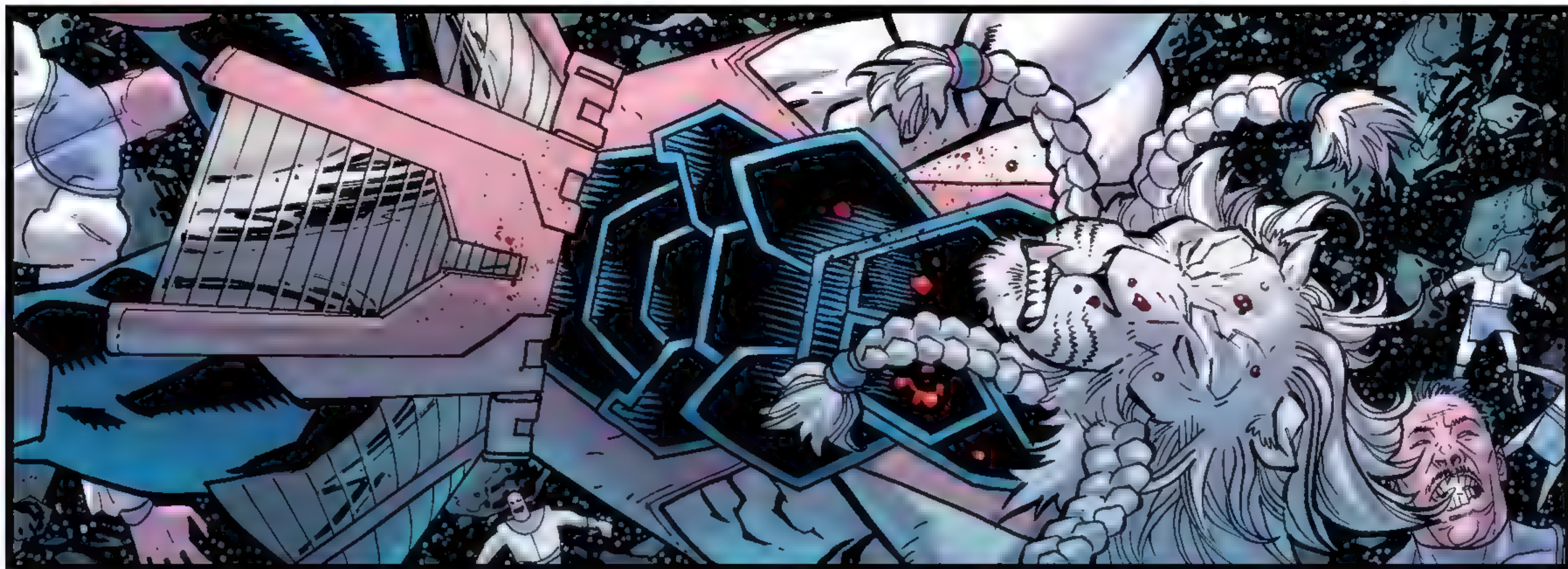
YOU
SICKEN
ME.

THERE
IS NOTHING
LEFT...



...BUT
REVENGE!





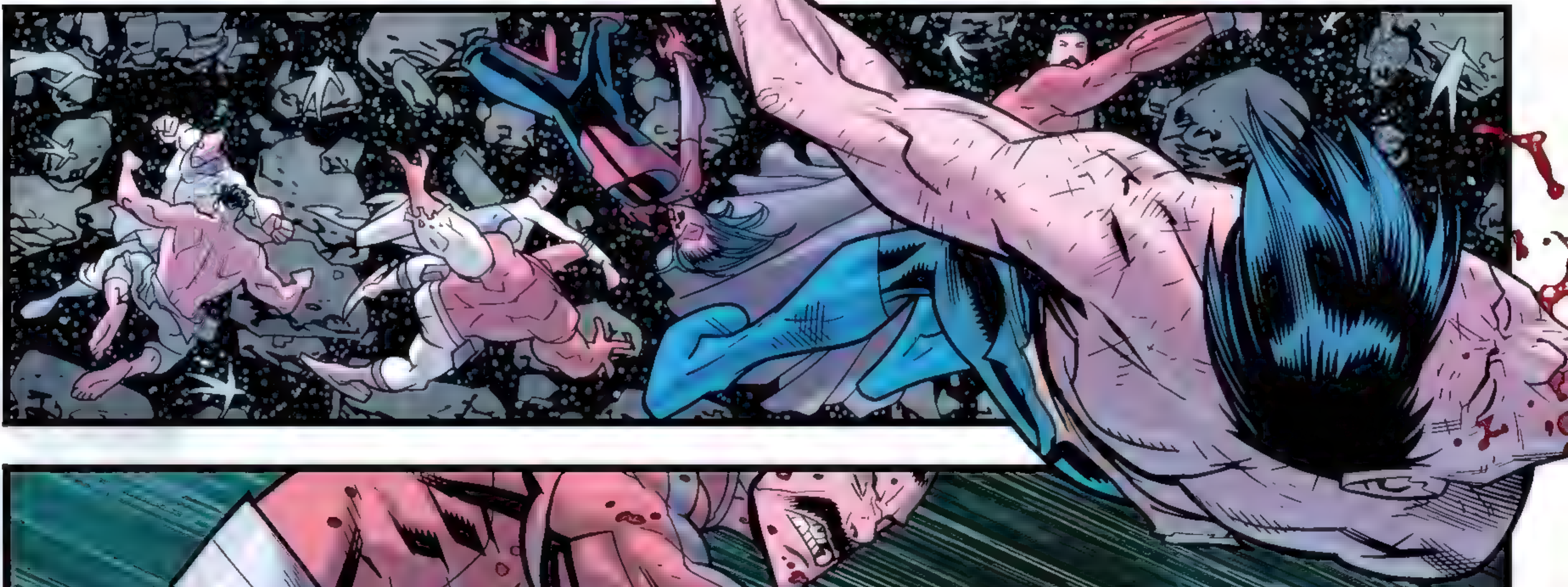


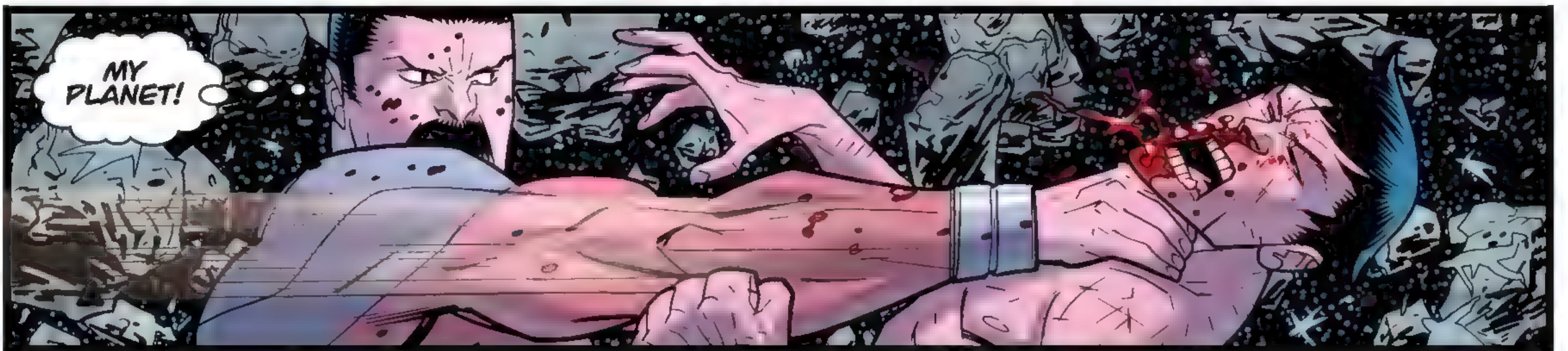
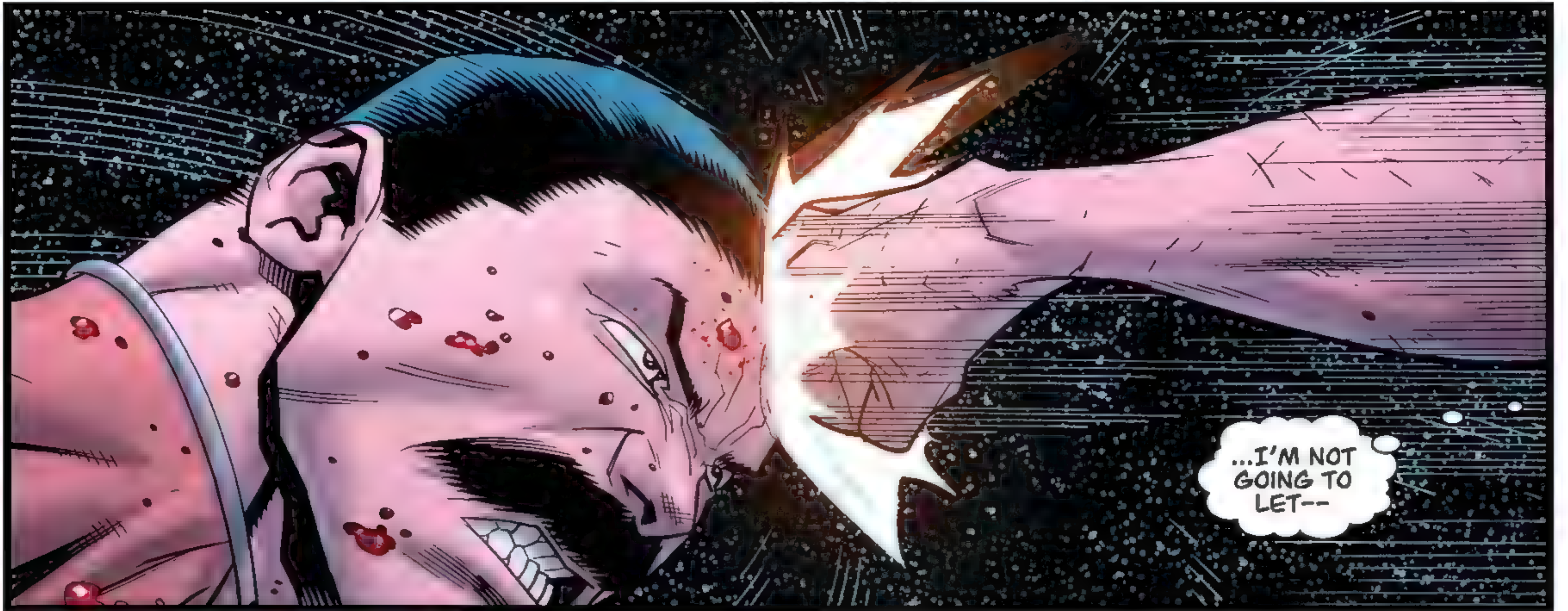
YOU
ARE ALL
NEXT.

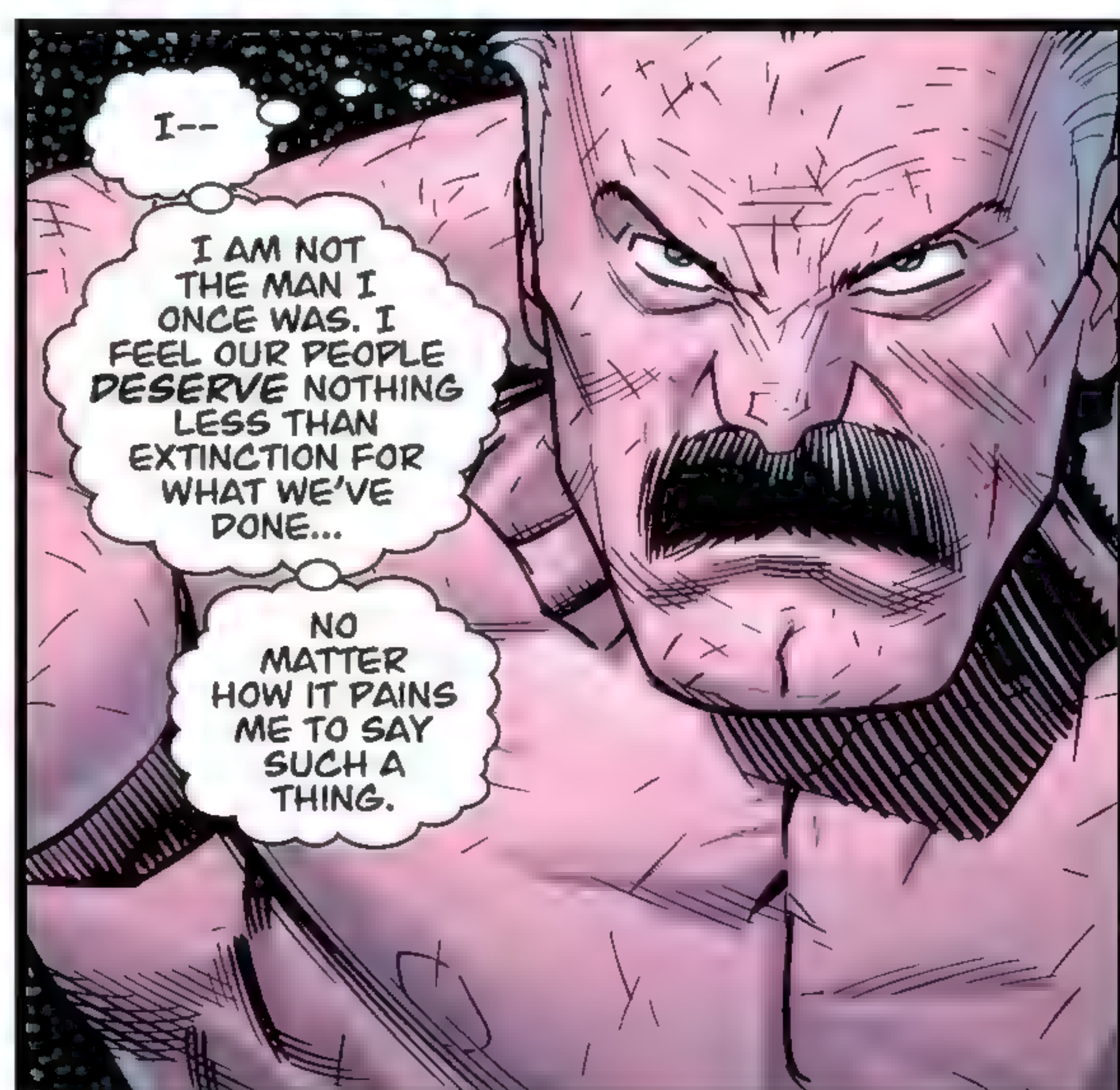
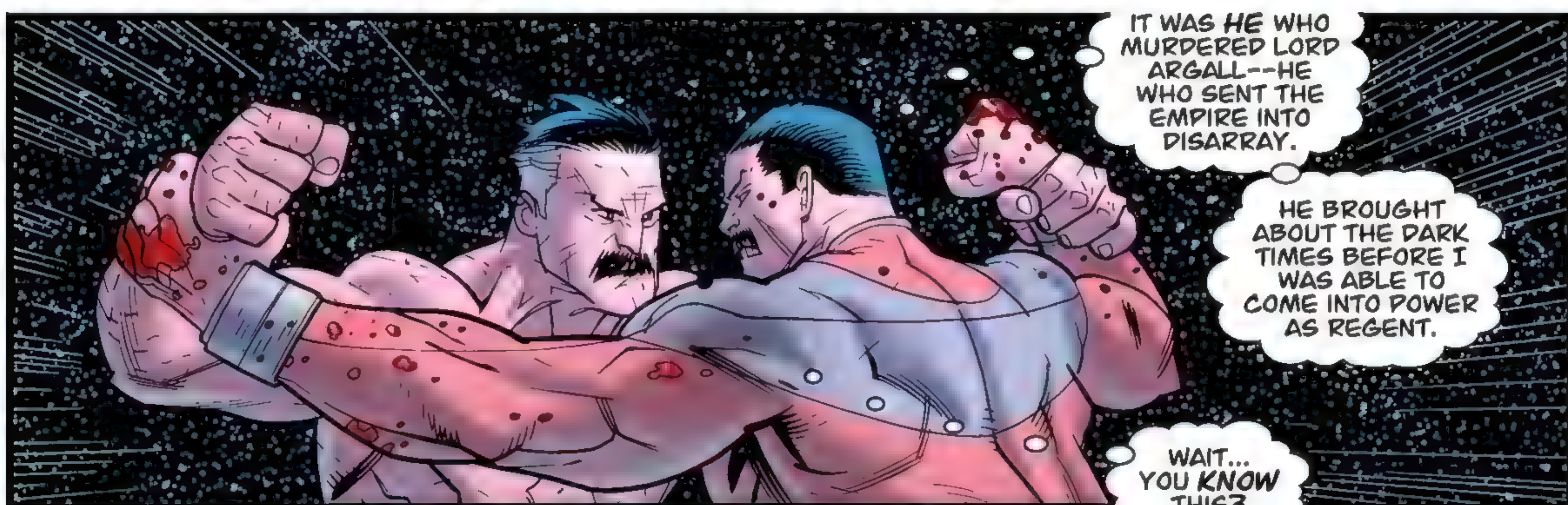
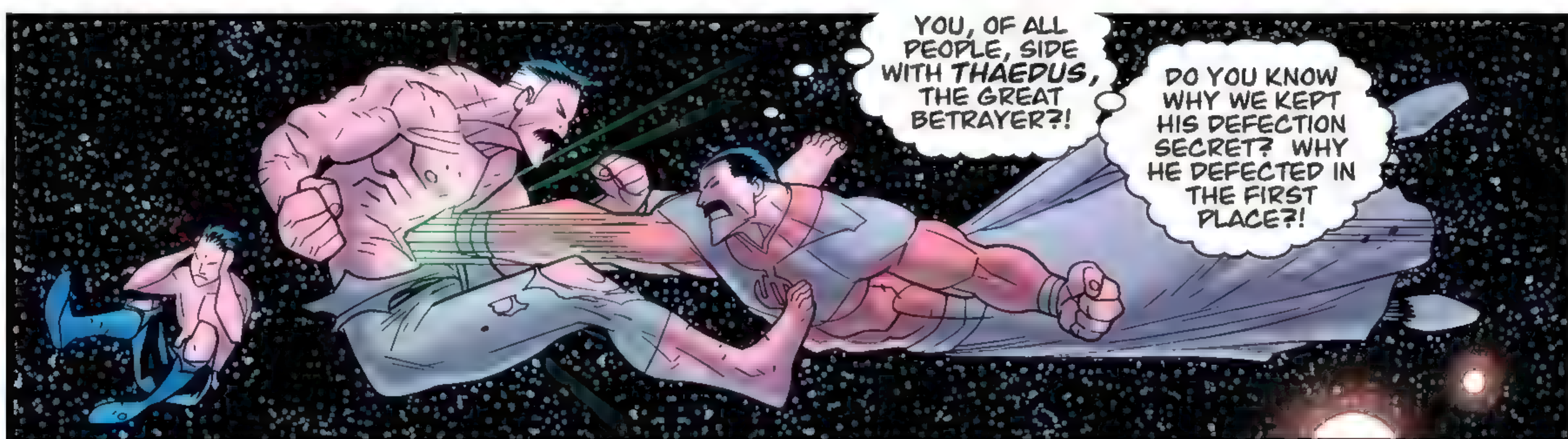


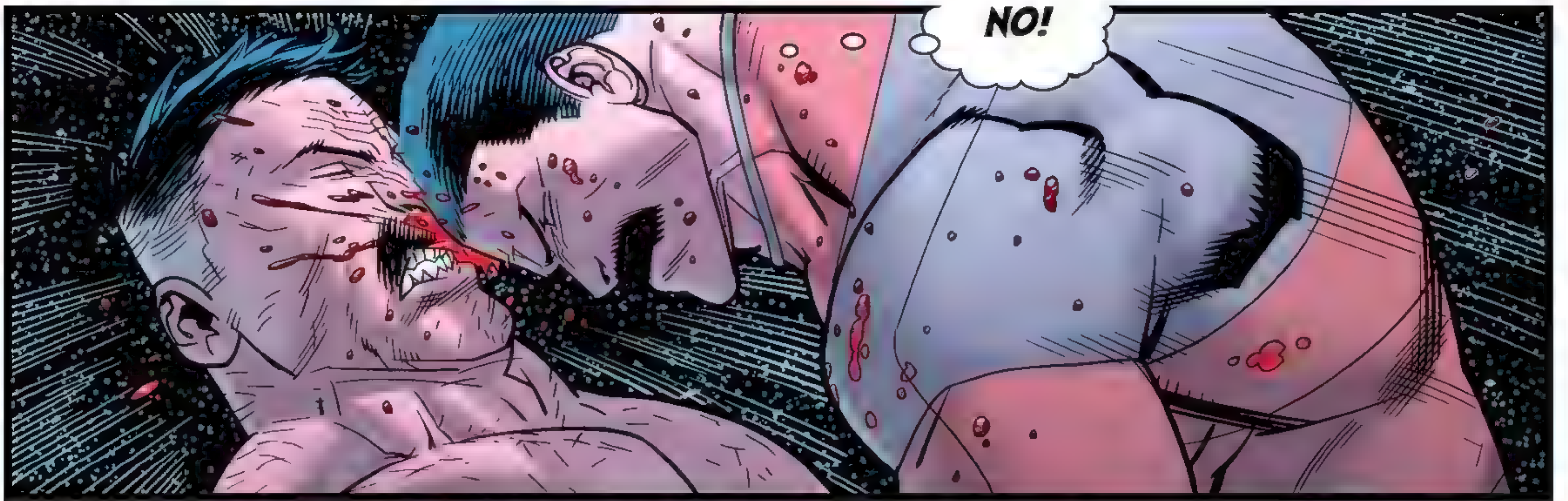
CHAPTER 76

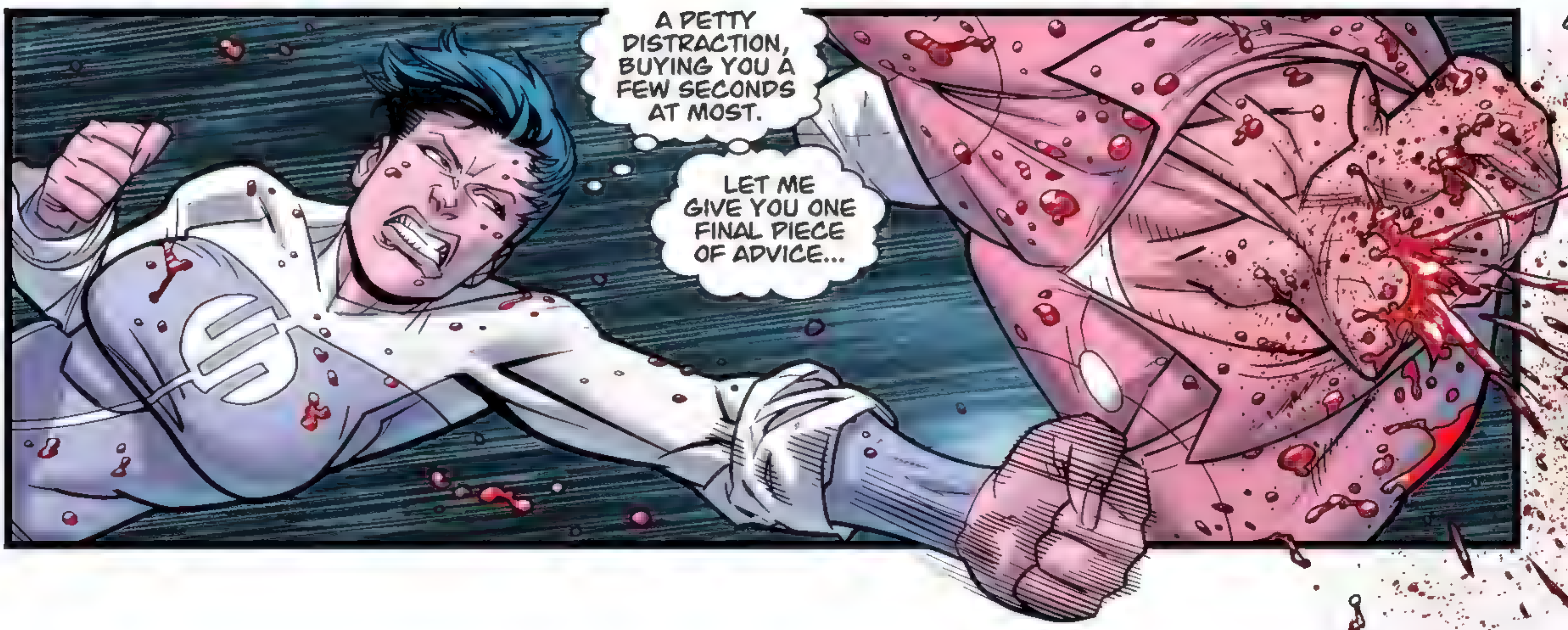
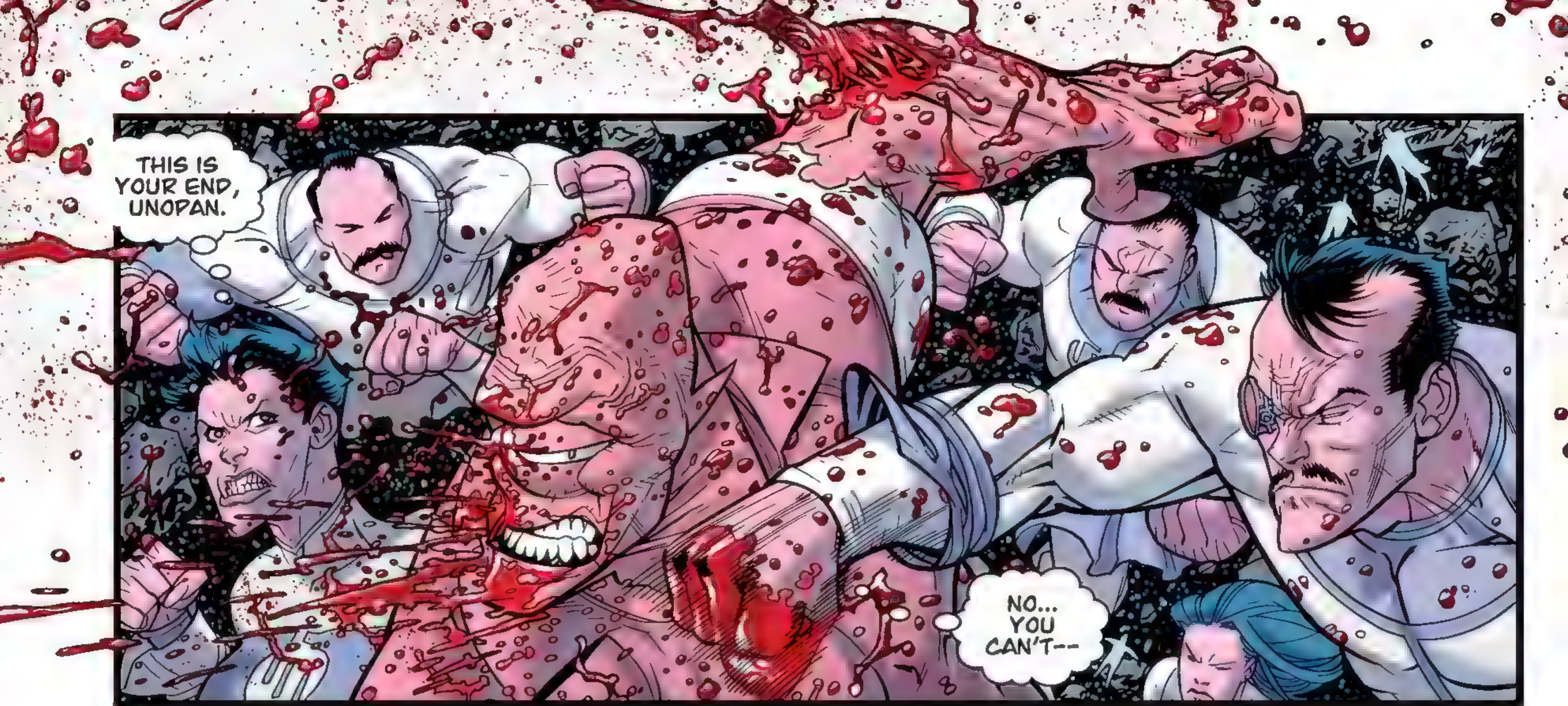


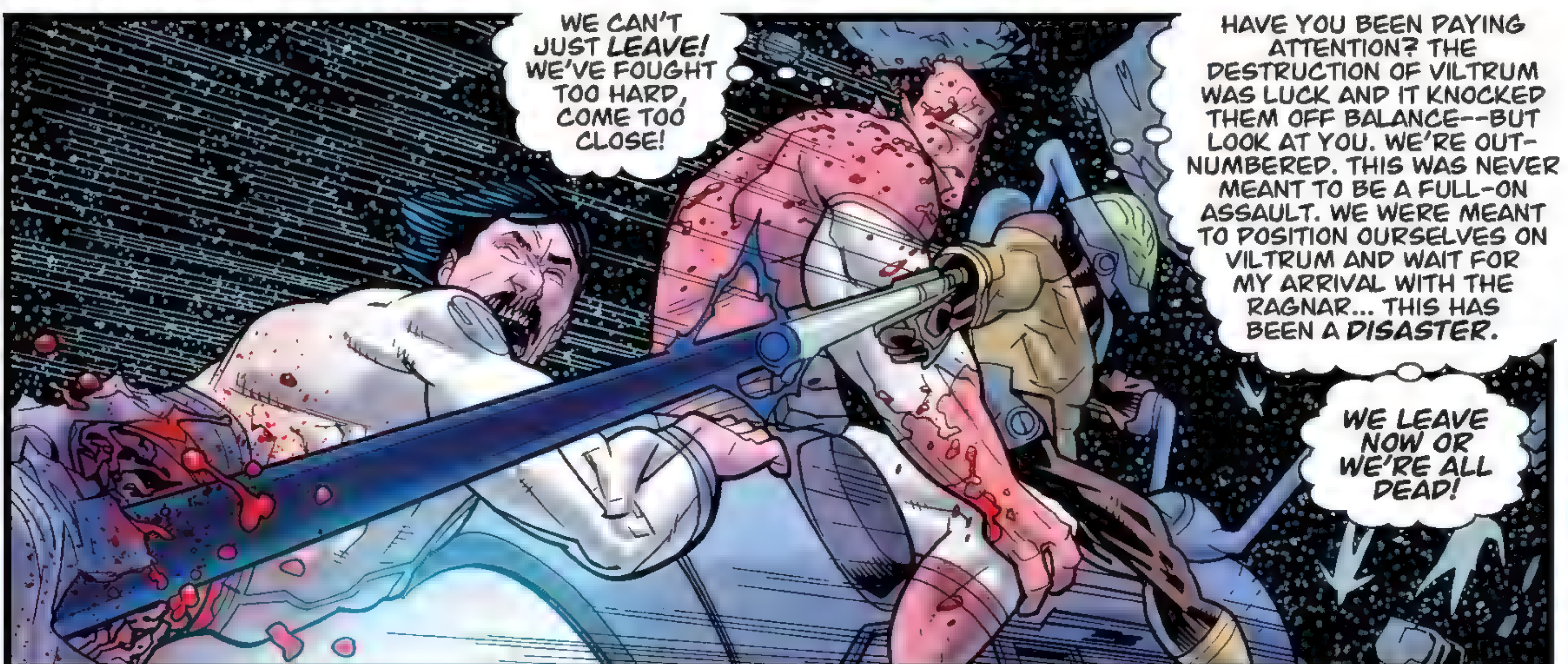


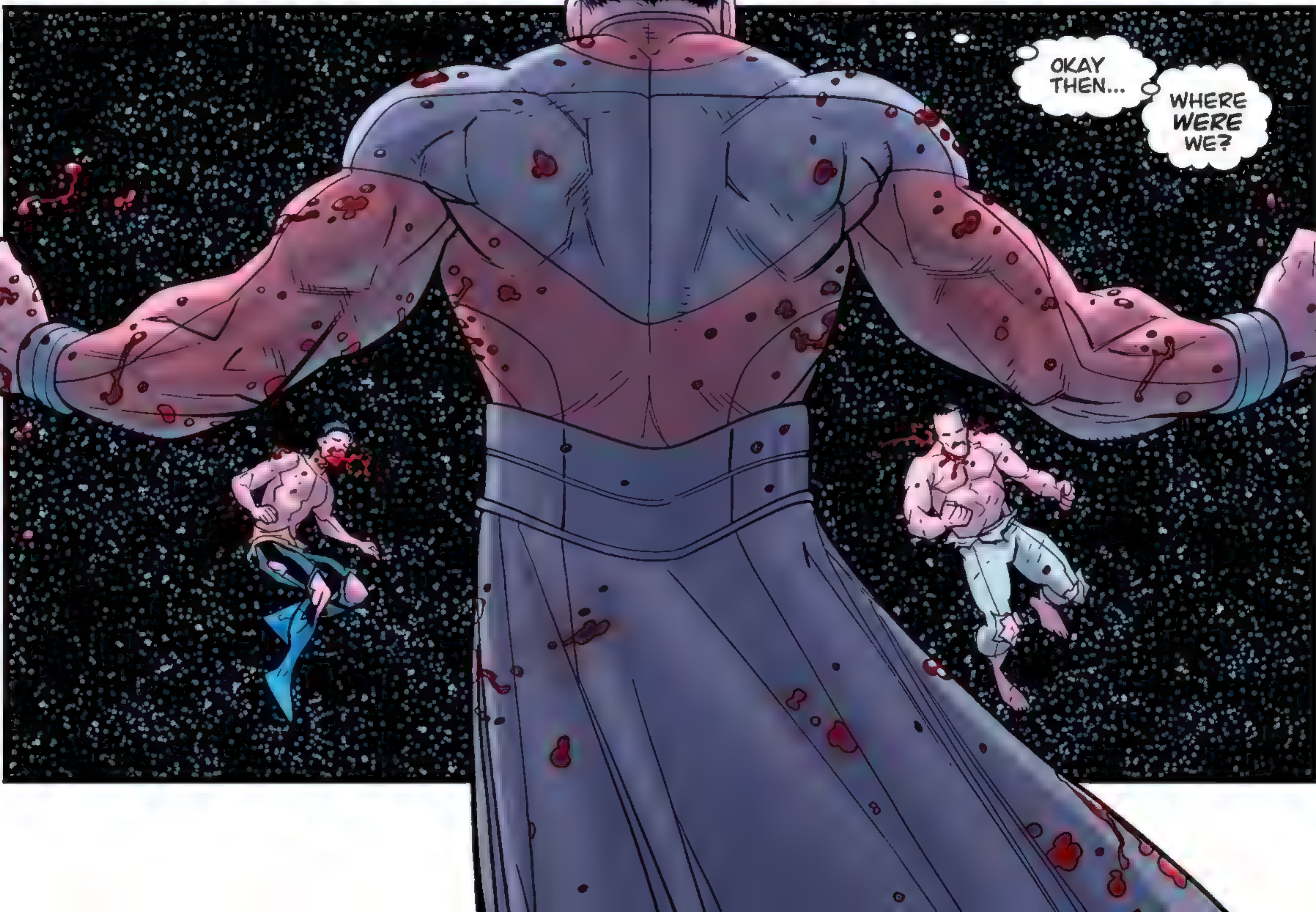
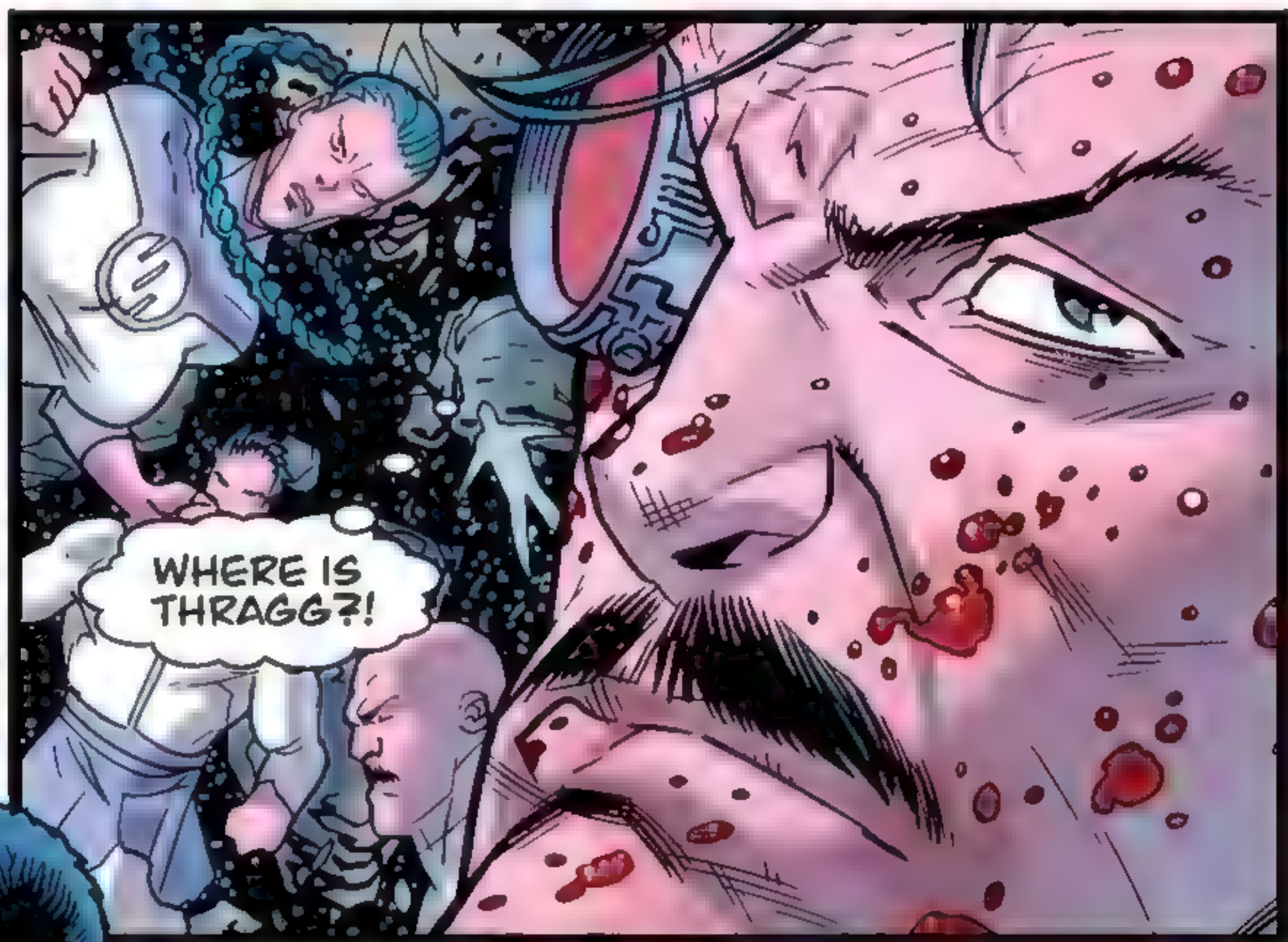
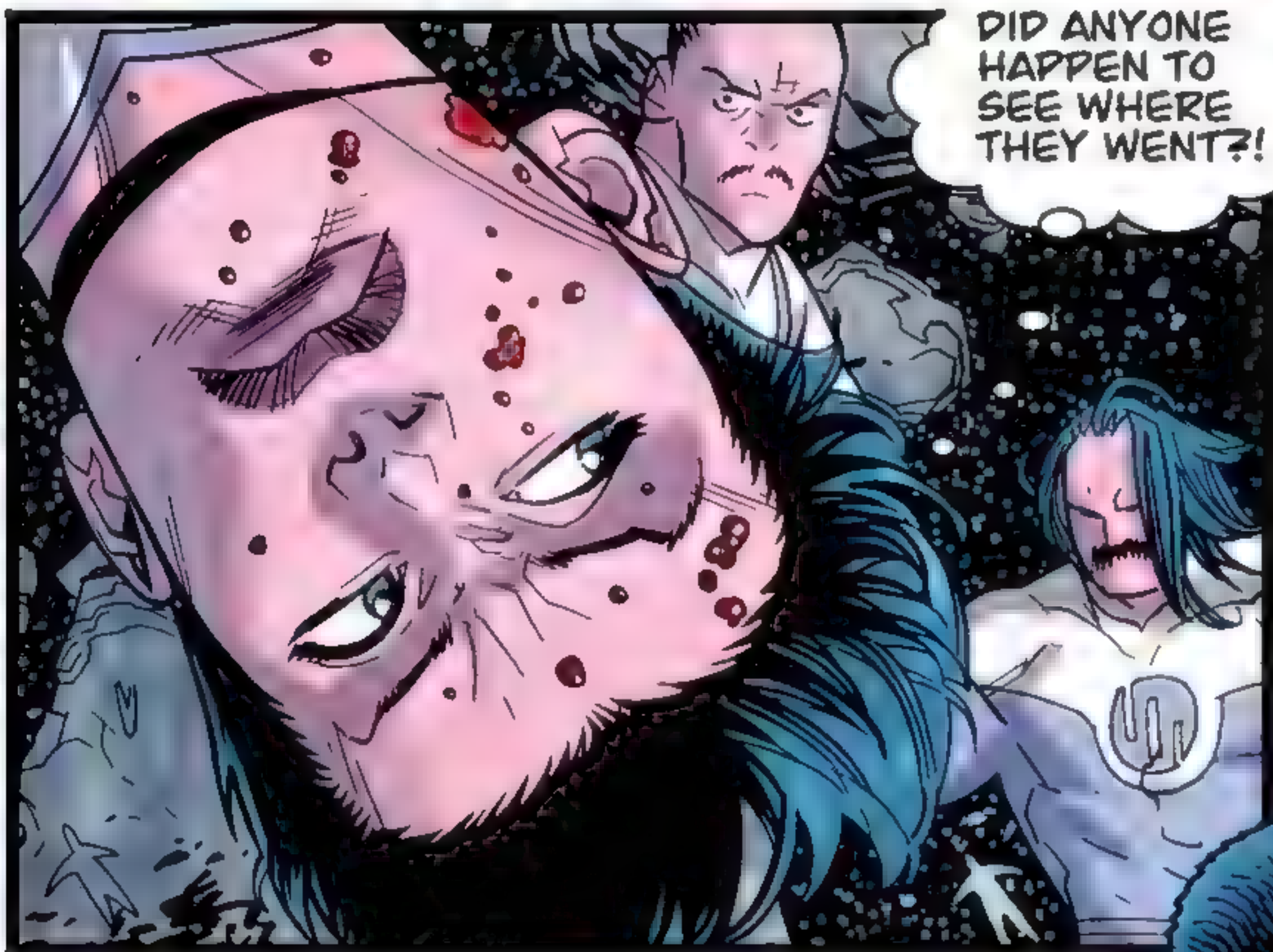
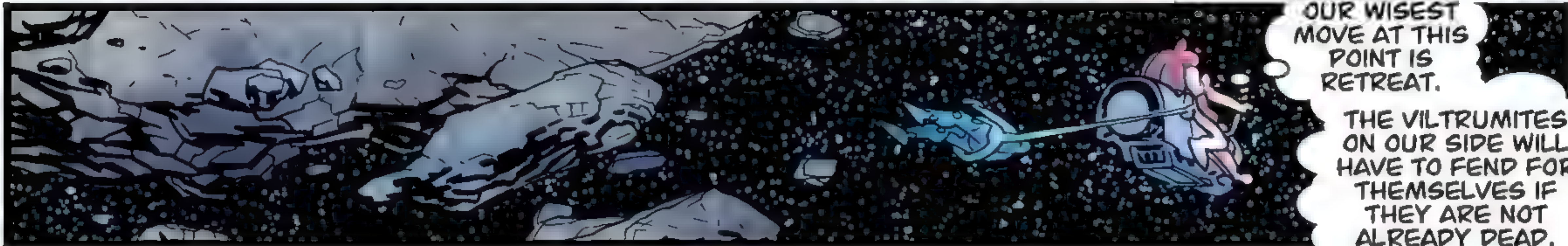
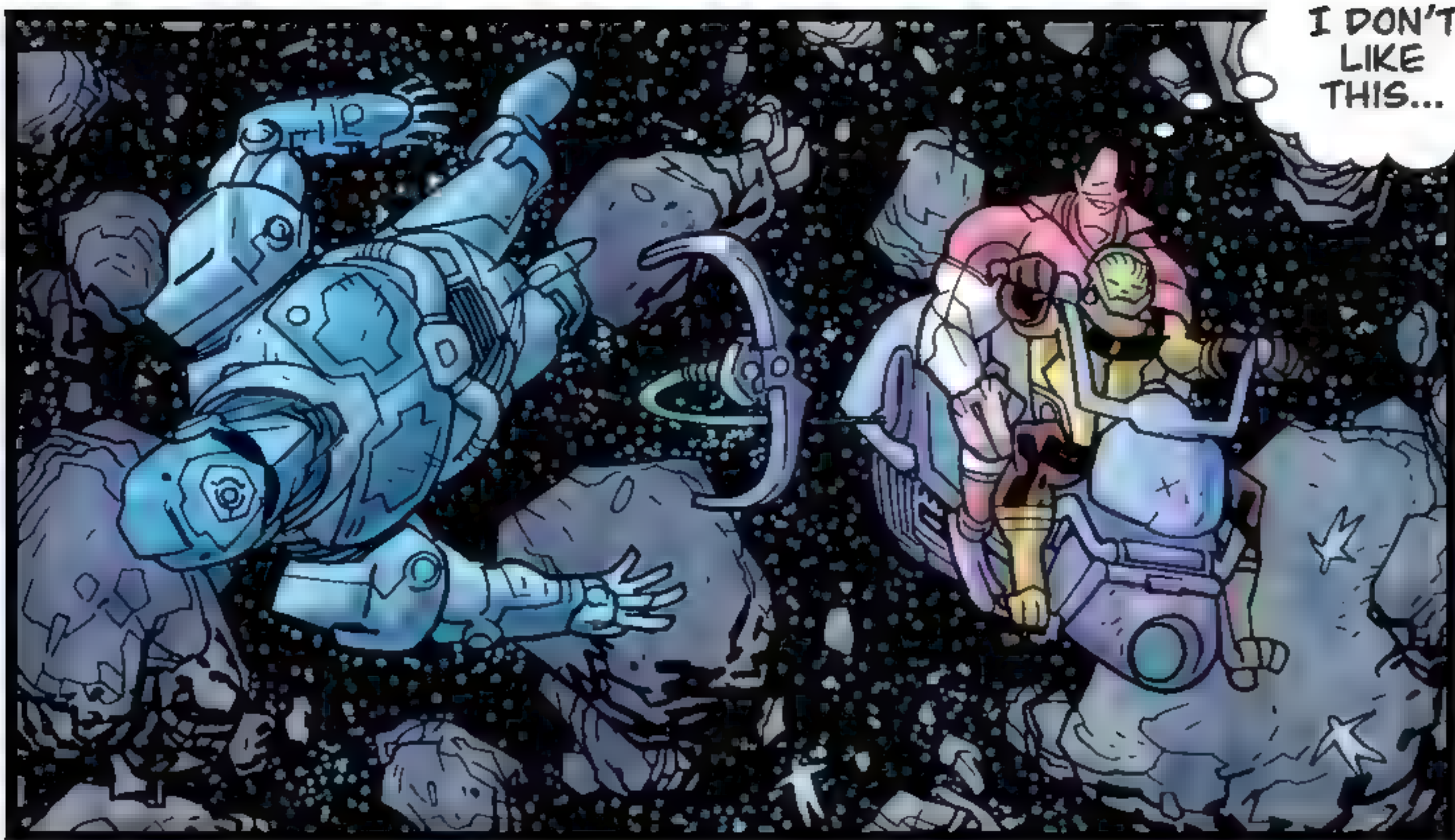


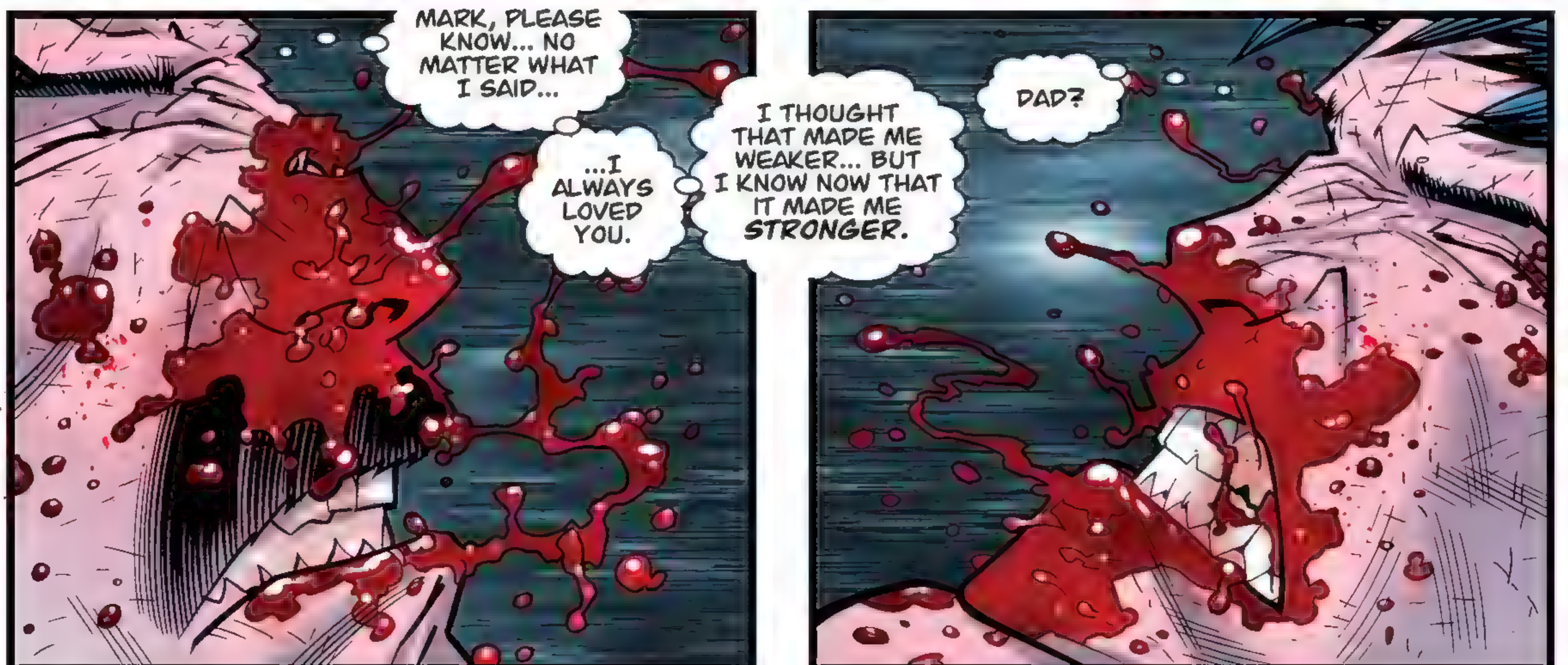
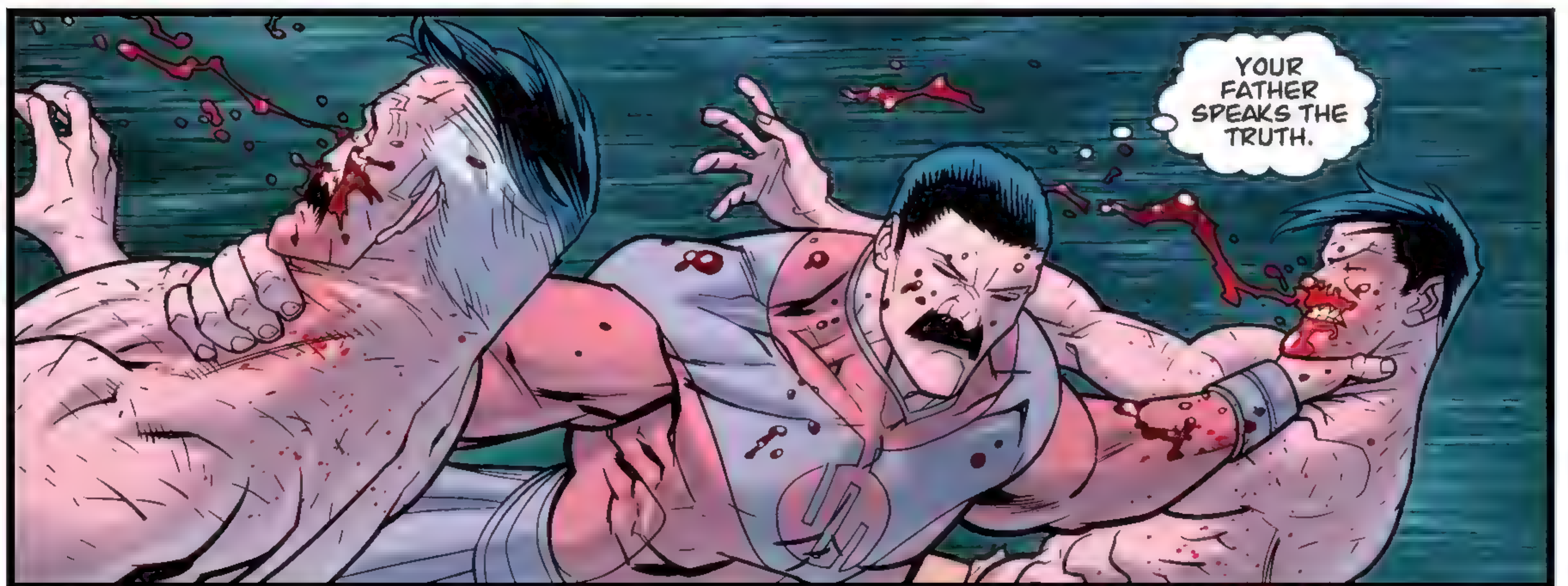


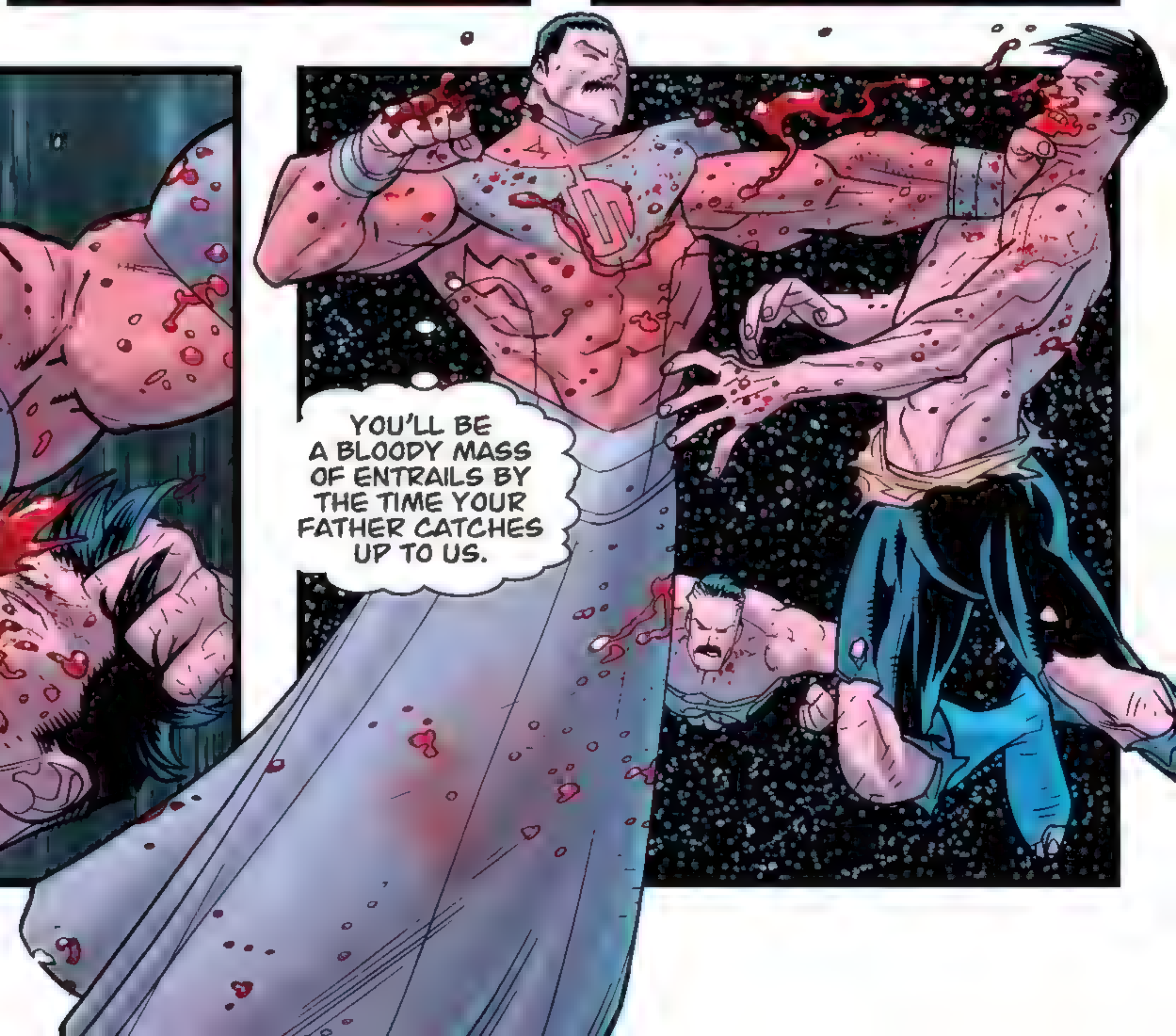
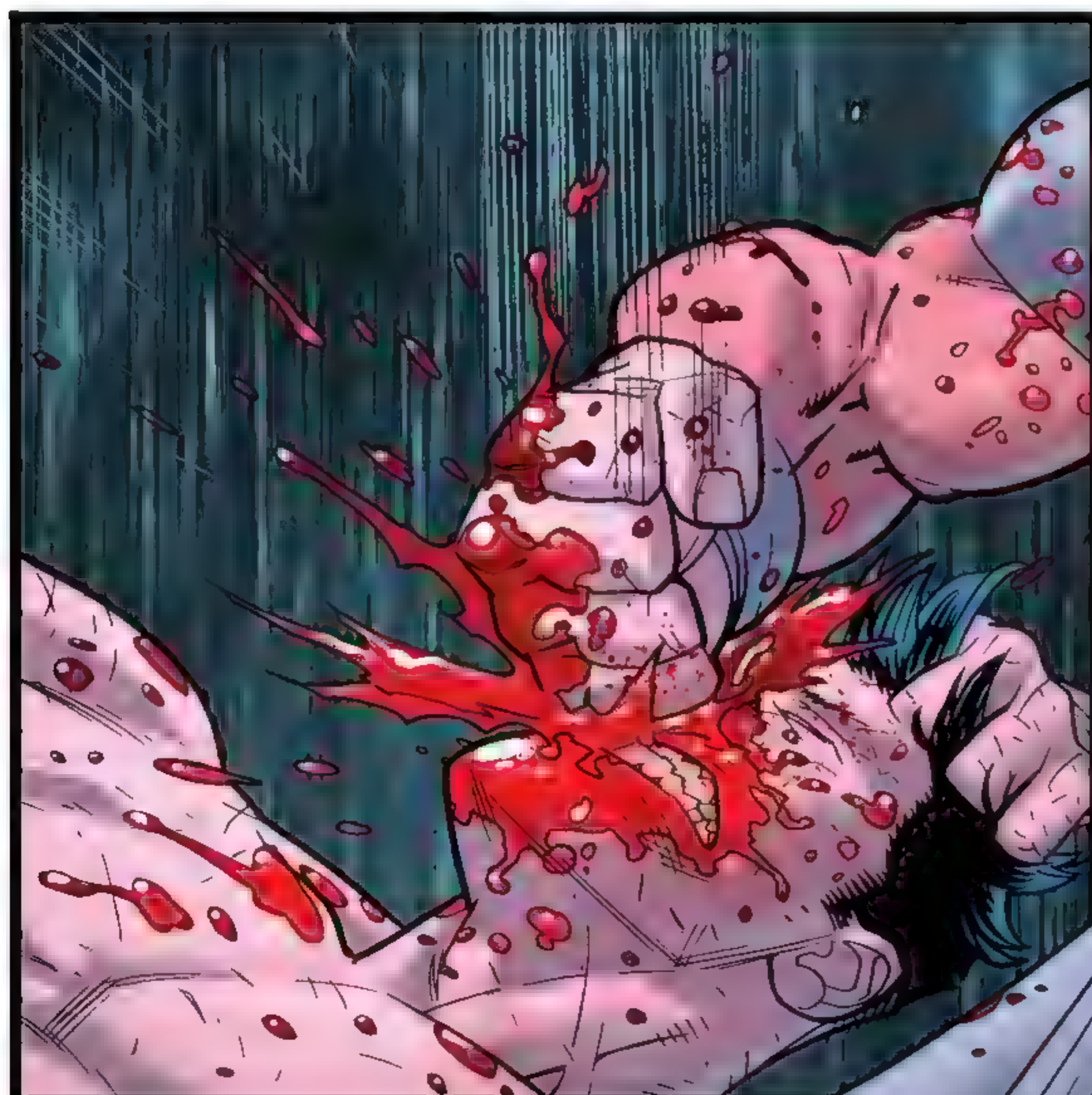
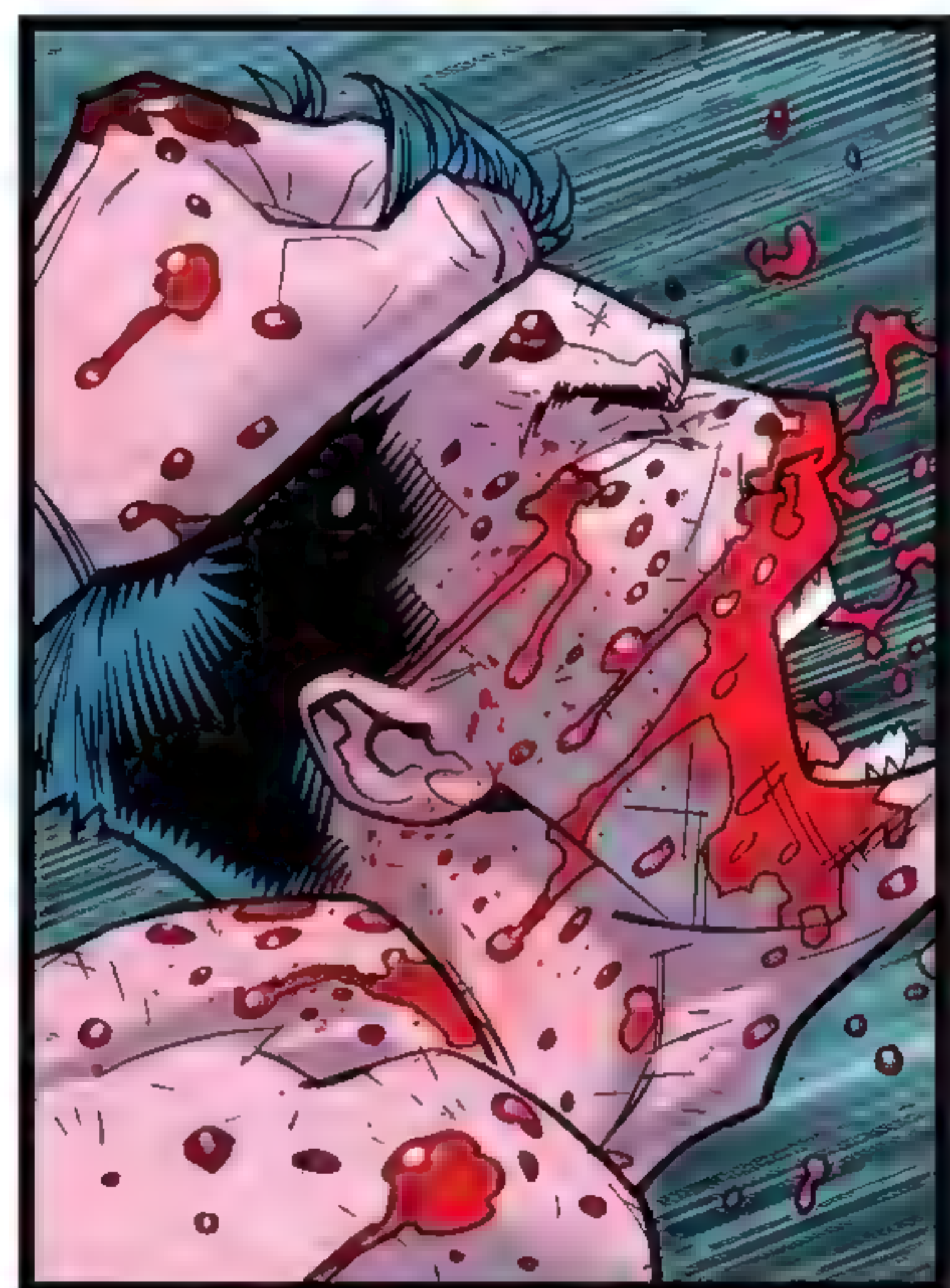
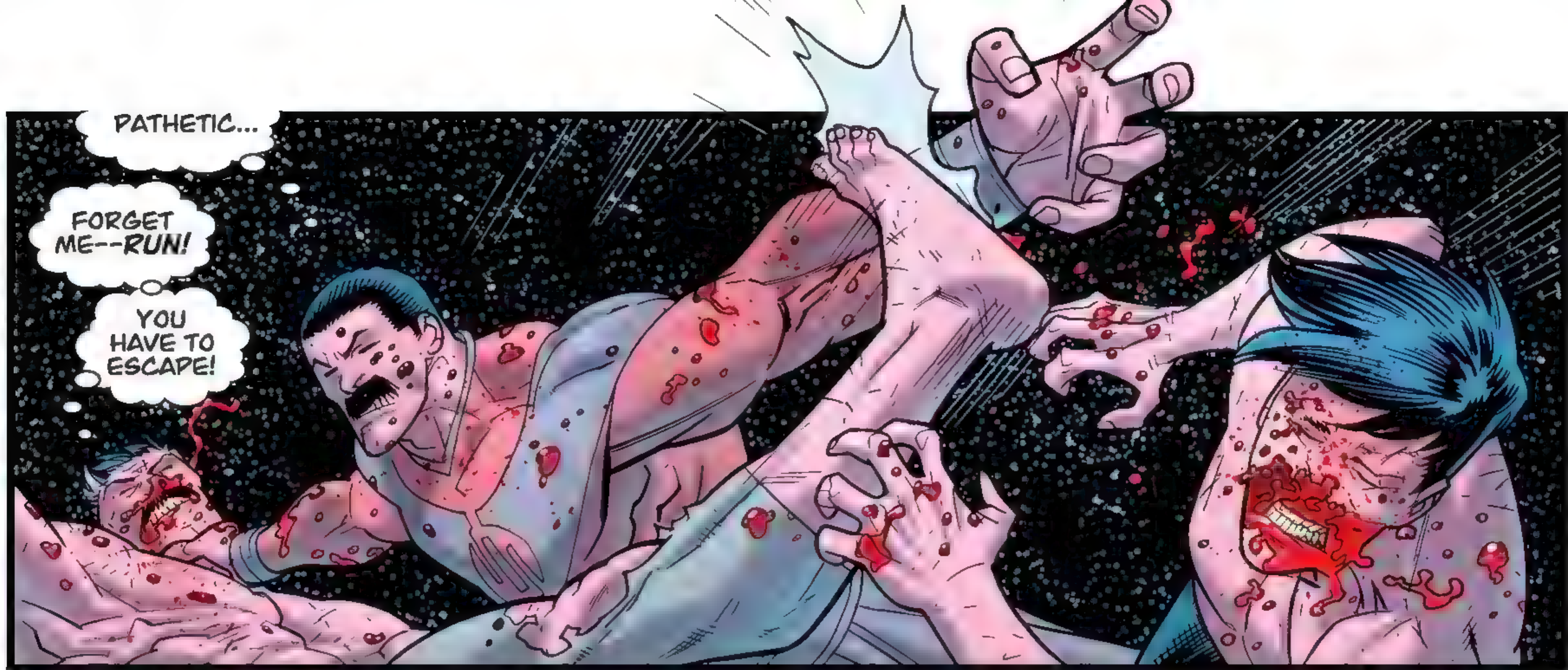




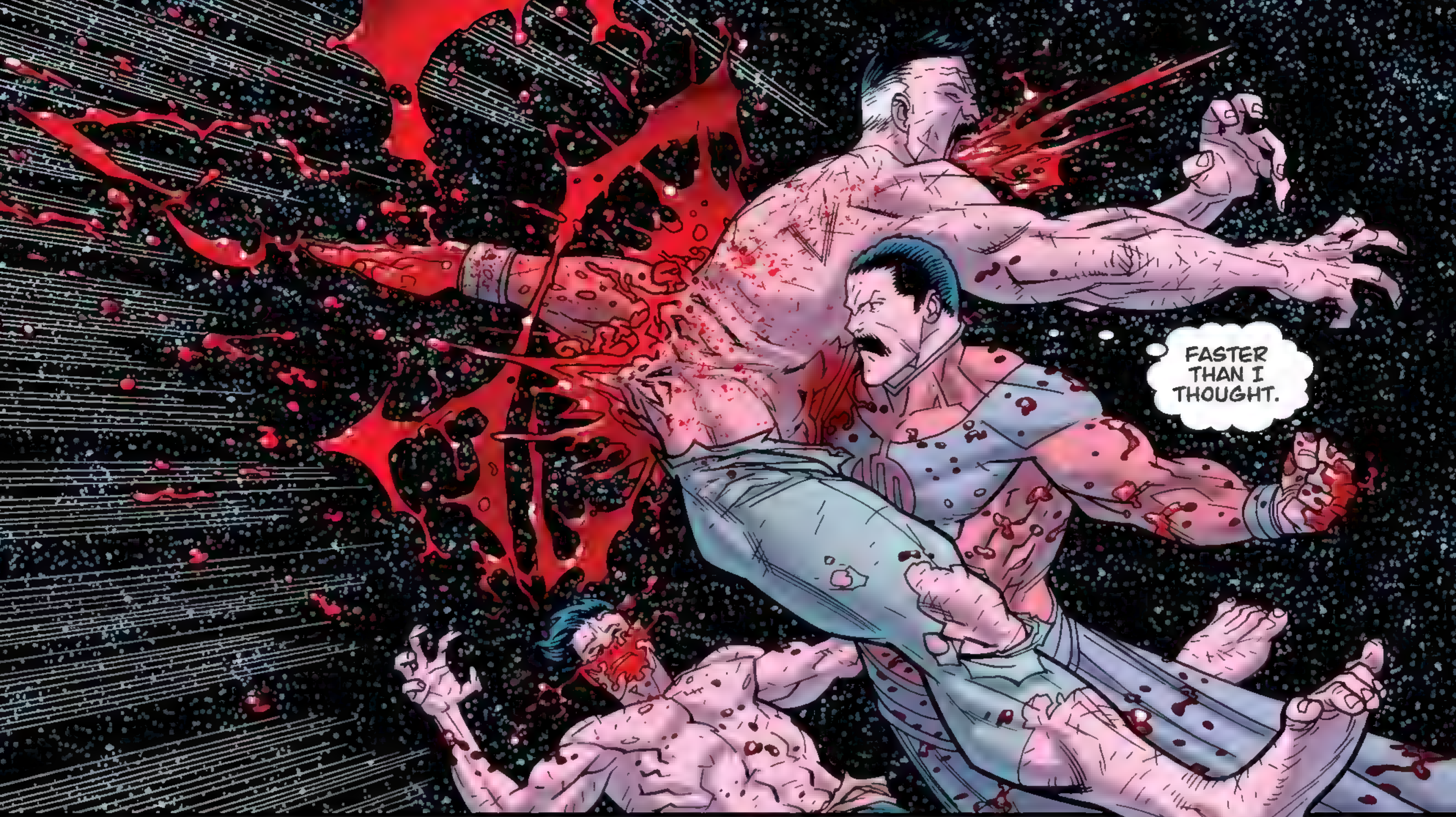








YOU'LL BE
A BLOODY MASS
OF ENTRAILS BY
THE TIME YOUR
FATHER CATCHES
UP TO US.

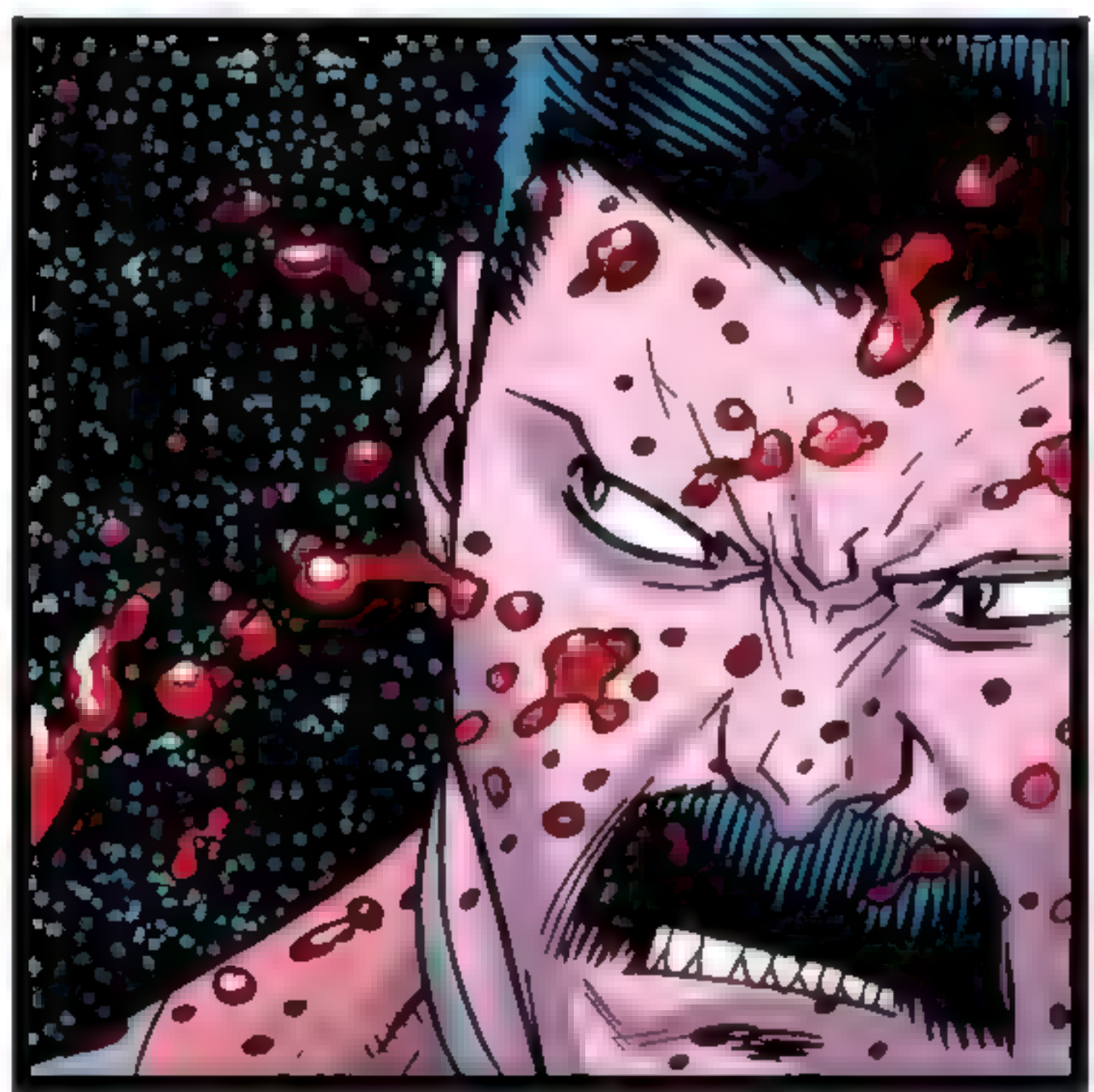


FASTER
THAN I
THOUGHT.

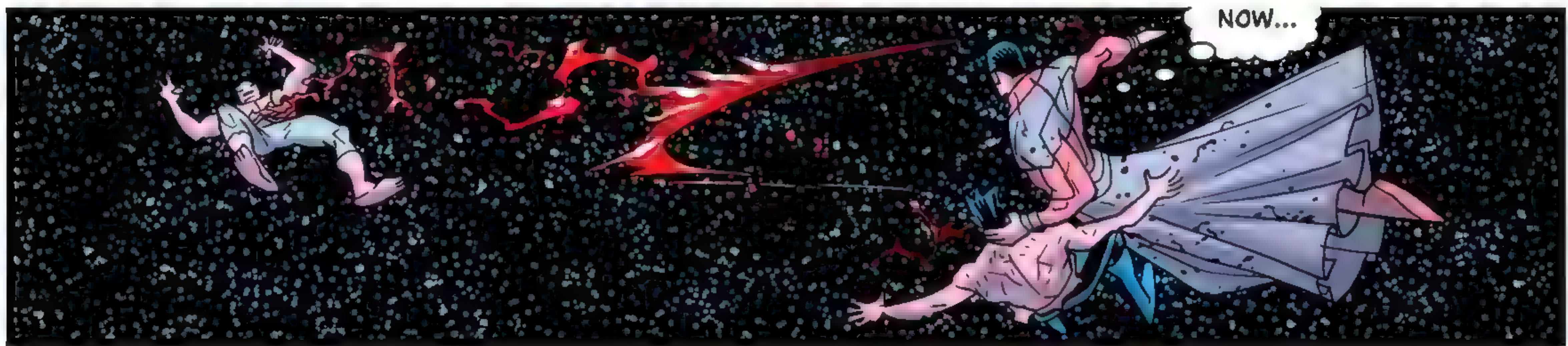


MARK...

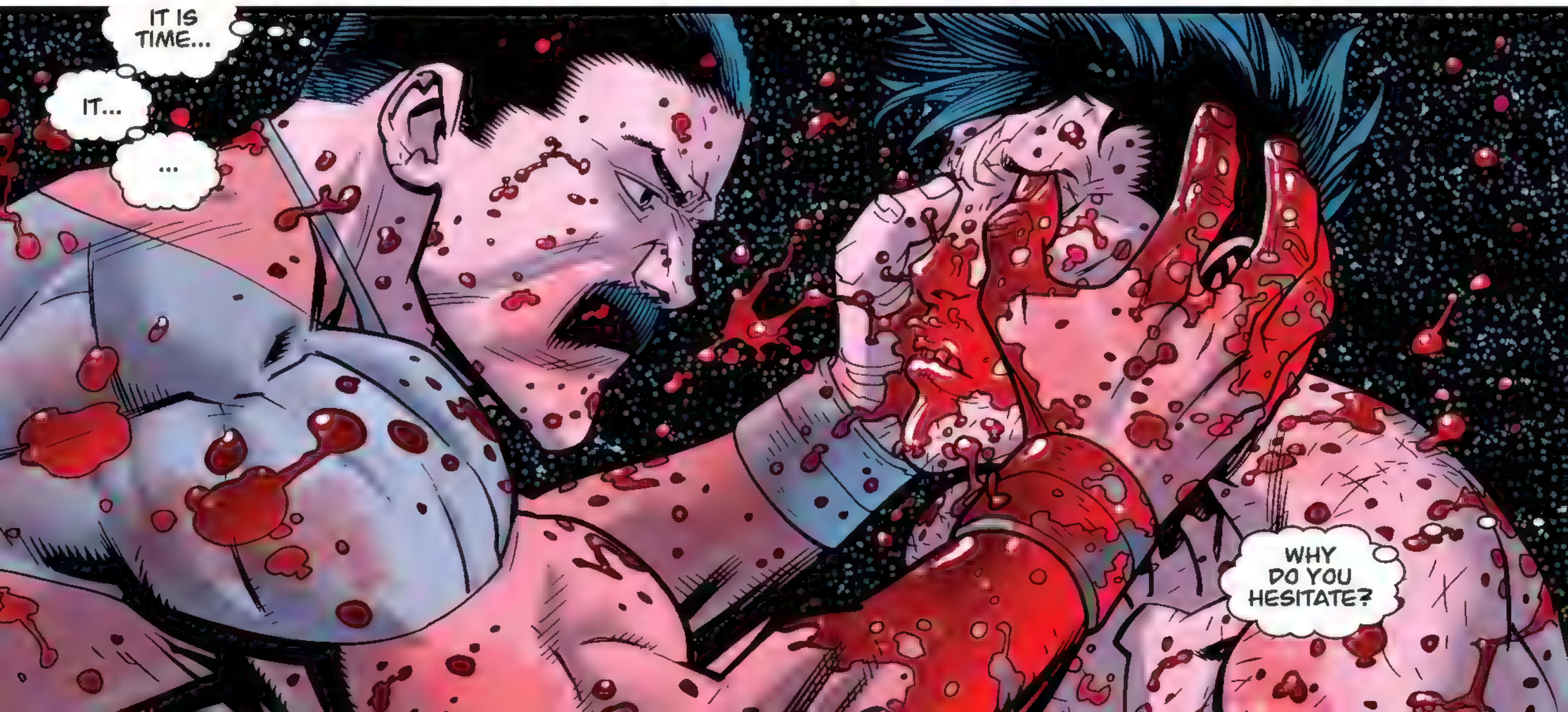
...



EVEN AT
THE END HE
SHOWS HIS
WEAKNESS.



NOW...

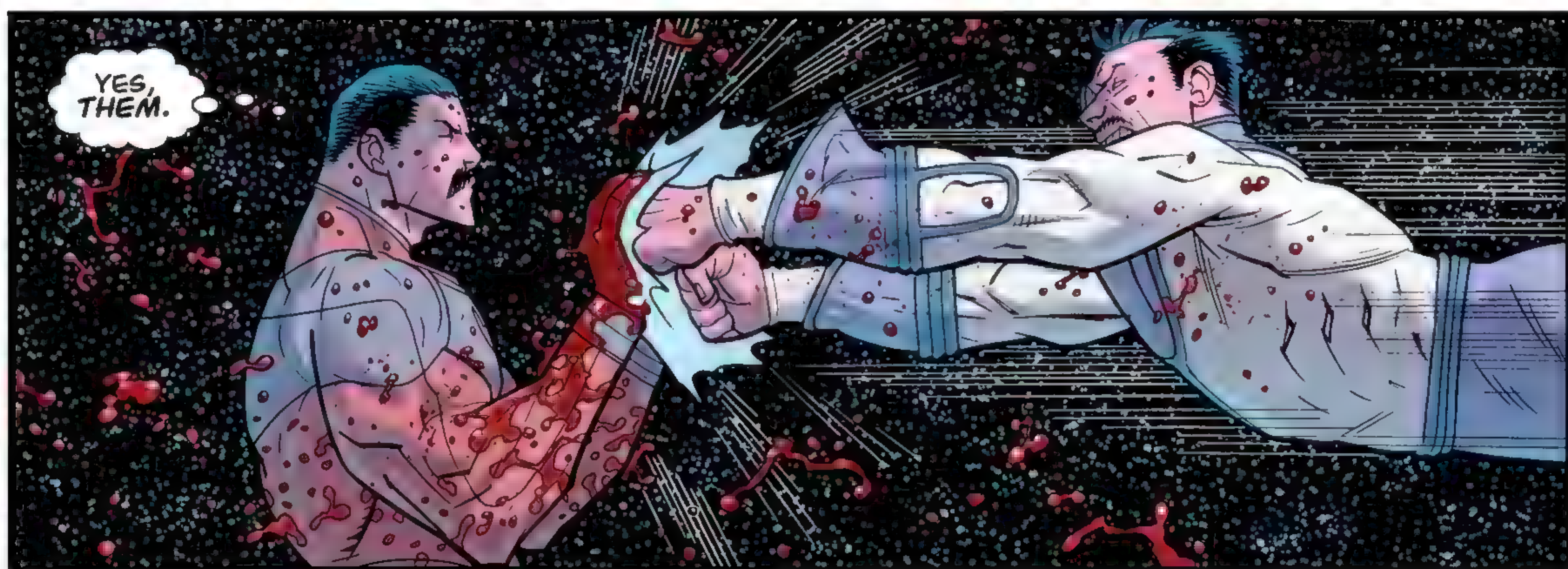
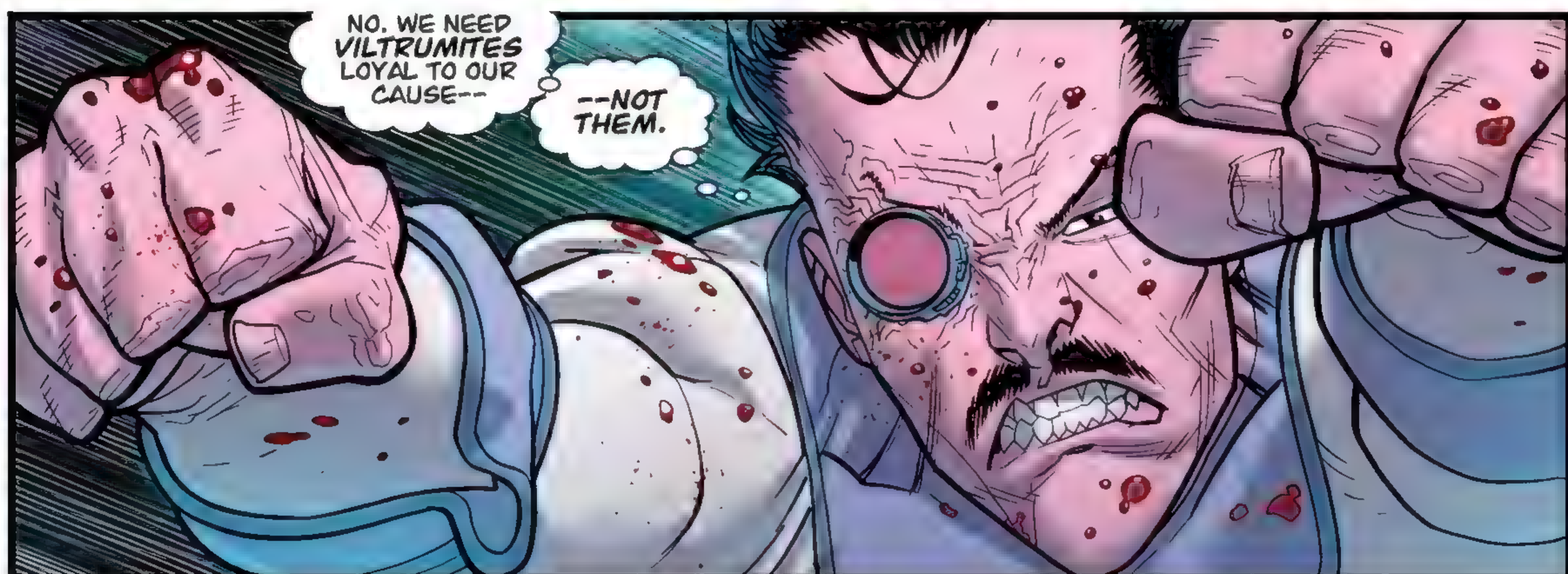


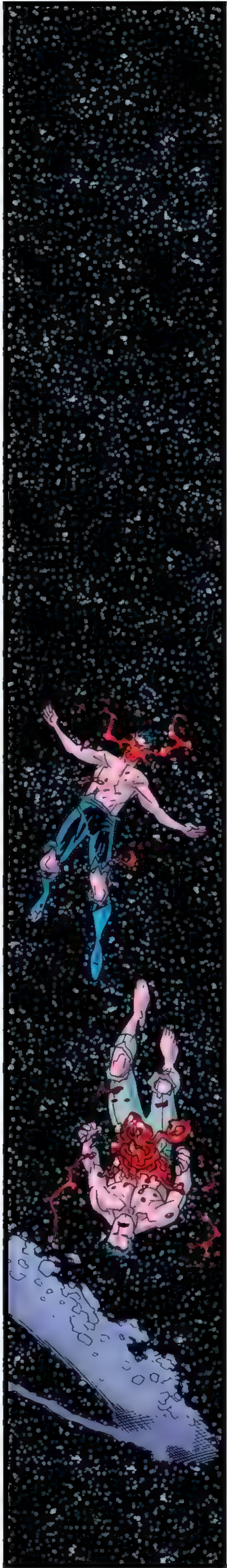
IT IS
TIME...

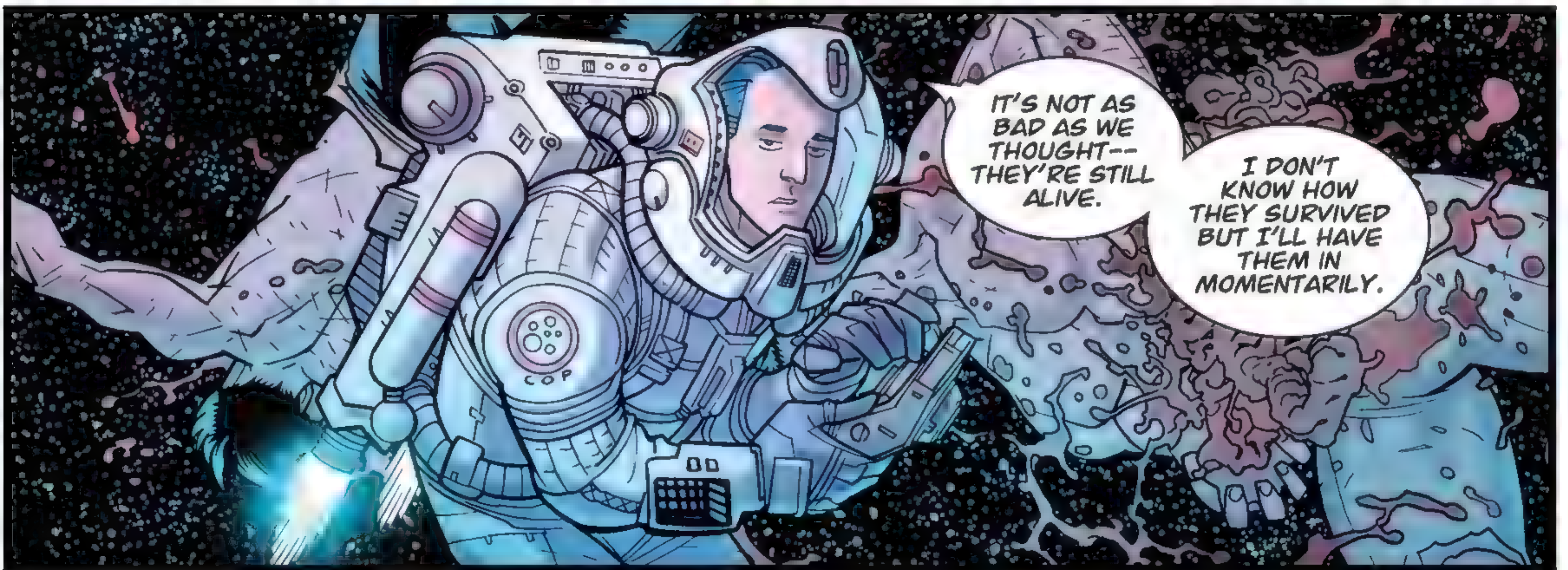
IT...

...

WHY
DO YOU
HESITATE?









WHA--

--HUH?

THEY TOLD
ME YOU WERE
WAKING UP.
I'M GLAD I
MADE IT HERE
IN TIME.

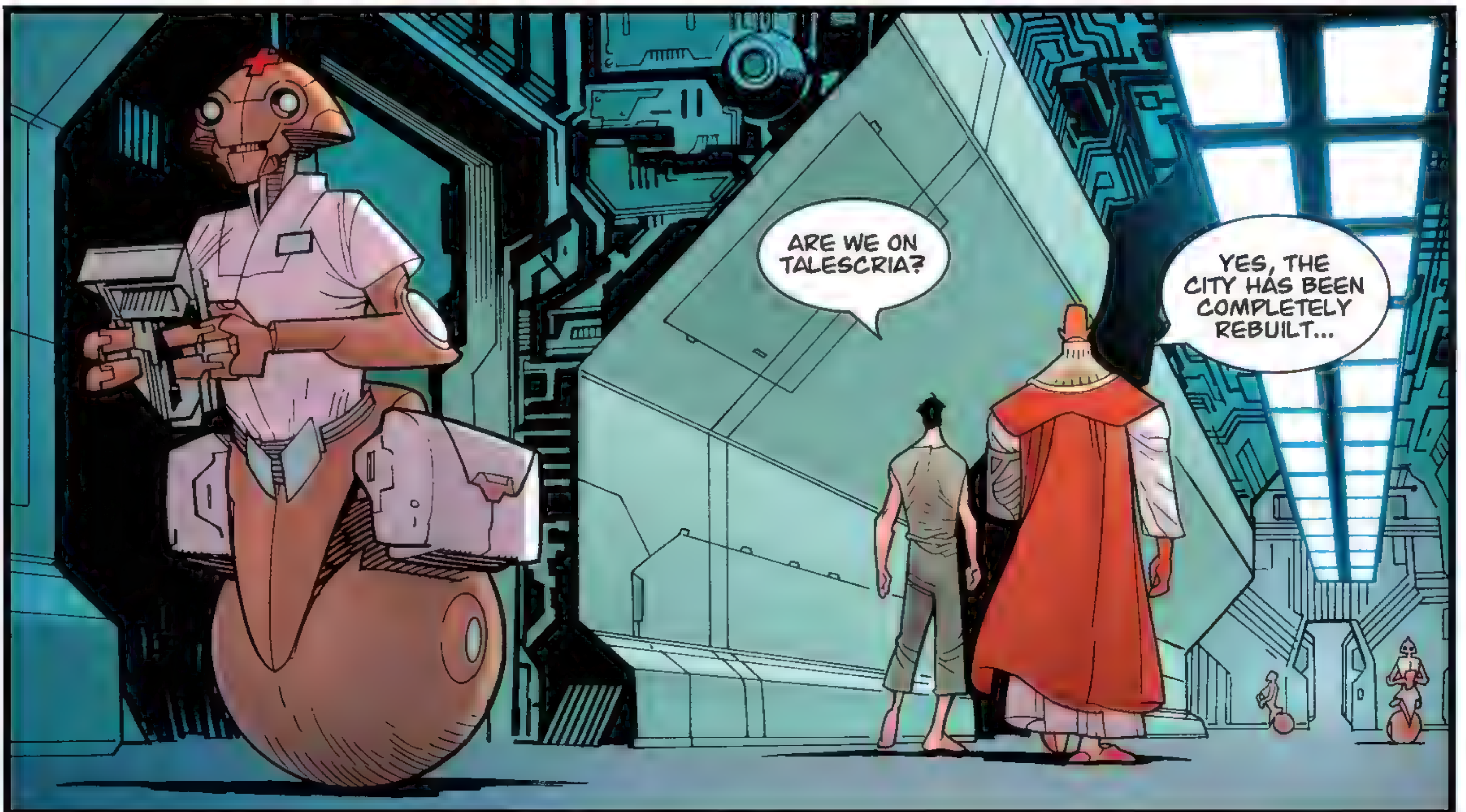
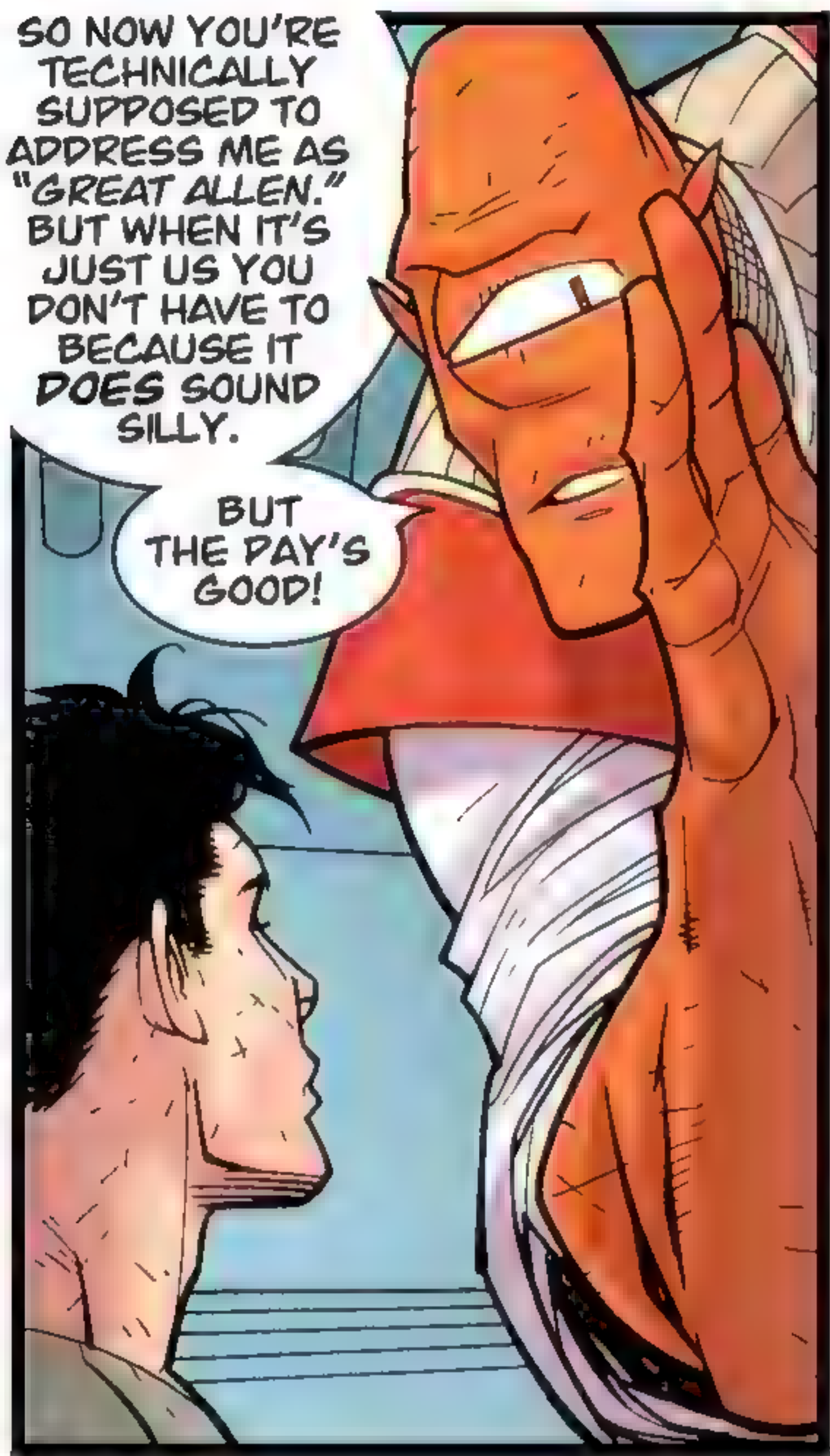
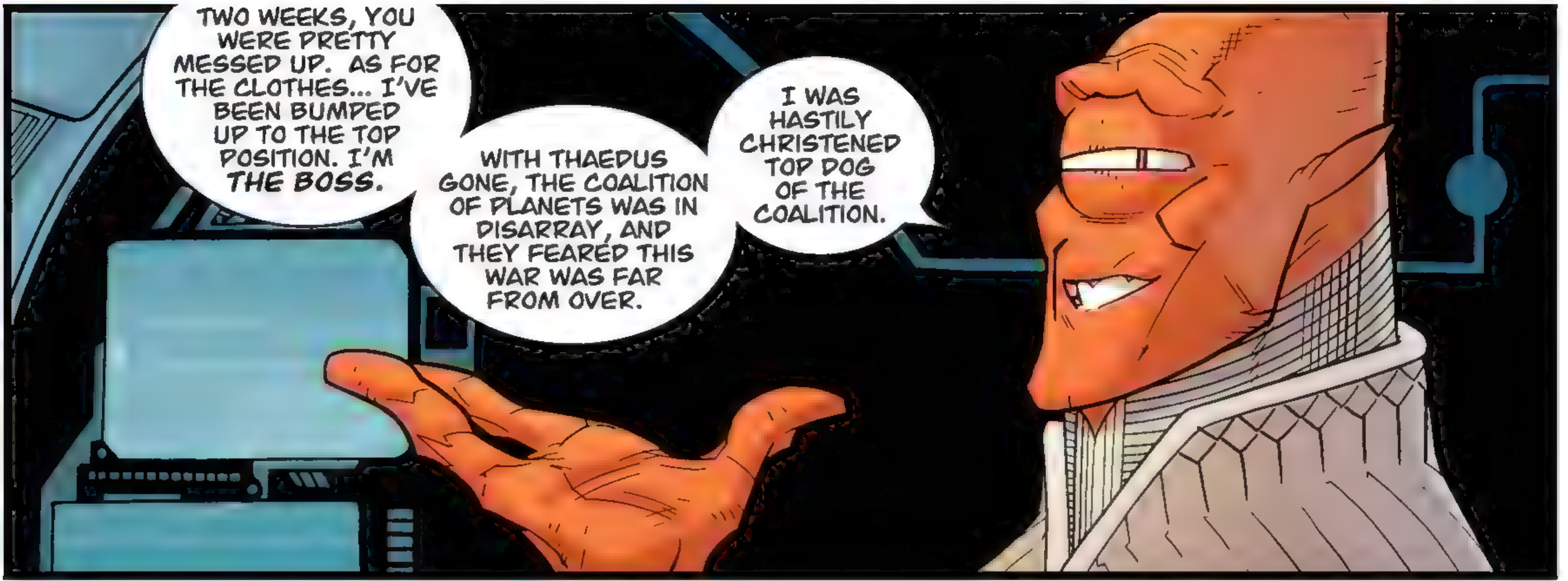
IT'S SO
GOOD TO SEE
YOU, MARK. I
WAS WORRIED
THERE AT THE
BEGINNING.

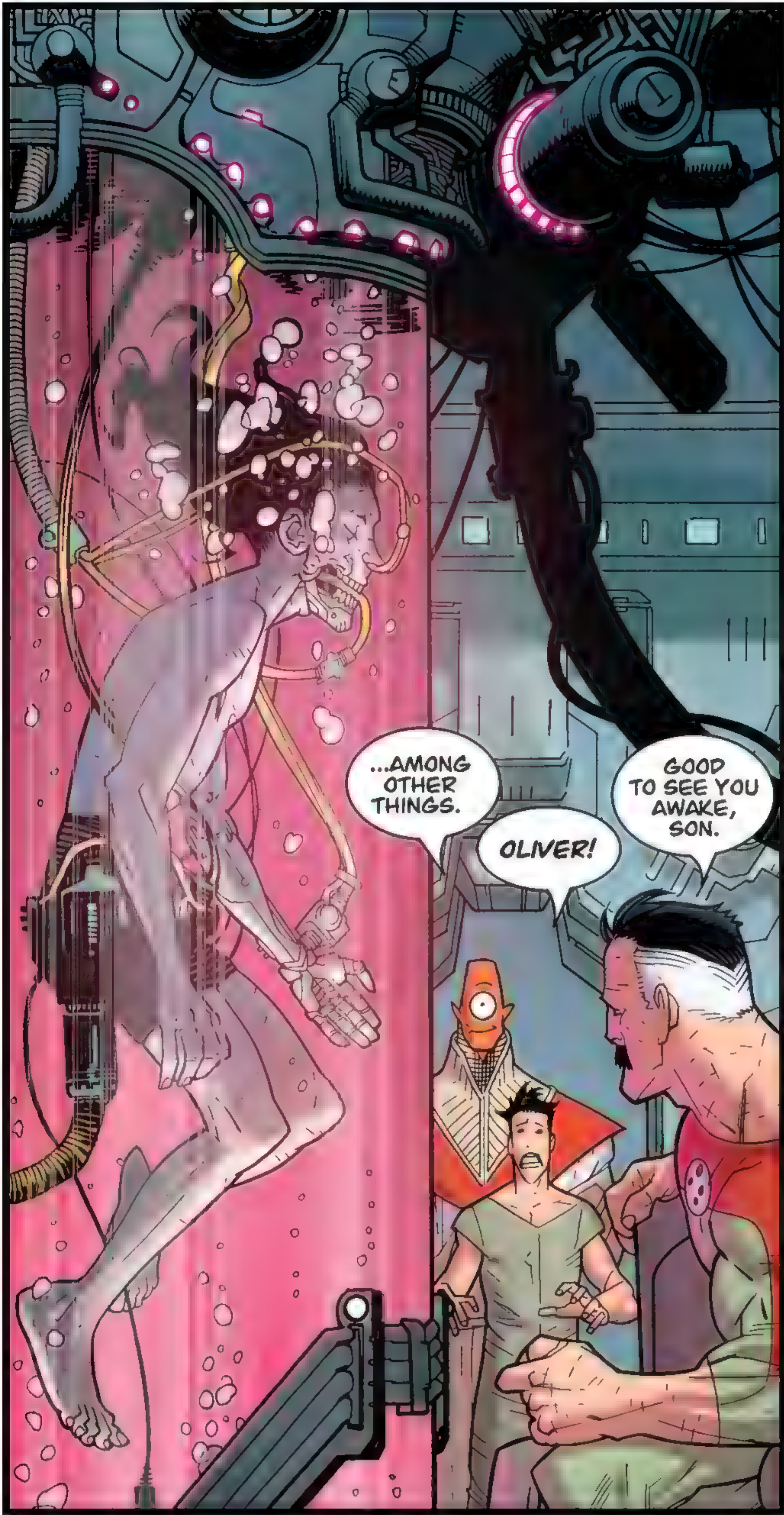


WHAT ARE YOU
WEARING?

THIS? MY
ARM WAS
BROKEN IN THE
BATTLE OF
VILTRUM. I'M
STILL WEARING
A CAST.

THAT'S NOT
WHAT I MEANT...
AND HOW LONG
HAVE I BEEN
OUT?

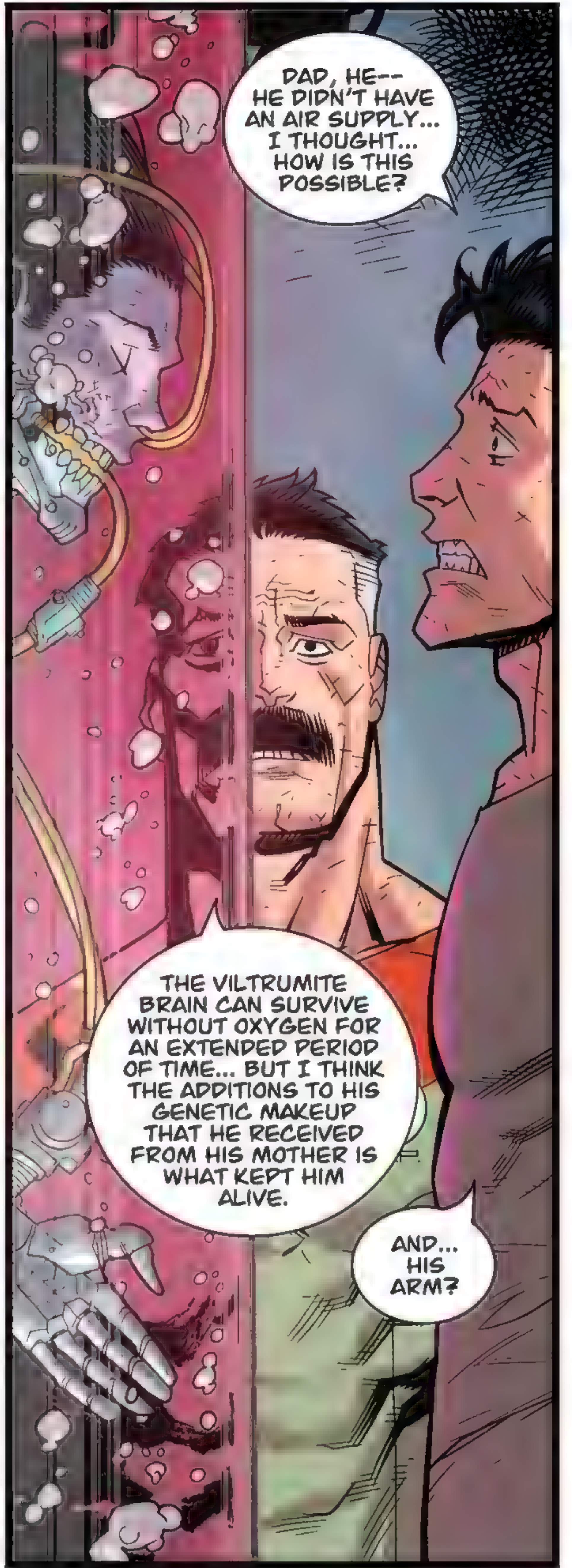




...AMONG
OTHER
THINGS.

GOOD
TO SEE YOU
AWAKE,
SON.

OLIVER!



DAD, HE---
HE DIDN'T HAVE
AN AIR SUPPLY...
I THOUGHT...
HOW IS THIS
POSSIBLE?

THE VILTRUMITE
BRAIN CAN SURVIVE
WITHOUT OXYGEN FOR
AN EXTENDED PERIOD
OF TIME... BUT I THINK
THE ADDITIONS TO HIS
GENETIC MAKEUP
THAT HE RECEIVED
FROM HIS MOTHER IS
WHAT KEPT HIM
ALIVE.

AND...
HIS
ARM?



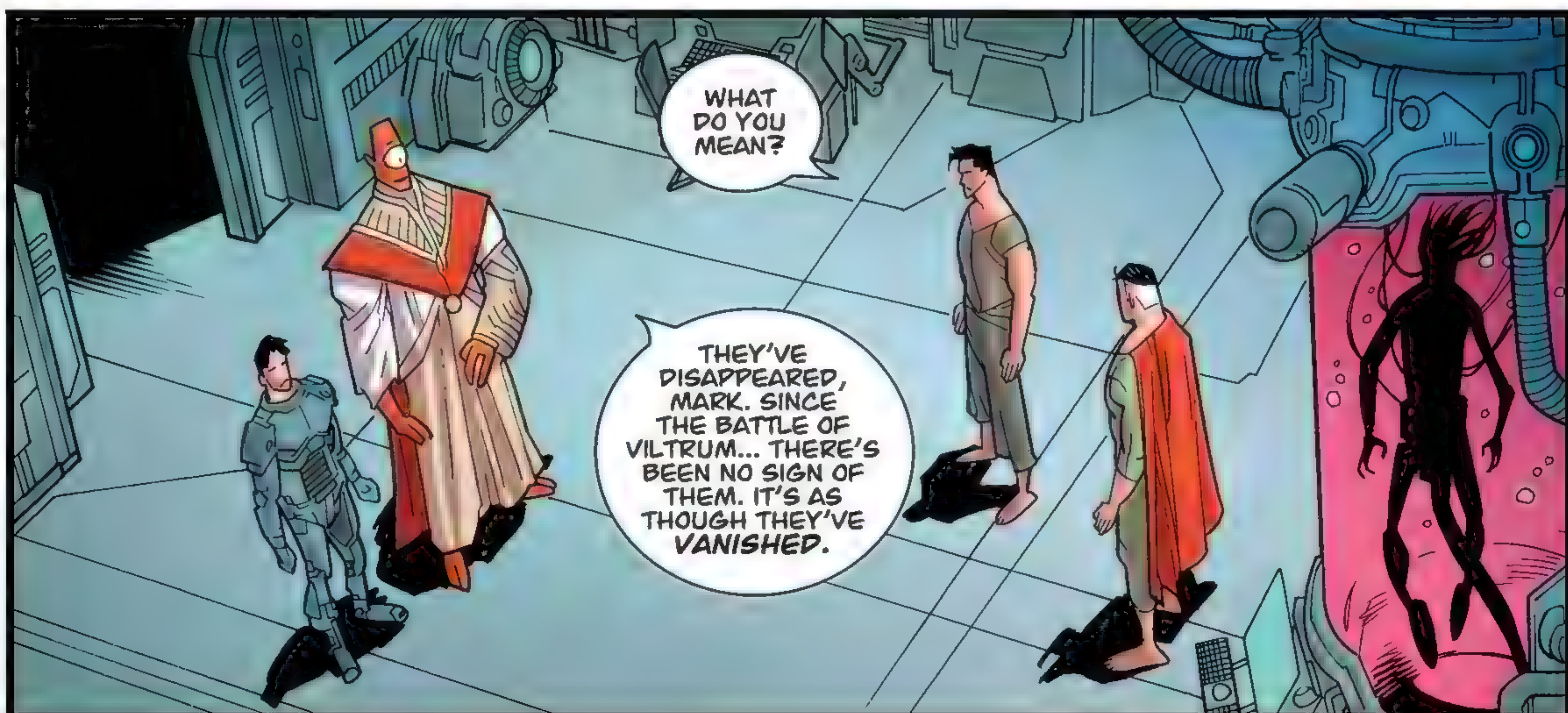
THE SOLUTION
HE'S SUSPENDED
IN IS ENHANCING
HIS NATURAL
REGENERATIVE
ABILITIES.

HIS OWN
SKIN IS BEING
GROWN OVER
PROSTHETIC
REPLACEMENTS
FOR HIS ARM
AND LOWER
JAW.

HIS BRAIN
SCANS ARE
REMARKABLE. IF HIS
HEALING KEEPS UP AT
THIS PACE, HE SHOULD
BE OUT OF THE TUBE IN
ANOTHER WEEK, READY
TO BEGIN HIS PHYSICAL
REHABILITATION.

HE WON'T
BE BACK UP
TO FULL
POWER ANY
TIME SOON...
BUT HE'S
ALIVE.

HE'S
ALIVE.





GRANTED, SPACE IS A BIG PLACE, AND THEY CAN CERTAINLY TRAVEL GREAT DISTANCES IN LITTLE TIME... BUT WE'VE GOT EYES IN ALL QUADRANTS OF THE GALAXY.

IT WOULD BE VERY HARD TO HIDE FROM US.

WE'VE SEARCHED ALL THE FORMER PLANETS OF THE VILTRUM EMPIRE TO SEE IF SOMEONE MIGHT POSSIBLY BE HARBORING THEM. **THEY'RE NOT.**

WITHOUT THOSE PLANETS TO BACK THEM, THEIR NUMBERS DWINDLE TO THE POINT THAT ANY FRONTAL ASSAULT AGAINST US WOULD BE INEFFECTIVE AT BEST, **DISASTROUS** AT WORST.

SO IT MAKES SENSE THAT THEY WOULD LAY LOW FOR A WHILE, REGROUP, PREPARE FOR A SERIES OF SMALL, CALCULATED ASSAULTS.

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM WOULD HAVE THEM ATTACKING THEIR FORMERLY OCCUPIED PLANETS, IT WOULD TAKE LITTLE EFFORT TO TURN THEM BACK TO THEIR SIDE... AND EVENTUALLY THEY WOULD AGAIN COMMAND A FORCE LARGE ENOUGH TO DESTROY US.

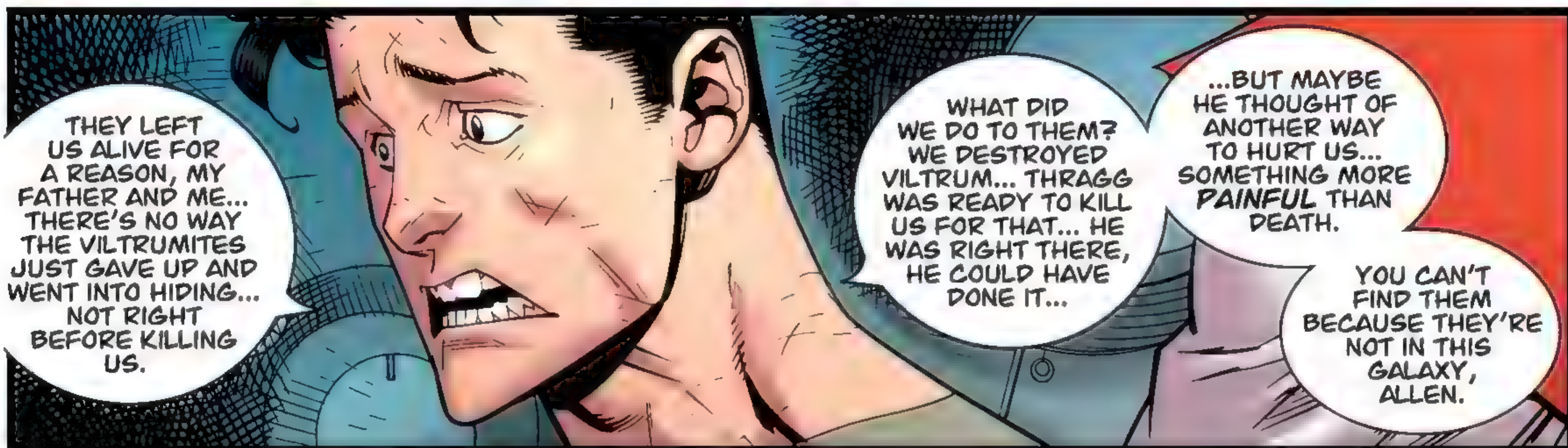
WE'VE BEEN STATIONING OUR TROOPS WITH THESE PLANETS IN PREPARATION FOR THIS. A DELAY OF THIS LONG, ESPECIALLY WITH THEM KNOWING YOU AND YOUR FATHER AND BROTHER WERE OUT OF COMMISSION FOLLOWING OUR LAST BATTLE... MAKES NO SENSE...

...NO SENSE AT ALL.



OH,
GOD...

WHAT?
WHAT IS
IT?

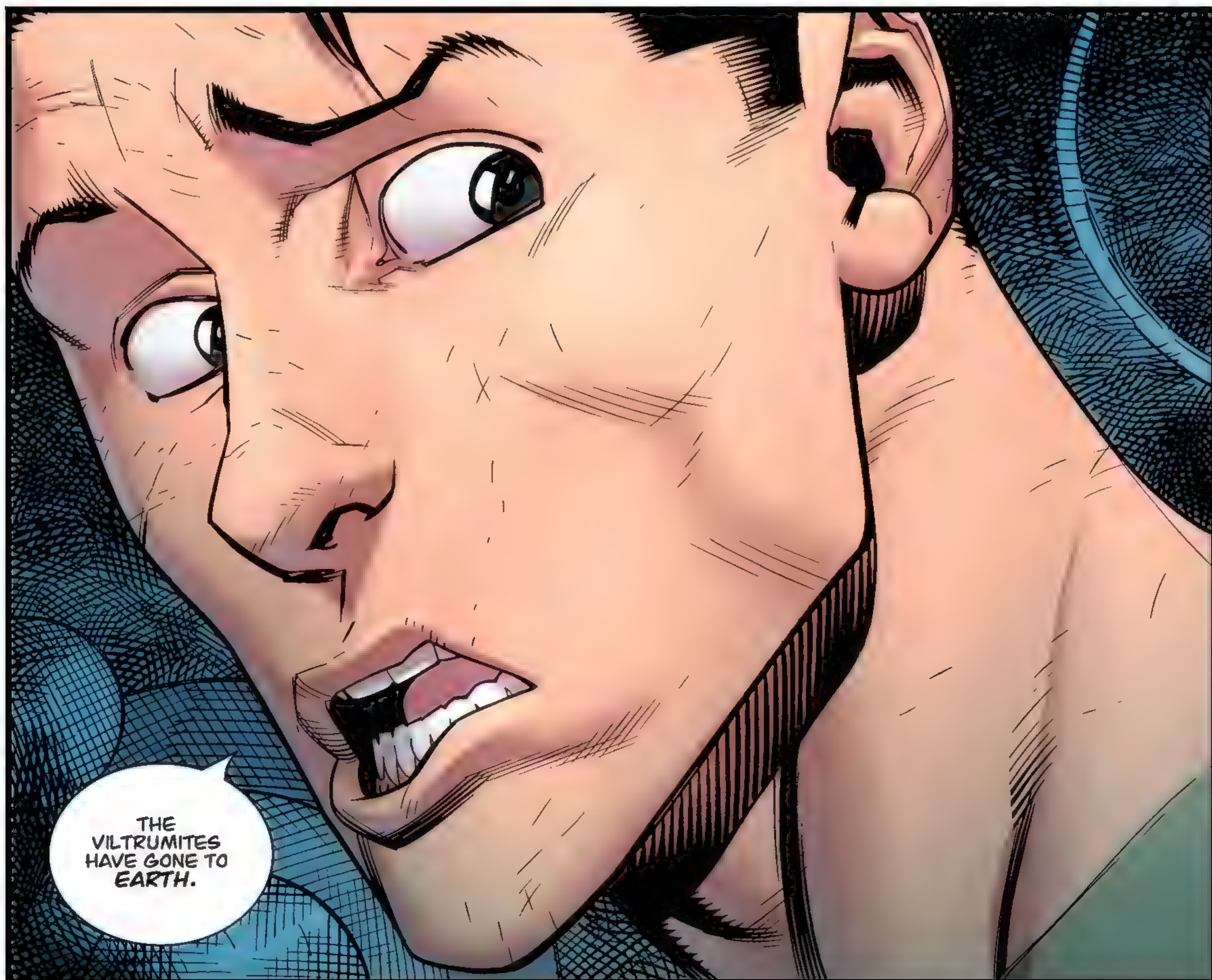


THEY LEFT
US ALIVE FOR
A REASON, MY
FATHER AND ME...
THERE'S NO WAY
THE VILTRUMITES
JUST GAVE UP AND
WENT INTO HIDING...
NOT RIGHT
BEFORE KILLING
US.

WHAT DID
WE DO TO THEM?
WE DESTROYED
VILTRUM... THRAGG
WAS READY TO KILL
US FOR THAT... HE
WAS RIGHT THERE,
HE COULD HAVE
DONE IT...

...BUT MAYBE
HE THOUGHT OF
ANOTHER WAY
TO HURT US...
SOMETHING MORE
PAINFUL THAN
DEATH.

YOU CAN'T
FIND THEM
BECAUSE THEY'RE
NOT IN THIS
GALAXY,
ALLEN.



THE
VILTRUMITES
HAVE GONE TO
EARTH.

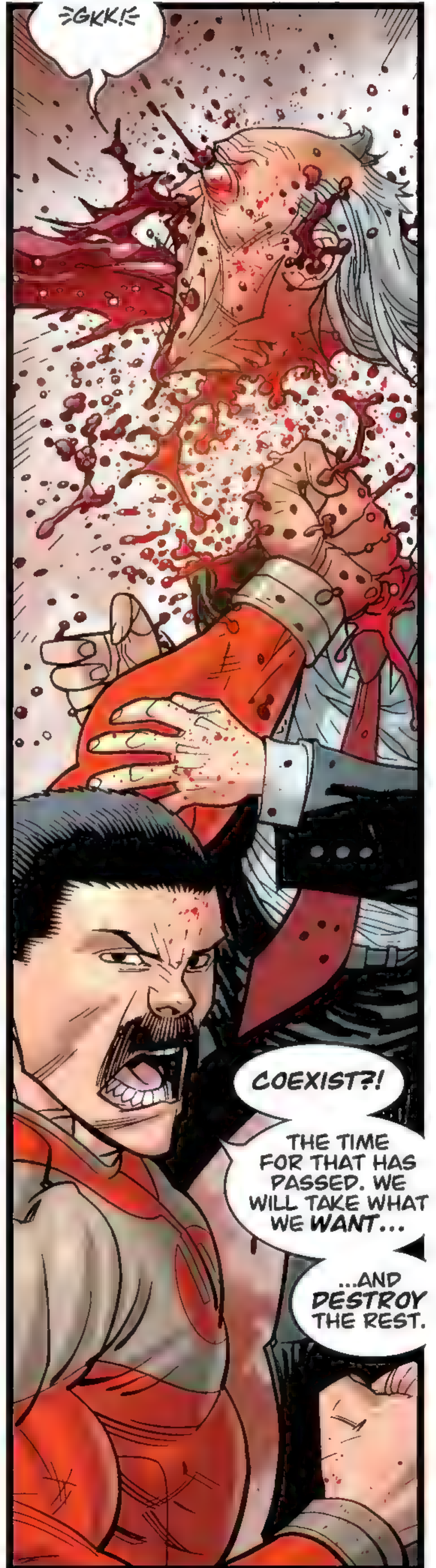
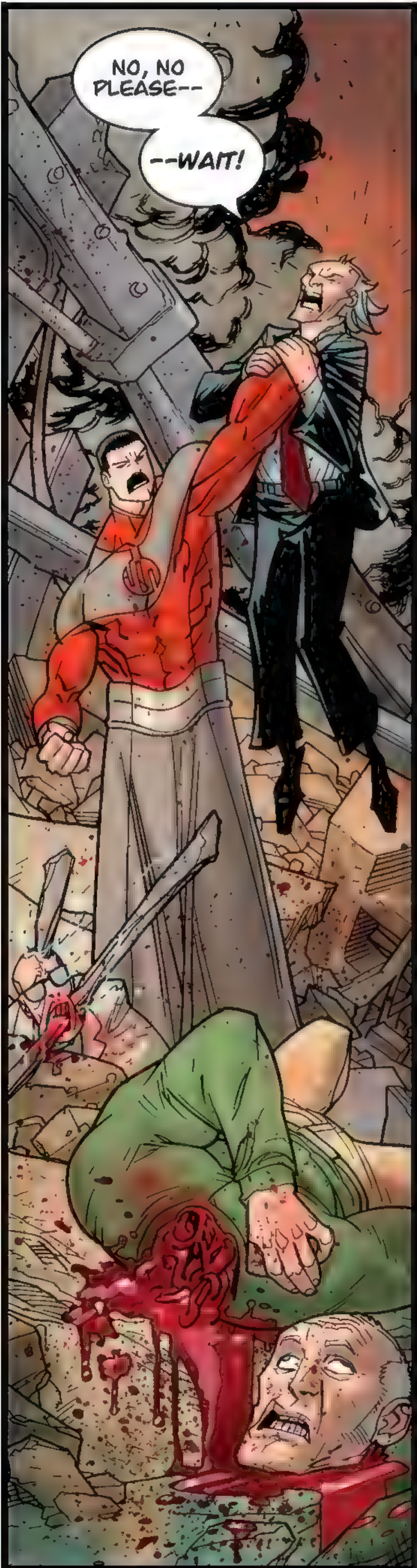
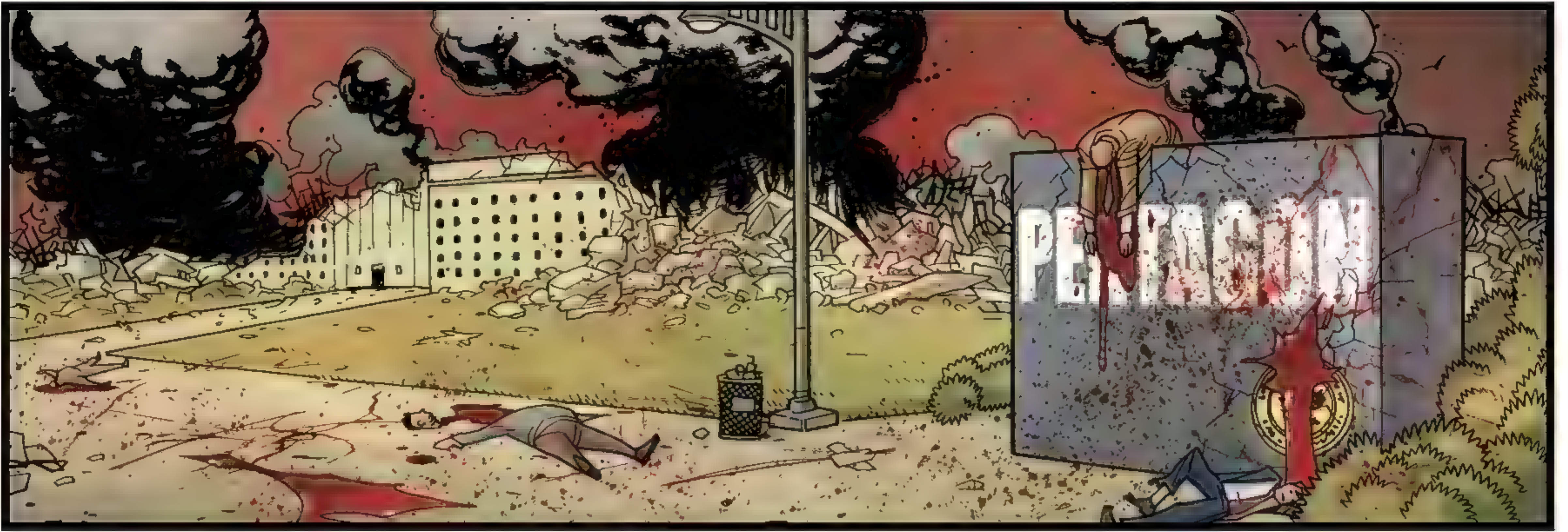


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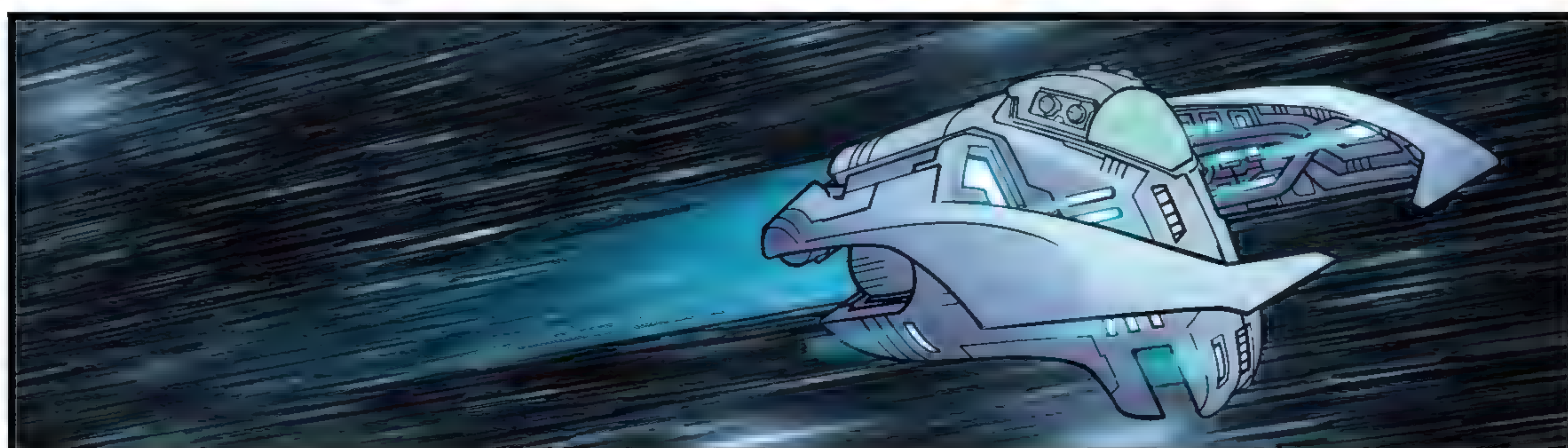


Byan
Townsend
+ico









TALESCRIA, HEADQUARTERS OF THE COALITION OF PLANETS.



THE MOVERS WON'T BE HERE FOR AT LEAST TWENTY MINUTES. PLENTY OF TIME IF YOU WANT TO--

TELIA, PLEASE... NOT NOW.

YOUR FRIENDS WILL BE FINE. THOSE VILTRUMITES PROBABLY JUST WENT INTO HIDING.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM. I BET WE DON'T HEAR FROM THEM FOR YEARS.

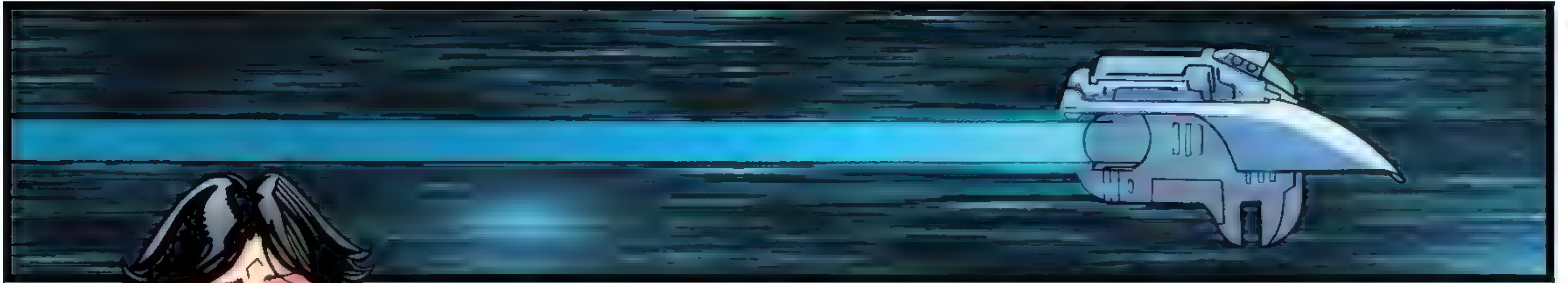
I DO NOT HAVE THE LUXURY OF TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE VILTRUMITES. I COMMAND ALL THE PLANETS IN THE COALITION, NOW... I'VE GOT FAR TOO MUCH TO WORRY ABOUT.

STILL, I CAN'T STAND THAT WE JUST DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY WENT... PART OF ME, I HATE TO ADMIT, WISHES THEY DID GO TO EARTH... AT LEAST THEN, WE'D KNOW.

BUT... THAT'S NOT ALL OF IT...

OH, ALLEN, BABY... WHAT IS IT?

I MISS MY FRIEND... TECH JACKET.



I KNOW I'M NOWHERE NEAR AS STRONG AS YOU GUYS--BUT I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW, WHATEVER WE'RE HEADING INTO, WHATEVER WE'RE UP AGAINST...

I'M TOTALLY THERE FOR YOU.

EARTH IS MY HOME, TOO-- AND I'M GOING TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO TAKE OUT AS MANY VILTRUMITES AS I CAN.

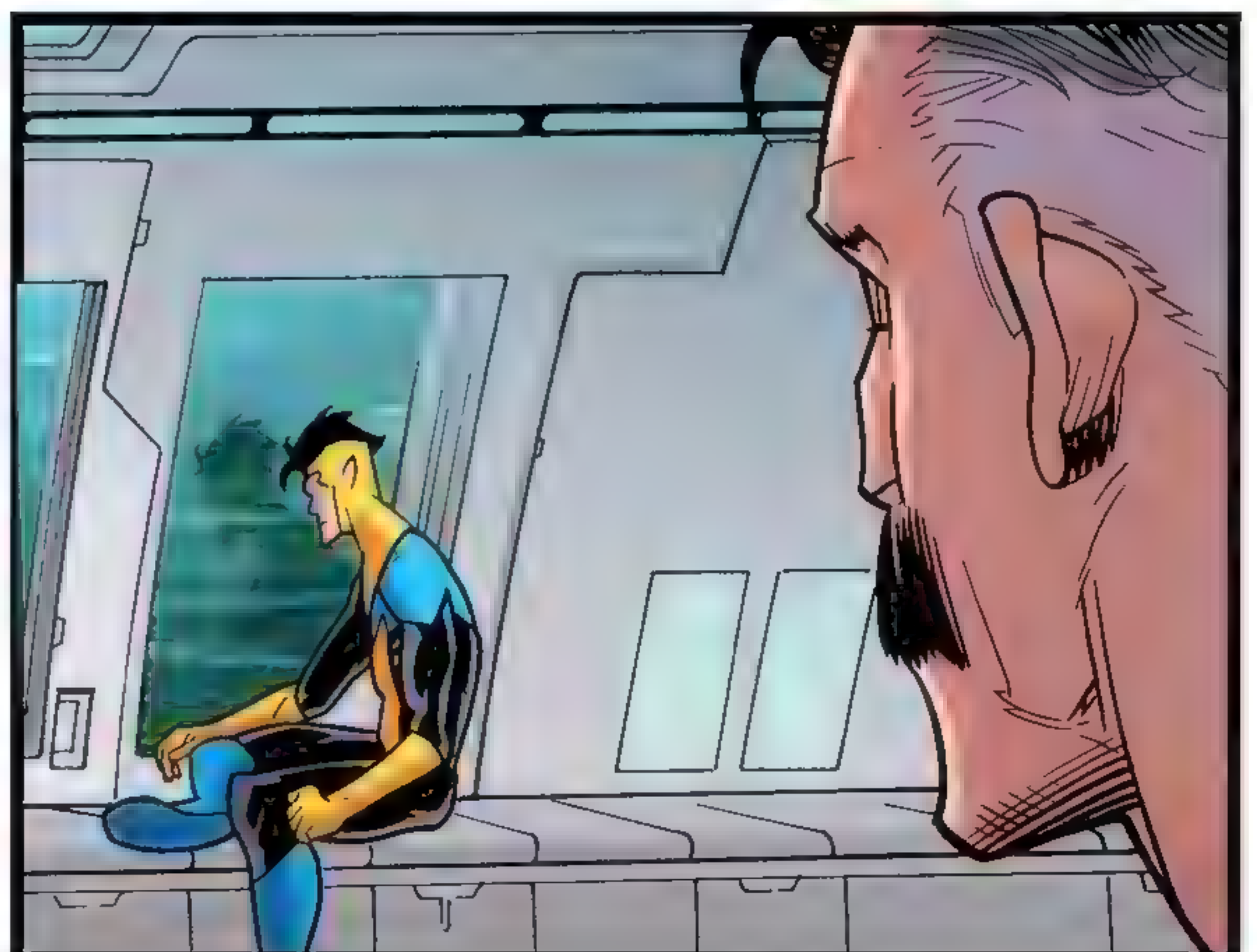
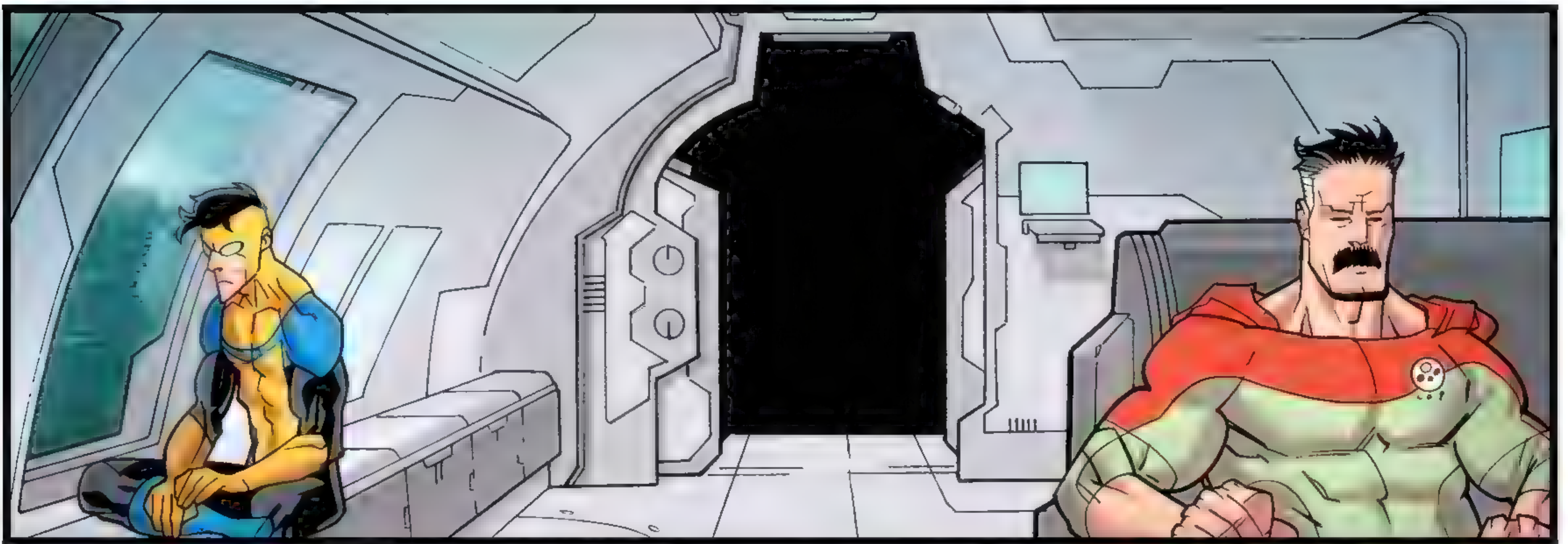
ALLEN LET ME KEEP A LOT OF THE WEAPONS THEY ARMED ME WITH THAT WERE MADE FROM THE THINGS YOU'D WRITTEN ABOUT IN YOUR BOOKS, NOLAN--AND I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT HOW I'LL BEST USE THEM TO STAY IN THE FIGHT AND KEEP THEM FROM GETTING NEAR ME.

I CAN ASSURE YOU, I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO--

--HELP SAVE EARTH FROM THOSE DUDES...

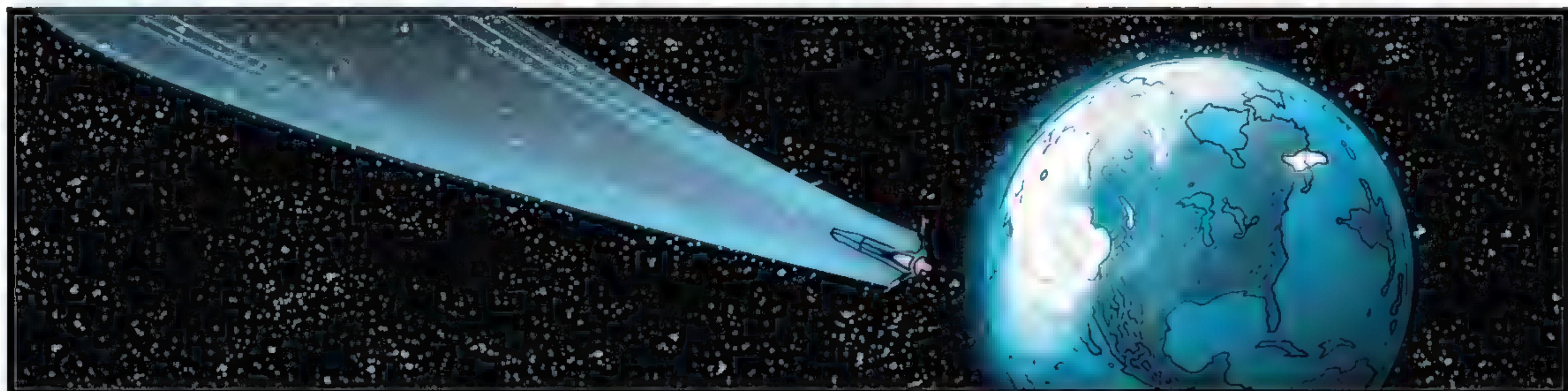
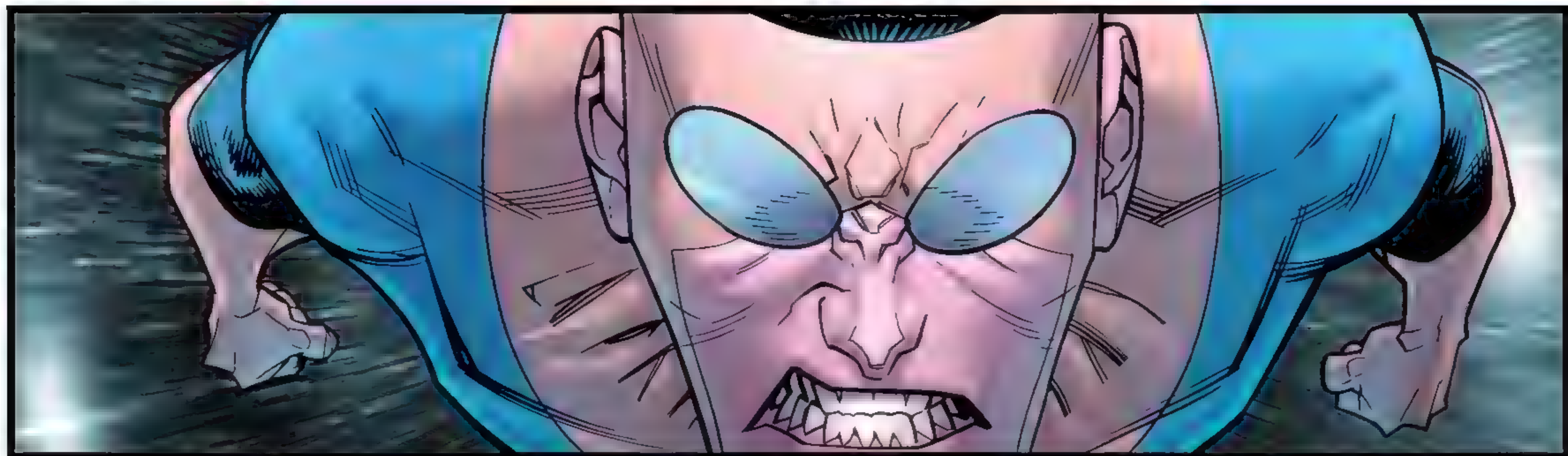
...AND THEN I'M GOING TO MAKE SWEET LOVE TO YOUR FACES IN CELEBRATION.

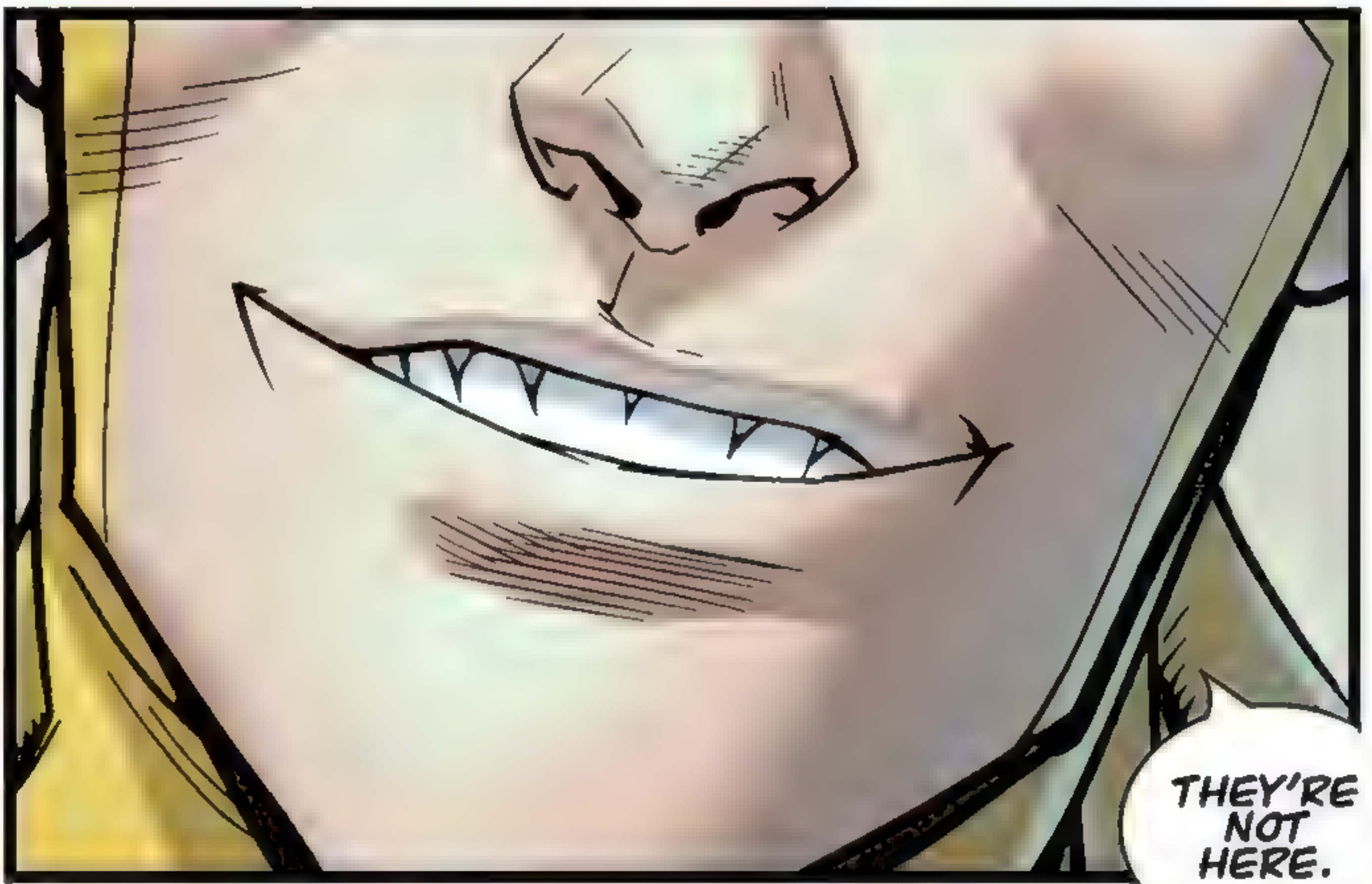
YOU GUYS SUCK.





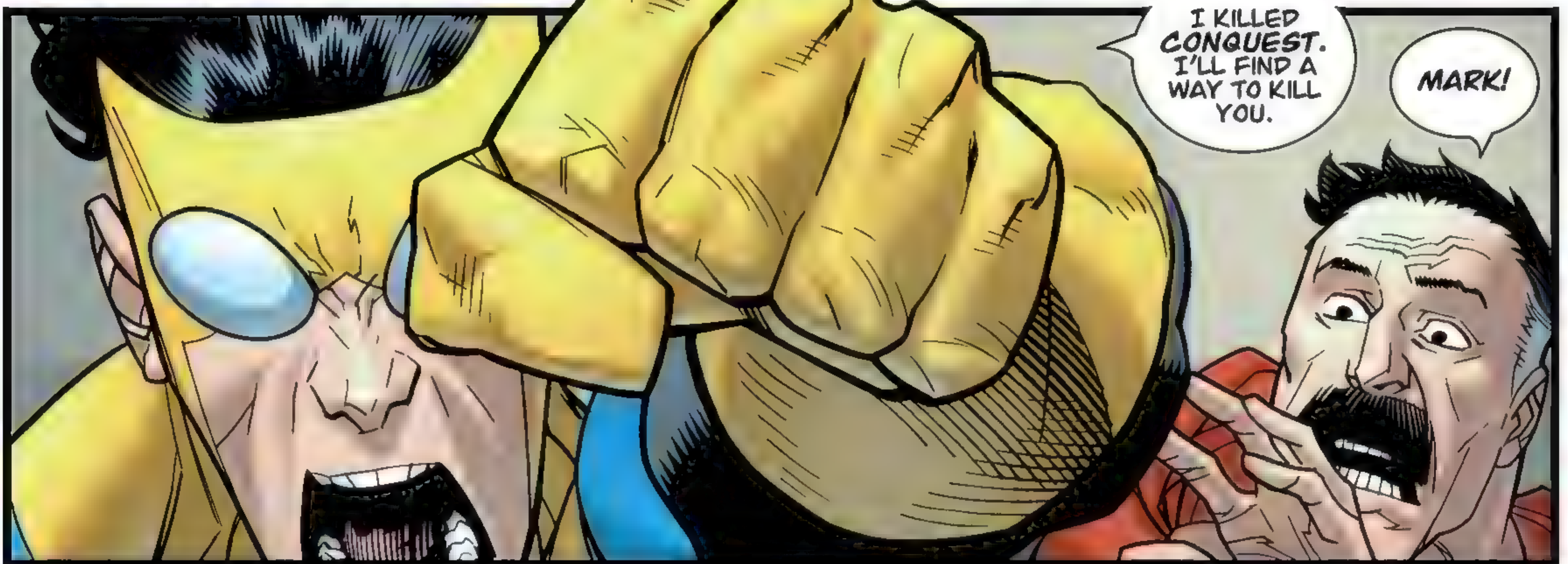






WE VERY
MUCH ARE
HERE.







YOU CAN FIGHT ME IF YOU WISH, BUT I AM NOT ALONE HERE.

IF BY CHANCE YOU WERE ABLE TO INJURE ME, I COULDN'T GUARANTEE THE REST OF MY FORCES WOULDN'T LAY WASTE TO THIS PLANET.

I SUGGEST THAT WE TALK, THE THREE OF US.

YOUR CHOICE. FIGHT OR TALK.



TALK.

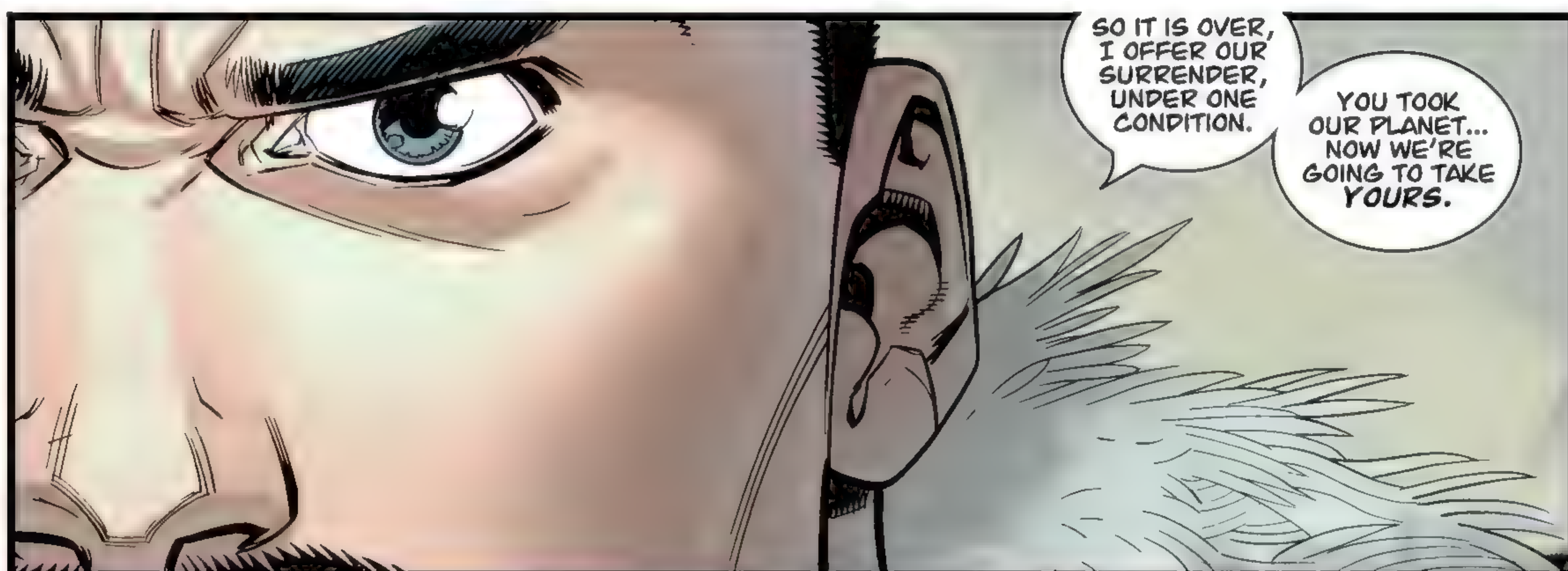


WISE CHOICE... I AM PLEASED.

I HAVE COME TO OFFER YOU A TRUCE. THERE ARE EXACTLY THIRTY-SEVEN OF US LEFT ALIVE, SOME OF US SEVERELY INJURED.

THAT IS ENOUGH TO TEAR THIS PLANET IN HALF, KILLING EVERY LIVING CREATURE HERE, AND THERE IS NOTHING YOU COULD DO TO STOP THAT.

AND IT WOULD BE FAIR RETALIATION FOR WHAT YOU DID TO OUR HOME WORLD.

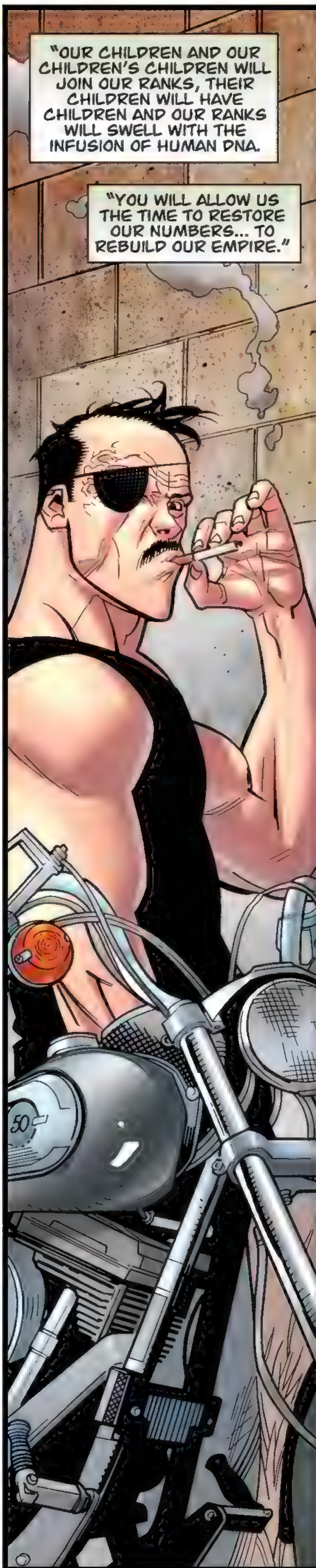






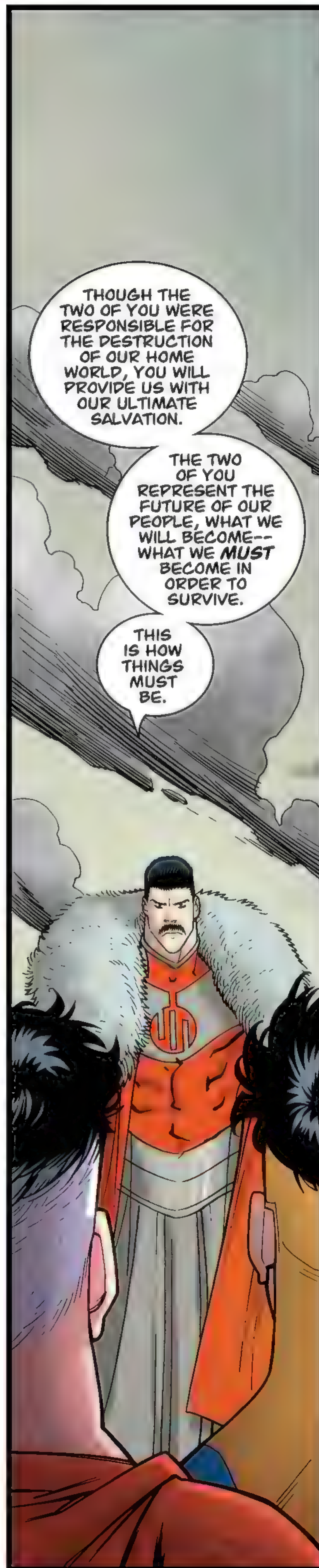
THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF THE VILTRUMITE PEOPLE.

WE WILL RESTORE OUR RANKS OVER THE COURSE OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS. HUMAN DNA HAS BEEN PROVEN TO MAKE NEAR PERFECT HYBRIDS... THE CLOSEST THING WE HAVE TO PURE-BLOODED VILTRUMITES.



"OUR CHILDREN AND OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN WILL JOIN OUR RANKS, THEIR CHILDREN WILL HAVE CHILDREN AND OUR RANKS WILL SWELL WITH THE INFUSION OF HUMAN DNA.

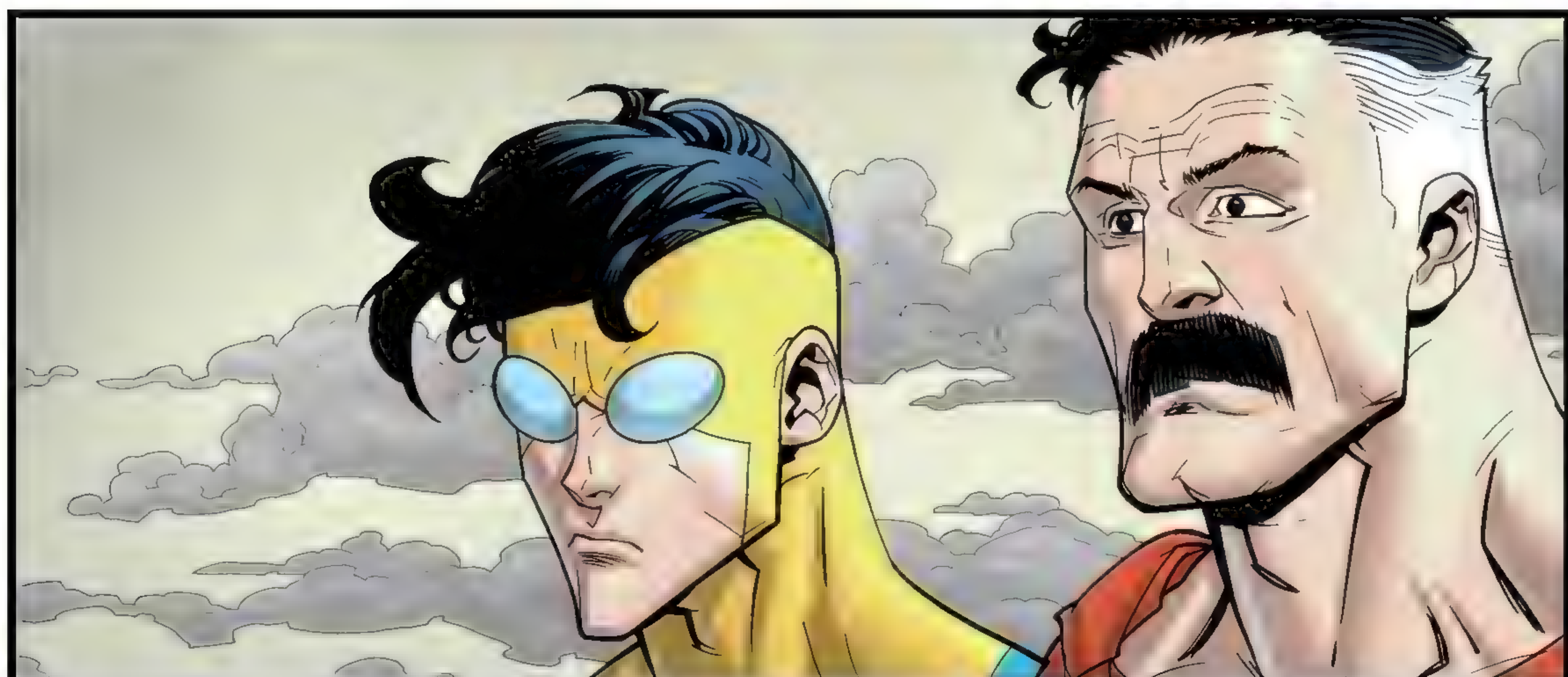
"YOU WILL ALLOW US THE TIME TO RESTORE OUR NUMBERS... TO REBUILD OUR EMPIRE."



THOUGH THE TWO OF YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR HOME WORLD, YOU WILL PROVIDE US WITH OUR ULTIMATE SALVATION.

THE TWO OF YOU REPRESENT THE FUTURE OF OUR PEOPLE, WHAT WE WILL BECOME-- WHAT WE **MUST** BECOME IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.

THIS IS HOW THINGS MUST BE.





WHAT YOU ARE PROPOSING... YOU WANT US TO WAIT AND RESUME OUR FIGHT WHEN THERE ARE MORE OF YOU-- AND YOU ARE STRONGER?

HOW COULD I AGREE TO THAT?



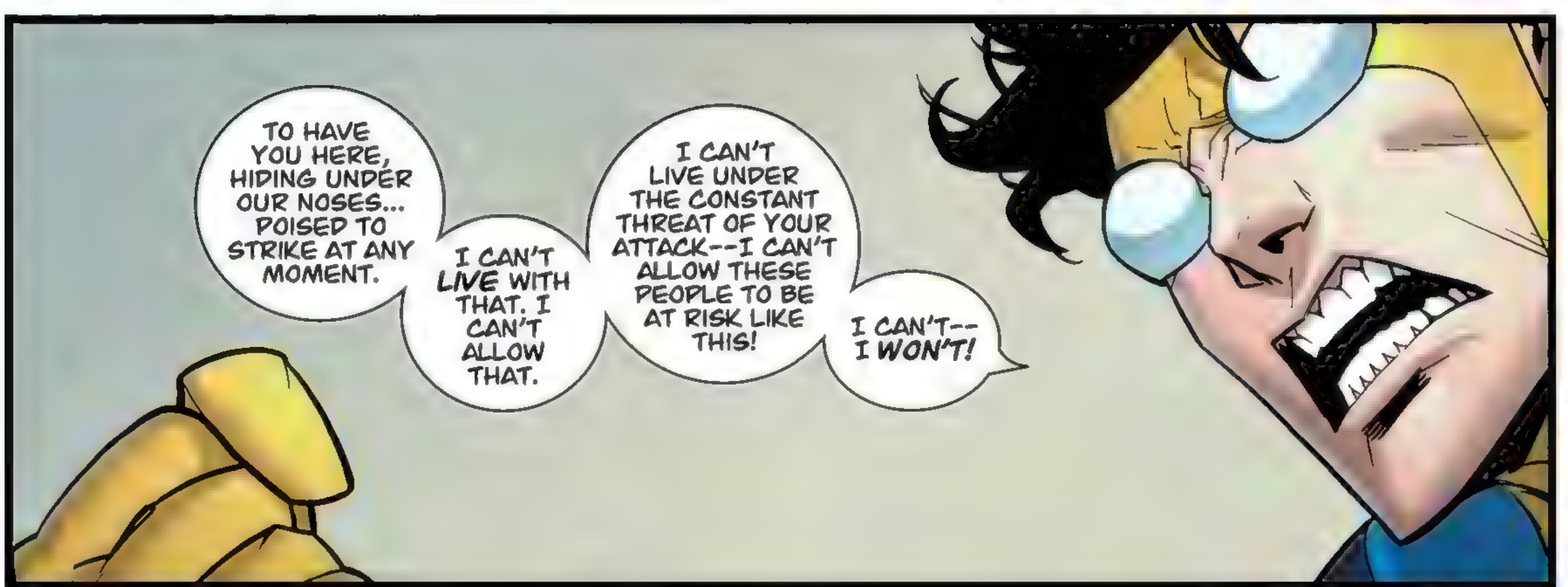
TODAY IS NOT TOMORROW.

YOU KNOW THE RESULTS OF FIGHTING US TODAY... WHY WOULDN'T YOU WANT TO PUT THAT OFF UNTIL TOMORROW?

WE ARE IN A STALEMATE... DO NOT THINK THAT YOU HAVE THE UPPER HAND. YOU ARE BACKED INTO A CORNER.

MAKE YOUR DECISION. STRIKE OUT BLINDLY OR SURRENDER TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.

I TIRE OF THIS.



TO HAVE YOU HERE, HIDING UNDER OUR NOSES... POISED TO STRIKE AT ANY MOMENT.

I CAN'T LIVE WITH THAT. I CAN'T ALLOW THAT.

I CAN'T LIVE UNDER THE CONSTANT THREAT OF YOUR ATTACK--I CAN'T ALLOW THESE PEOPLE TO BE AT RISK LIKE THIS!

I CAN'T-- I WON'T!

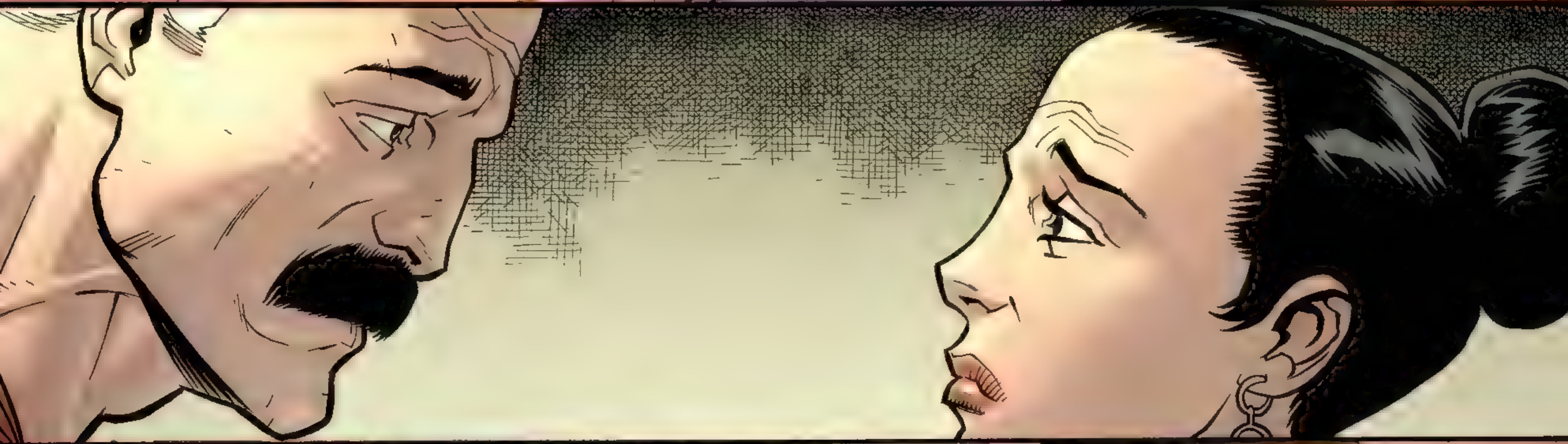


MARK.

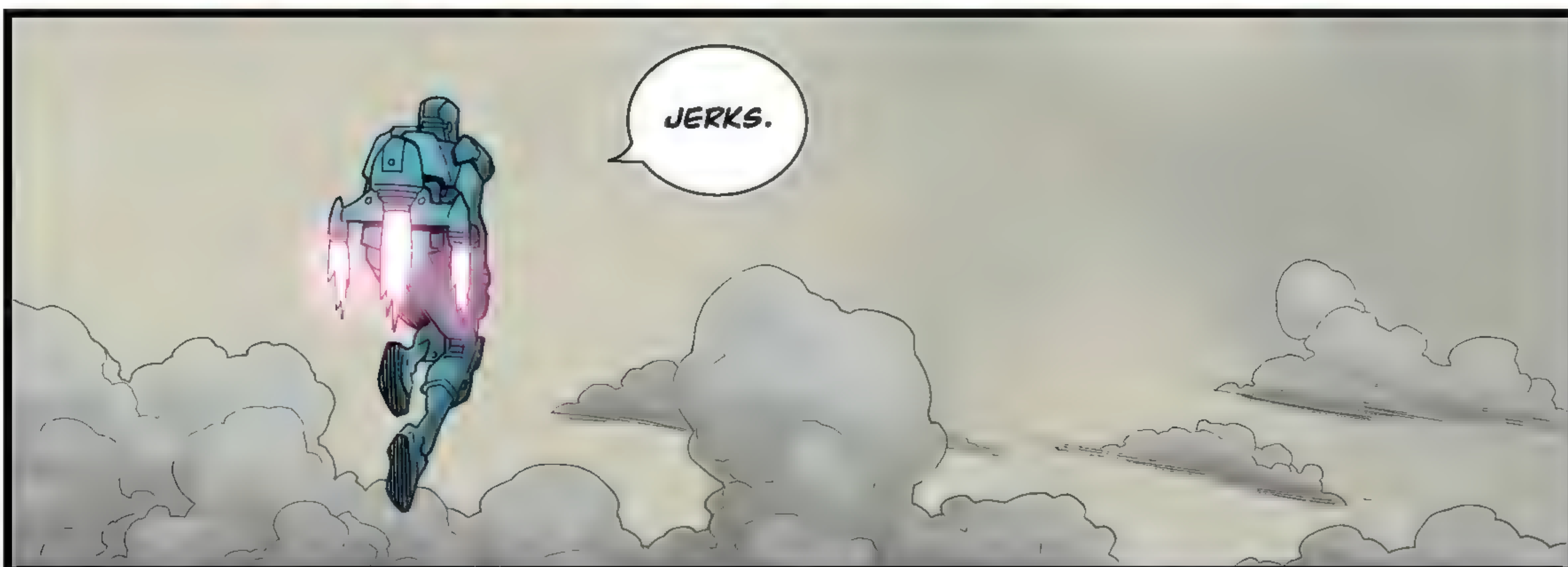
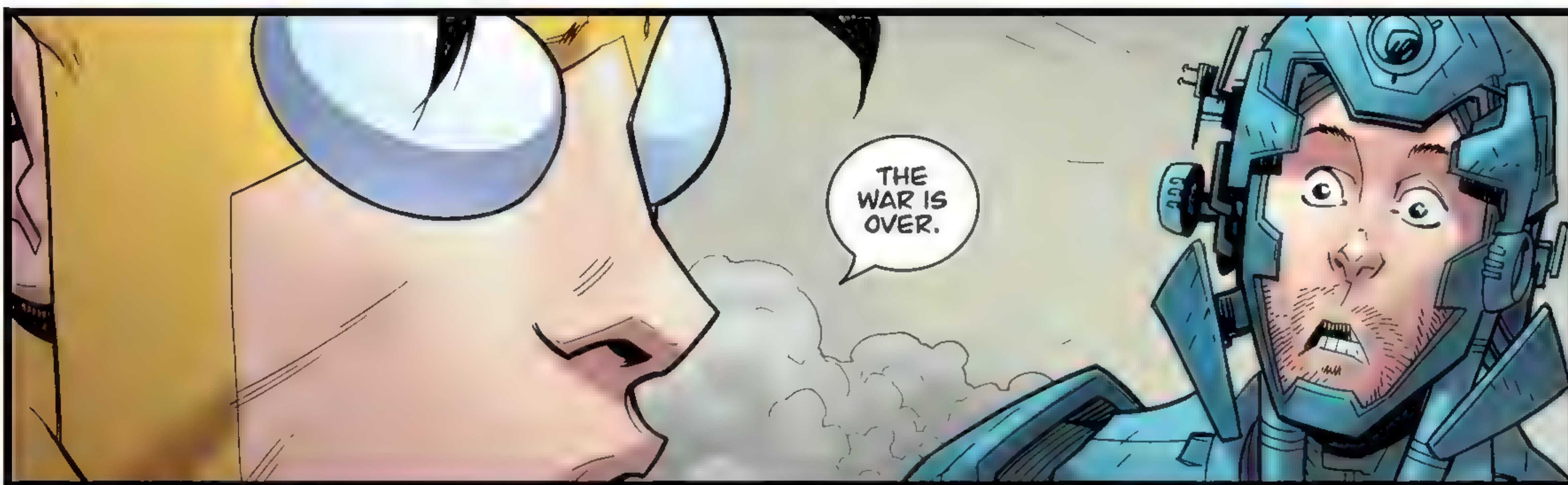
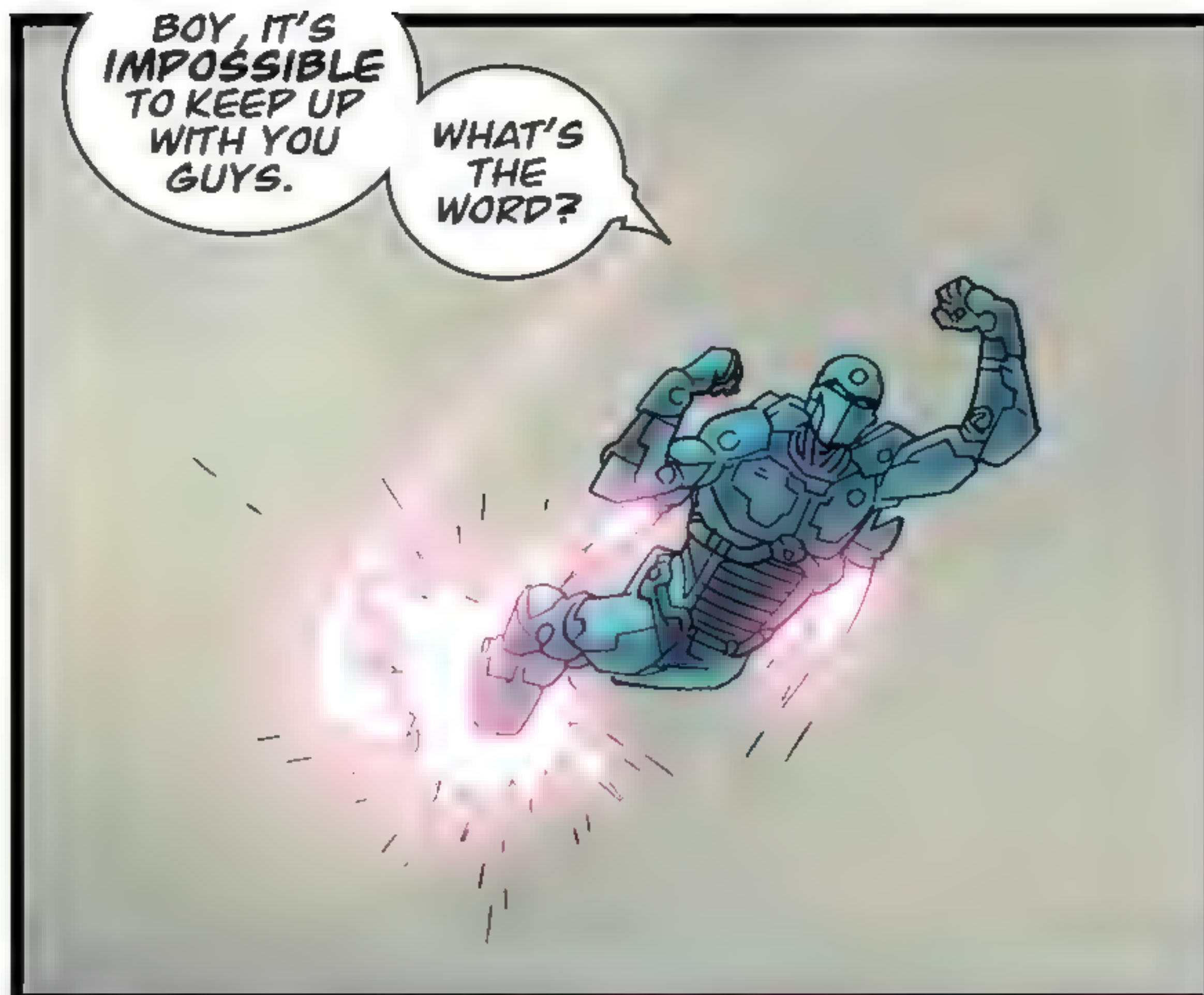
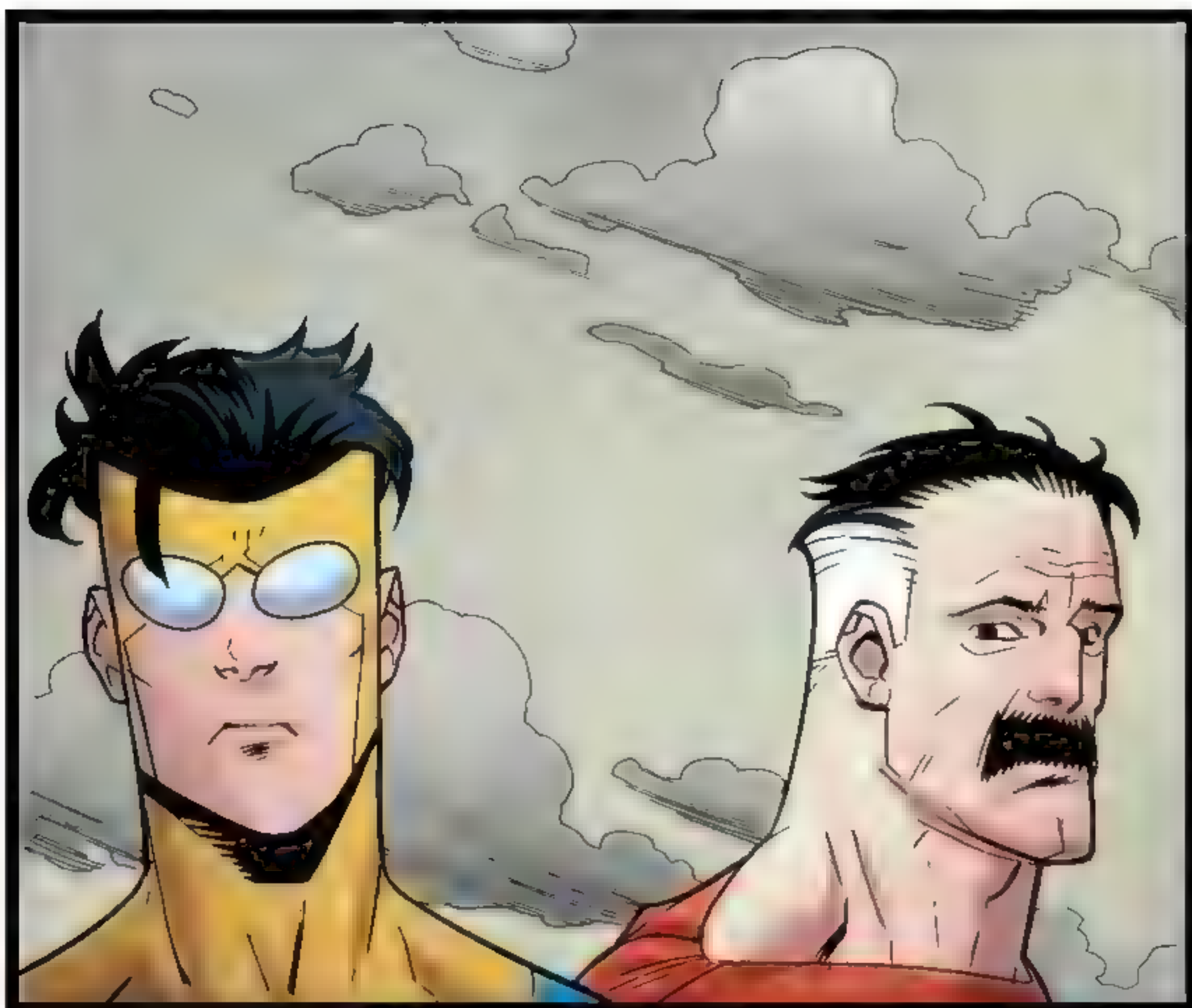




CHAPTER 78









YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, PAUL... I DON'T WANT ANY OF THIS CRAP.

I DON'T WANT TO LOOK AT IT.



THERE ARE TOO MANY MEMORIES ATTACHED. YEAH, GOOD AND BAD ONES.

IT DOES UPSET ME. I CAN ADMIT THAT I MISS YOU A LITTLE BIT. THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THINGS.

THAT'S NOT MY FAULT AND YOU KNOW IT.

NO.

JUST--

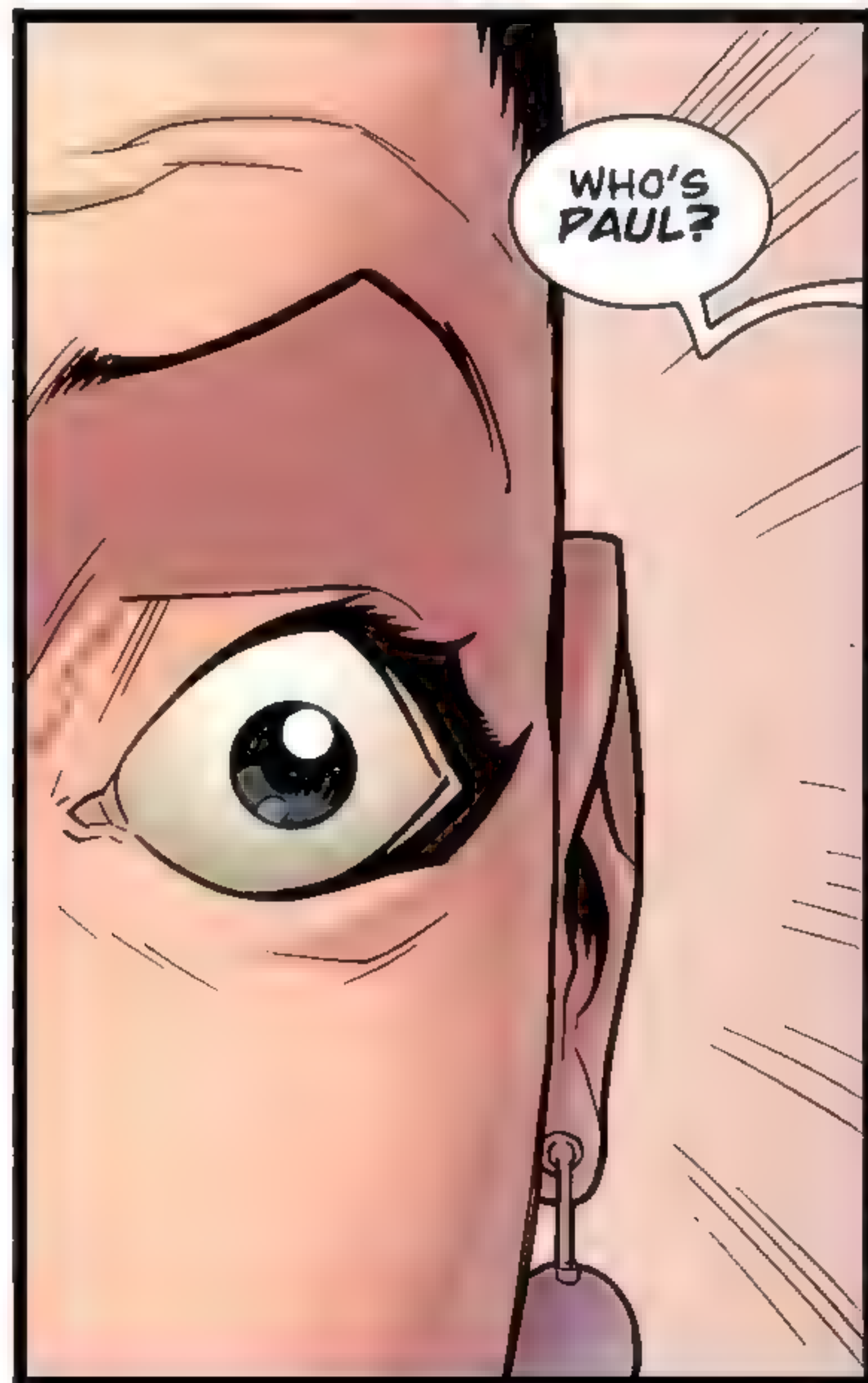
JUST COME OVER TODAY AND GET THIS CRAP OR I'M THROWING IT AWAY.

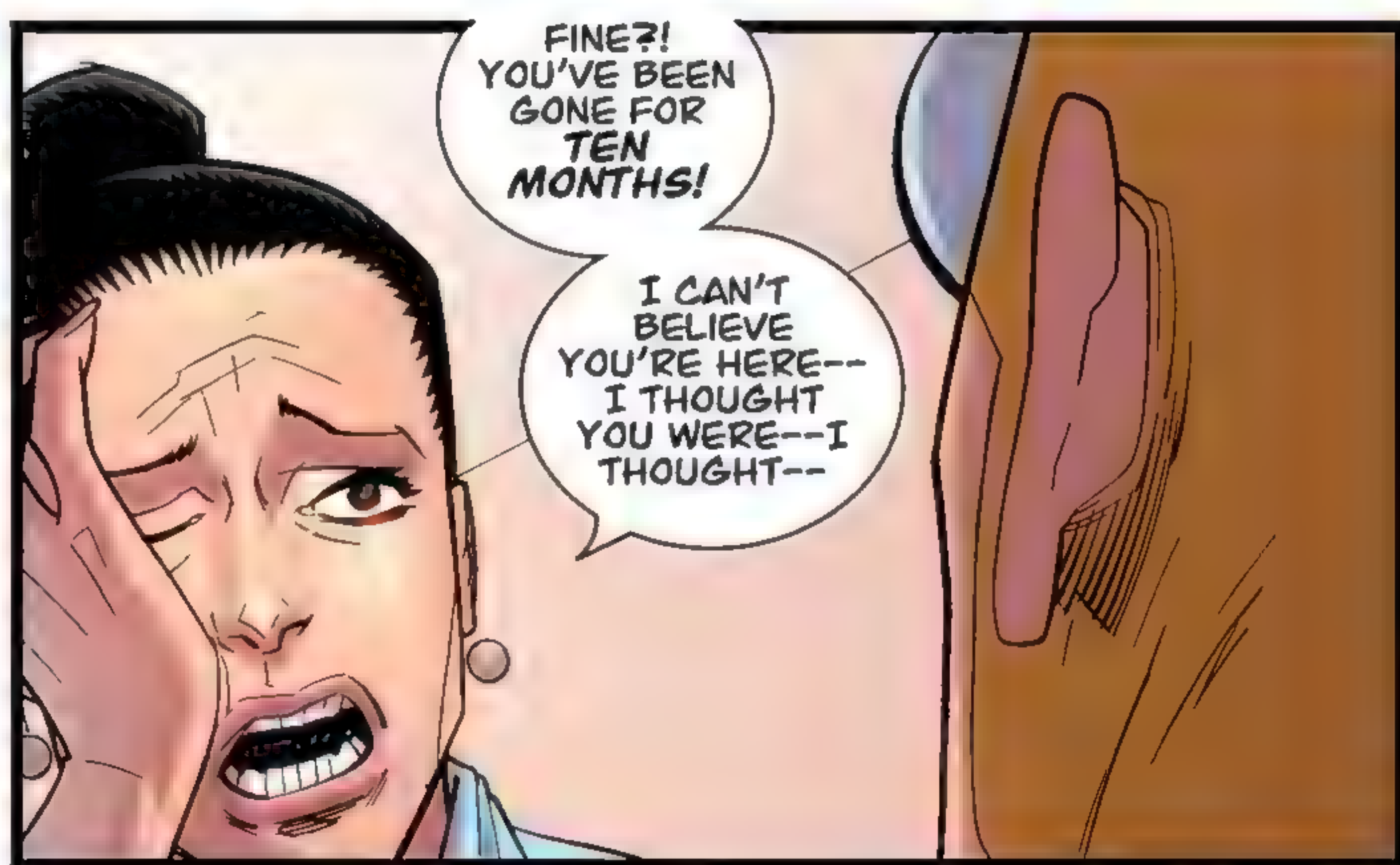


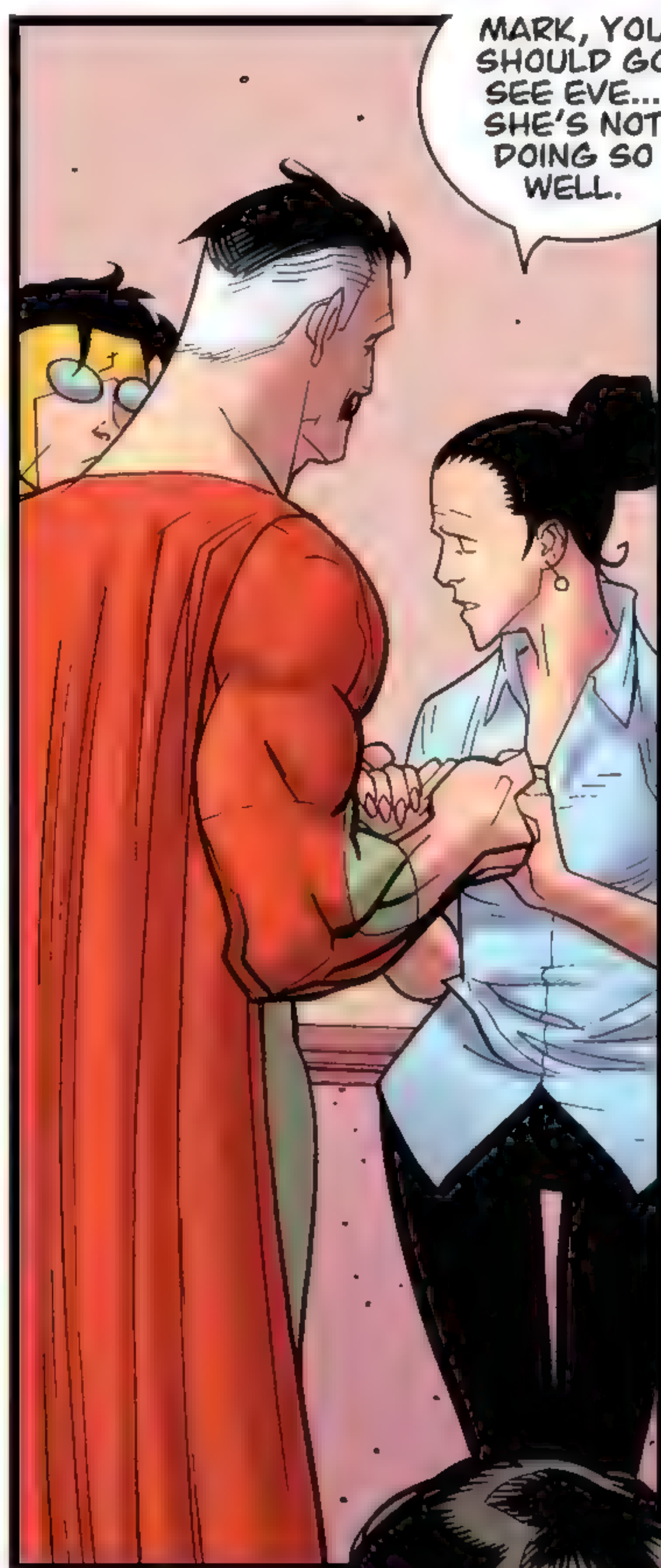
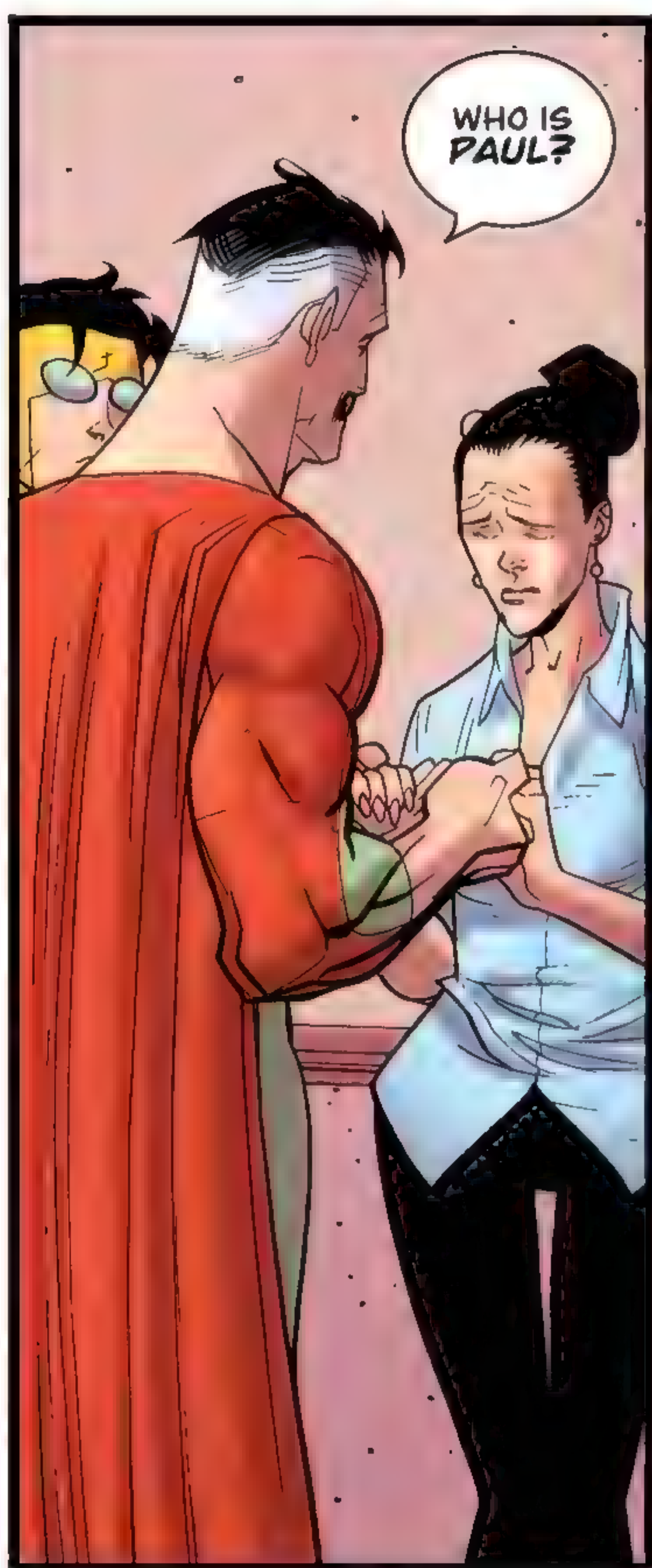
SCREW YOU, PAUL.

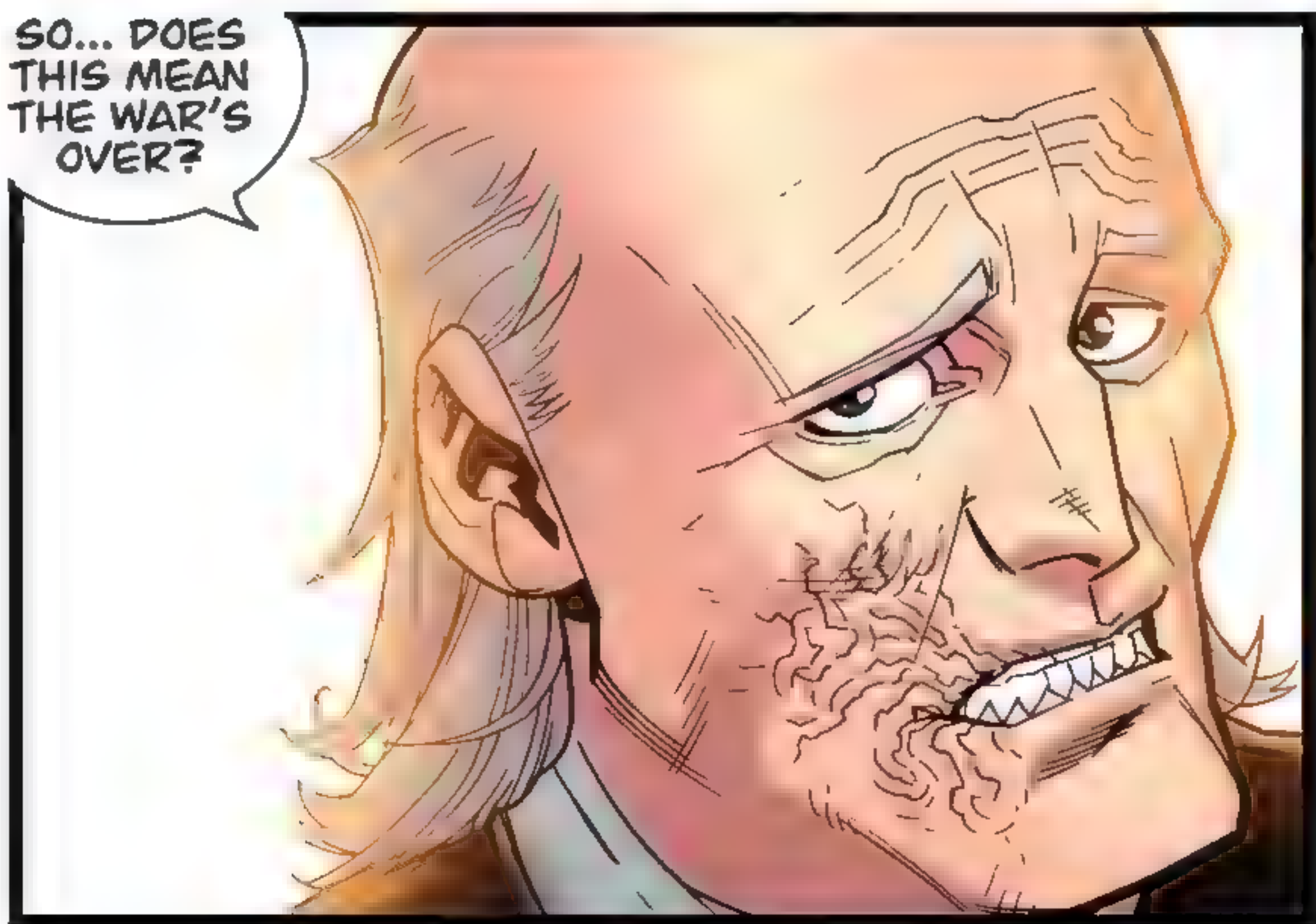
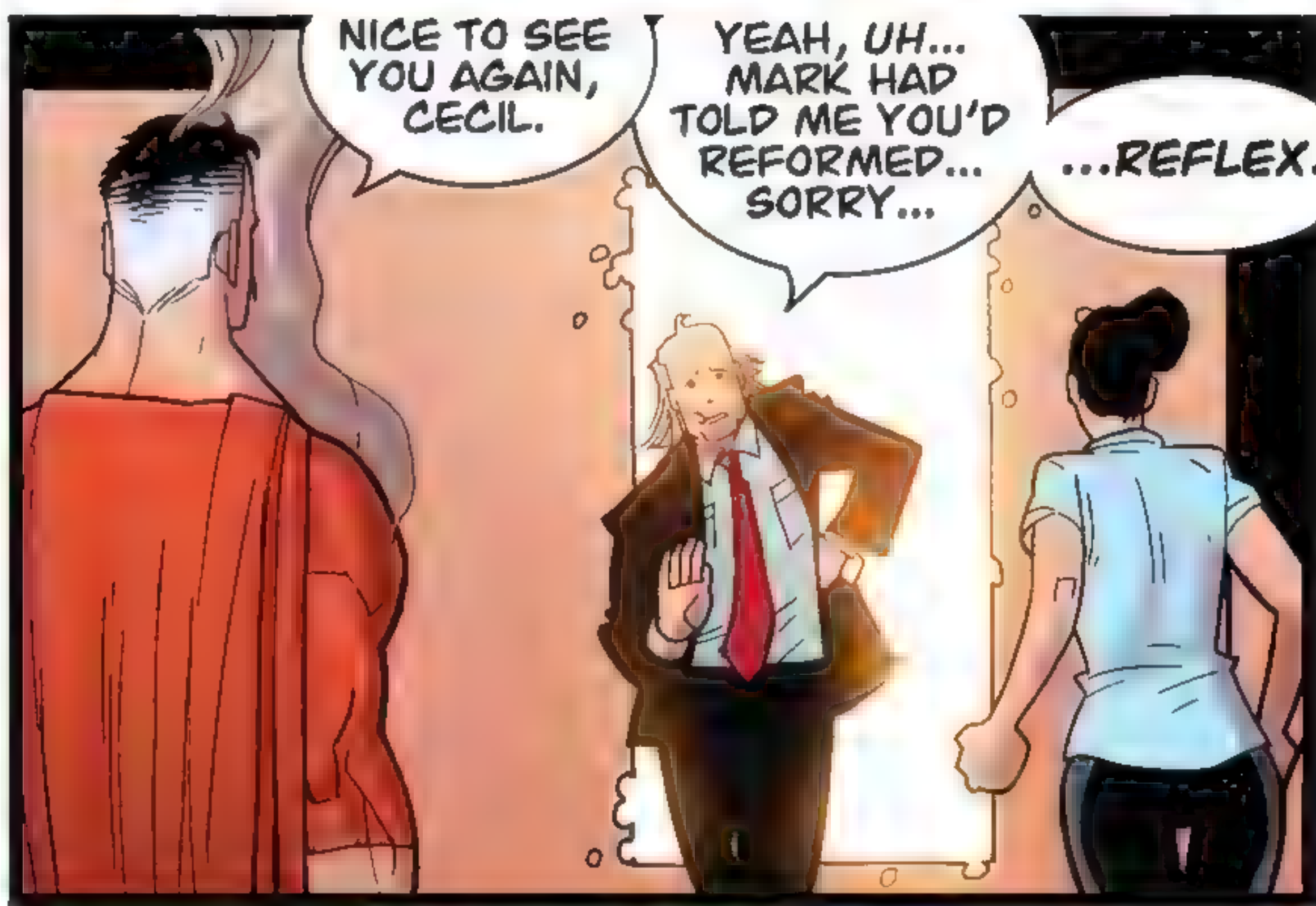
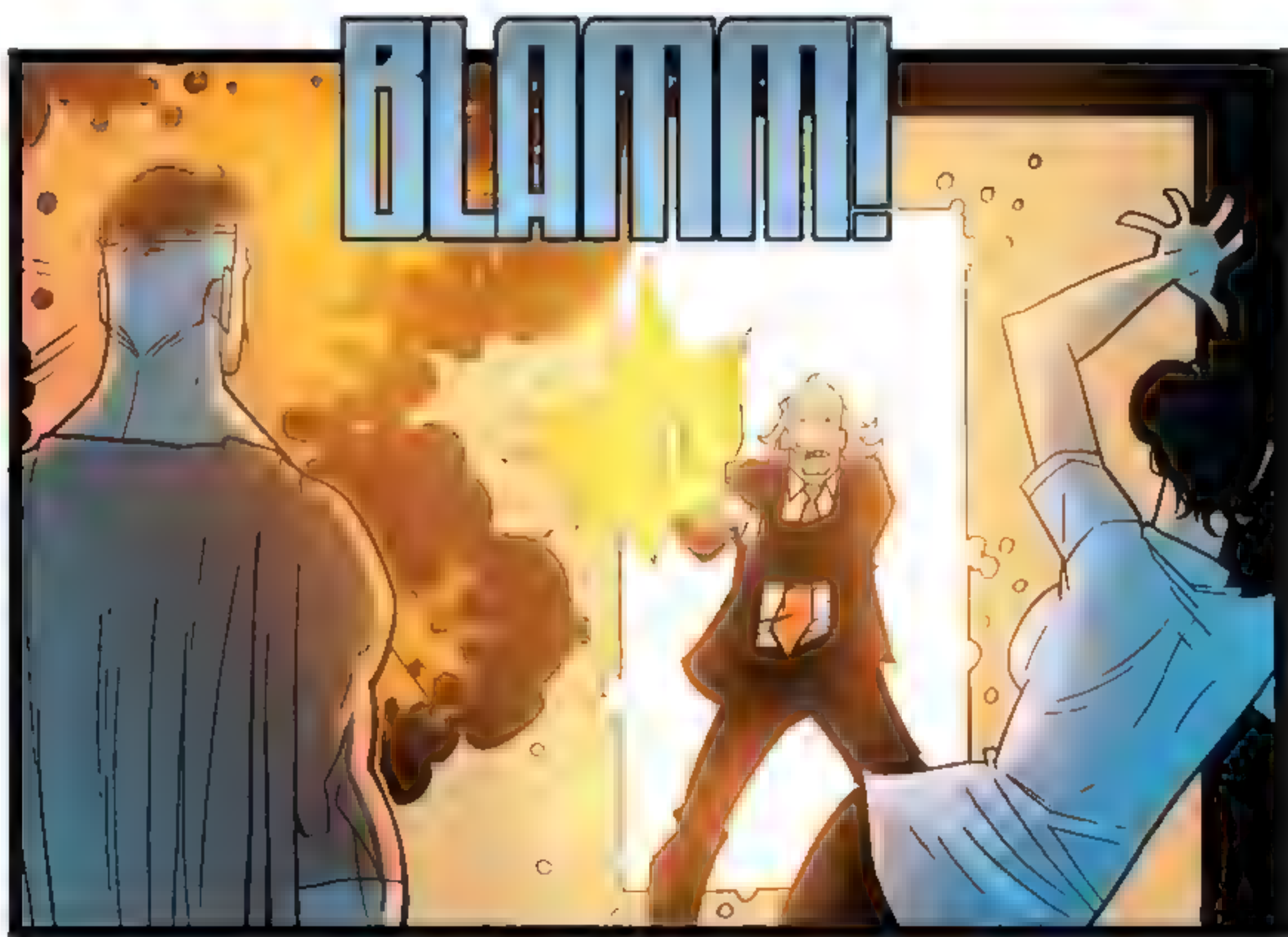
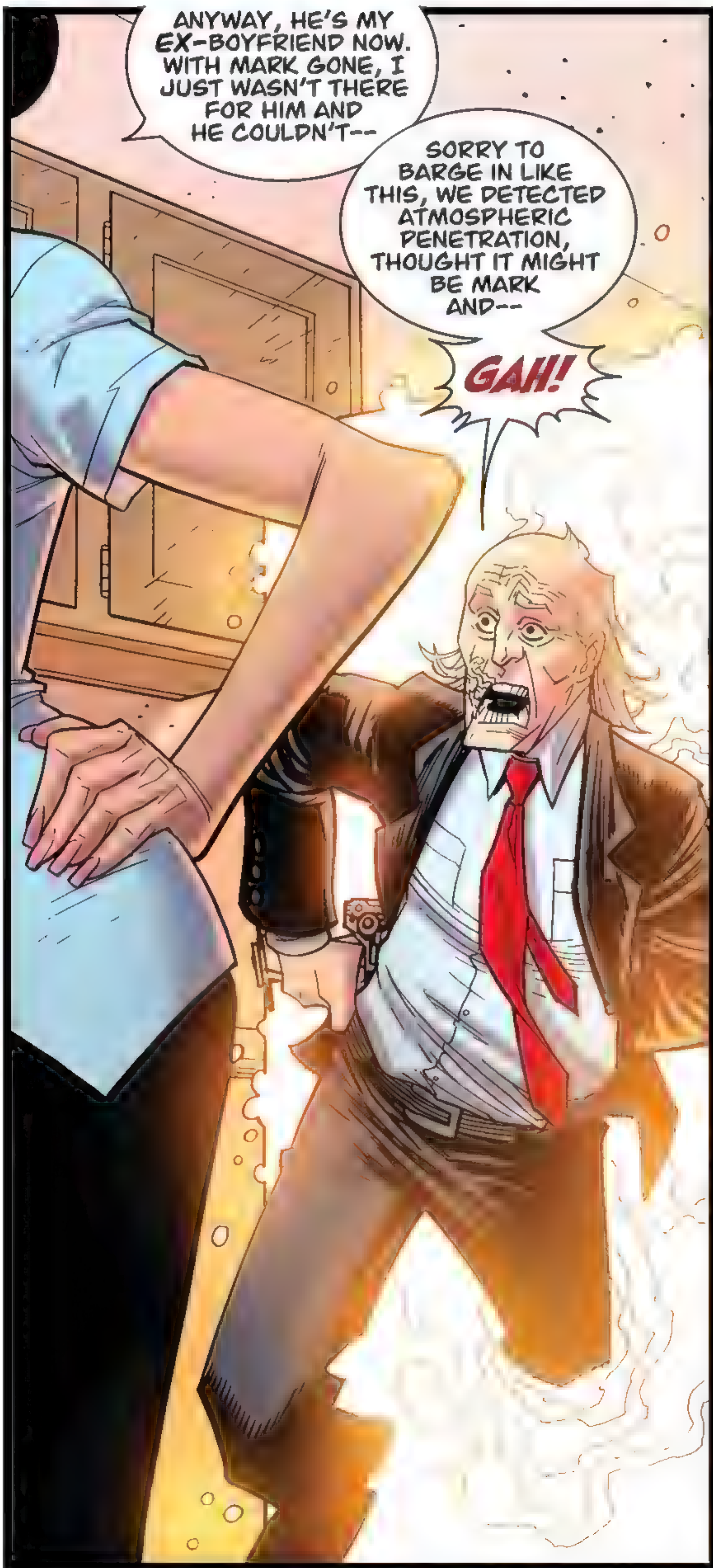
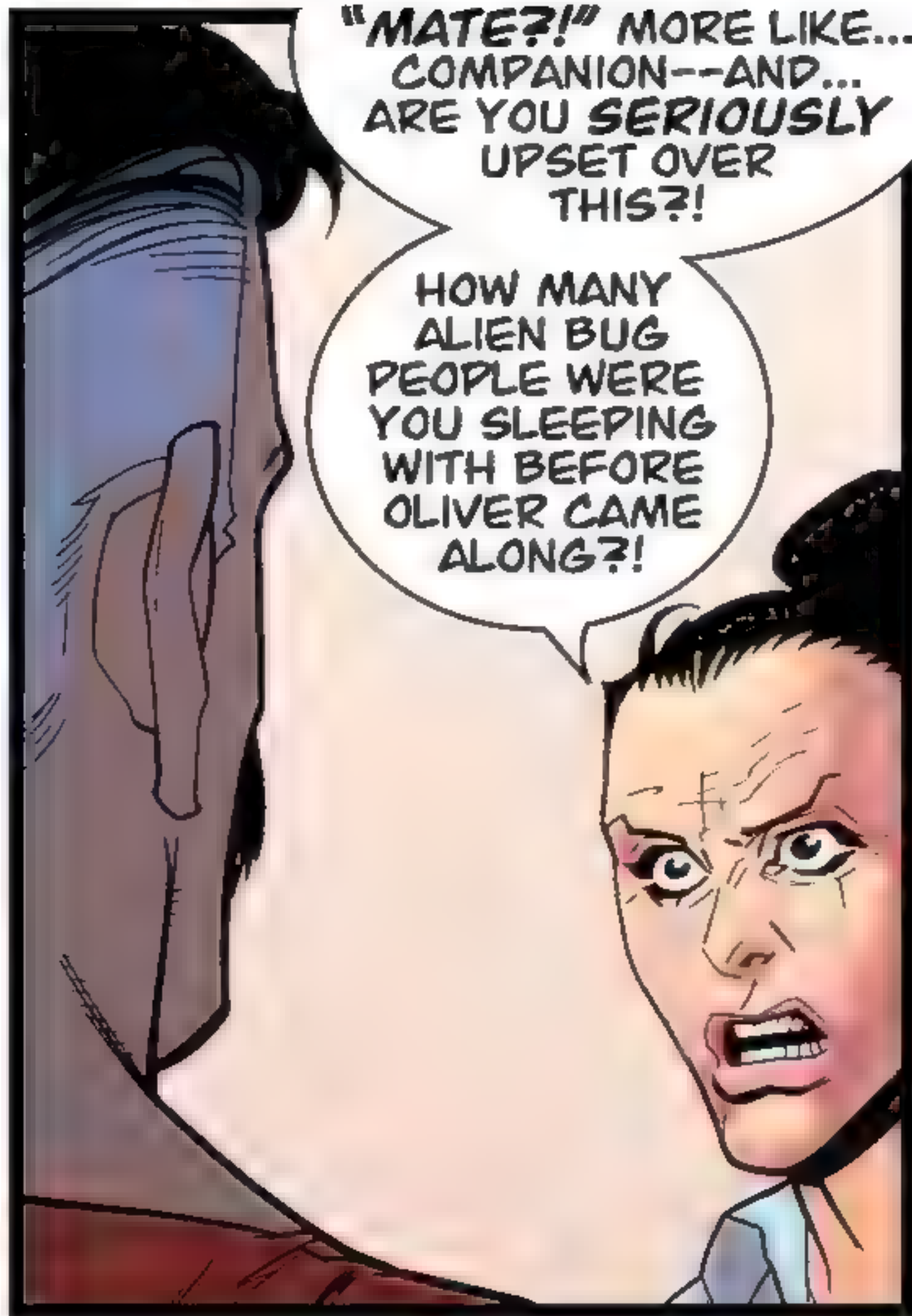


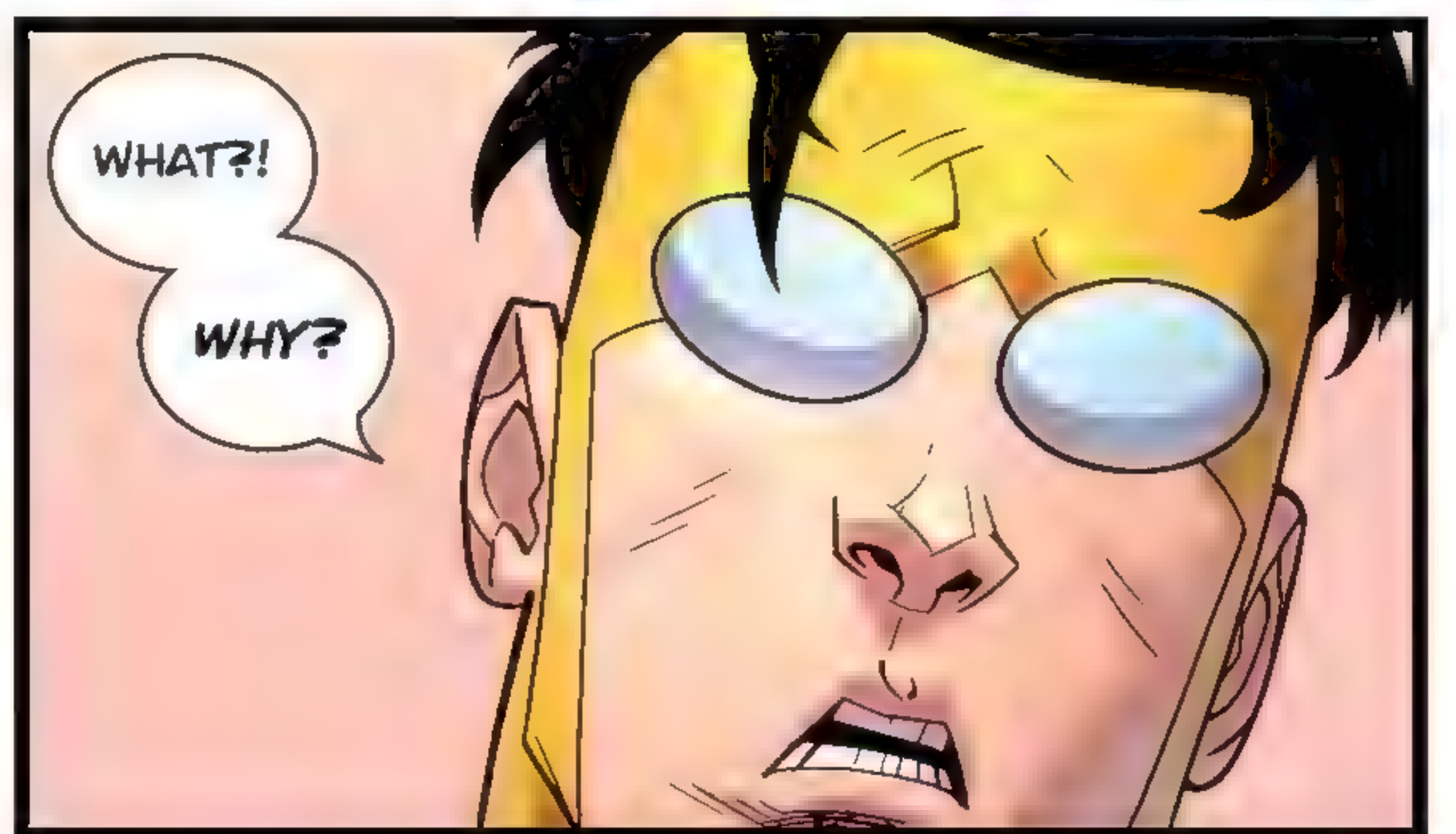
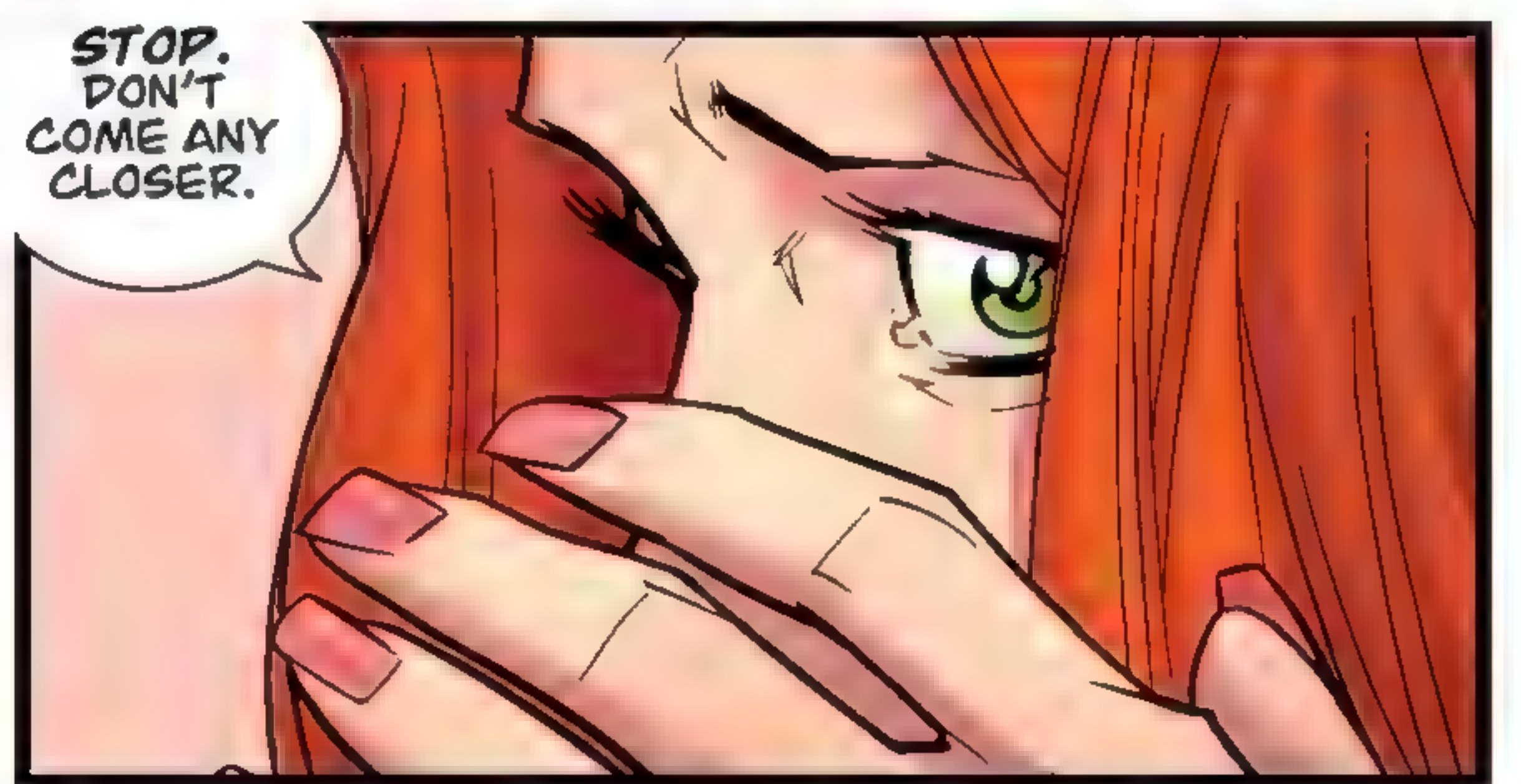
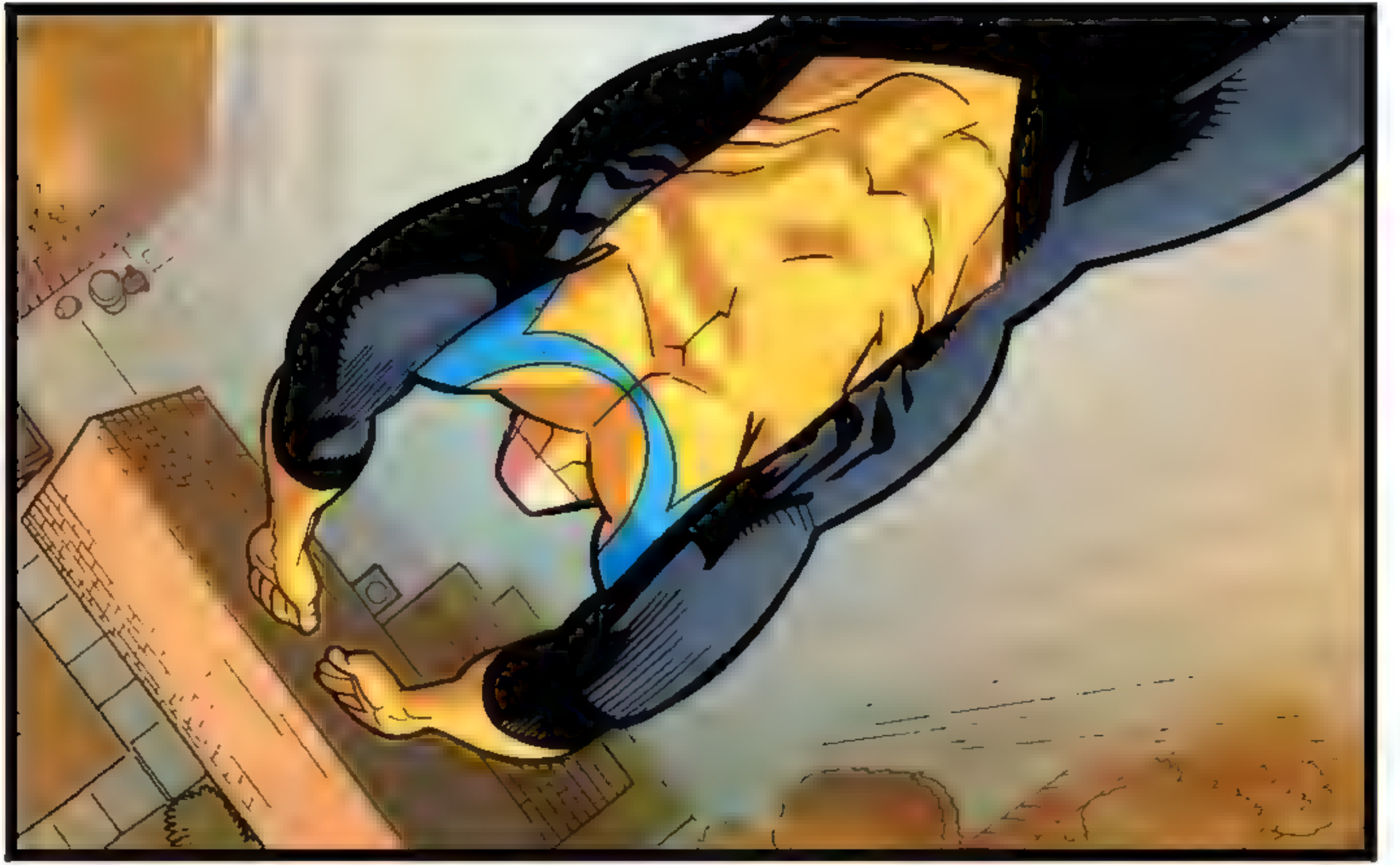
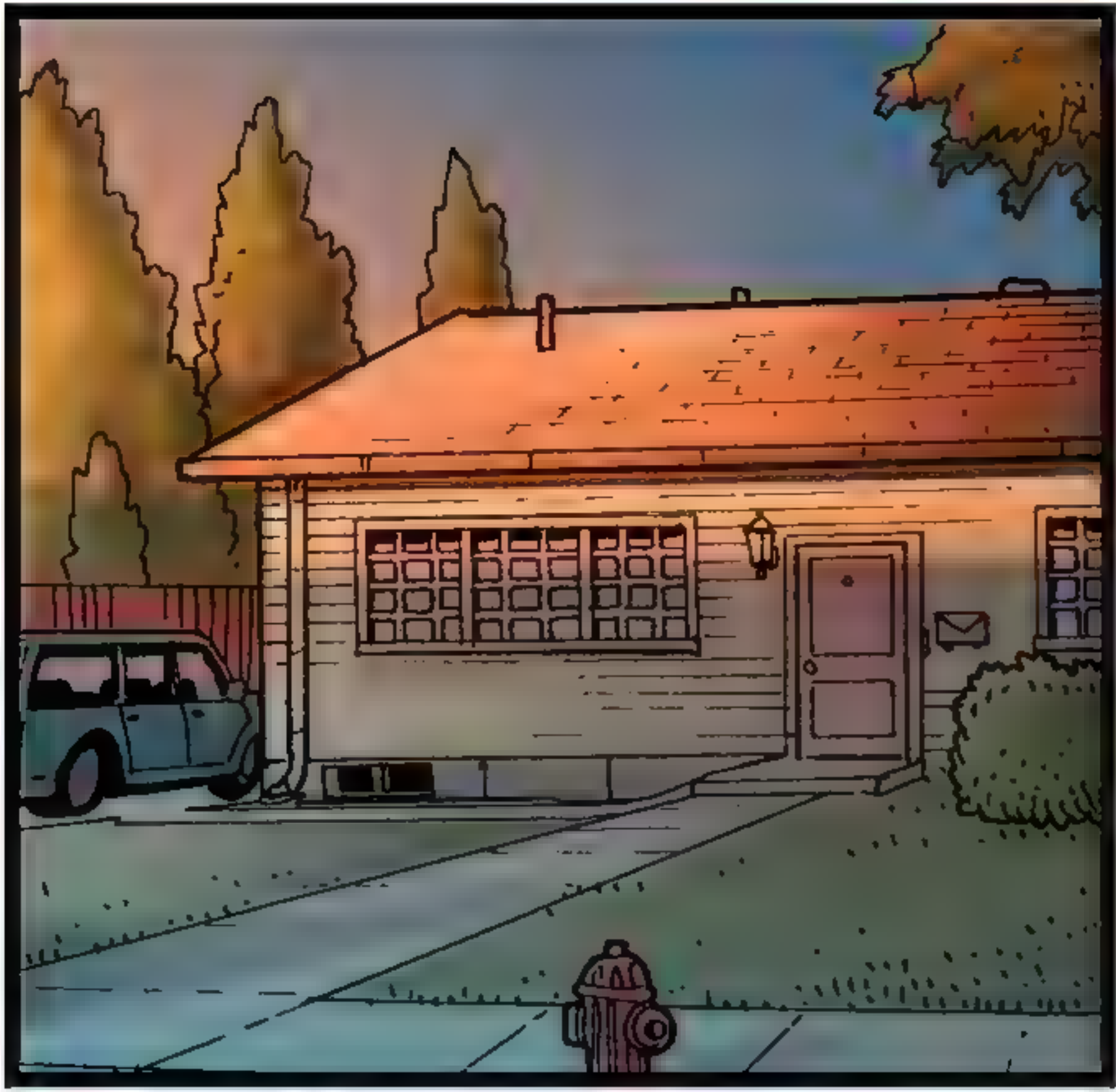
WHO'S PAUL?

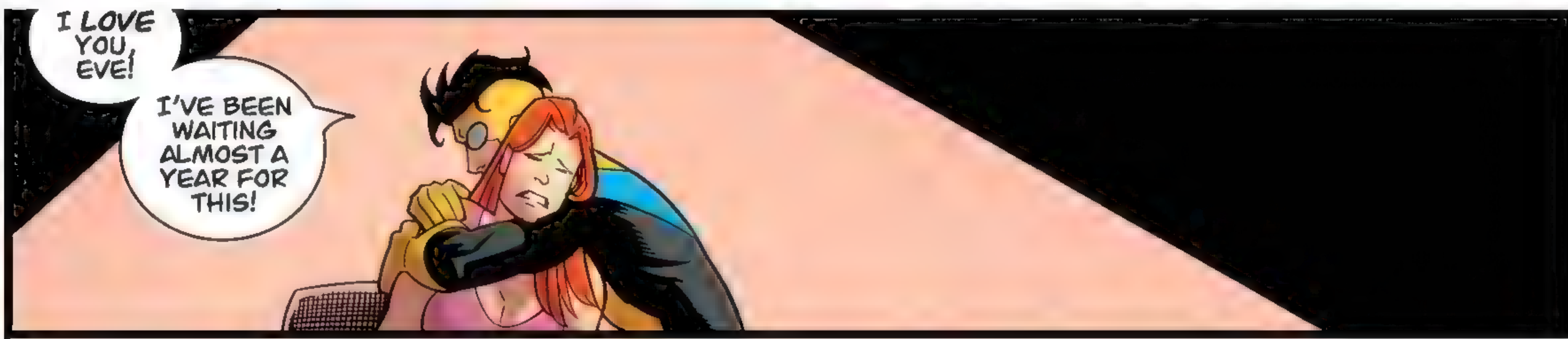


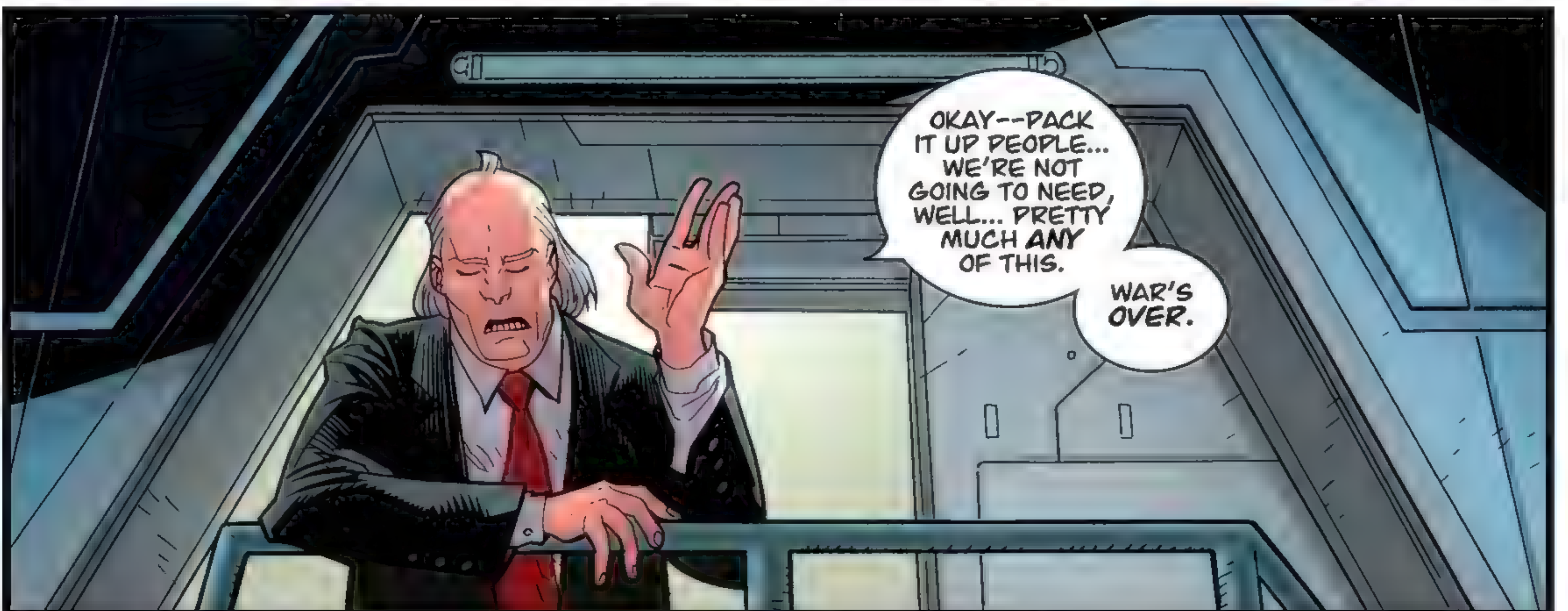
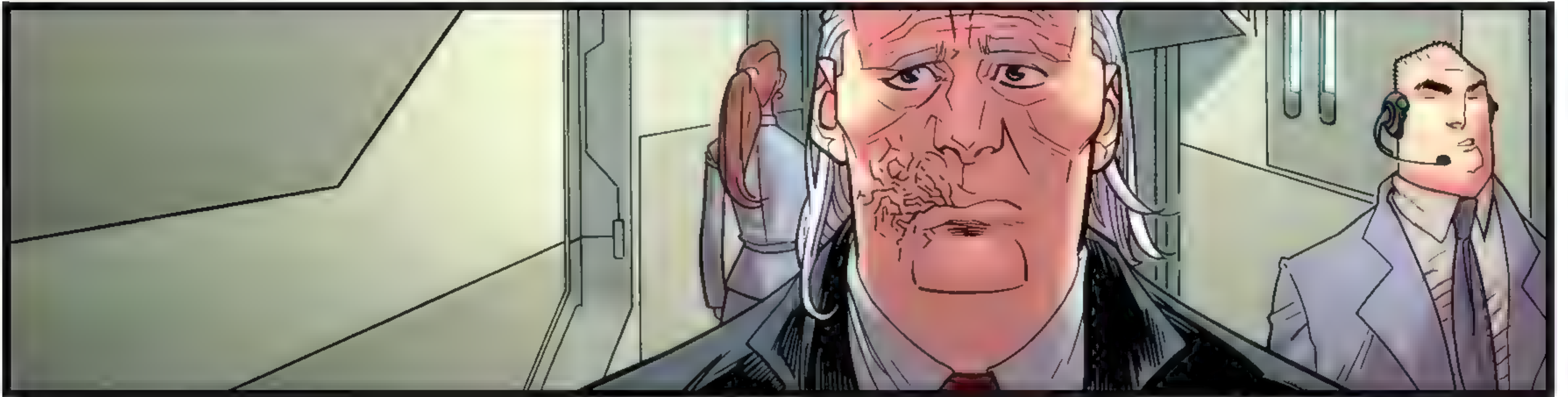
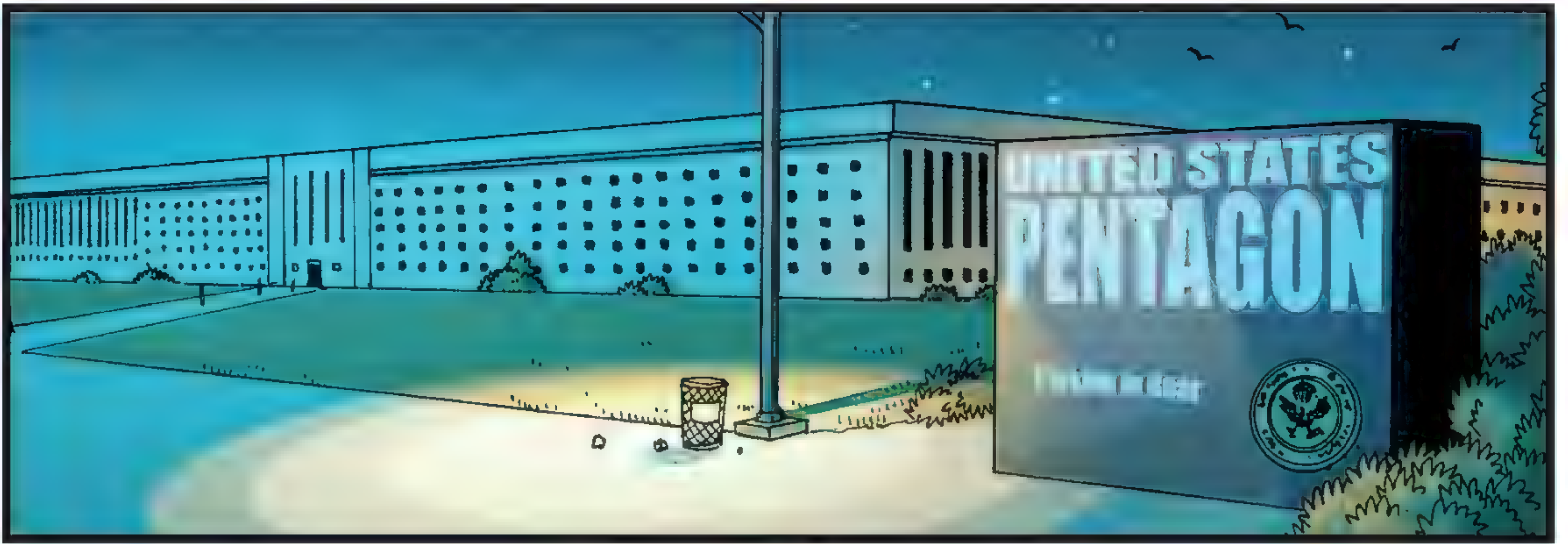






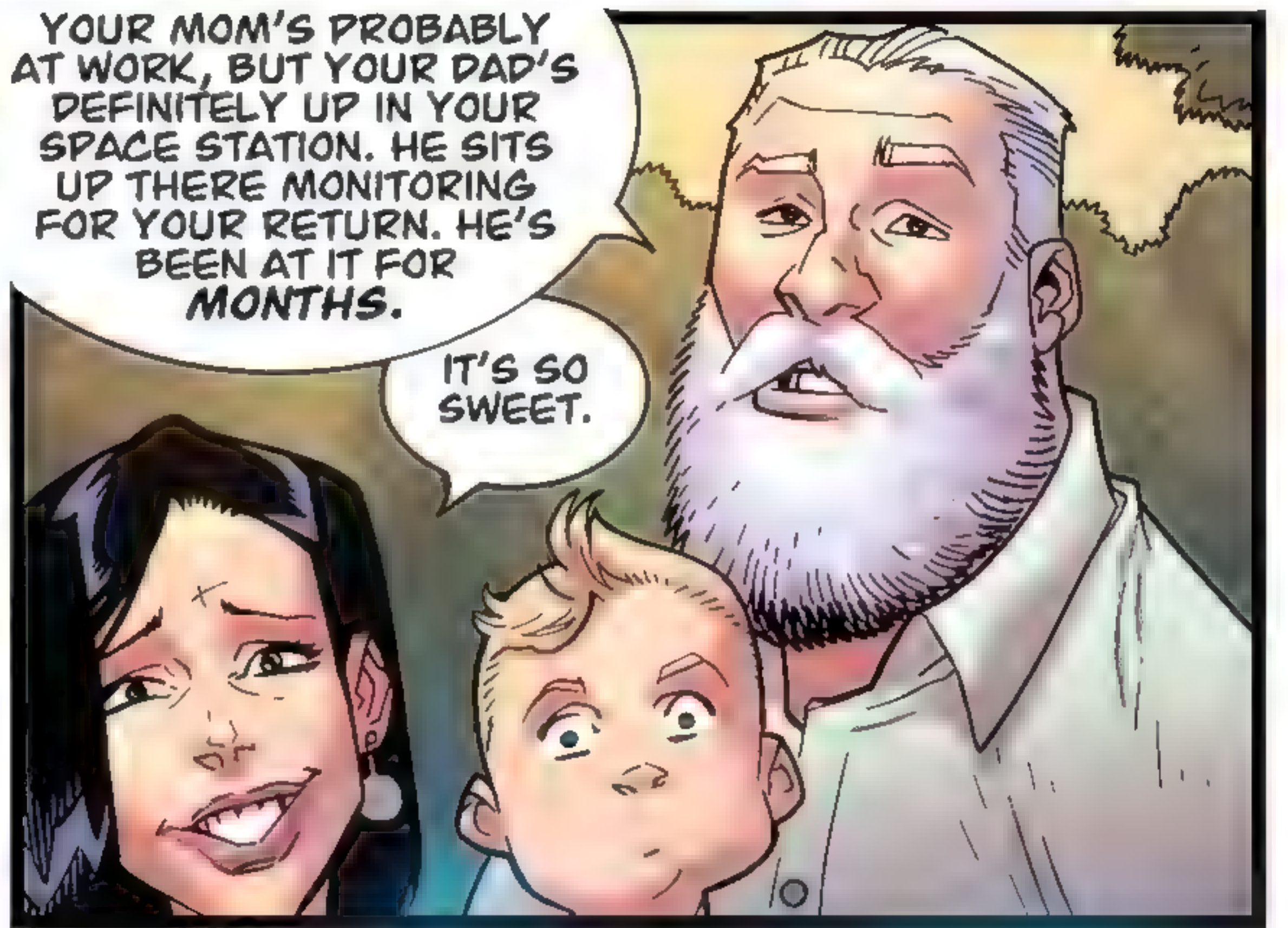
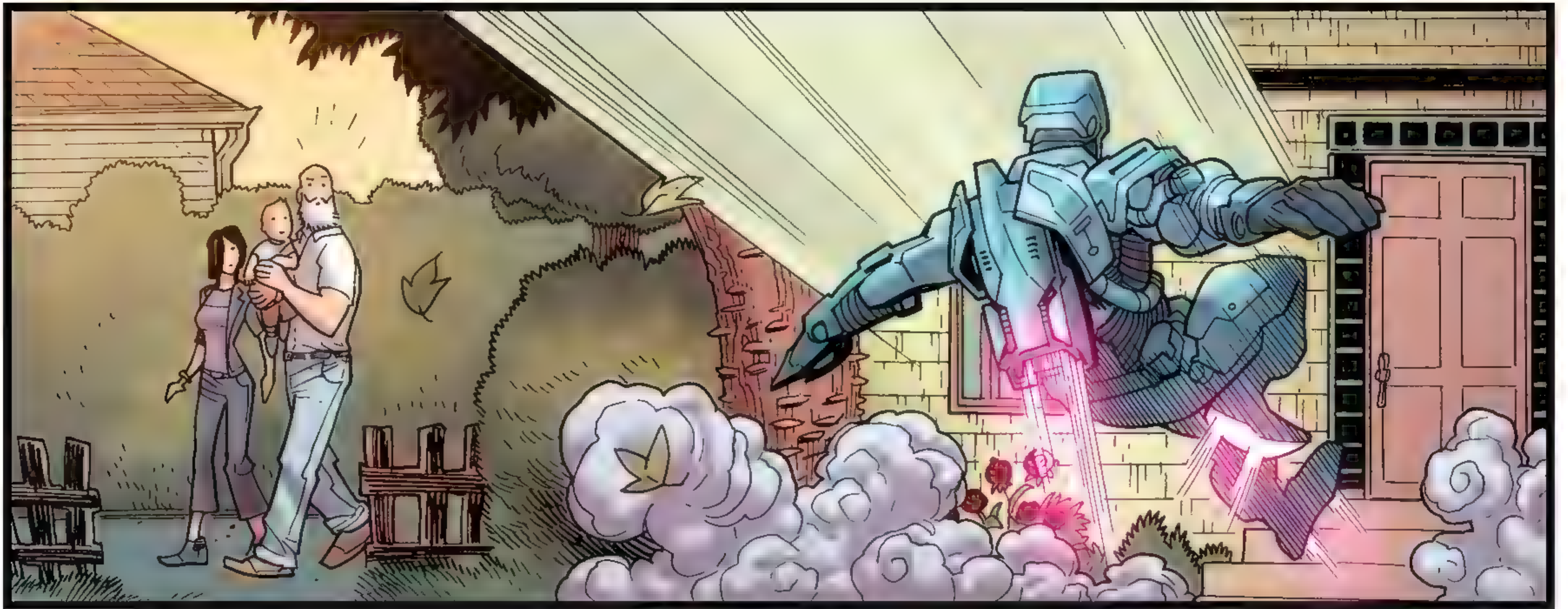


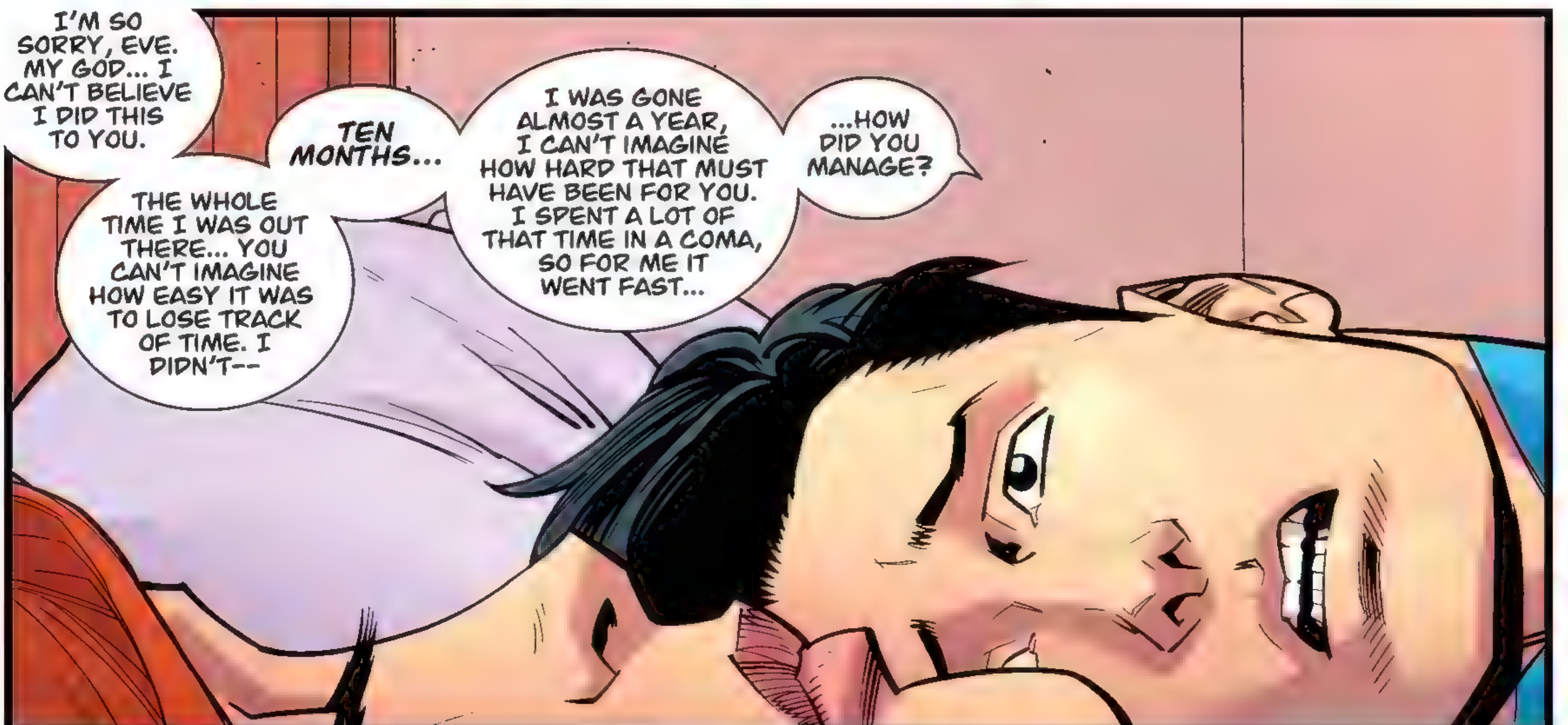


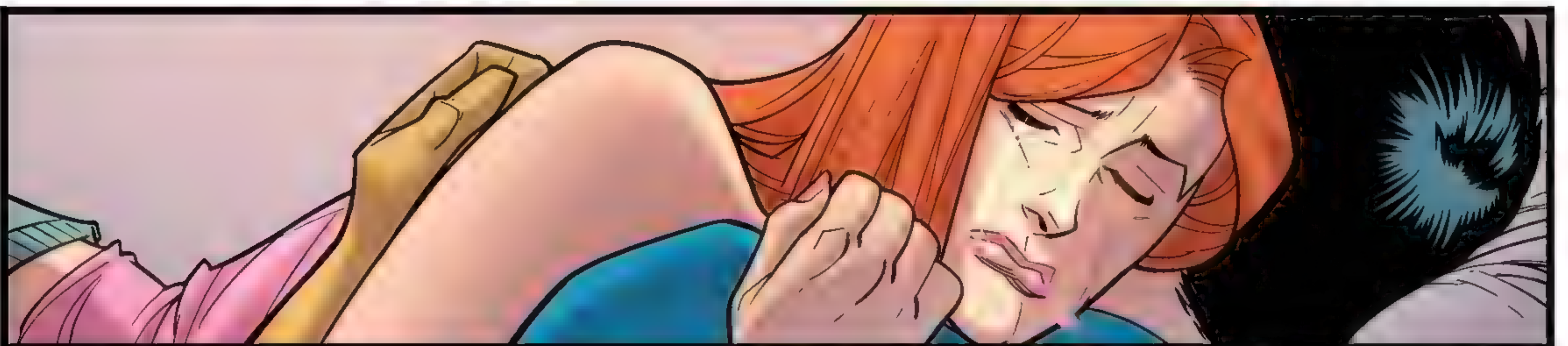
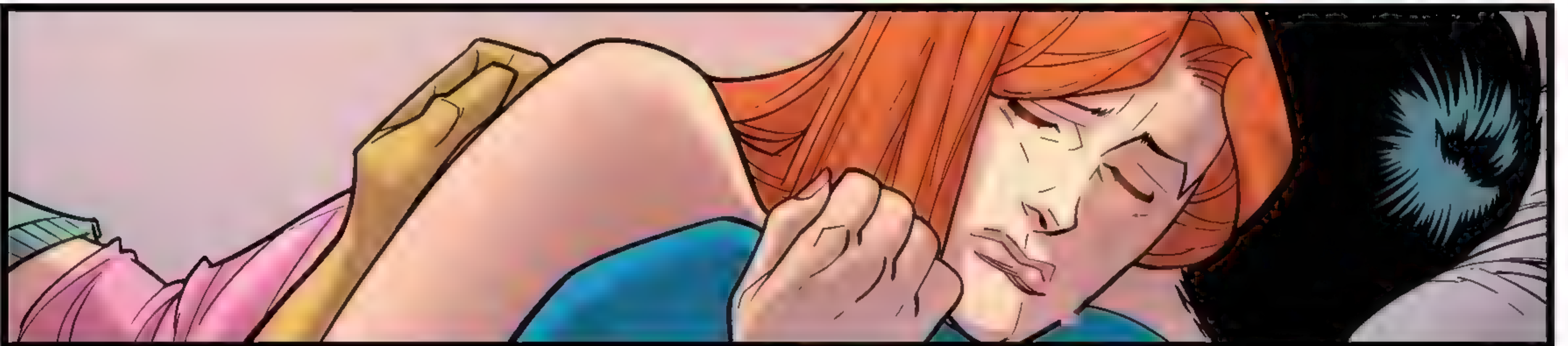
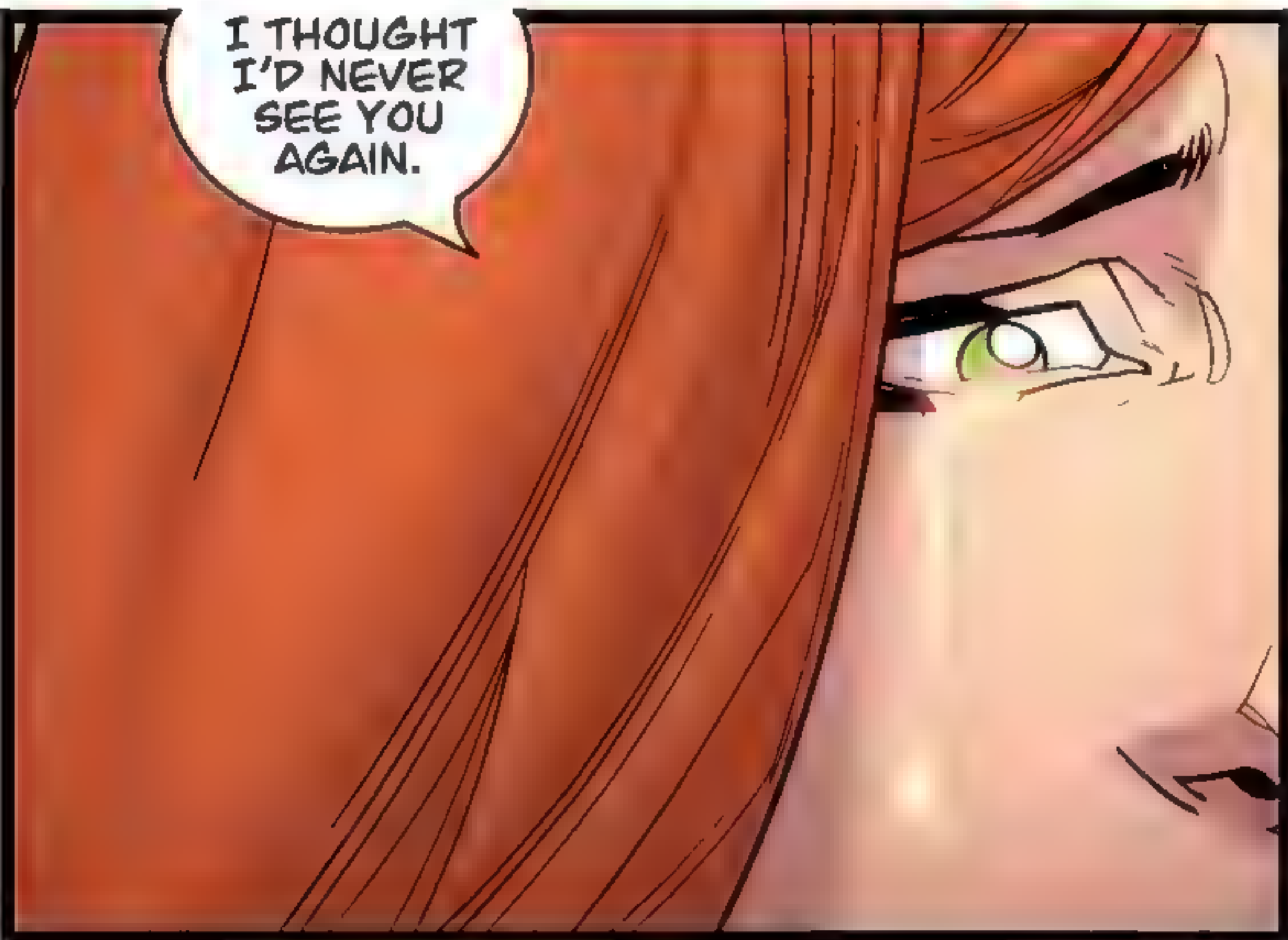
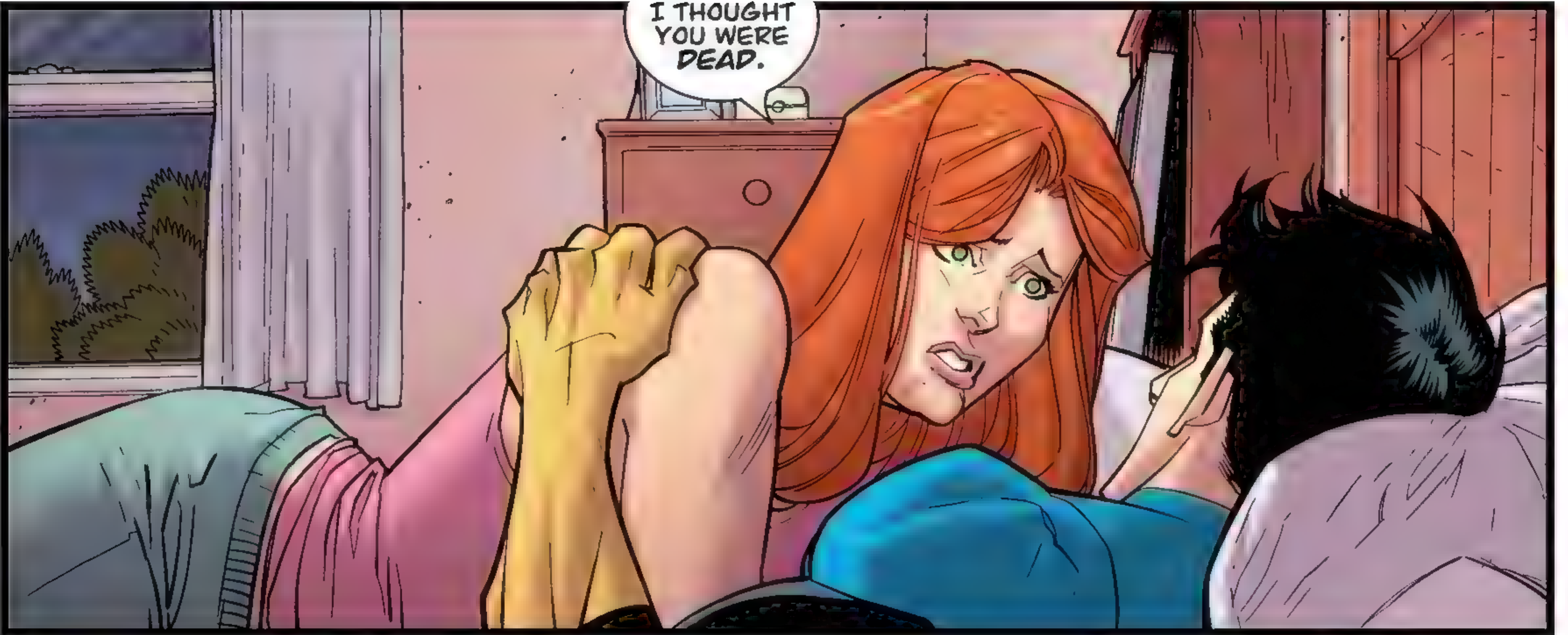


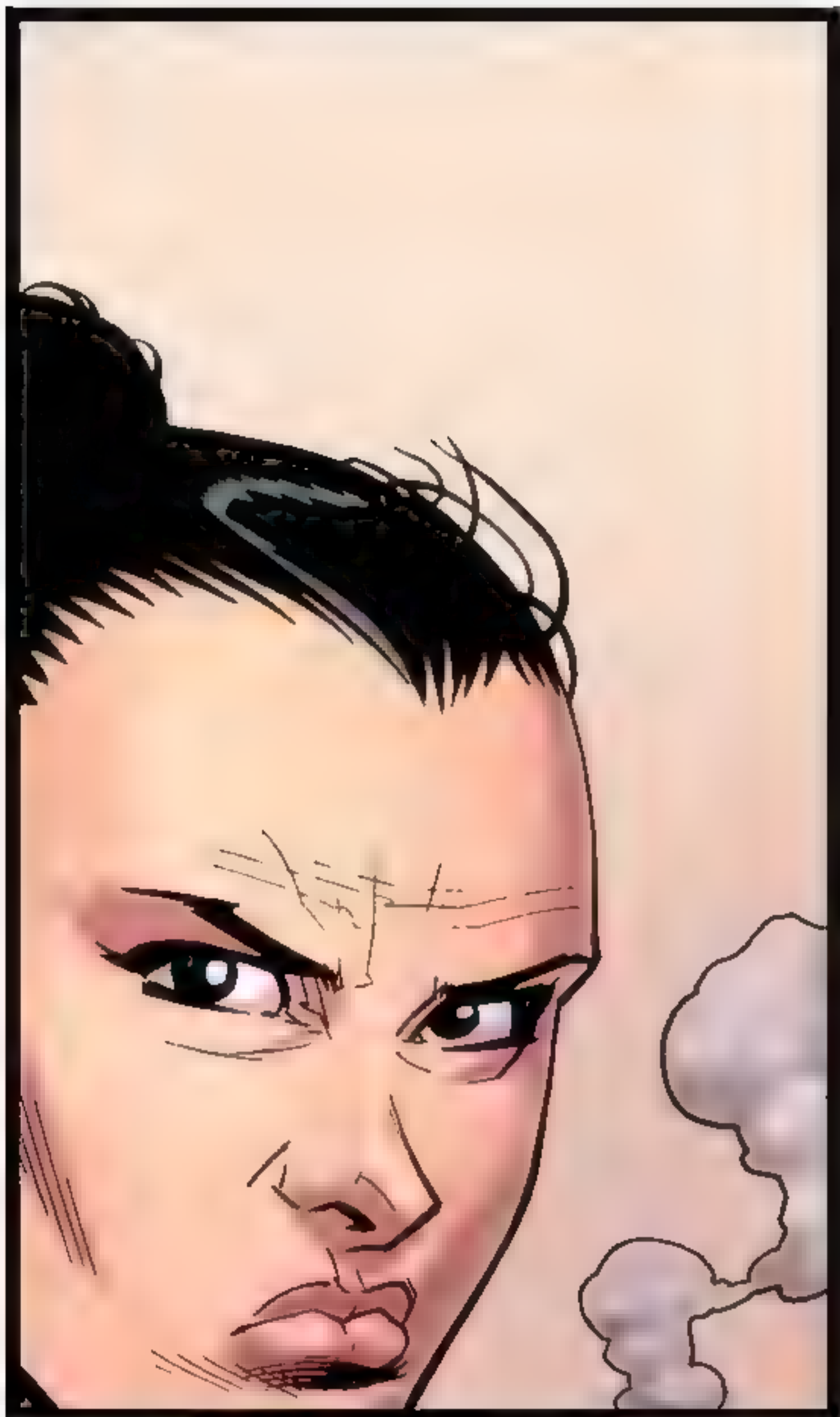
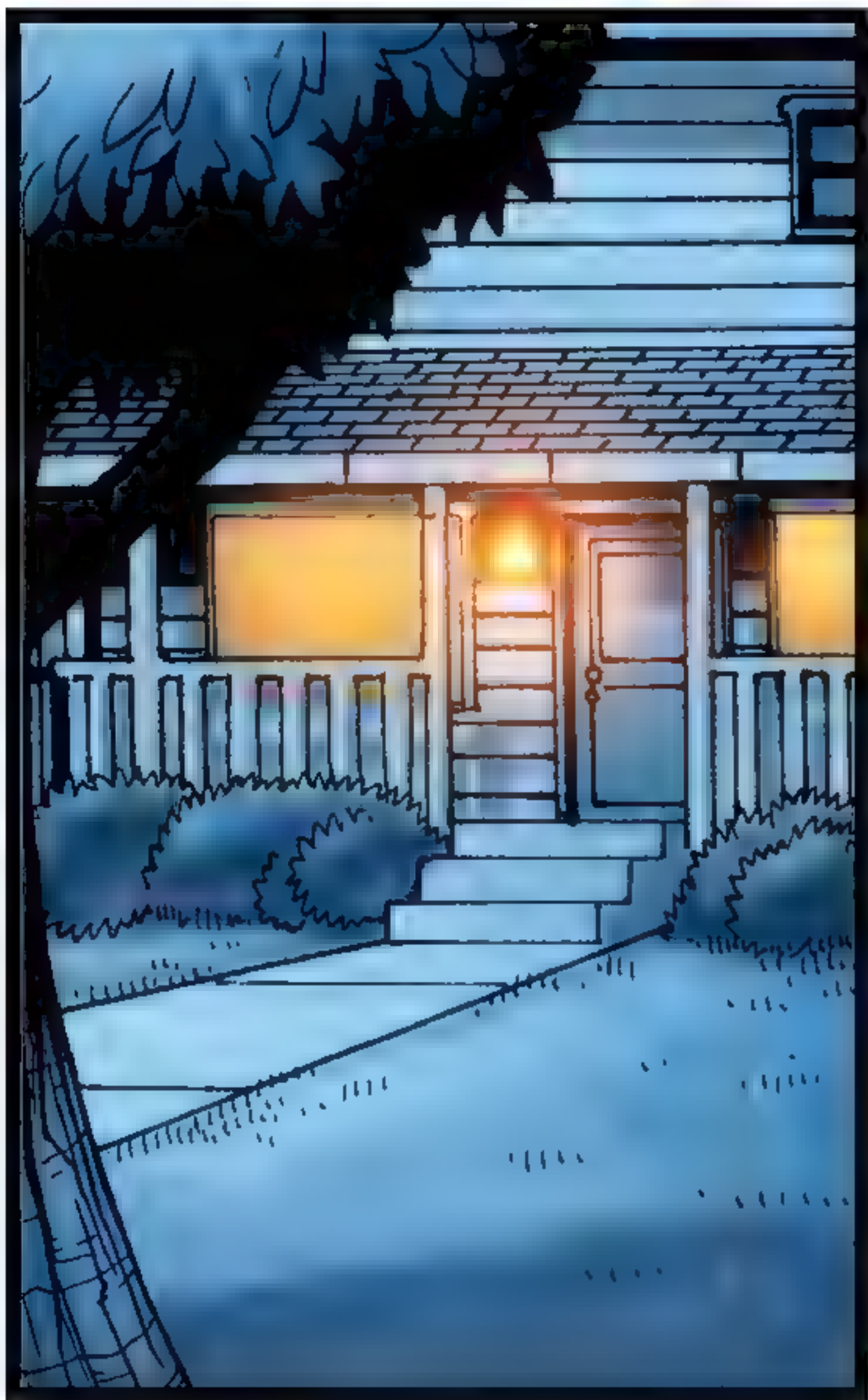


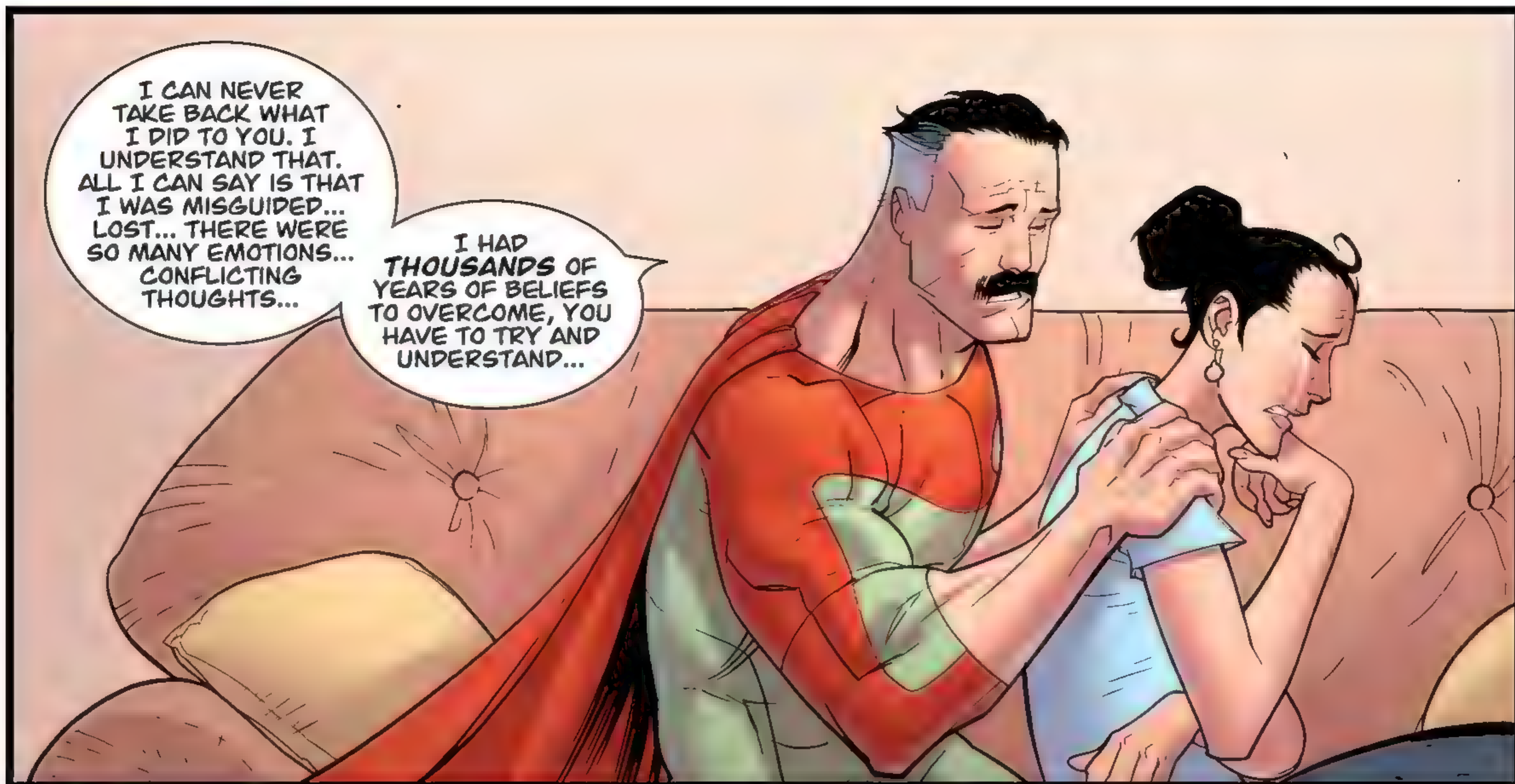
BUMMER.











I CAN NEVER
TAKE BACK WHAT
I DID TO YOU. I
UNDERSTAND THAT.
ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT
I WAS MISGUIDED...
LOST... THERE WERE
SO MANY EMOTIONS...
CONFLICTING
THOUGHTS...

I HAD
THOUSANDS OF
YEARS OF BELIEFS
TO OVERCOME, YOU
HAVE TO TRY AND
UNDERSTAND...



NO!

I DON'T
HAVE TO
UNDERSTAND
A GODDAMN
THING! YOU
RUINED MY
LIFE, YOU
SON OF A
BITCH!

DON'T YOU
UNDERSTAND
THAT?!

YOU
RUINED---!!



...



I JUST
WISH...

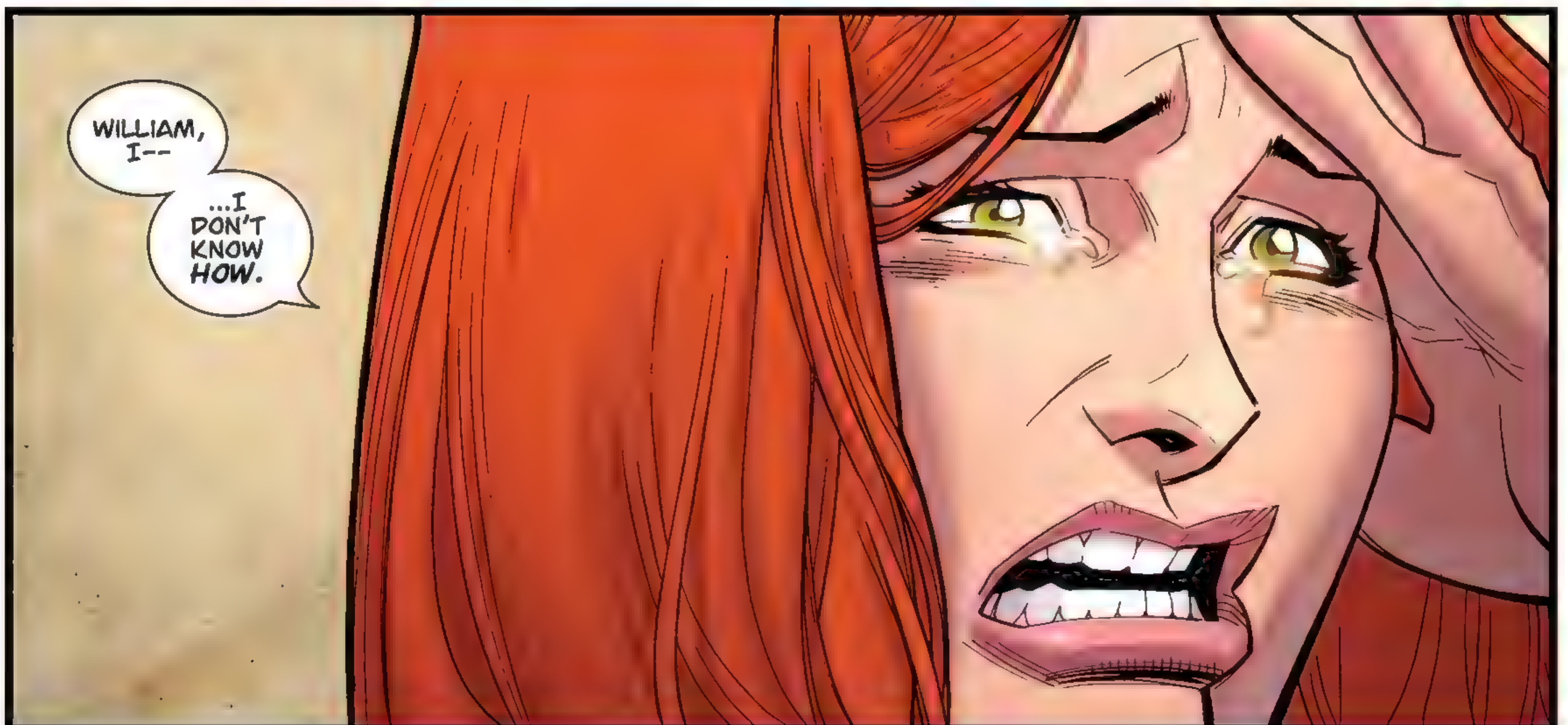
I WISH
EVERYTHING
COULD GO BACK
TO THE WAY
IT WAS
BEFORE...

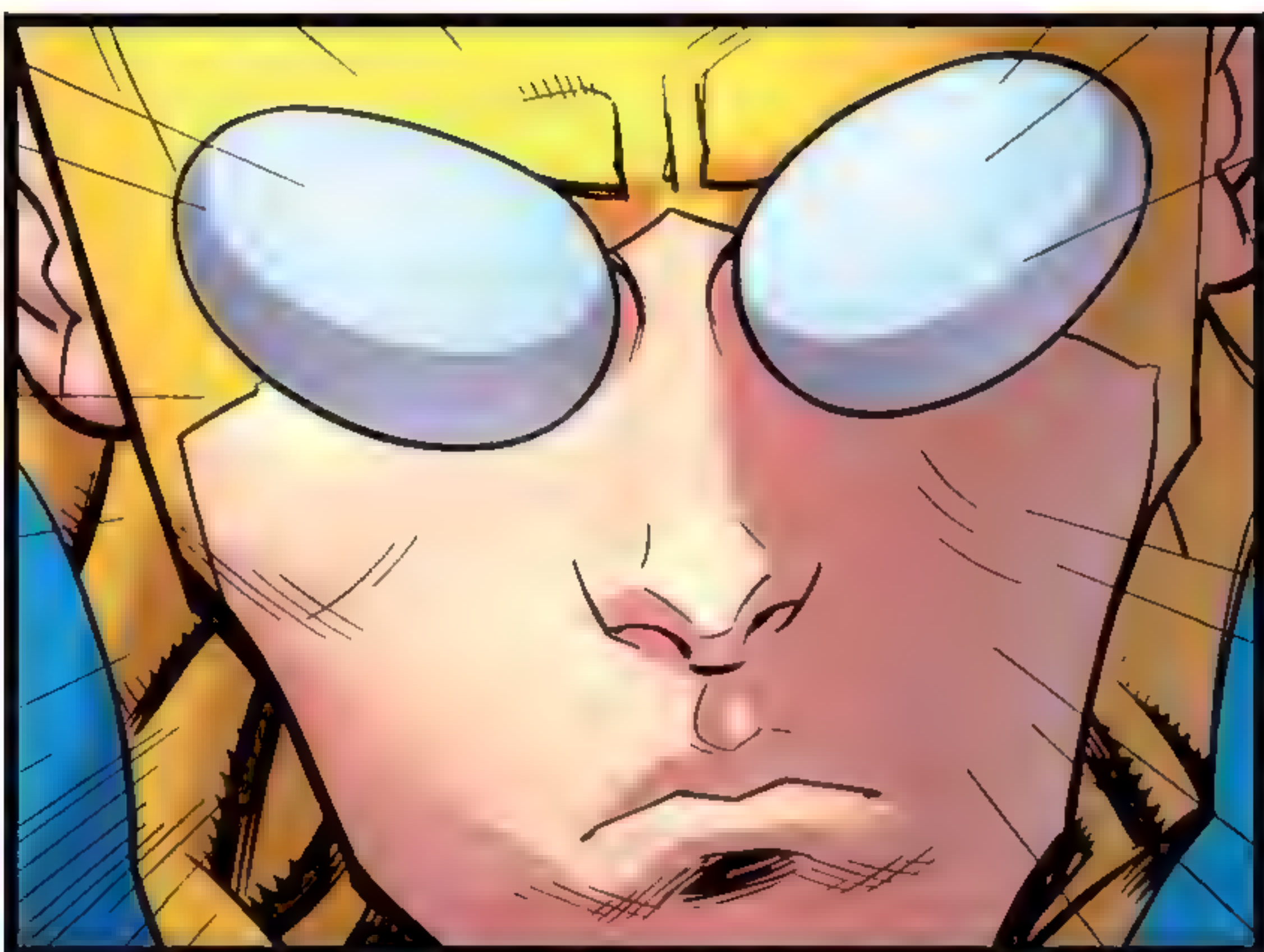


NO.

THINGS
WILL NEVER
GO BACK
TO THE
WAY THEY
WERE...

...BECAUSE
I WILL NEVER
LIE TO YOU
AGAIN.







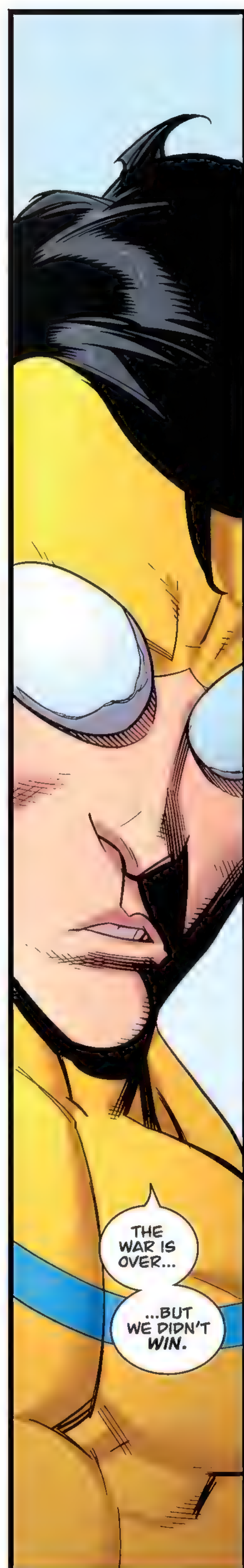
I KILLED CONQUEST.

WE DESTROYED VILTRUM.

WE ENDED THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

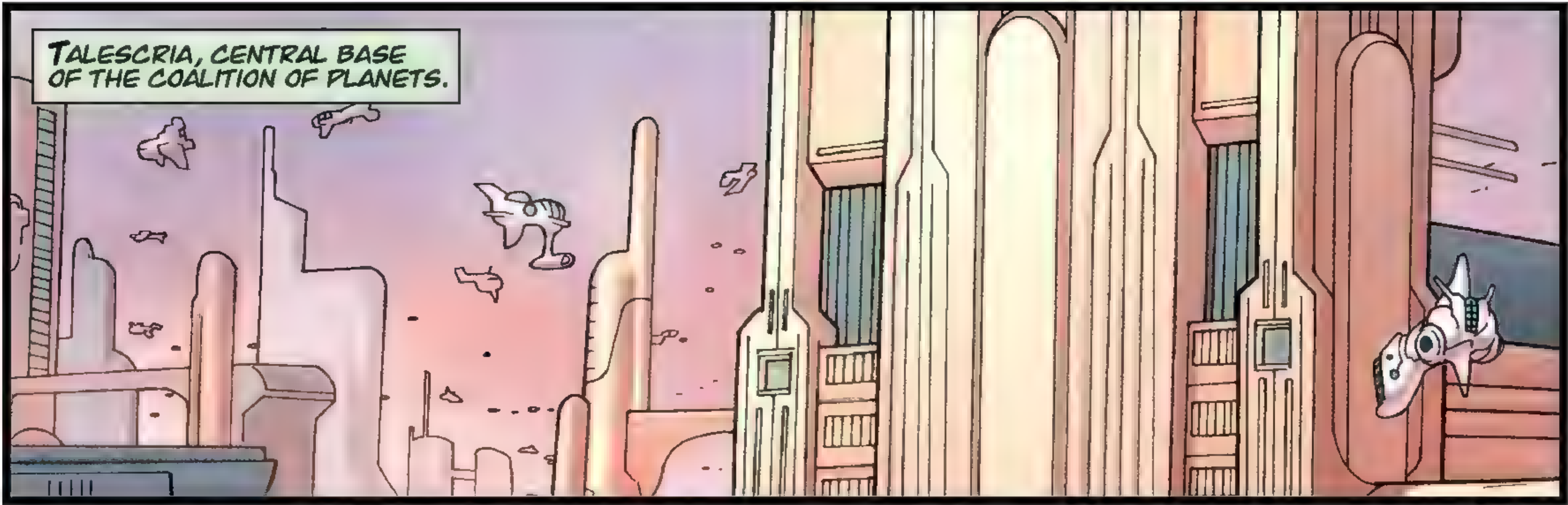
...

BUT NOW THEY'RE HERE...



THE WAR IS OVER...

...BUT WE DIDN'T WIN.





THE SCOURGE VIRUS.

THE VIRUS THAT
RAVAGED THE
VILTRUMITE
POPULATION...
NEARLY KILLED
THEM ALL.

THIS IS A STRONGER
STRAIN, PERFECTED...
IT WILL NOT FAIL
THIS TIME.

IF THE WAR EFFORT APPEARS
LOST, I URGE YOU TO USE IT...
IGNORE YOUR ATTACHMENT
TO OUR VILTRUMITE ALLIES.



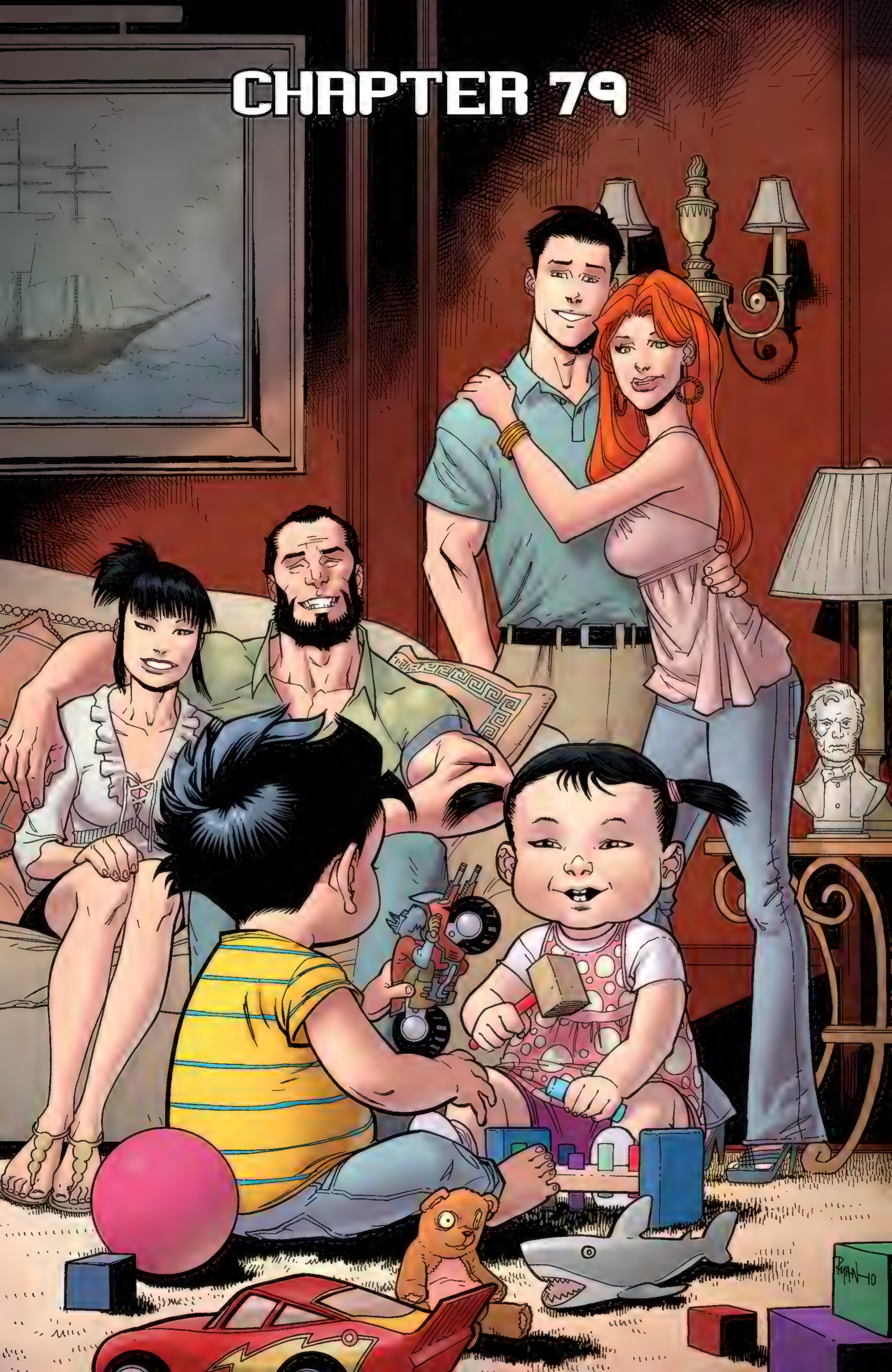
FOR THE GOOD OF
THE UNIVERSE.

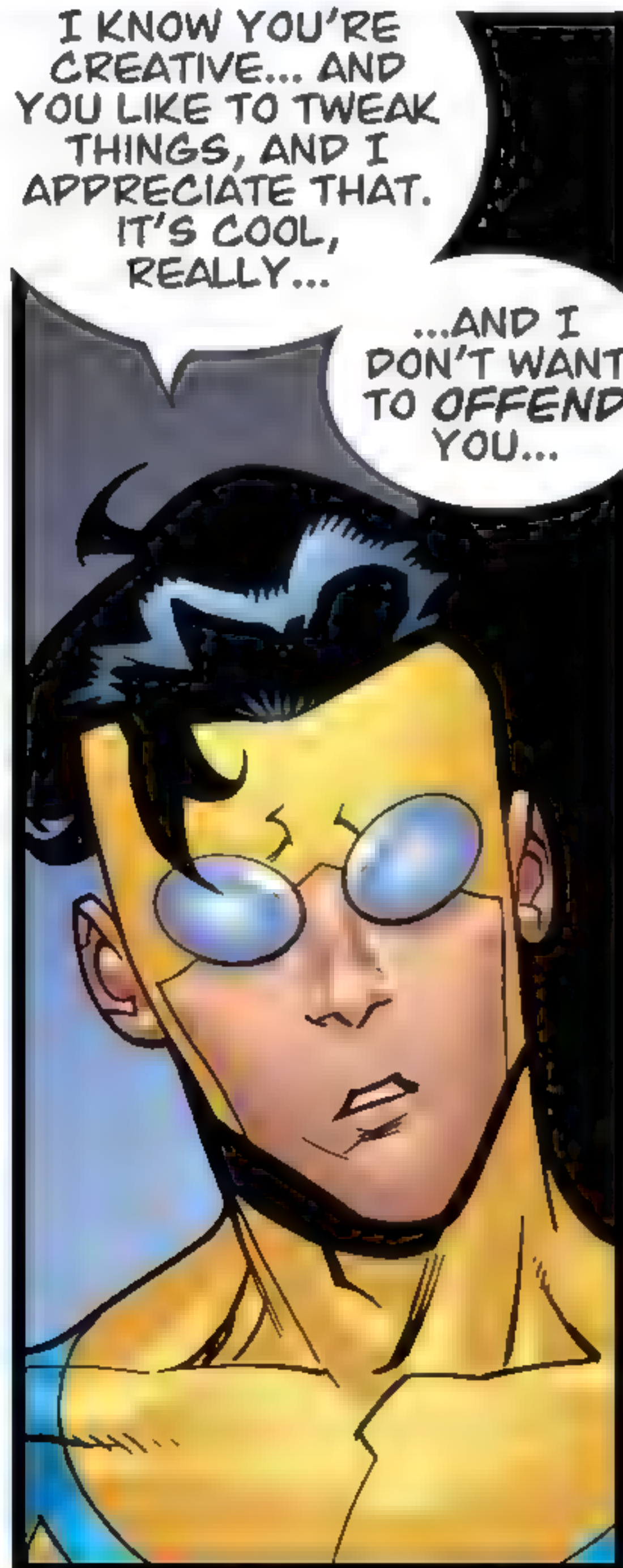
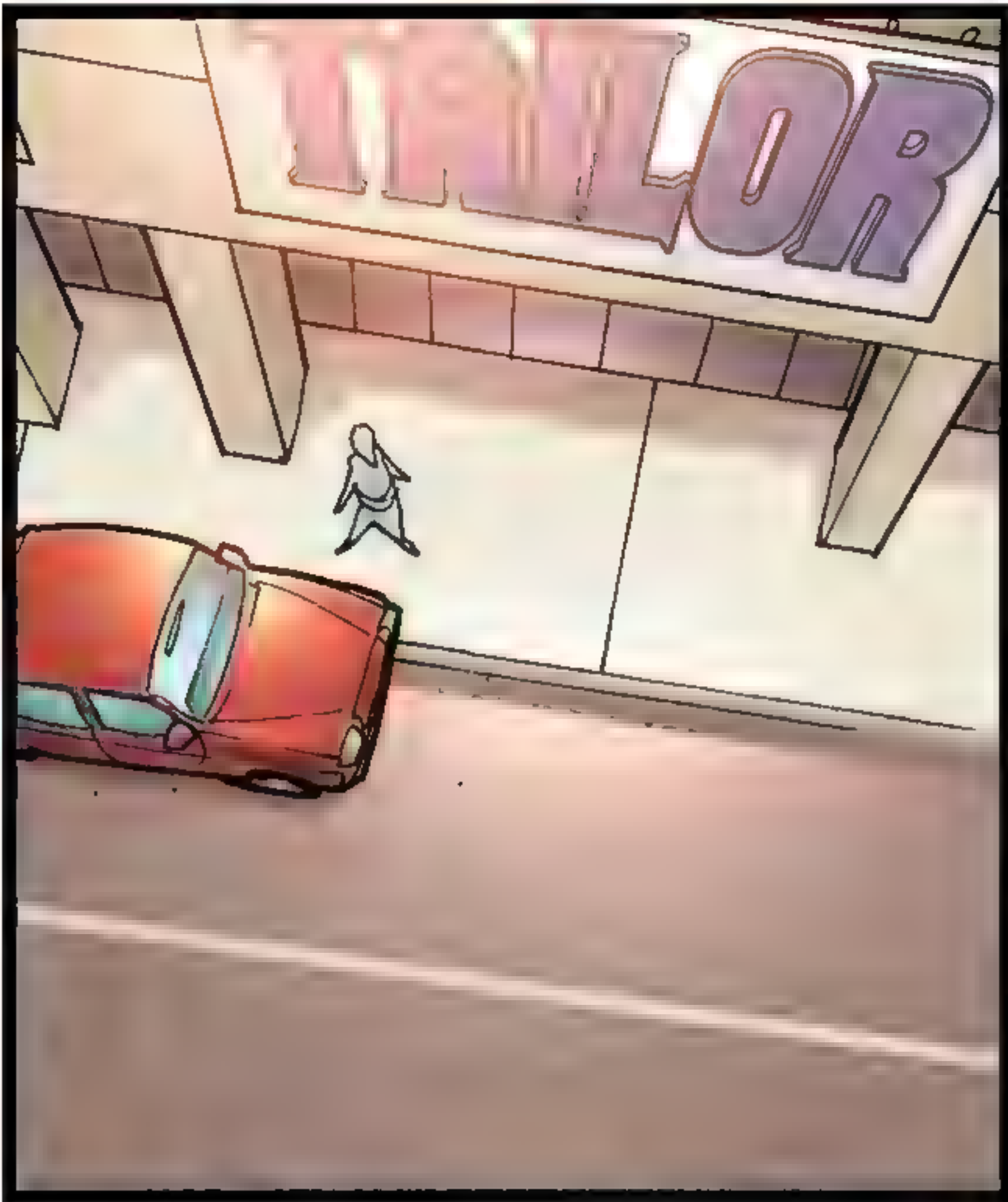
ERADICATE ALL
VILTRUM LIFE...
FOREVER.

WHATEVER YOU DO,
MAKE CERTAIN THAT
I DID NOT DIE IN VAIN.
-THAEDUS.



CHAPTER 79







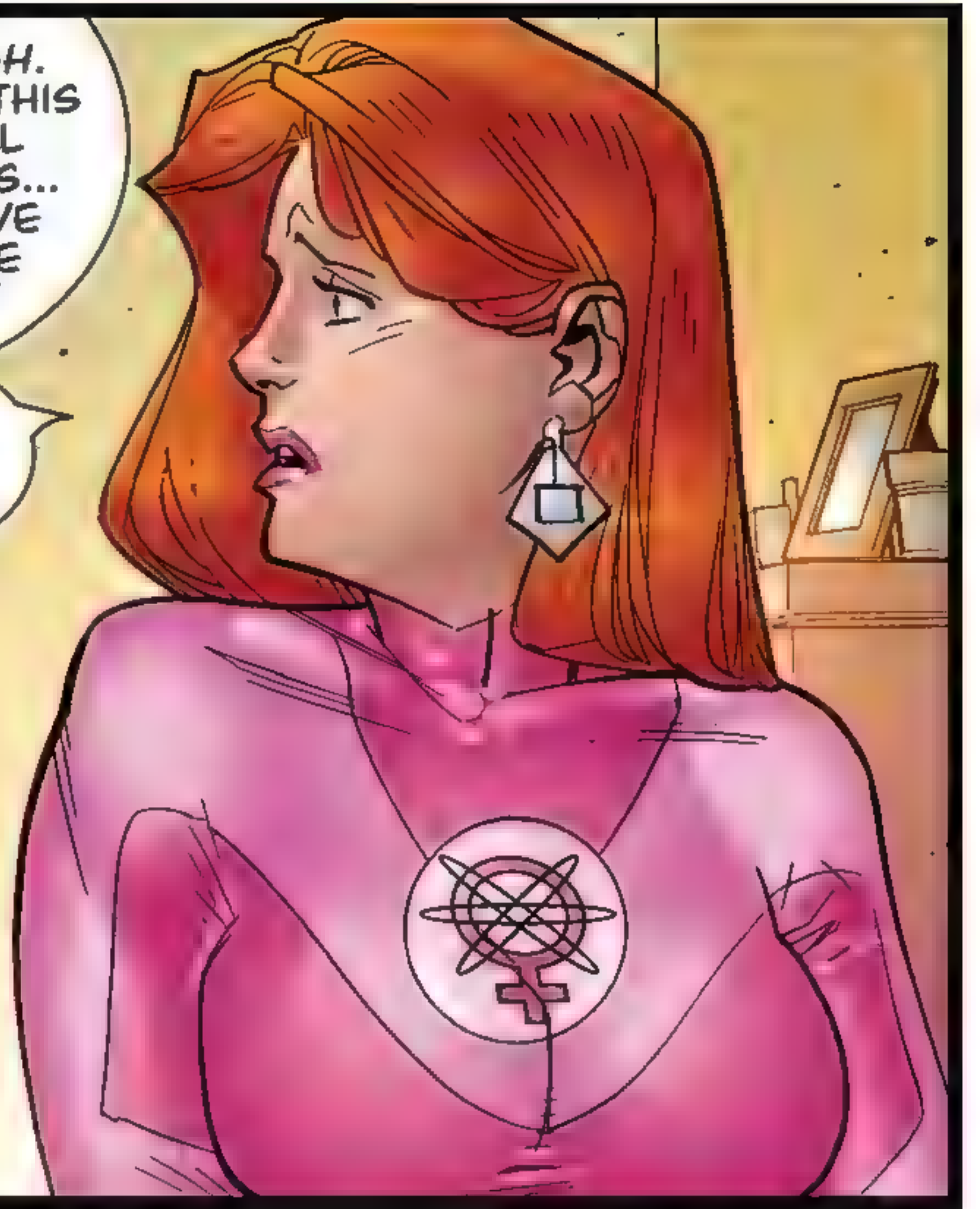


WHOA! ARE YOU GOING OUT? SOMETHING GOING ON?

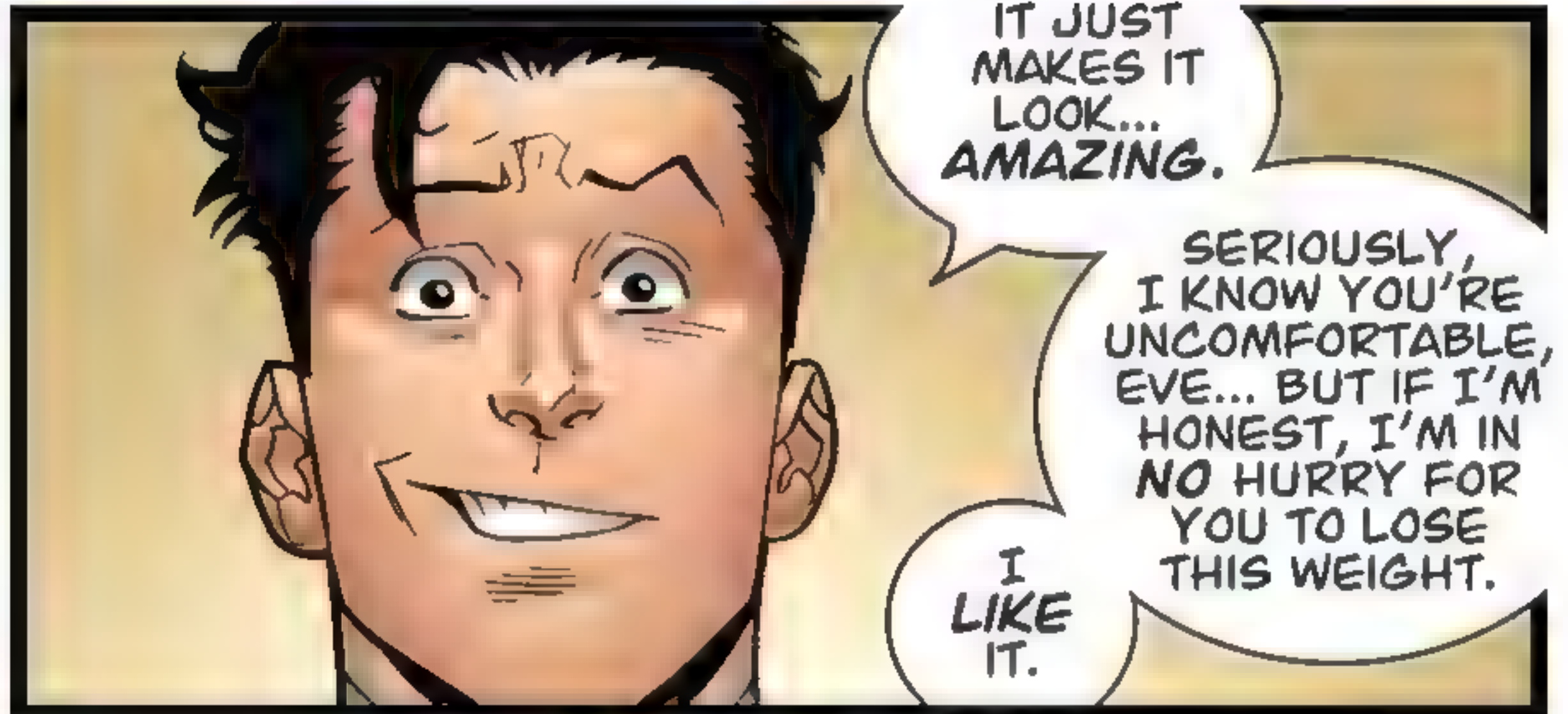


NO, I WAS--UGH. JUST SEEING IF THIS COSTUME STILL WORKED... I WAS... WHY'D YOU HAVE TO COME HOME RIGHT NOW?

JUST...



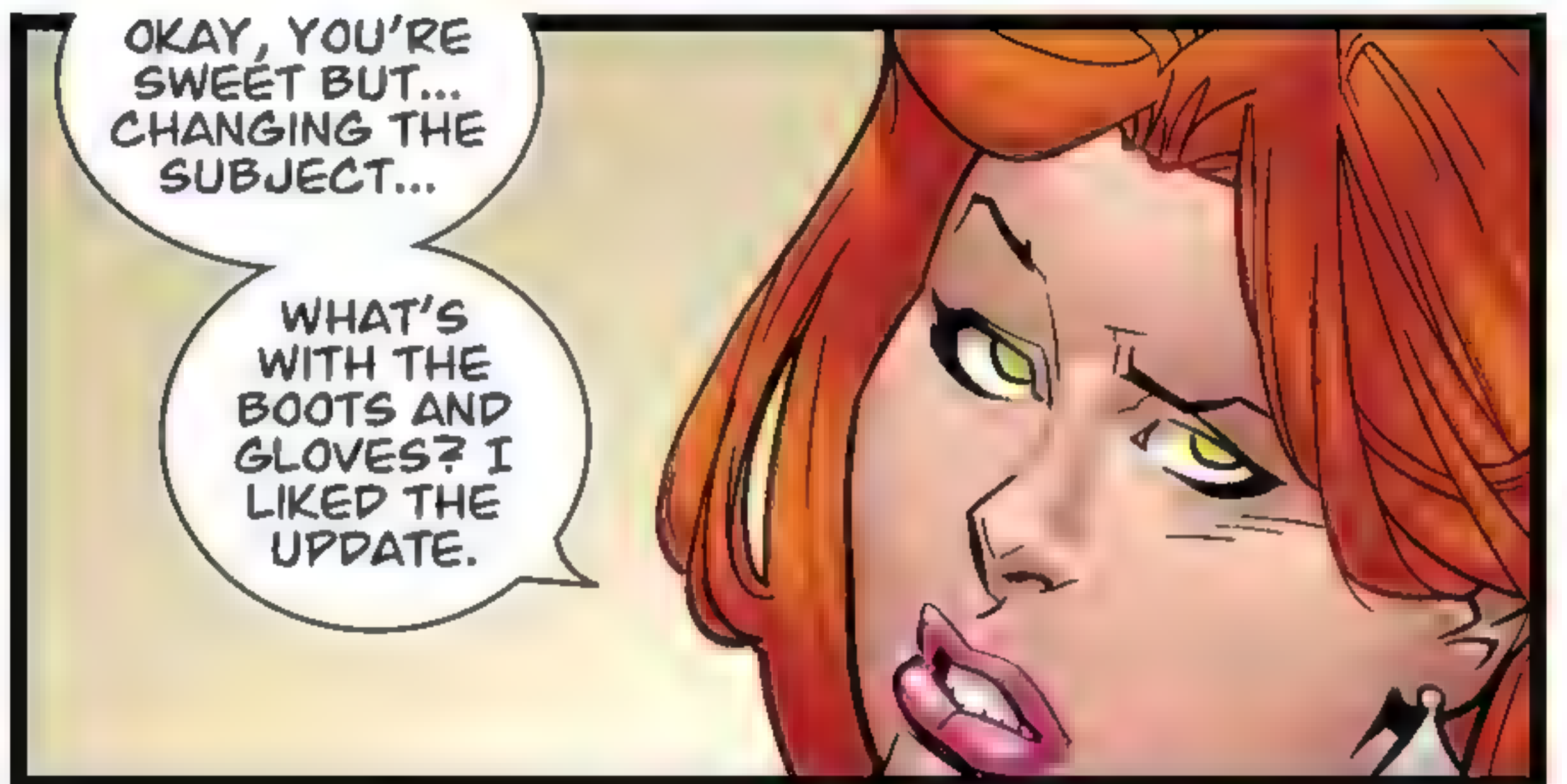
DOES THIS SKIRT MAKE MY BUTT LOOK BIGGER?



IT JUST MAKES IT LOOK... AMAZING.

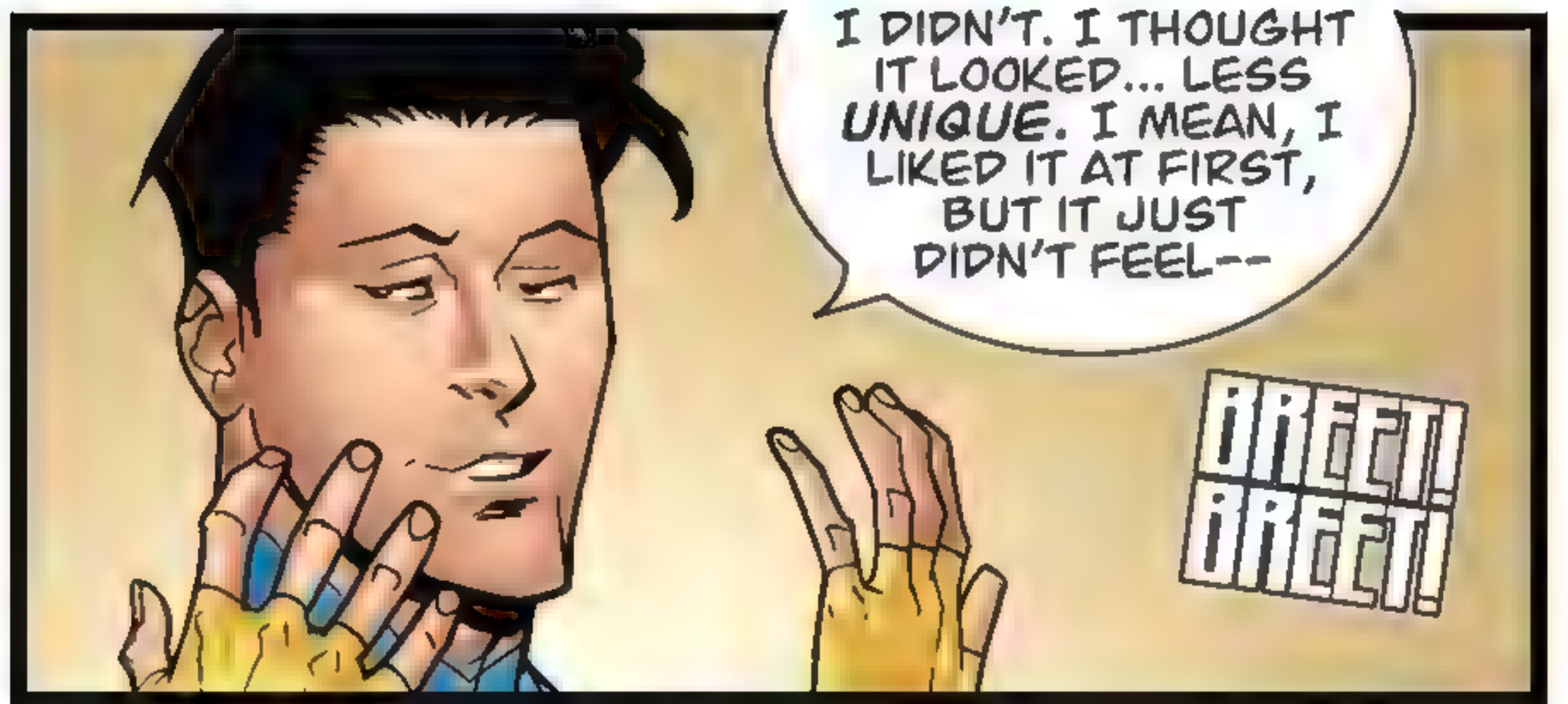
SERIOUSLY, I KNOW YOU'RE UNCOMFORTABLE, EVE... BUT IF I'M HONEST, I'M IN NO HURRY FOR YOU TO LOSE THIS WEIGHT.

I LIKE IT.



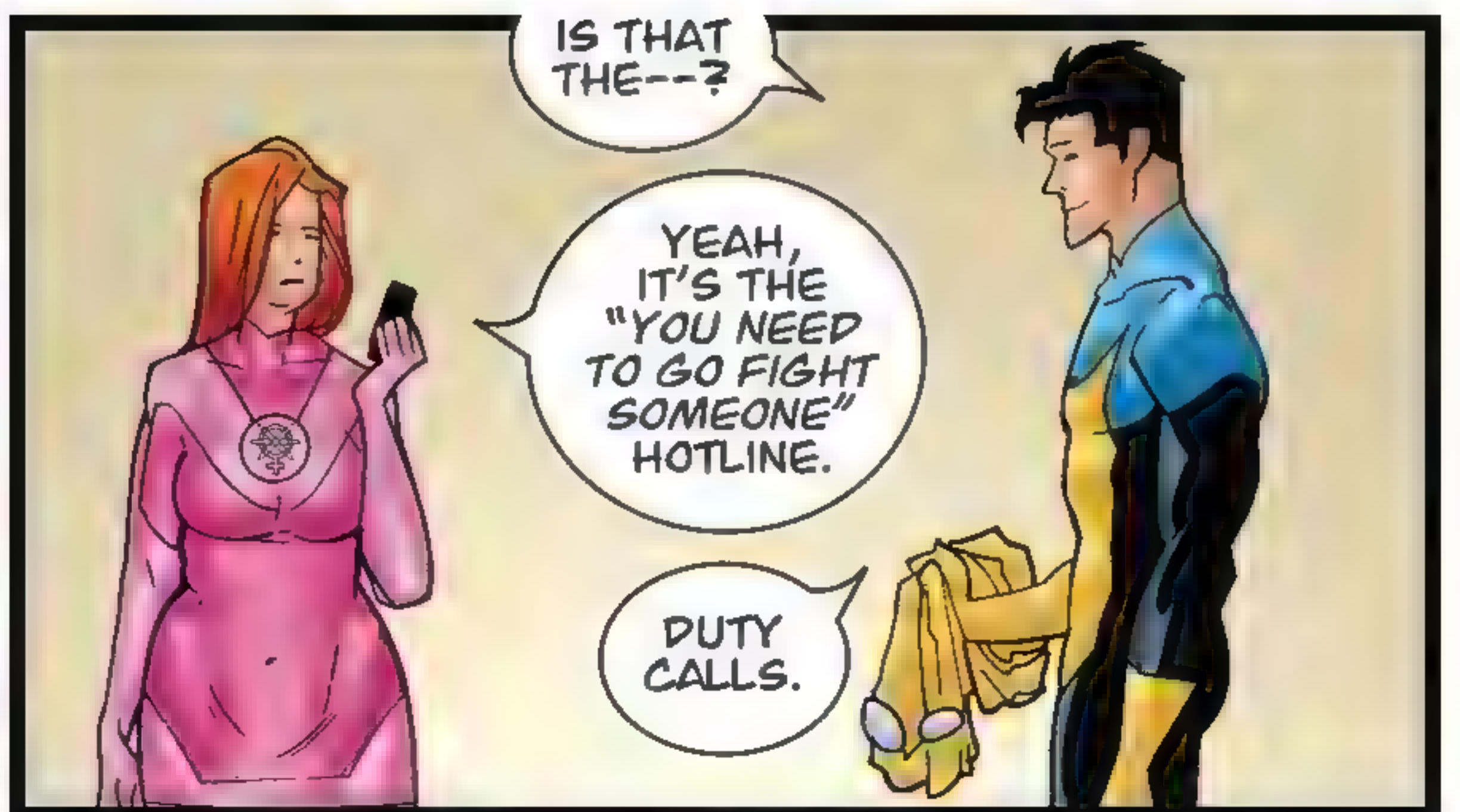
OKAY, YOU'RE SWEET BUT... CHANGING THE SUBJECT...

WHAT'S WITH THE BOOTS AND GLOVES? I LIKED THE UPDATE.



I DIDN'T. I THOUGHT IT LOOKED... LESS UNIQUE. I MEAN, I LIKED IT AT FIRST, BUT IT JUST DIDN'T FEEL--

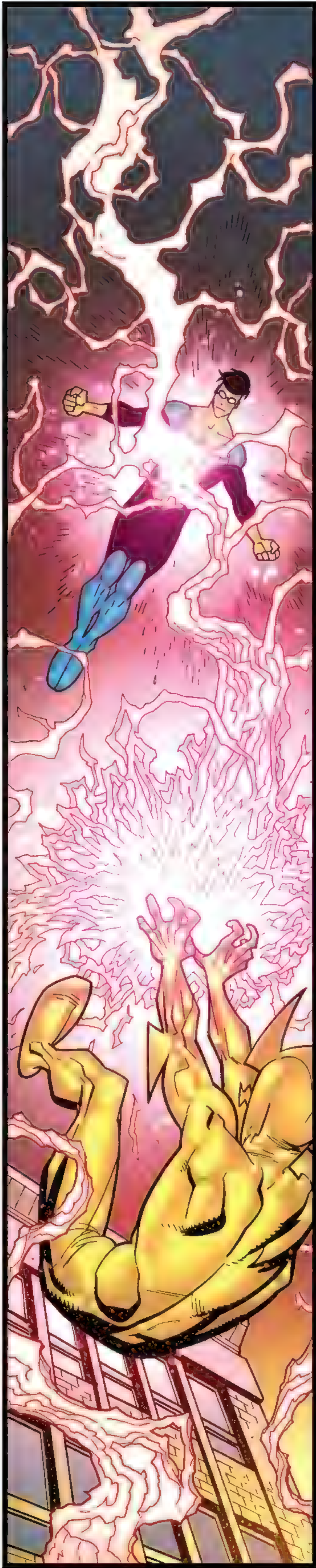
BRETT! BRETT!



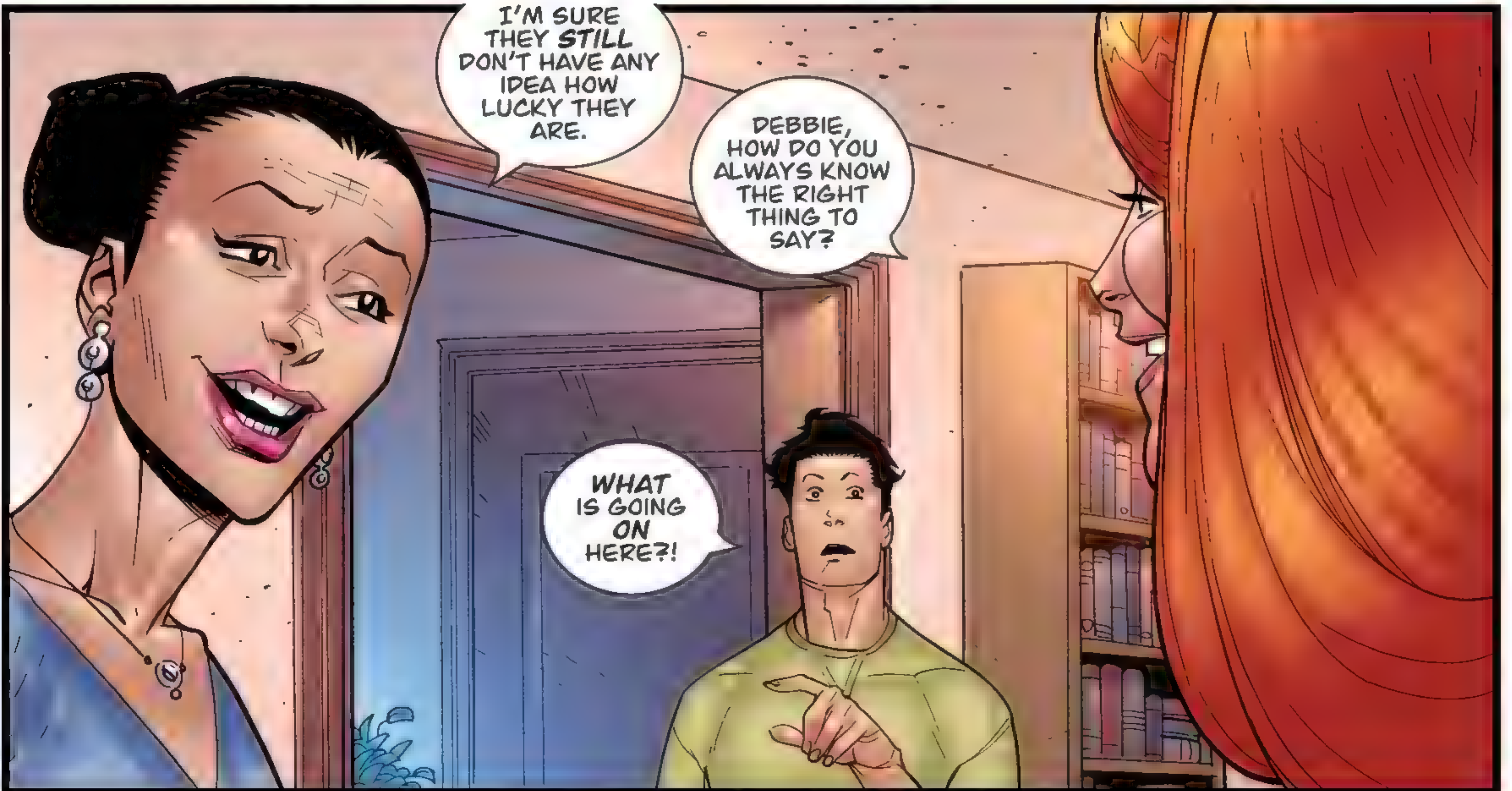
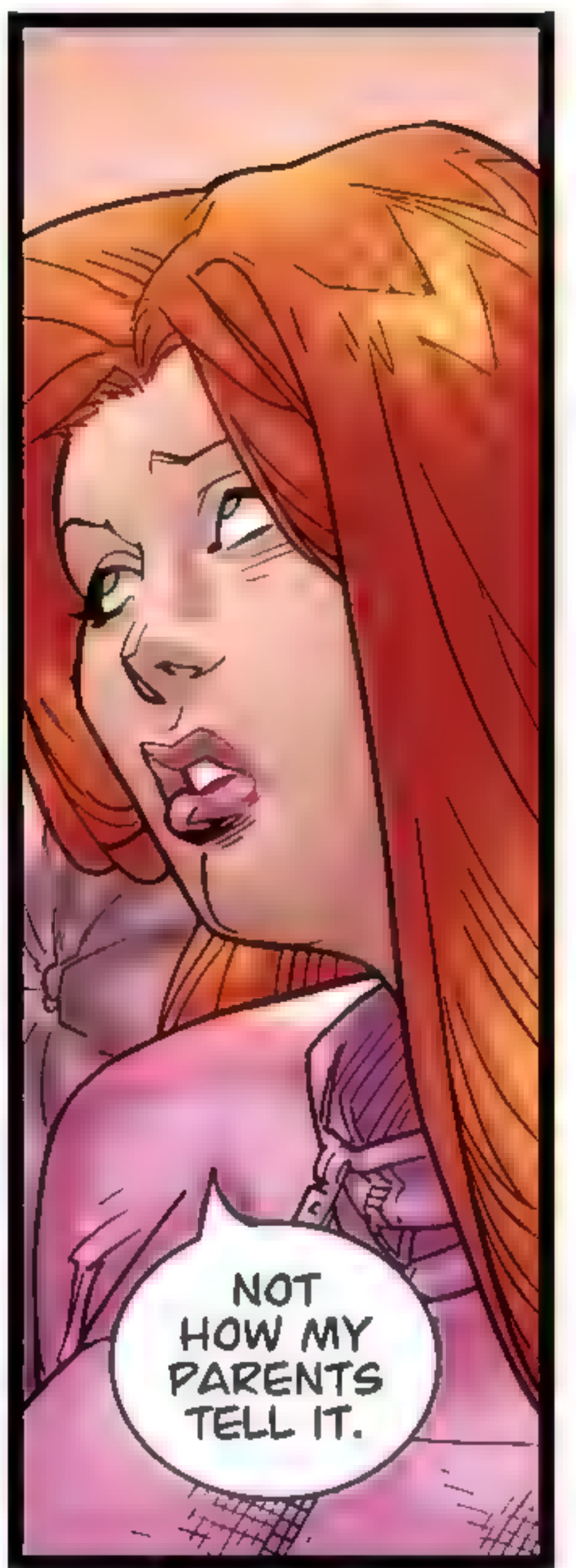
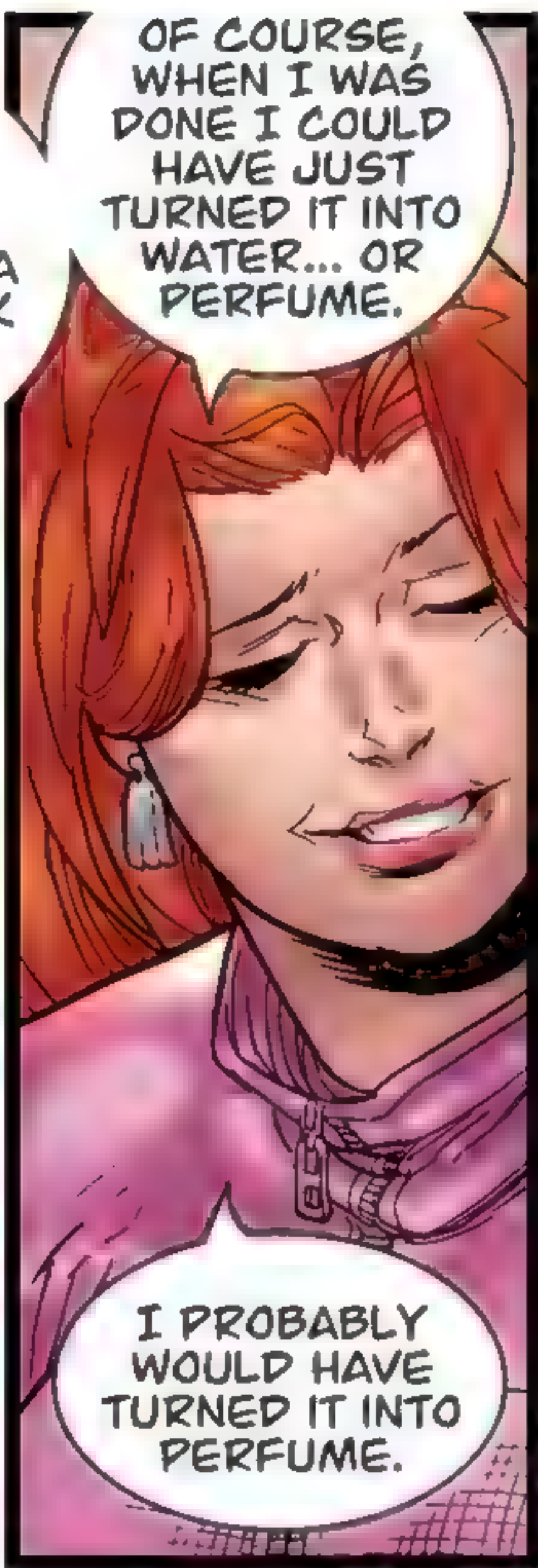
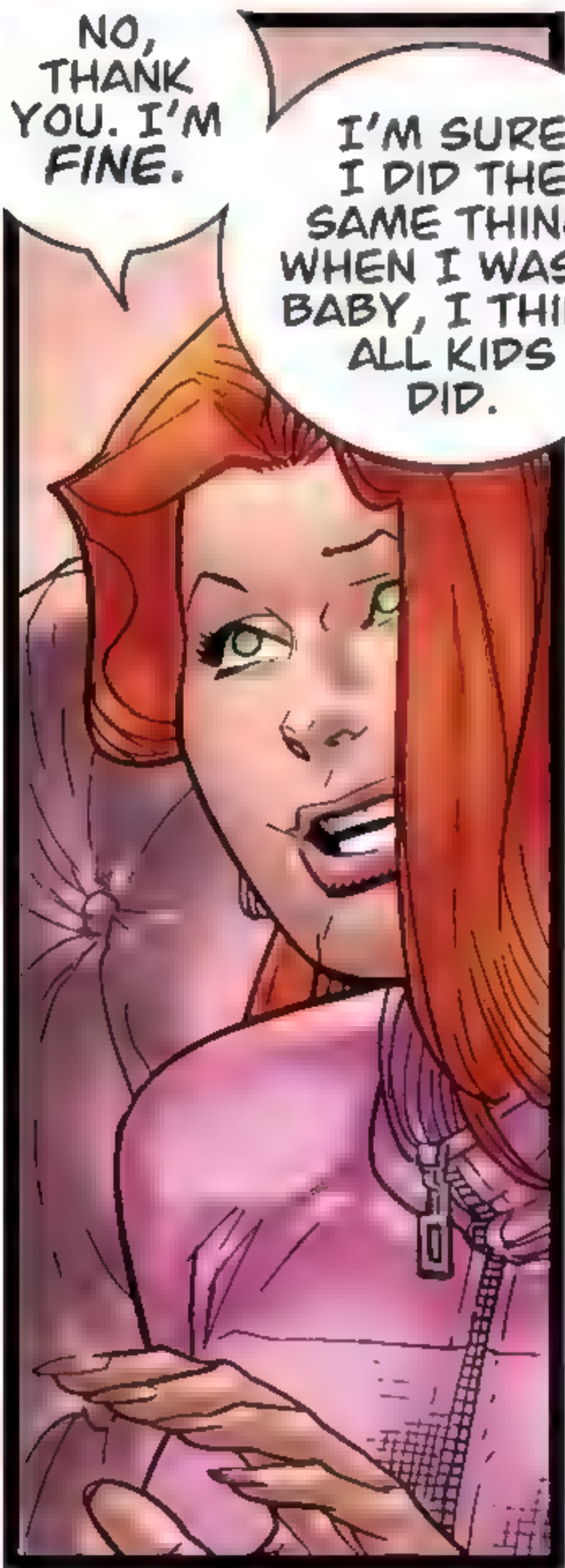
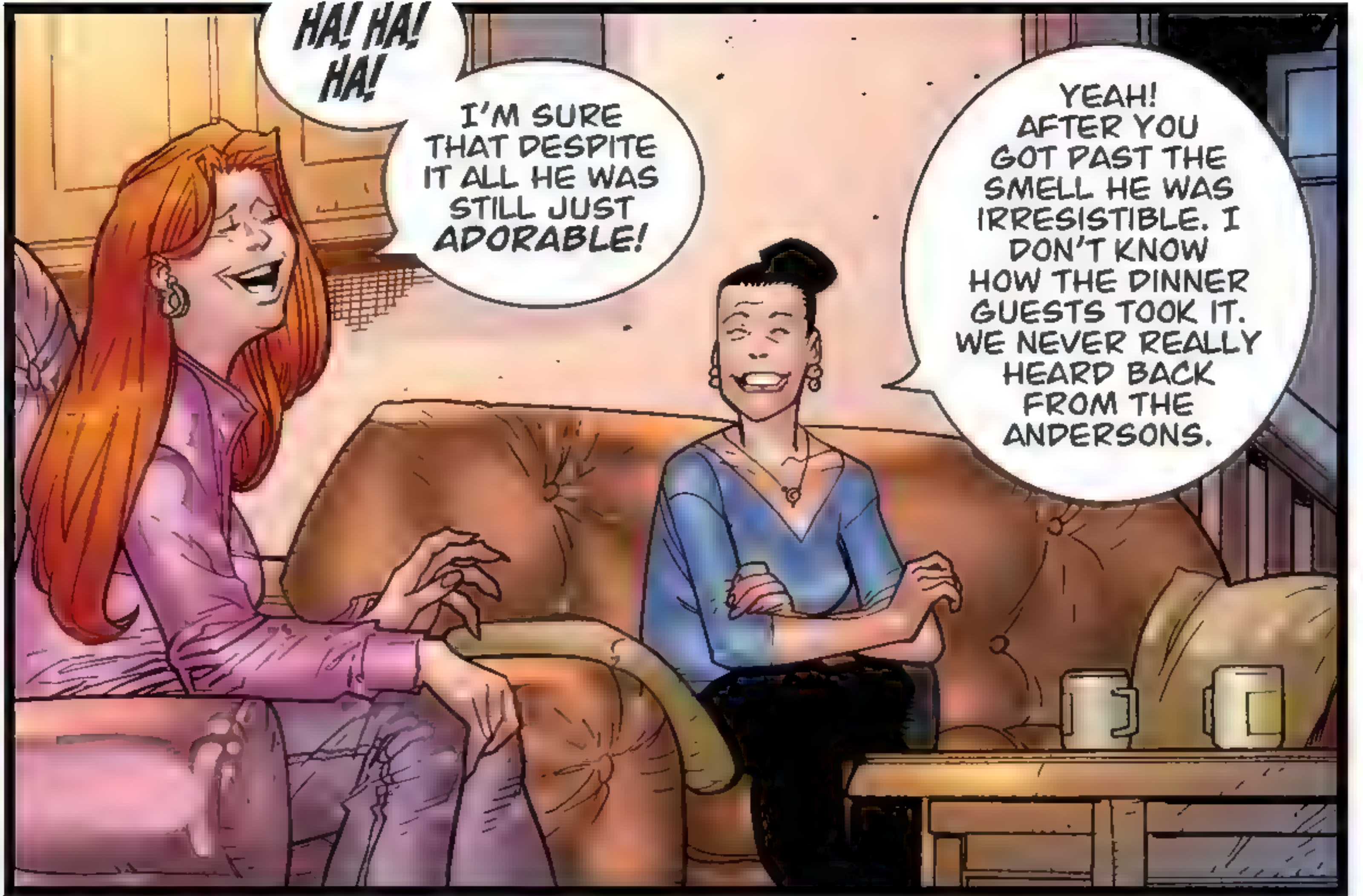
IS THAT THE--?

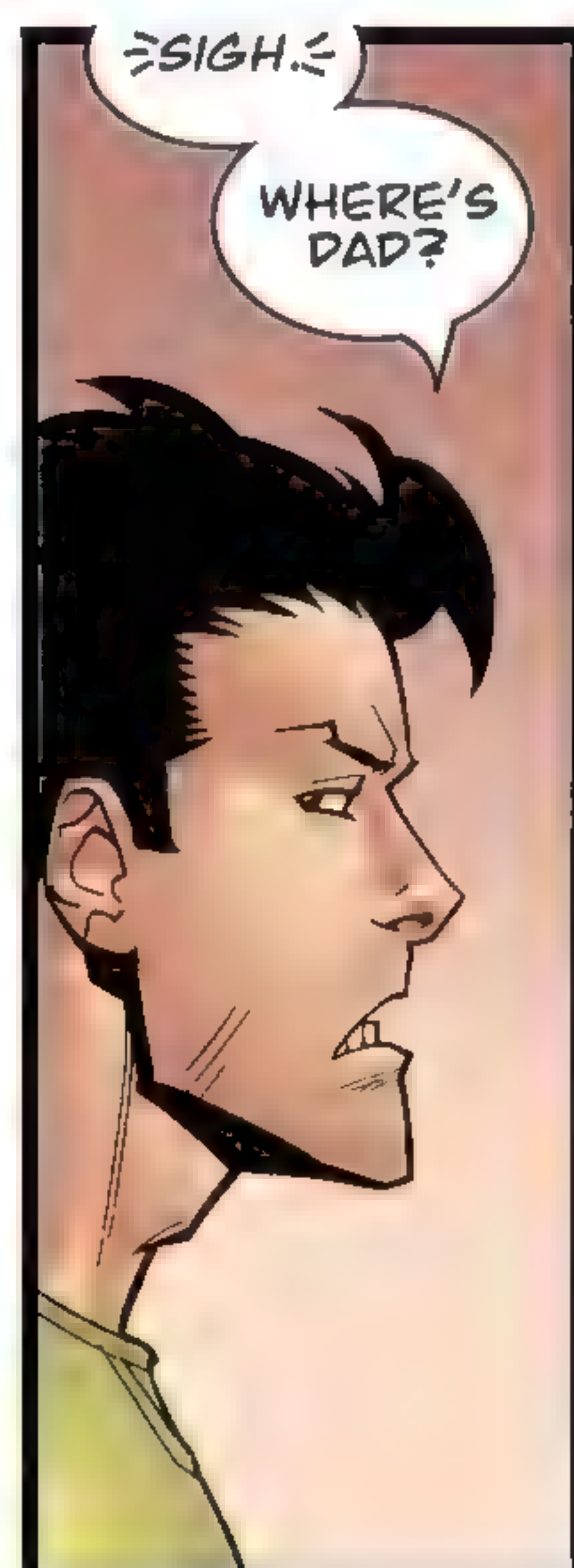
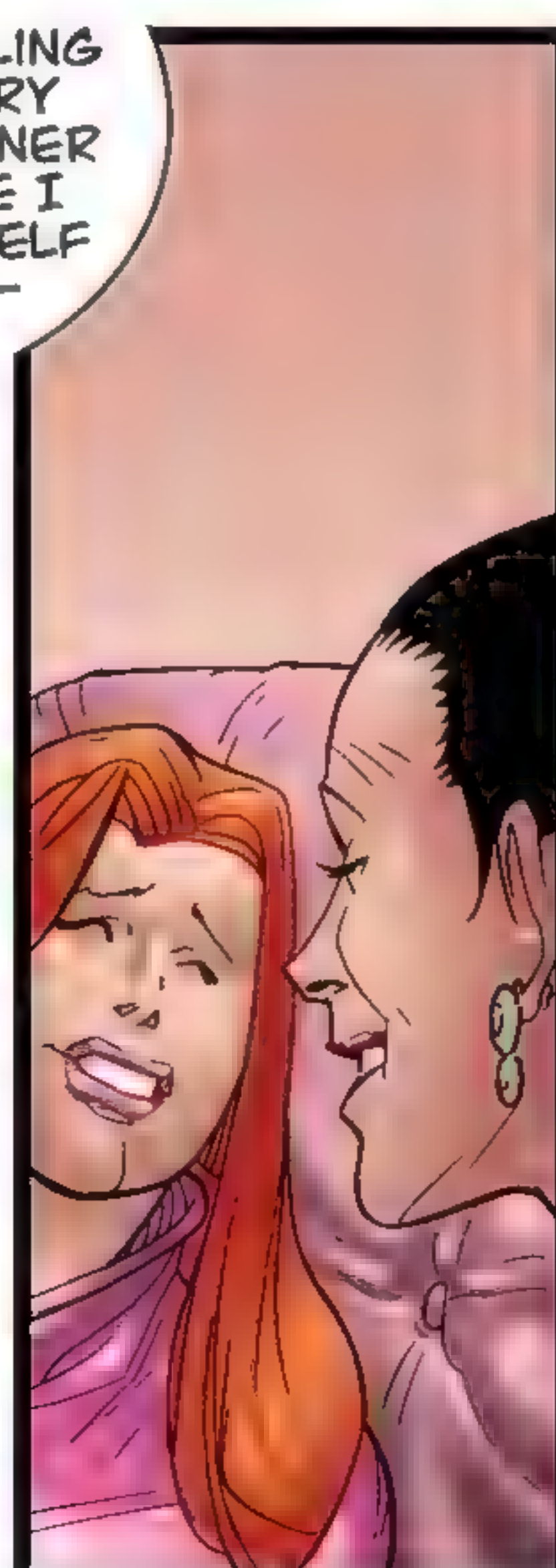
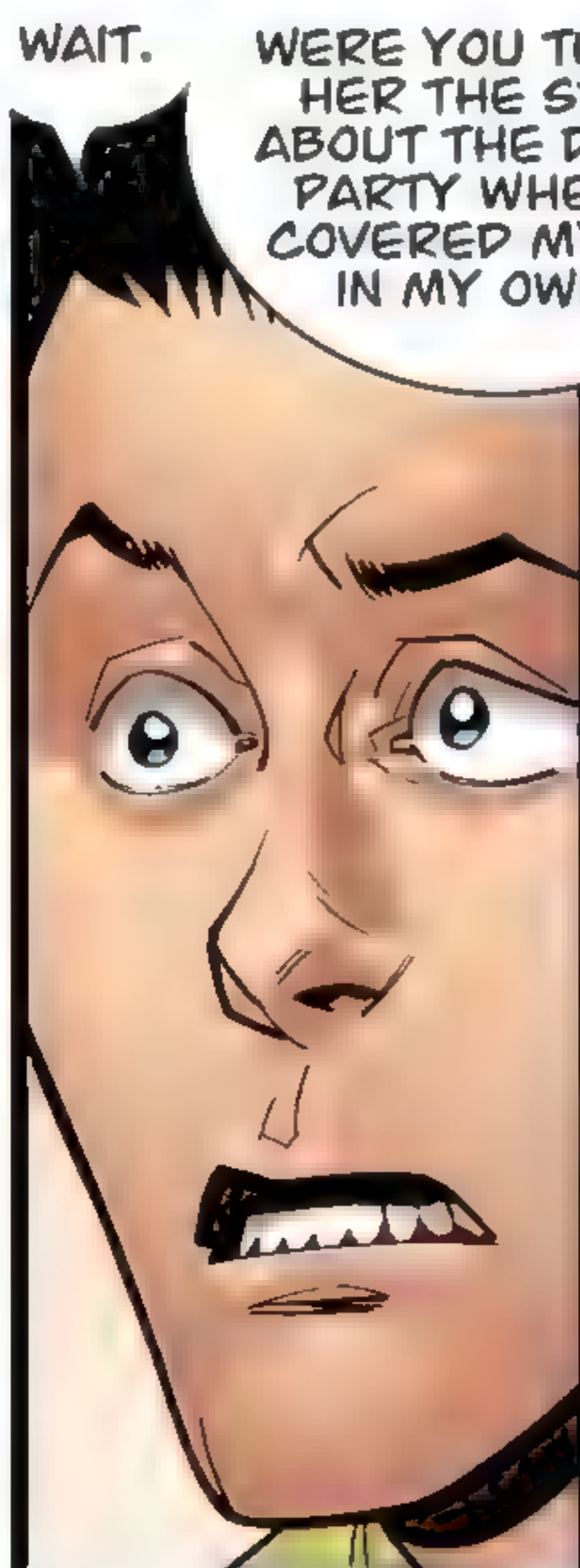
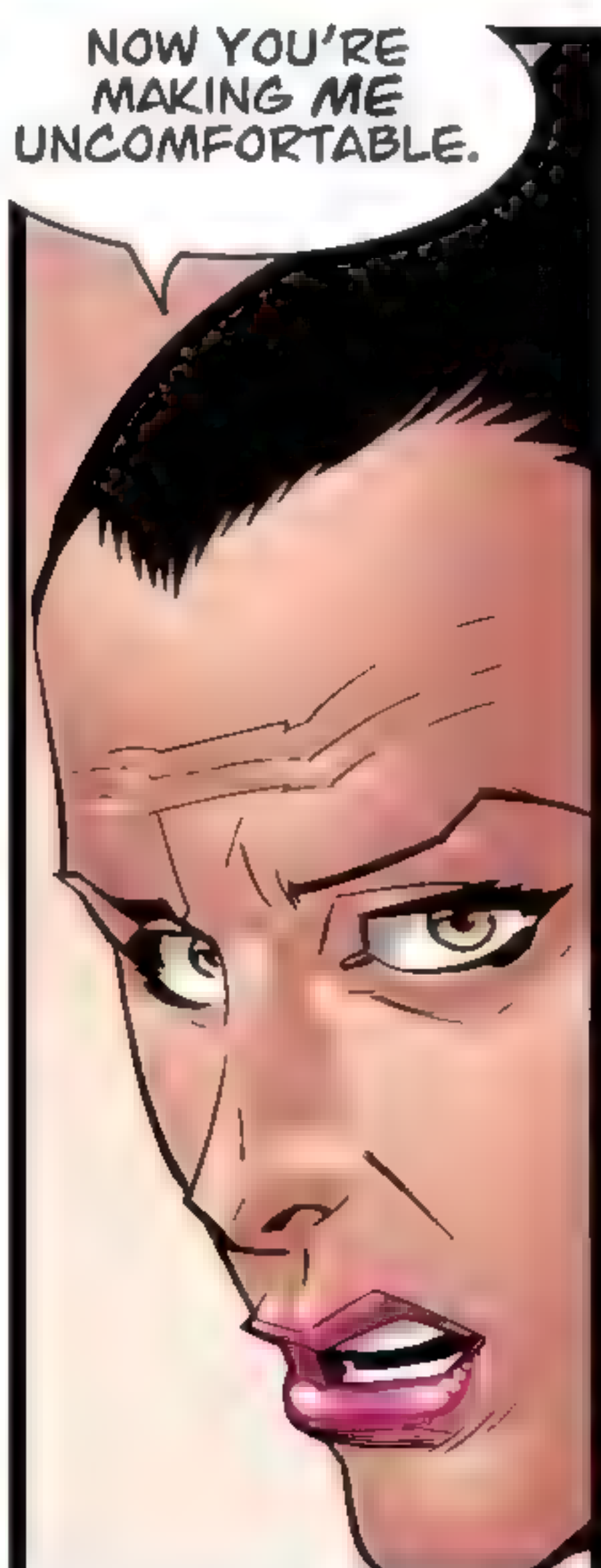
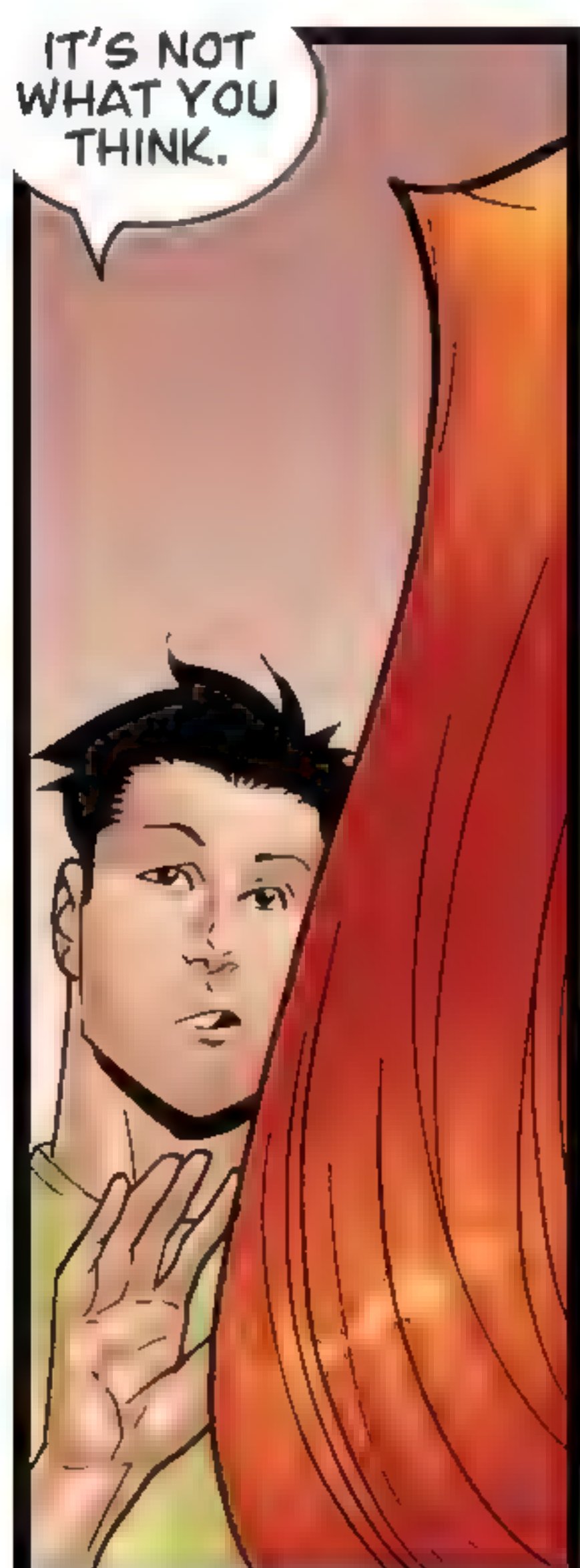
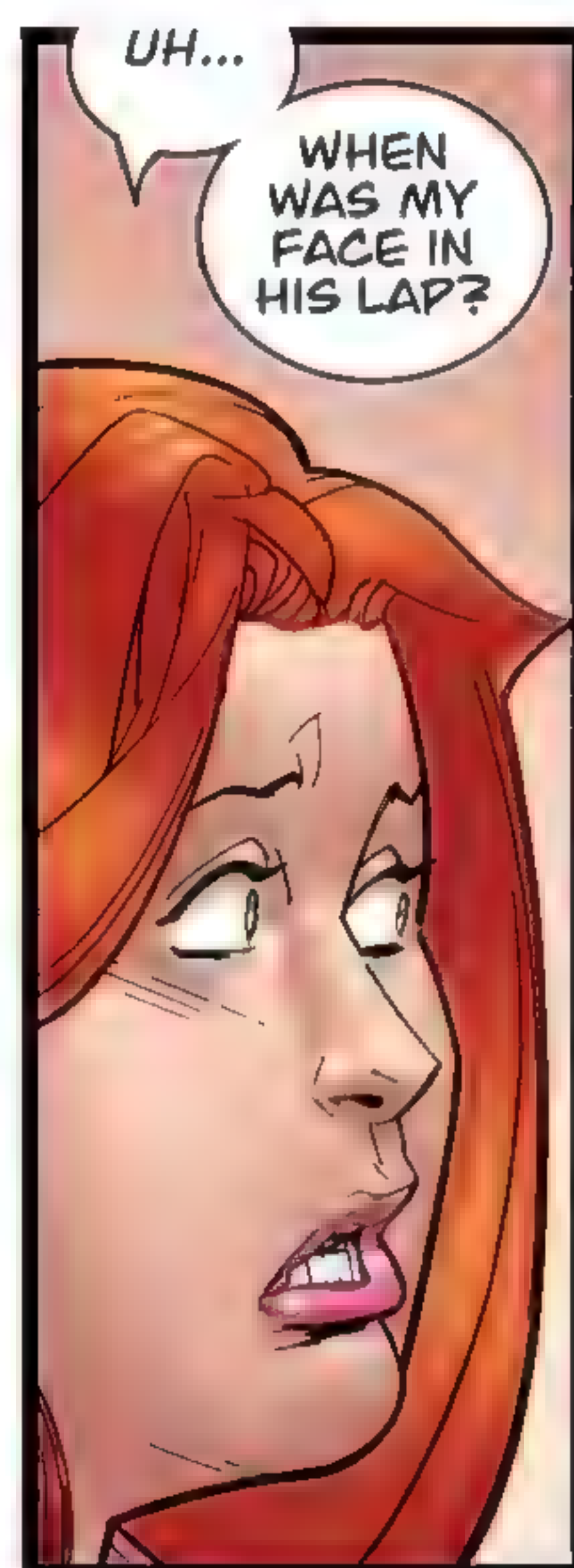
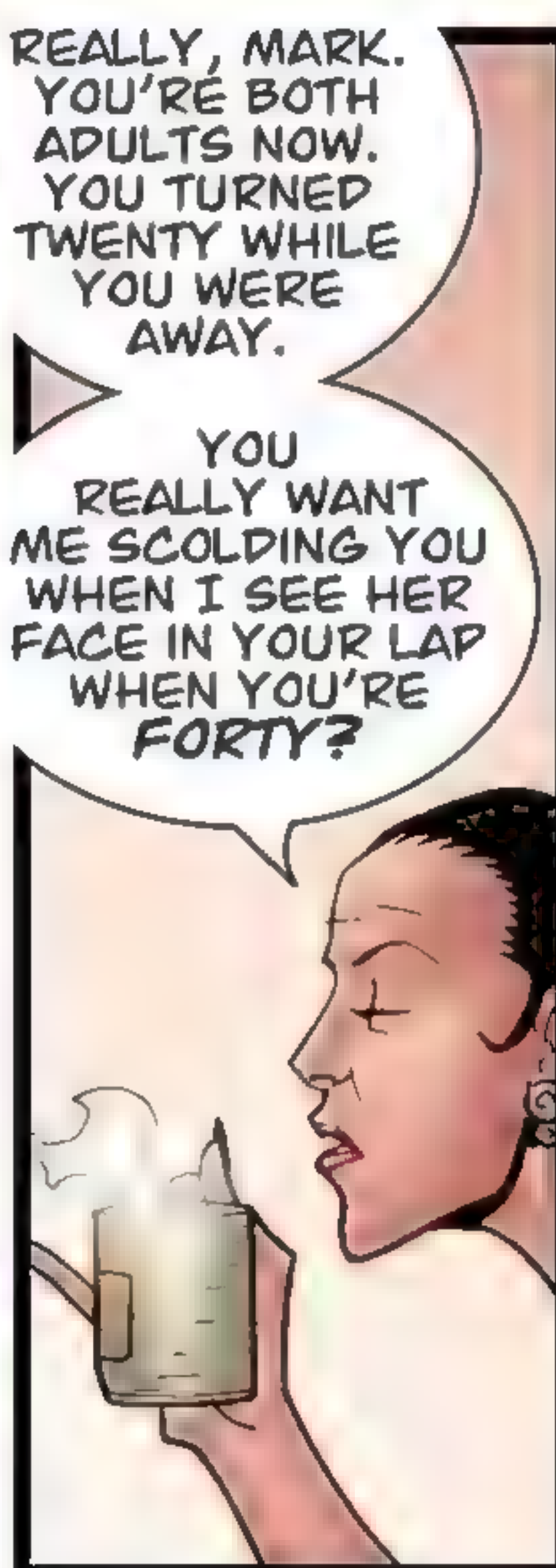
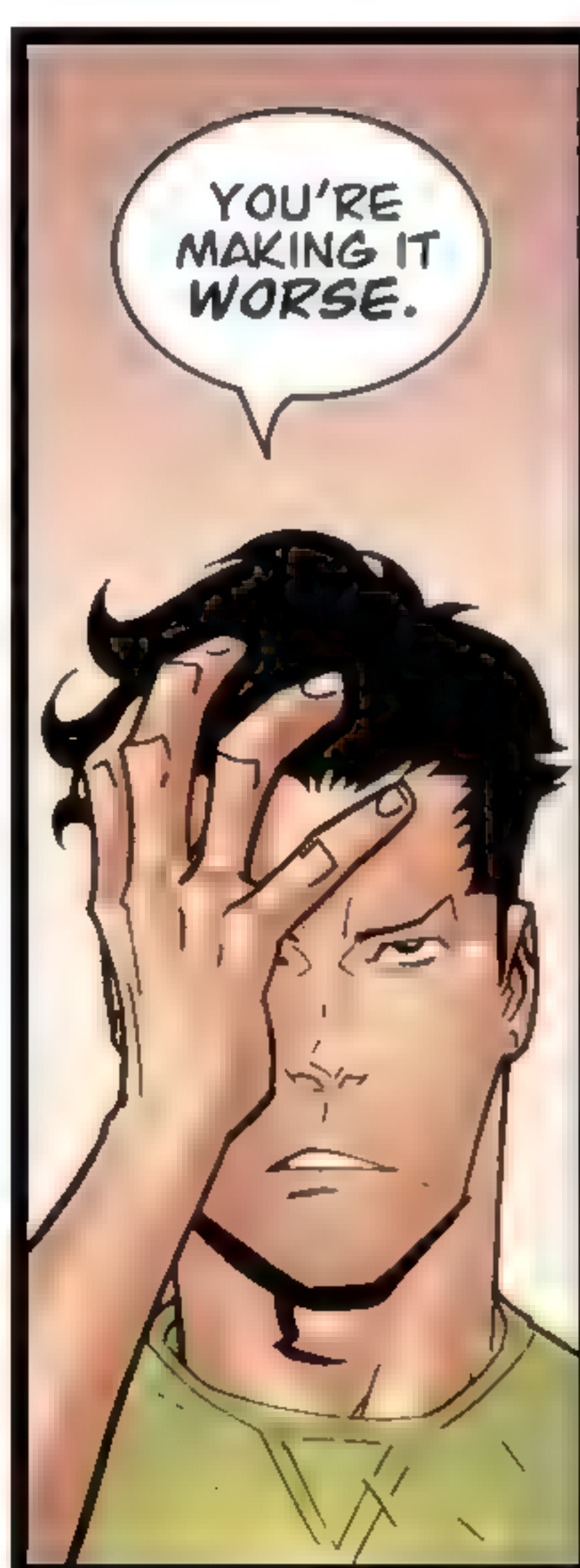
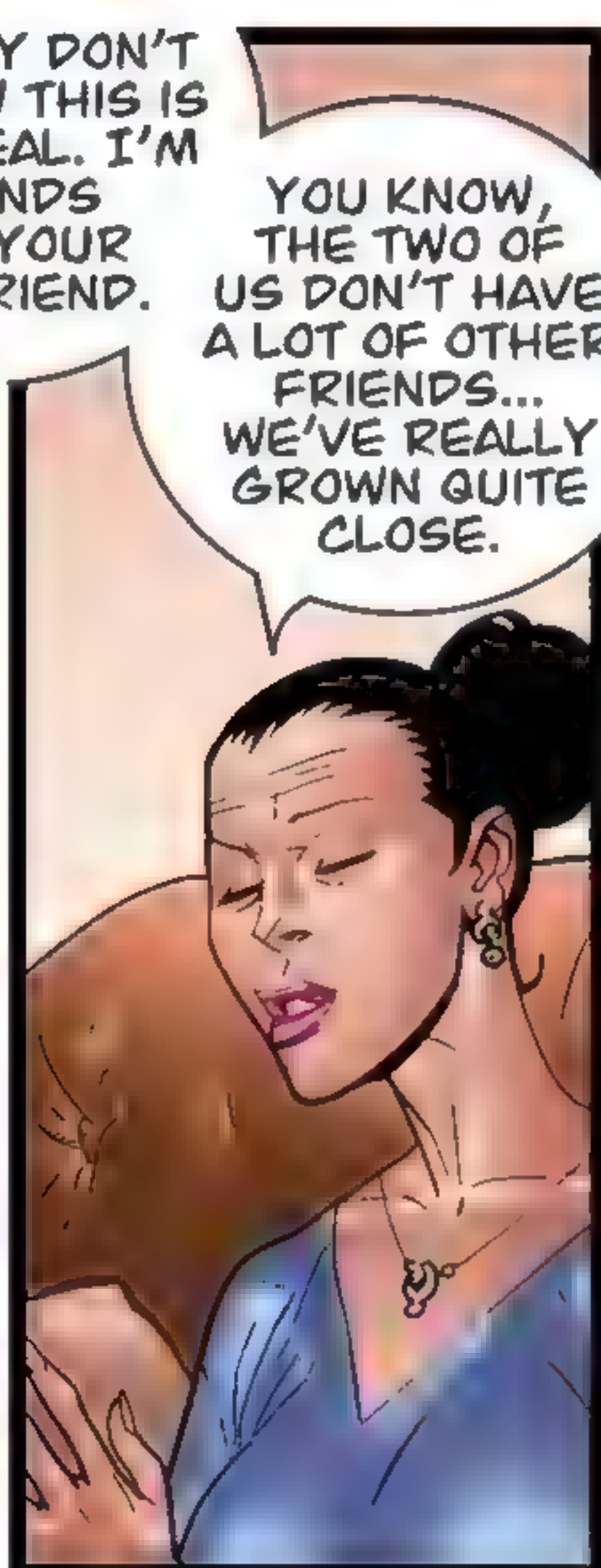
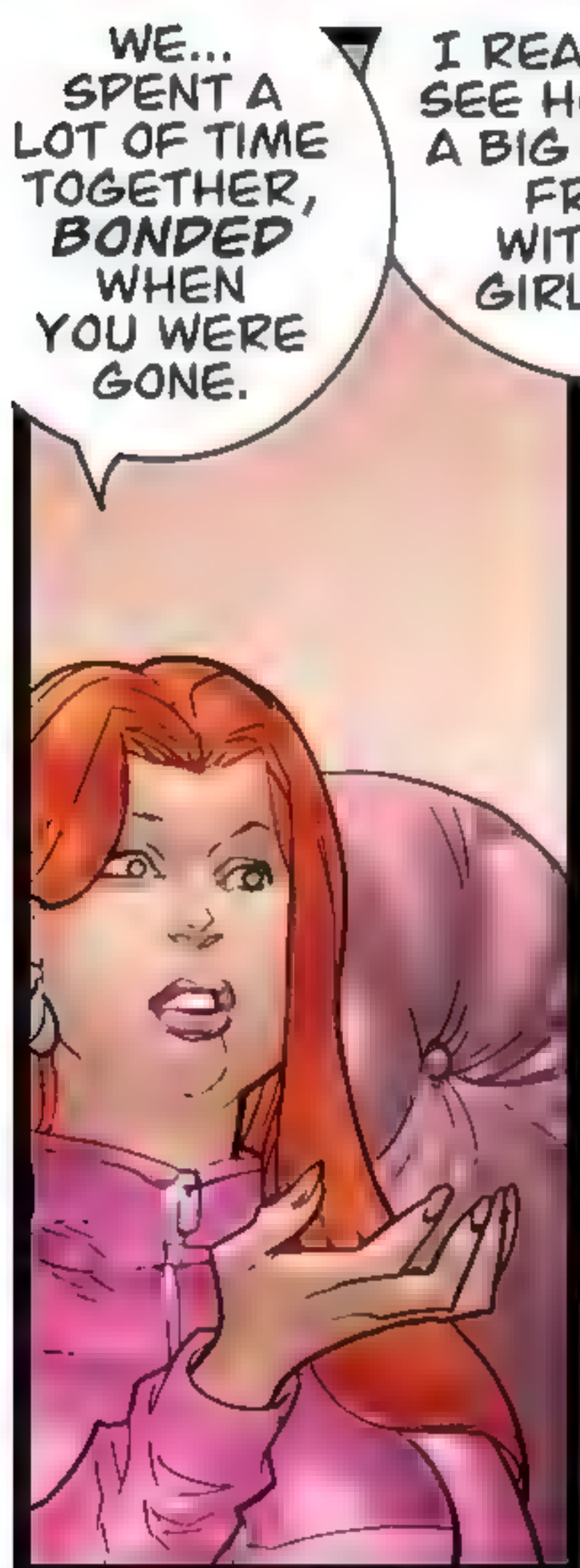
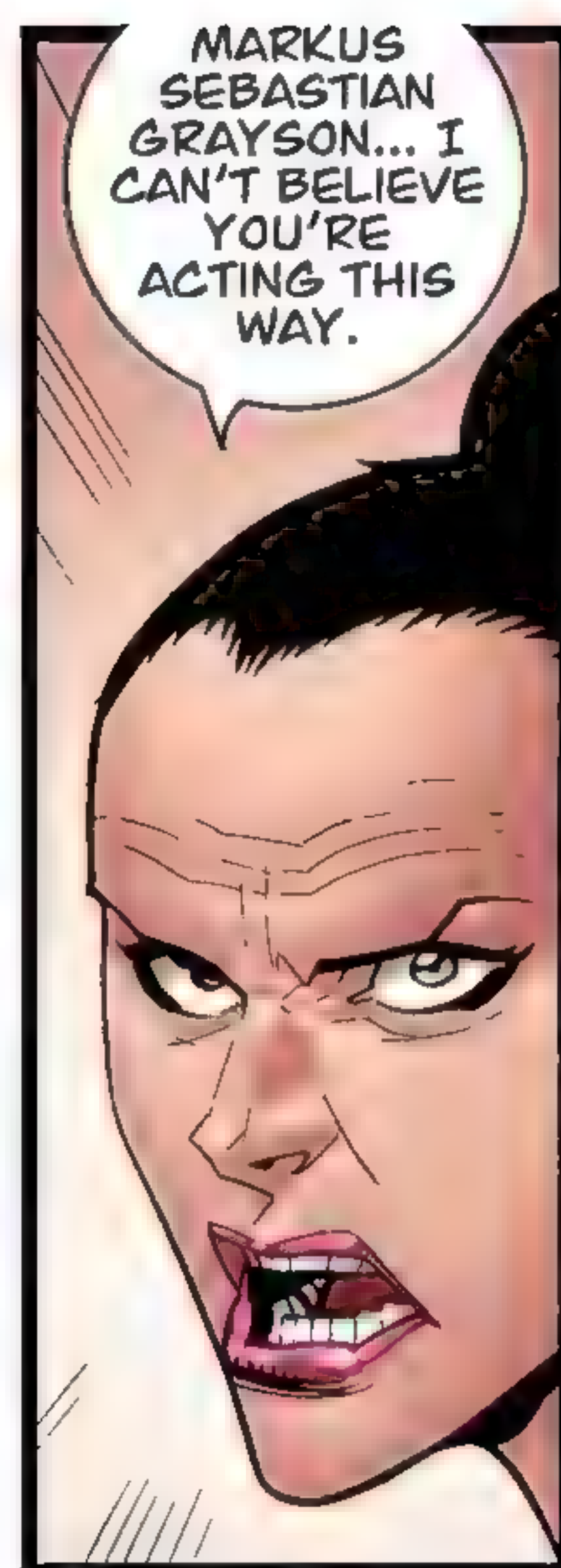
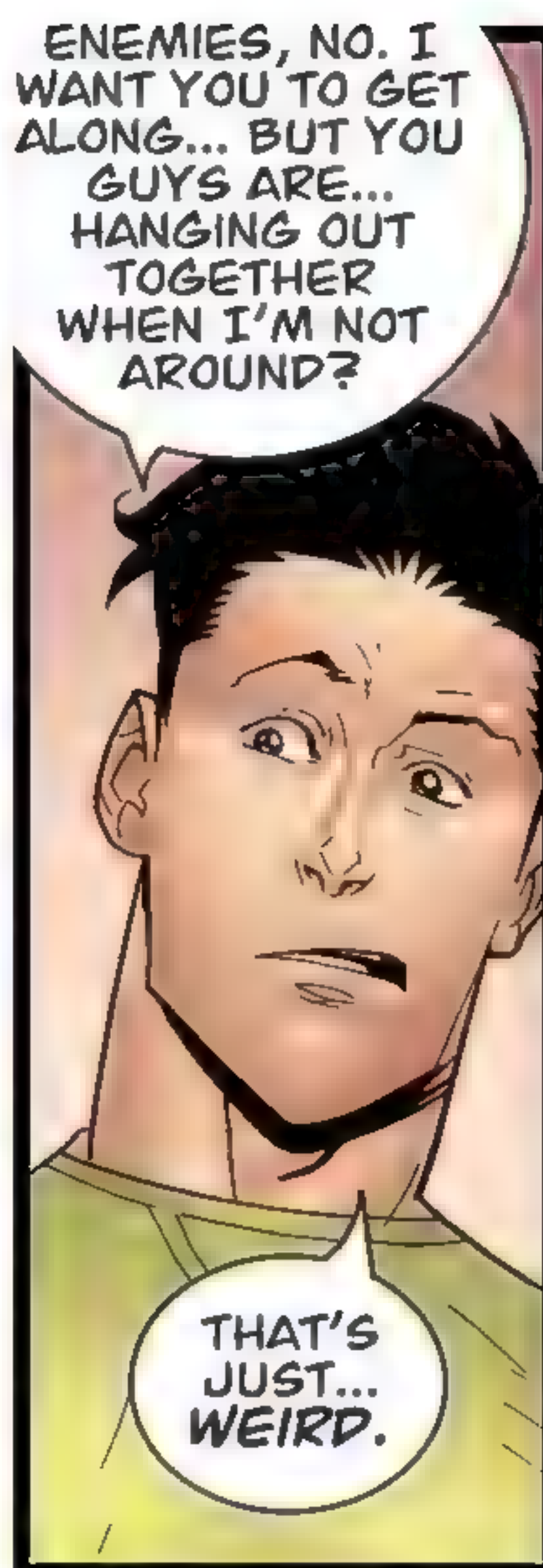
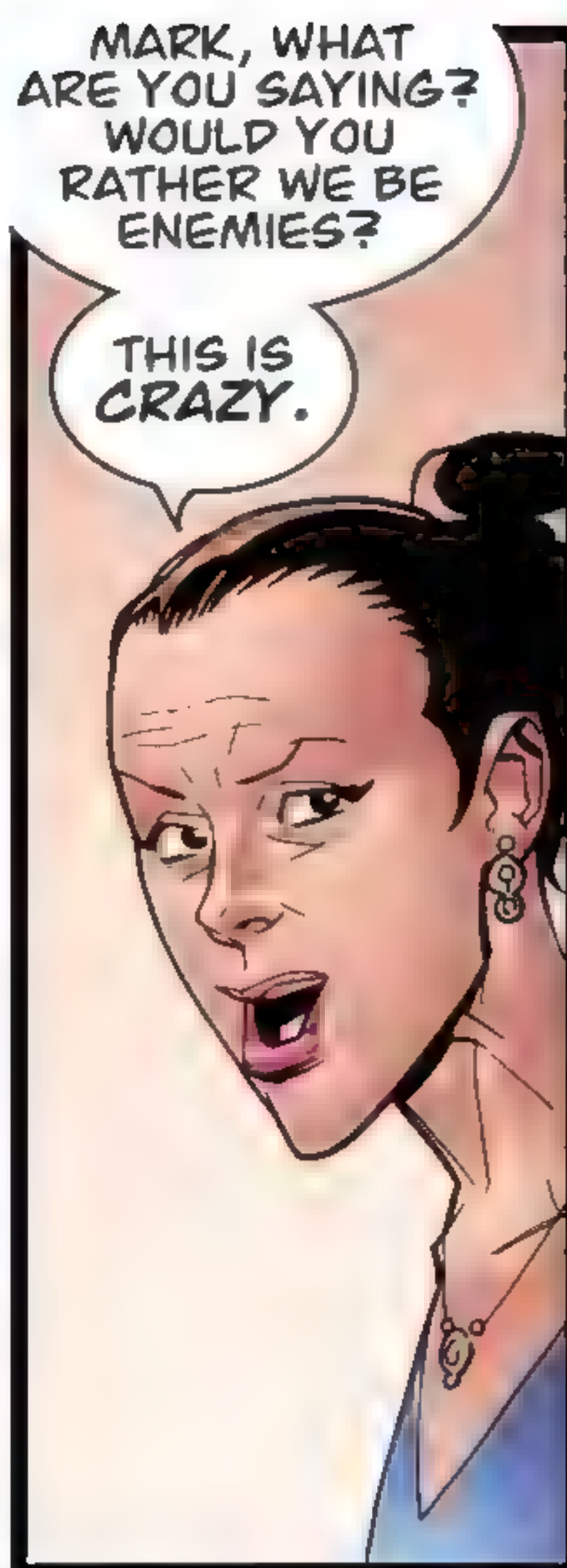
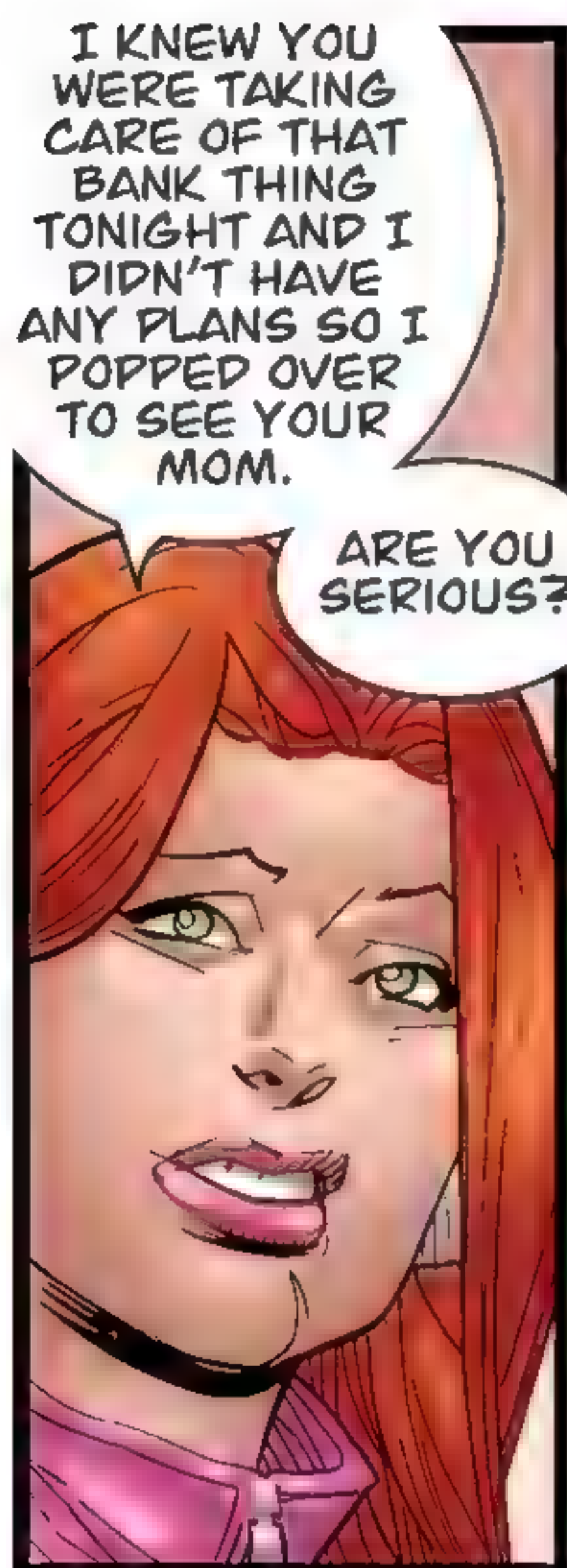
YEAH, IT'S THE "YOU NEED TO GO FIGHT SOMEONE" HOTLINE.

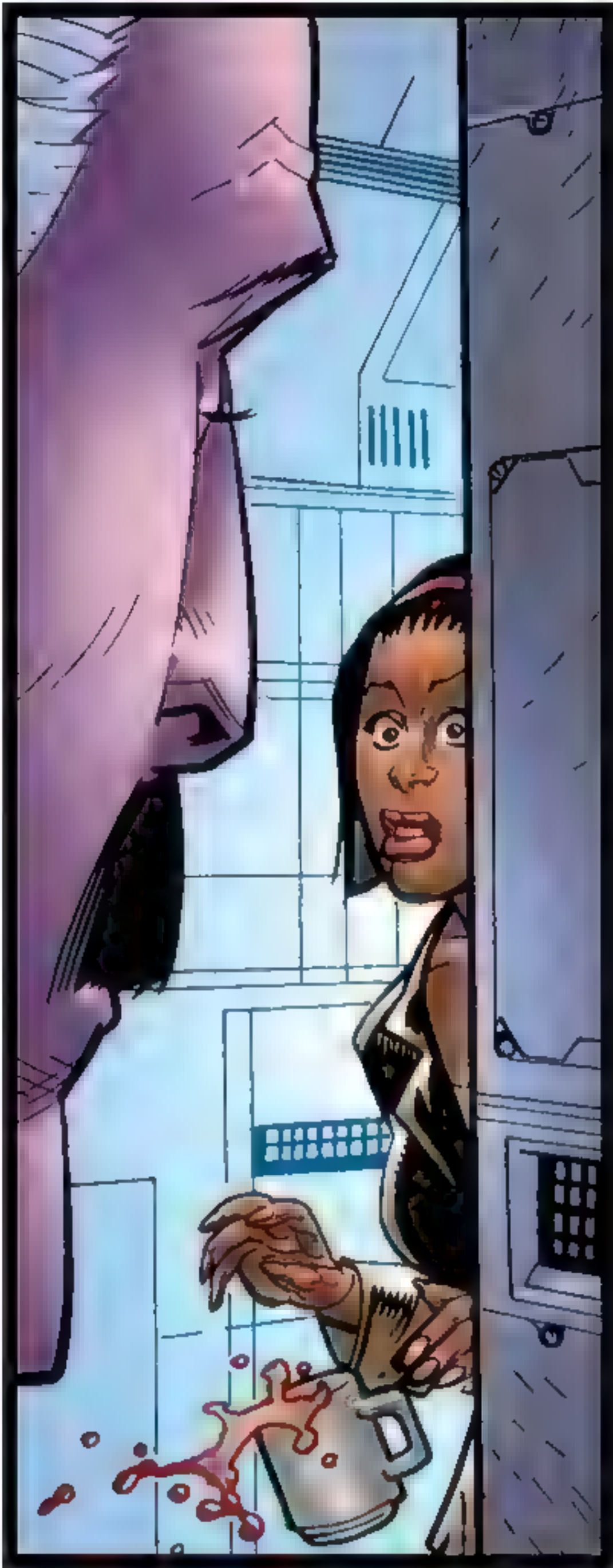
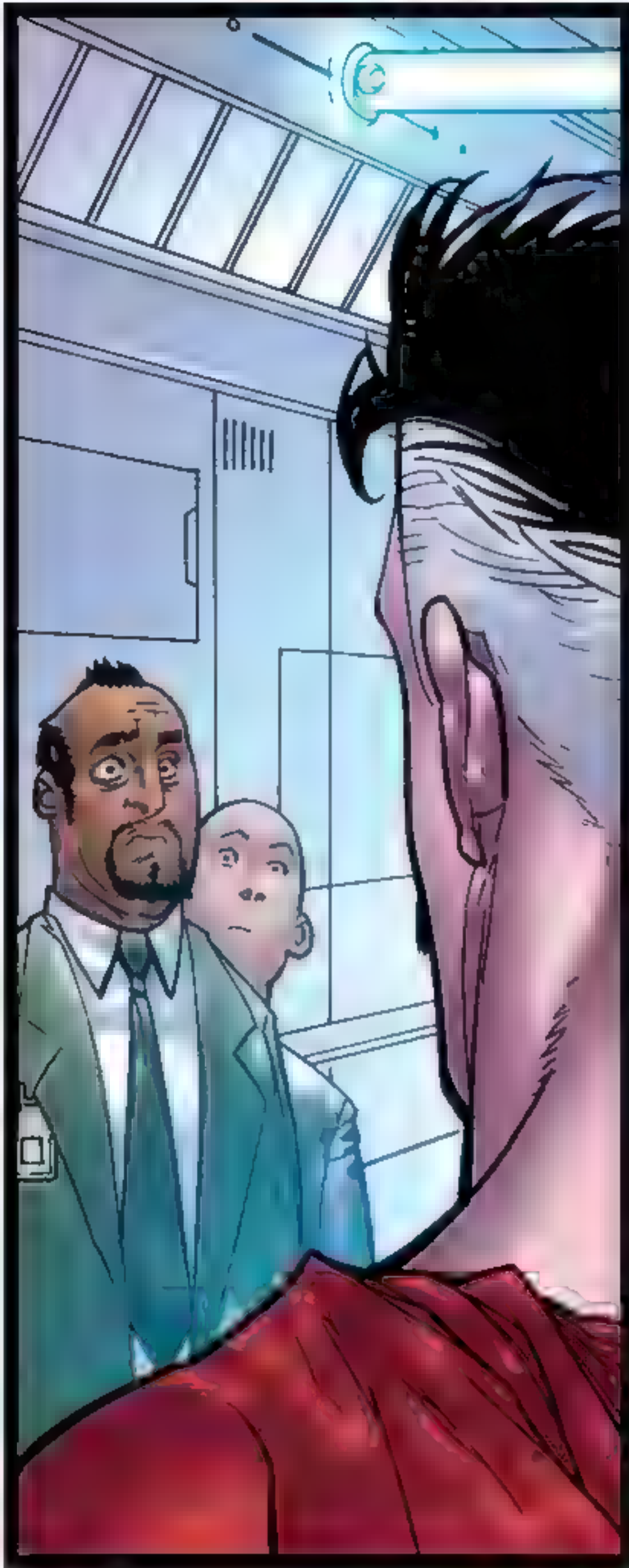
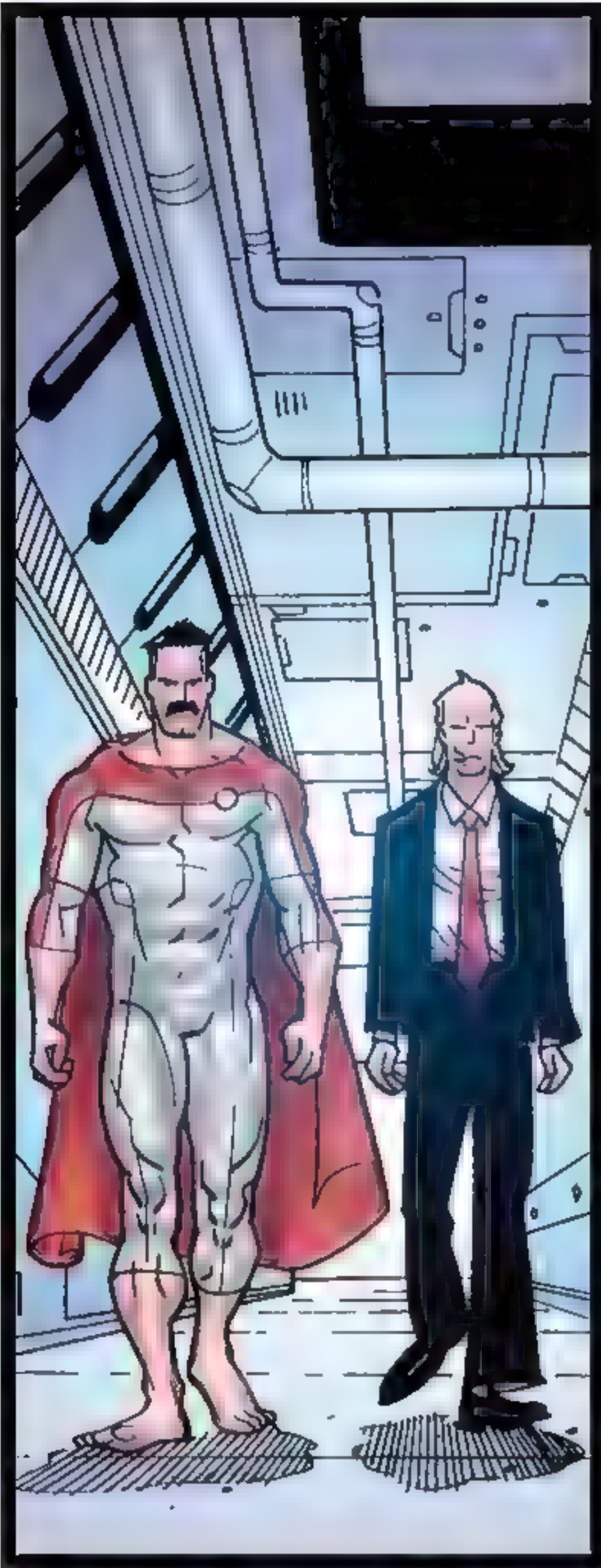
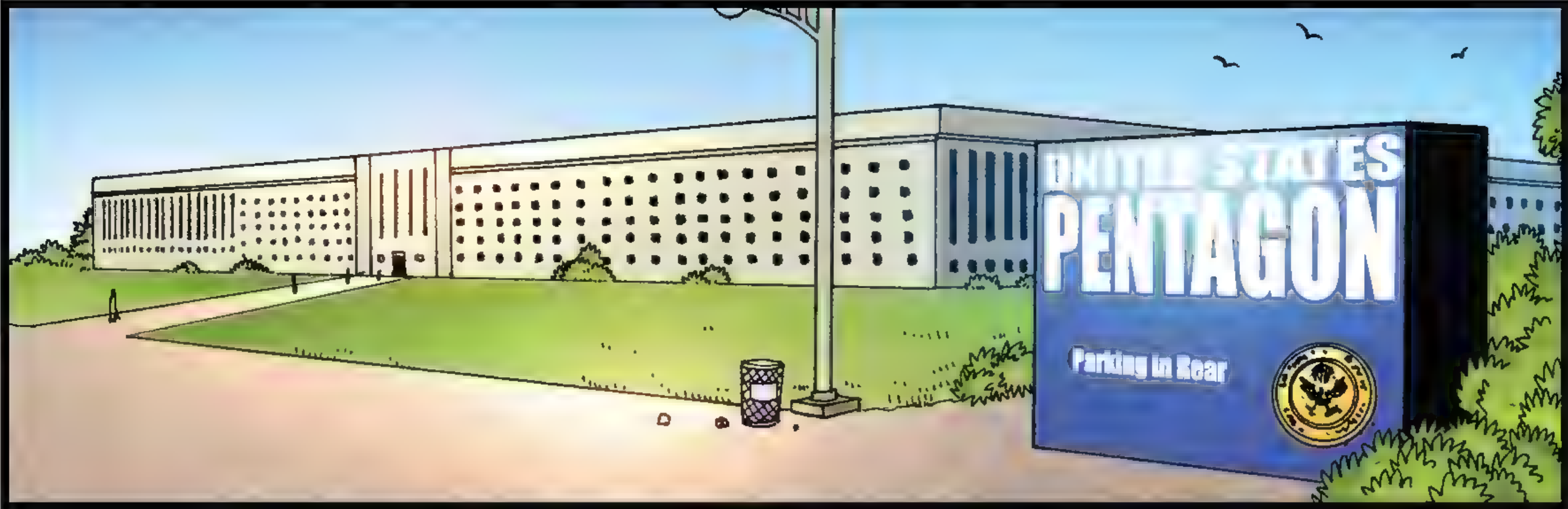
DUTY CALLS.

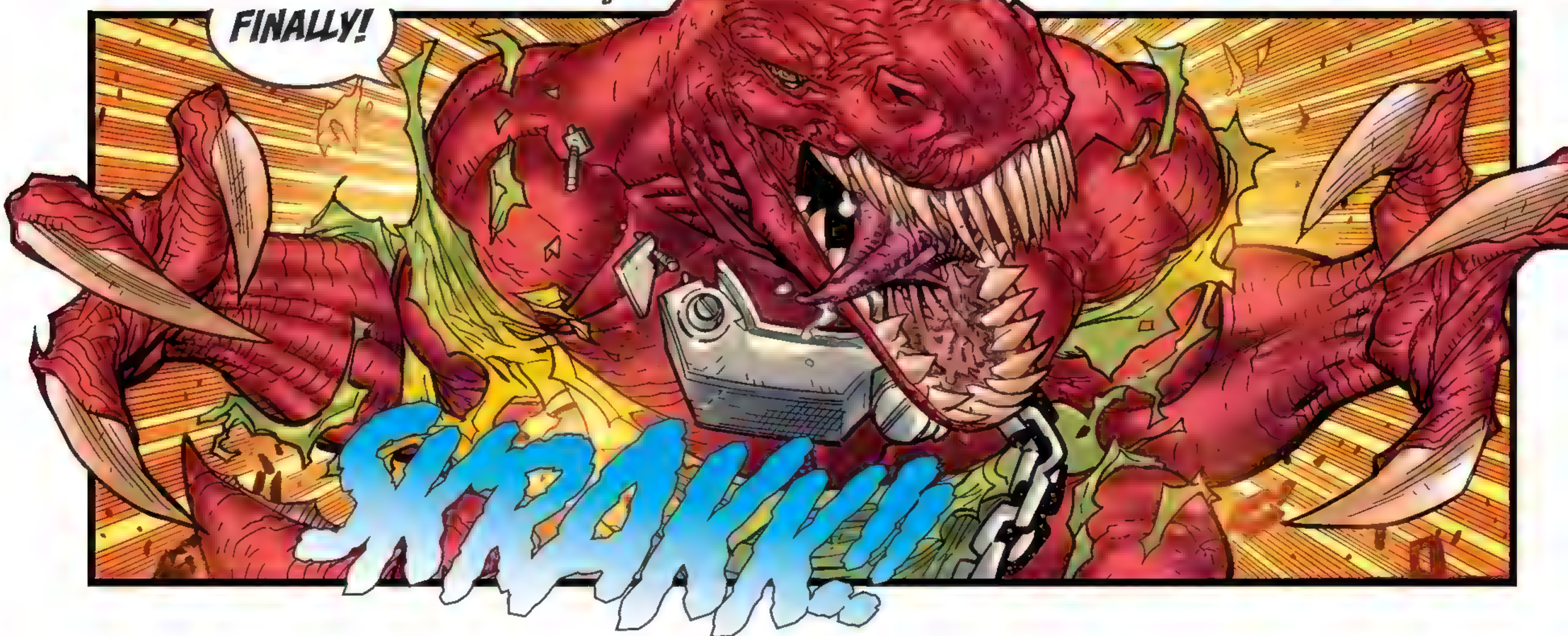
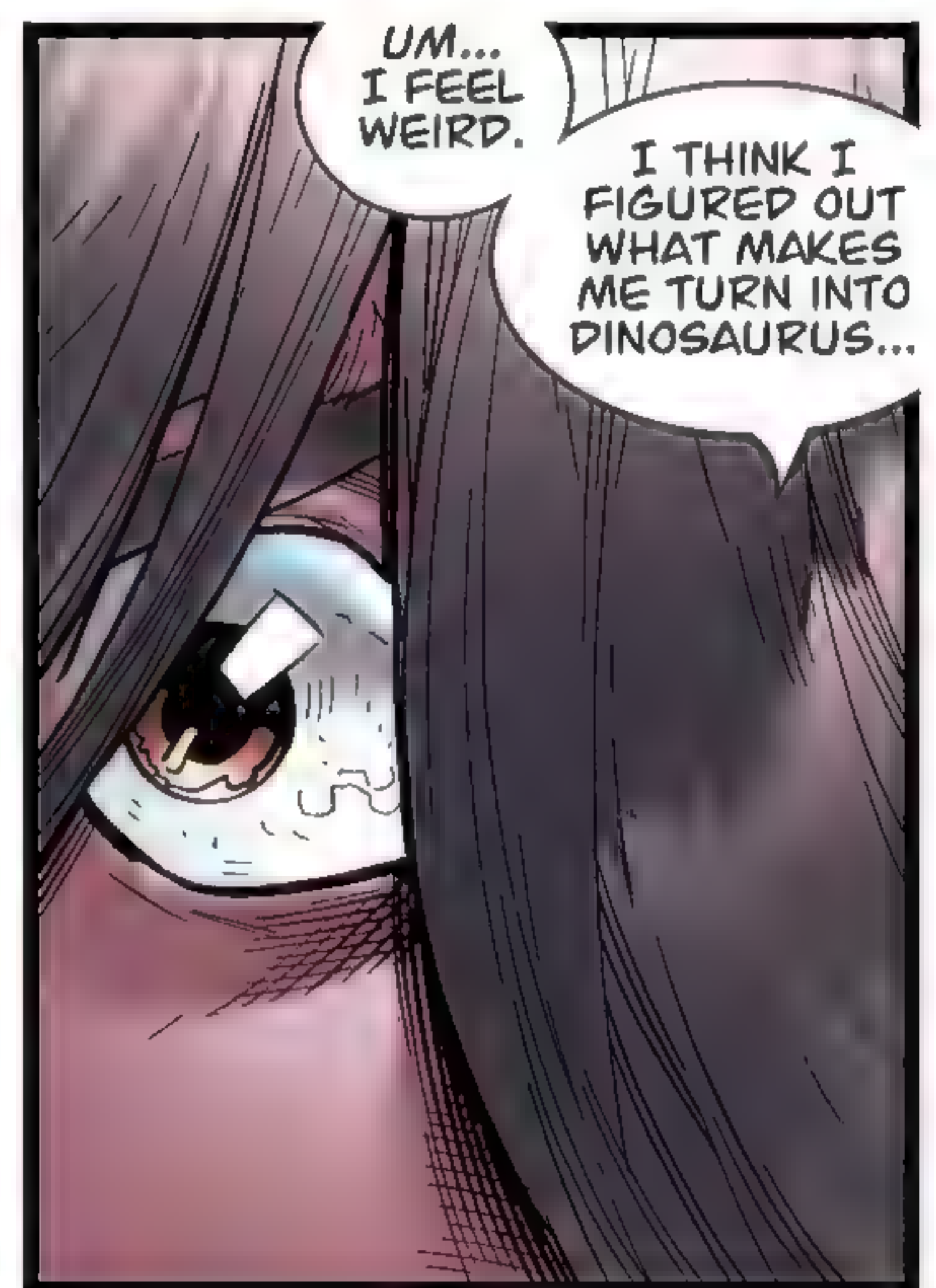
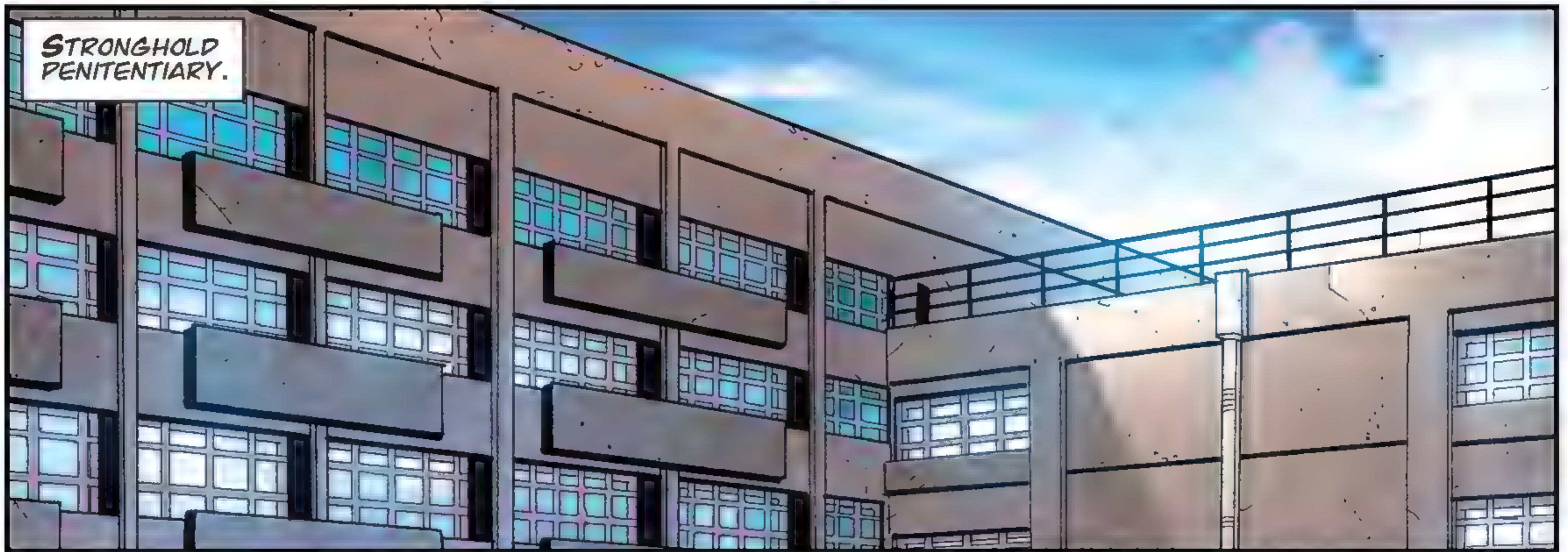














WE DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.

NO, IT'S NOT THAT. I ACTUALLY REALLY WANT TO DO THIS. I HAVE ALMOST NO FRIENDS AND KATE AND I USED TO BE REALLY CLOSE.

TO BE HONEST, I WAS SHOCKED WHEN SHE INVITED US.

I JUST HATE BEING IN THIS COSTUME. I LOOK HORRIBLE, I FEEL HORRIBLE. I SHOULD HAVE JUST FLOWN OVER IN PLAIN CLOTHES.



YOU LOOK GREAT. WILL YOU STOP FISHING FOR COMPLIMENTS?

SHUT UP.

THAT'S THEIR HOUSE OVER THERE.

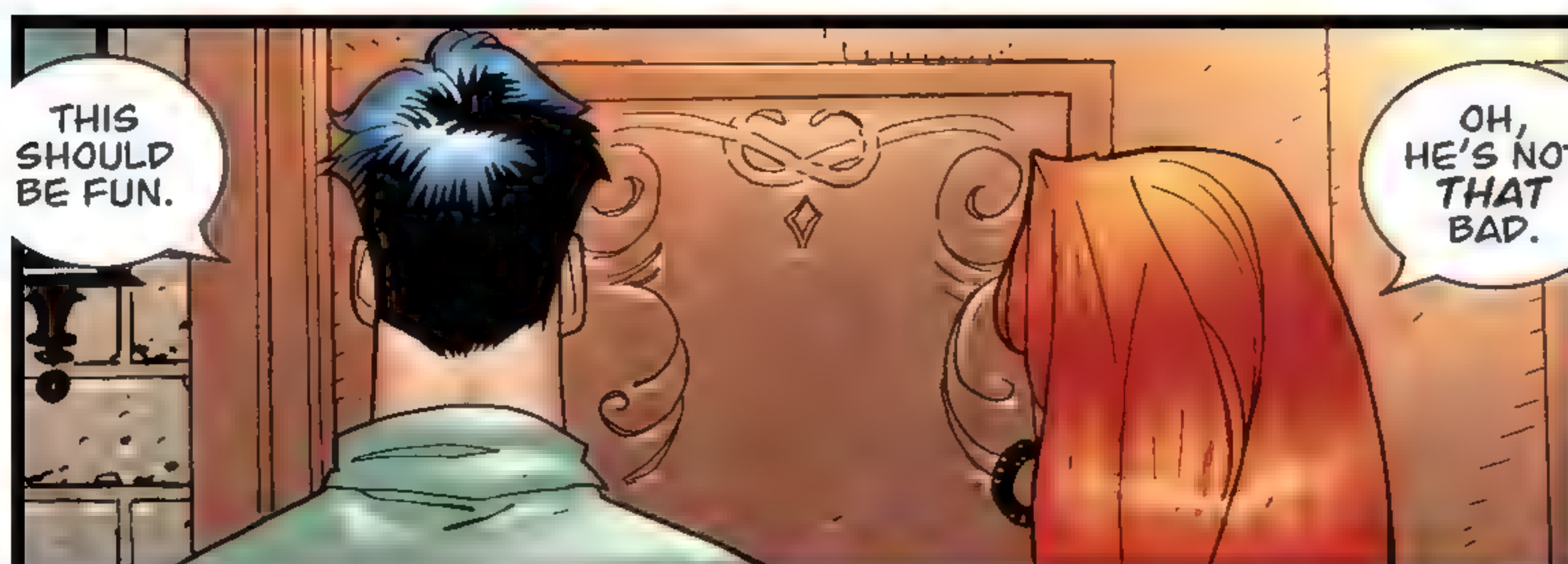


READY TO GO?

SEE ANY CIVILIANS AROUND?



ALL CLEAR.



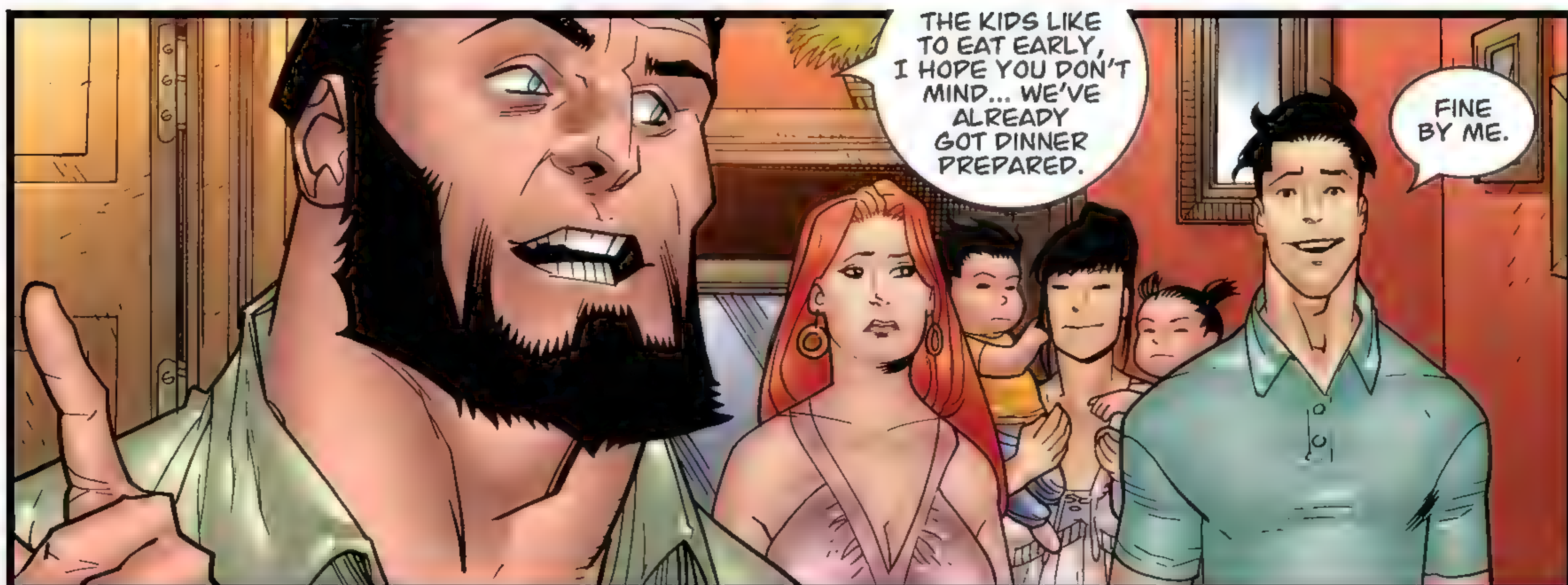
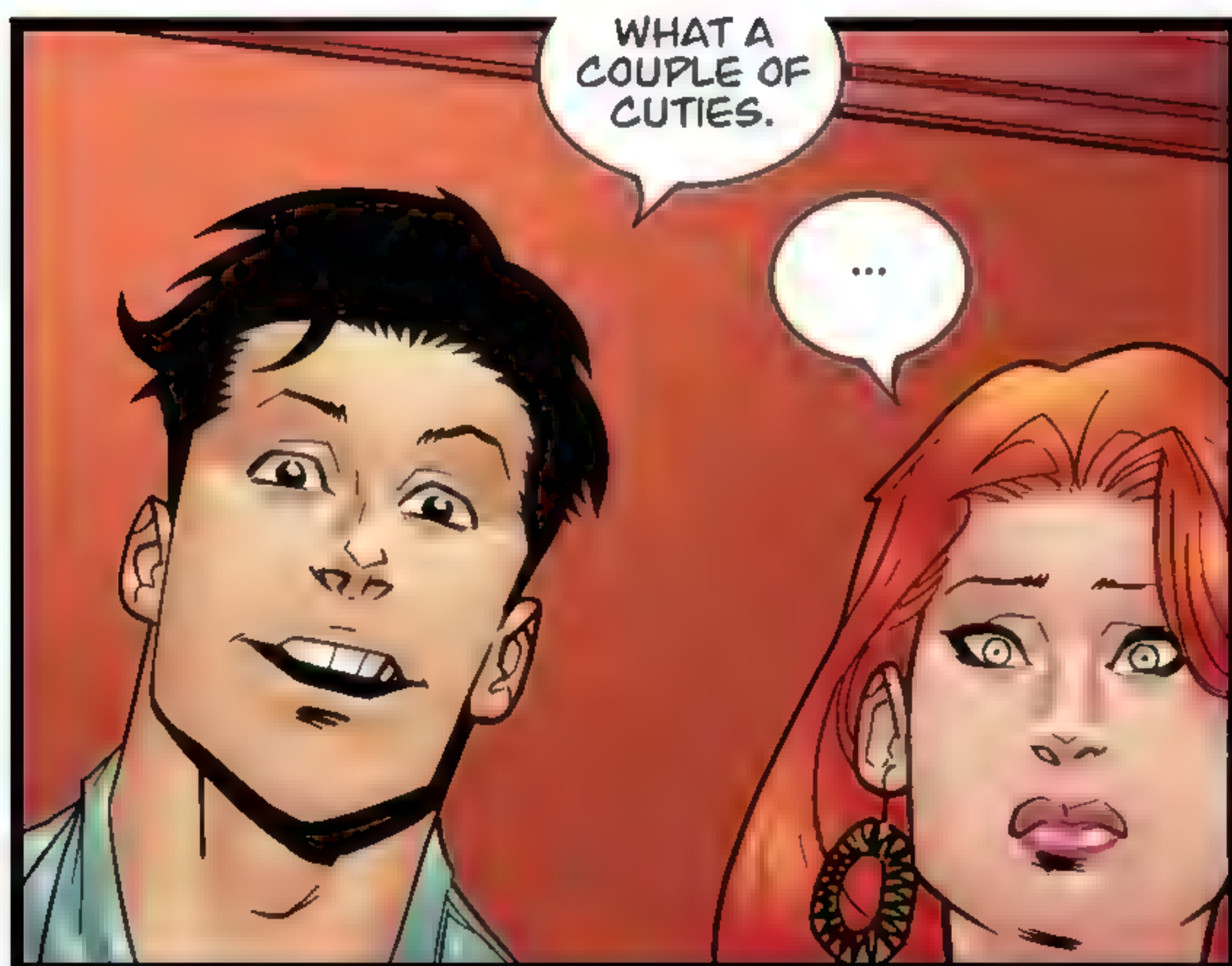
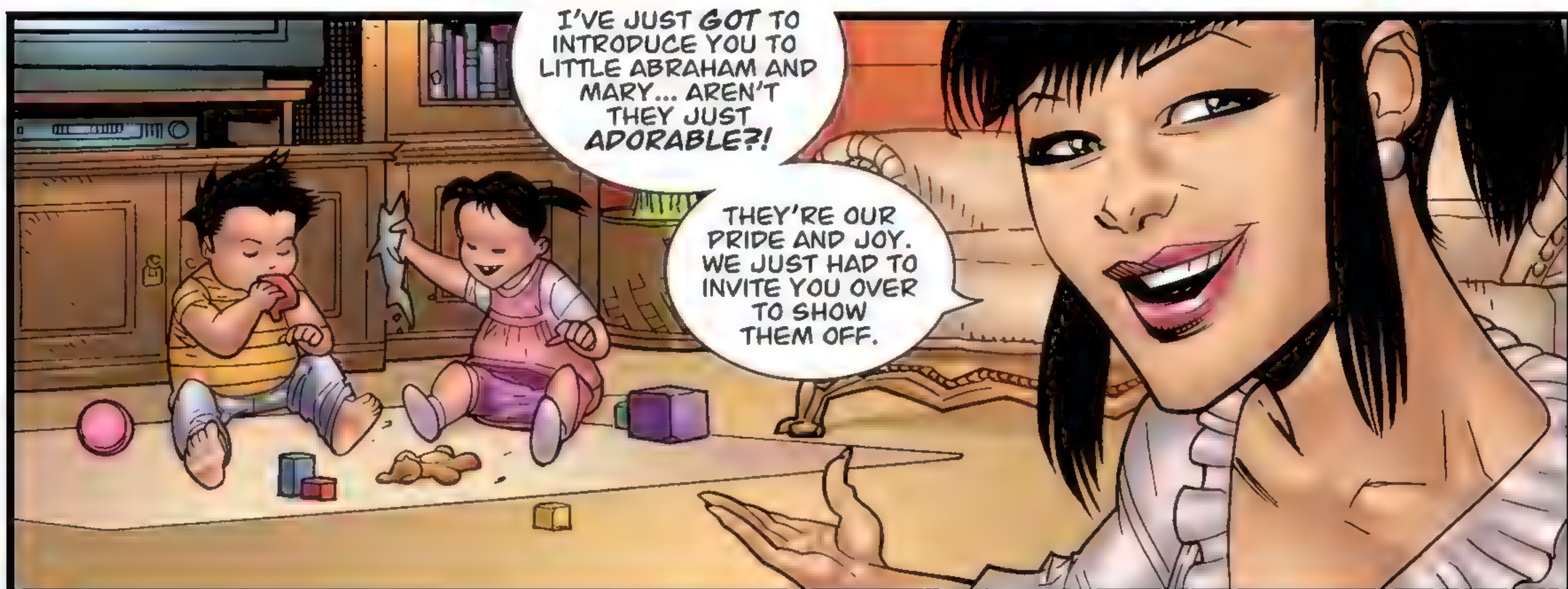
THIS SHOULD BE FUN.

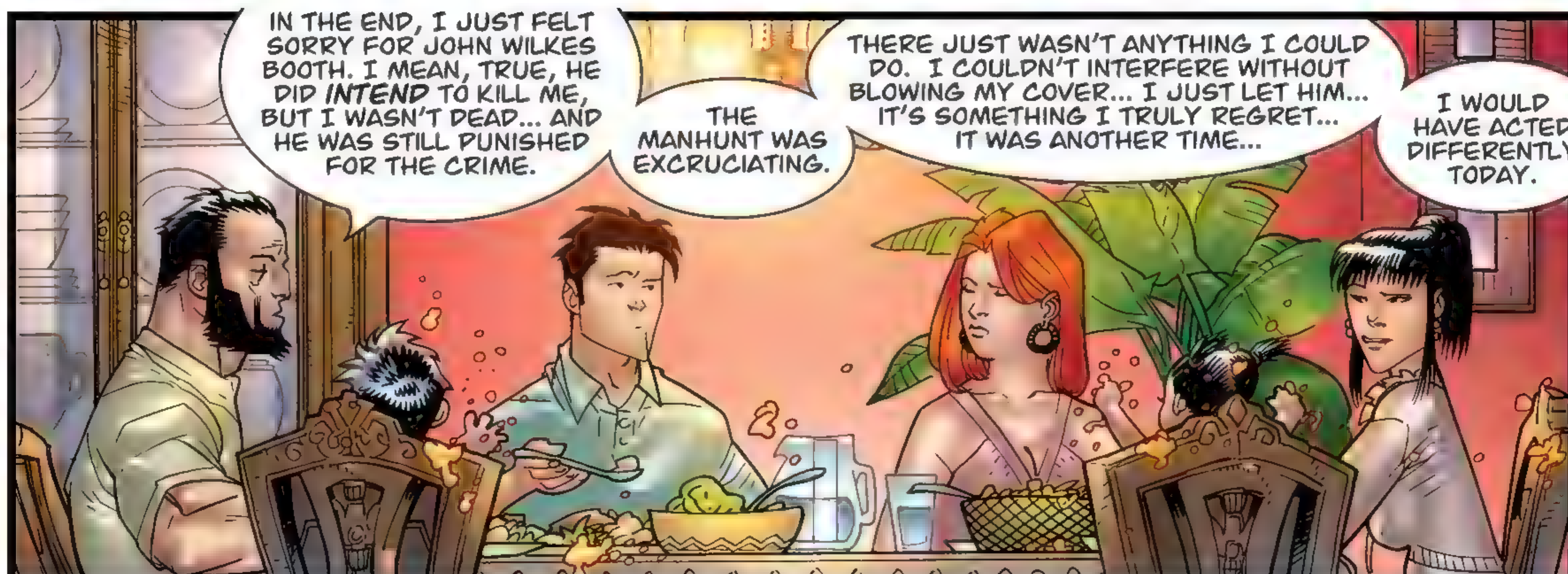
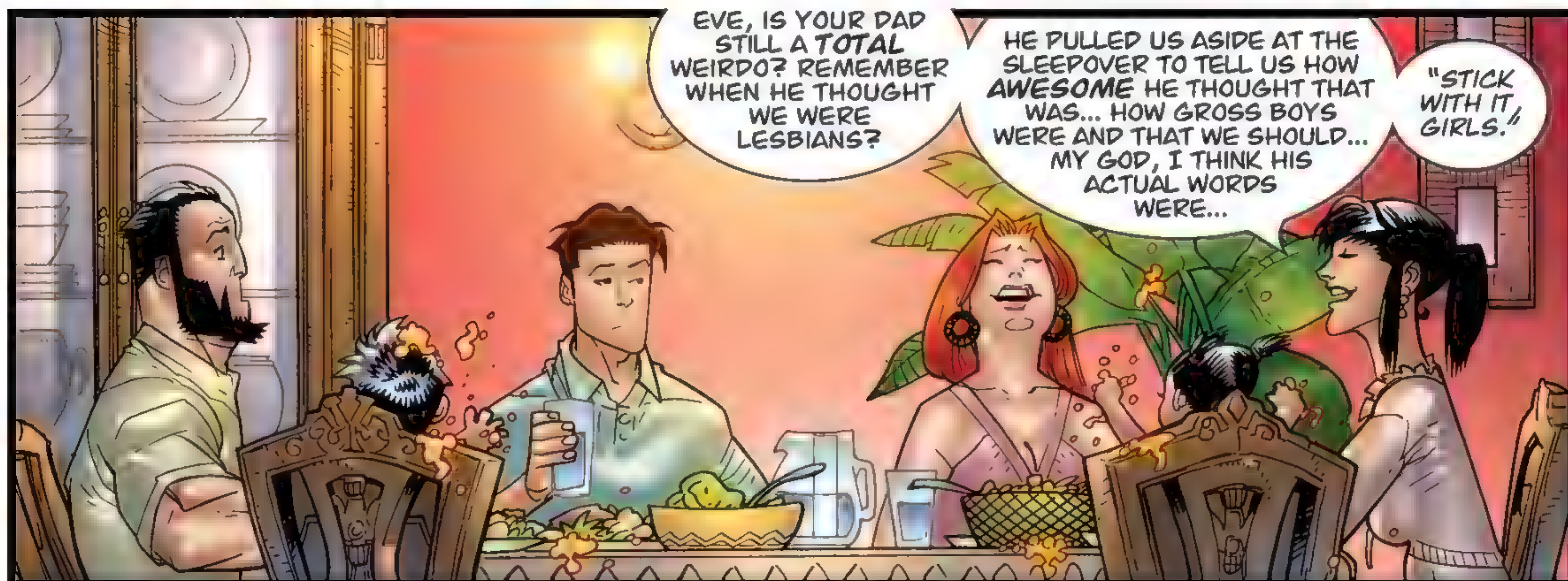
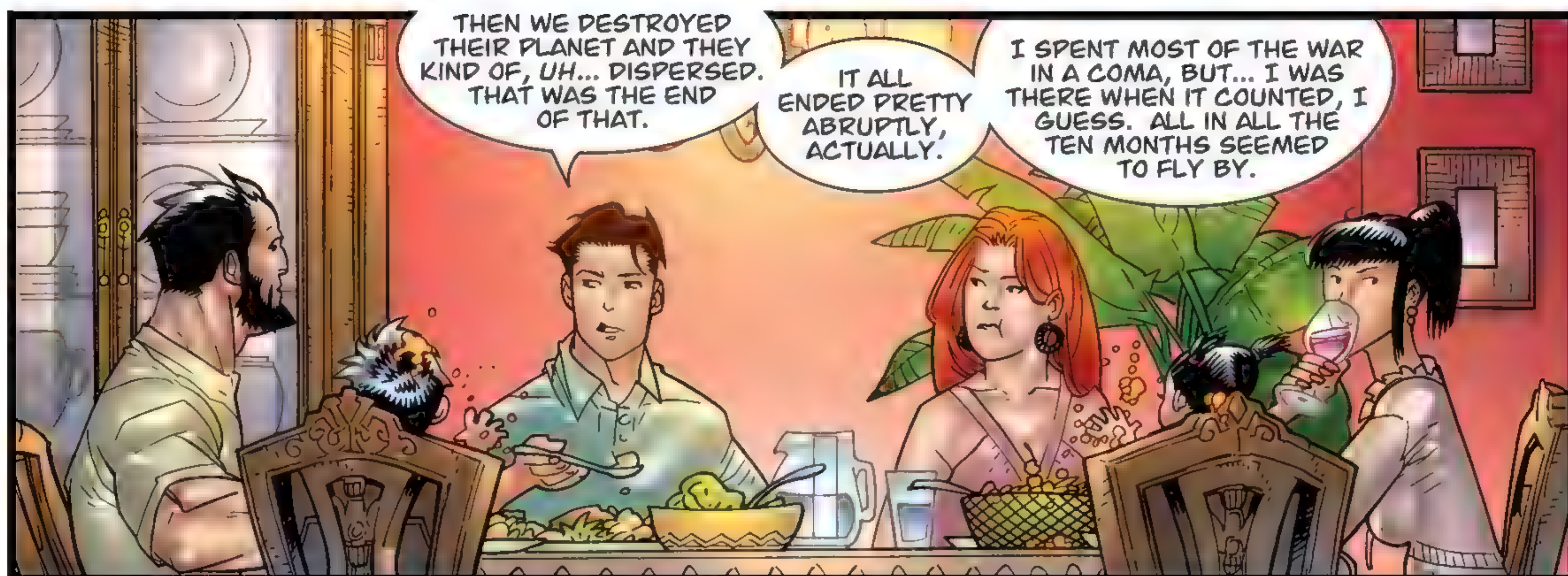
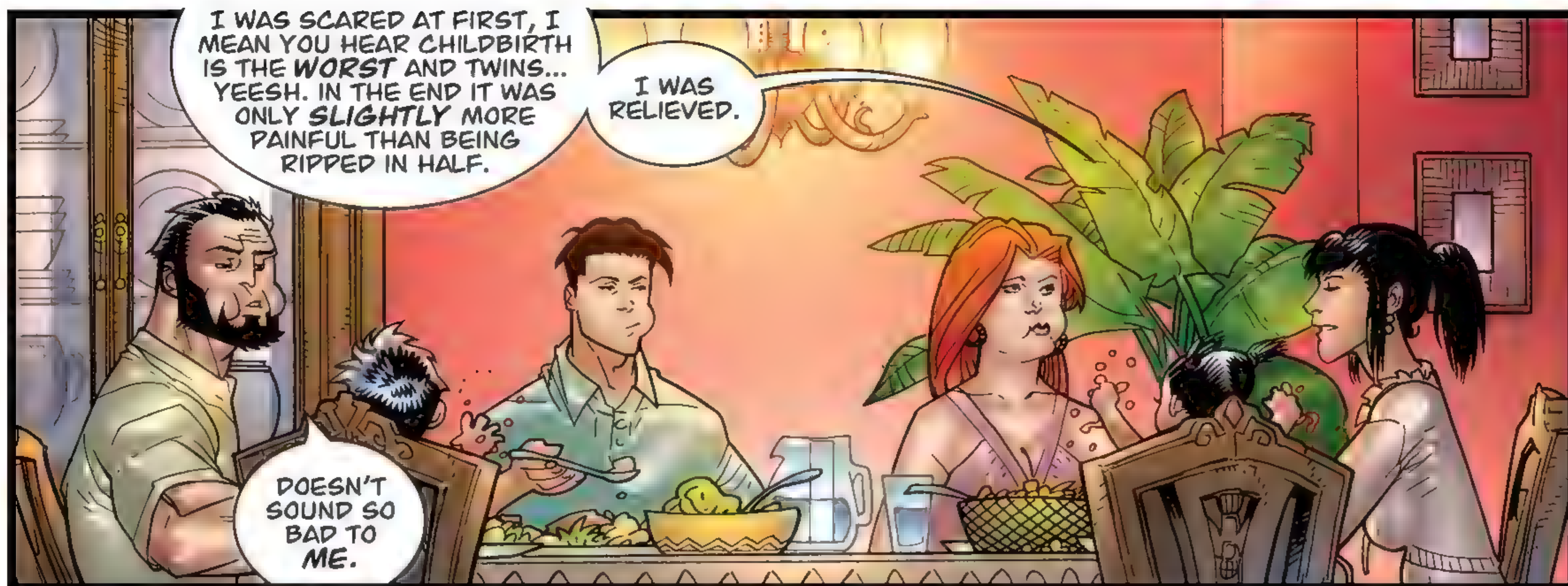
OH, HE'S NOT THAT BAD.

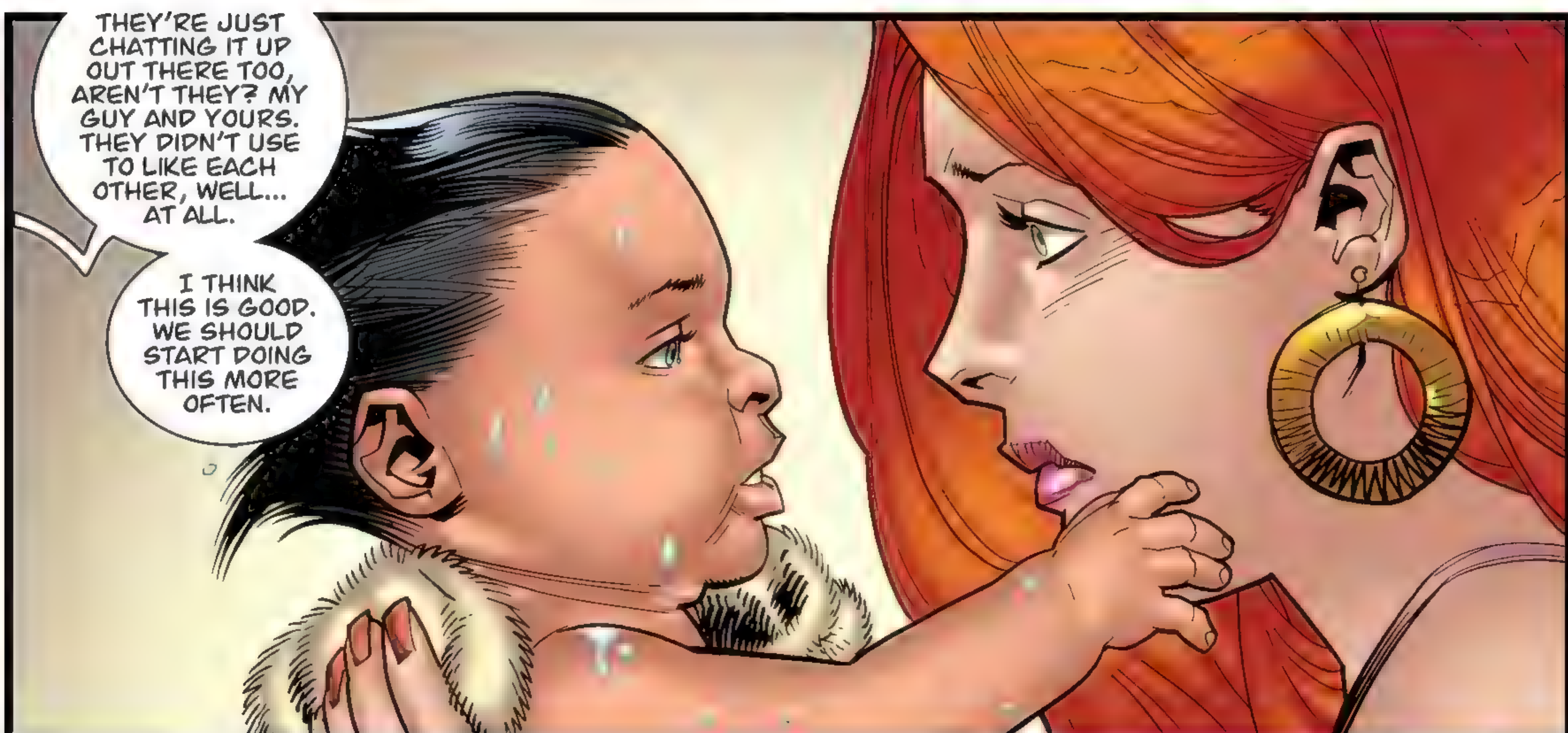
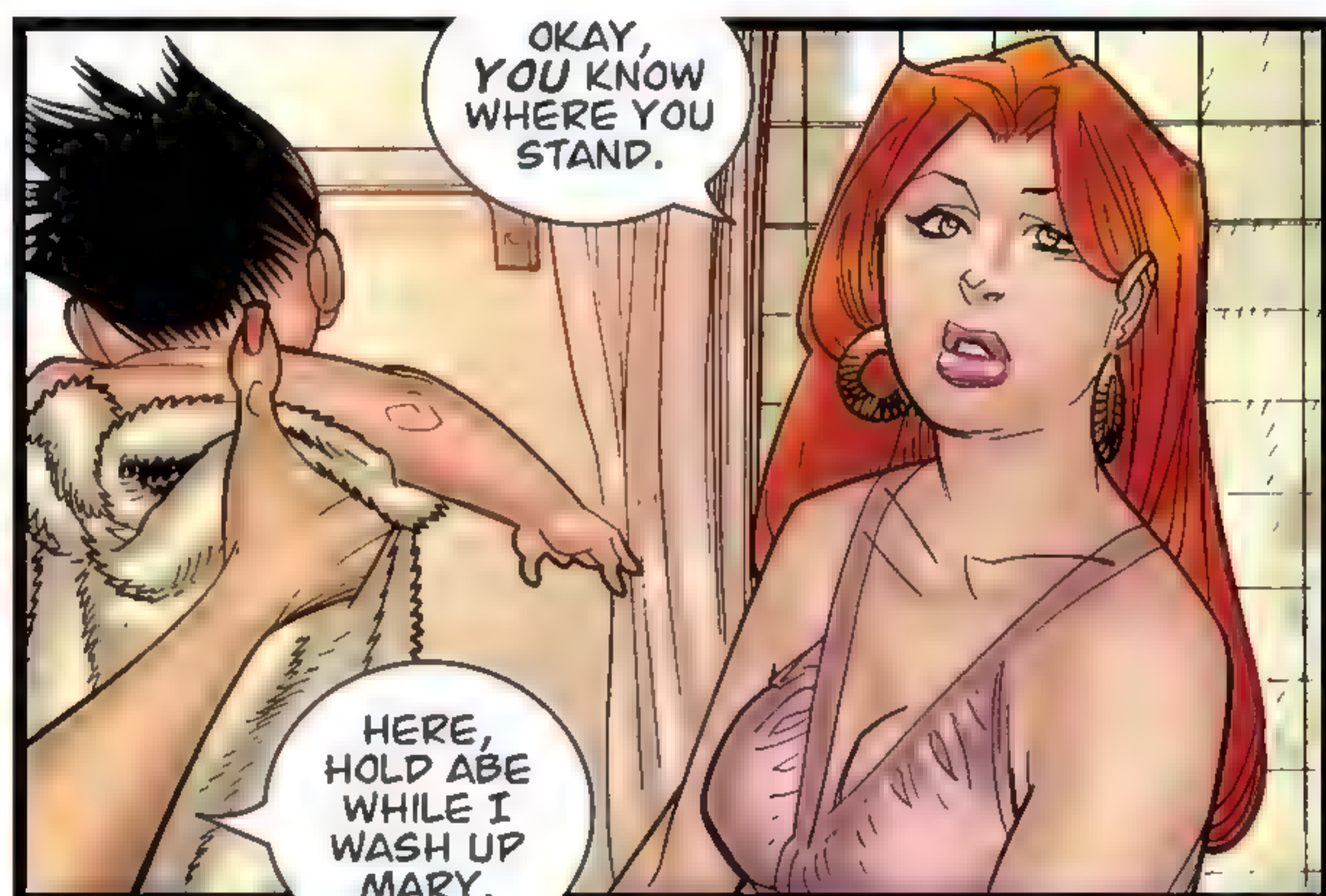
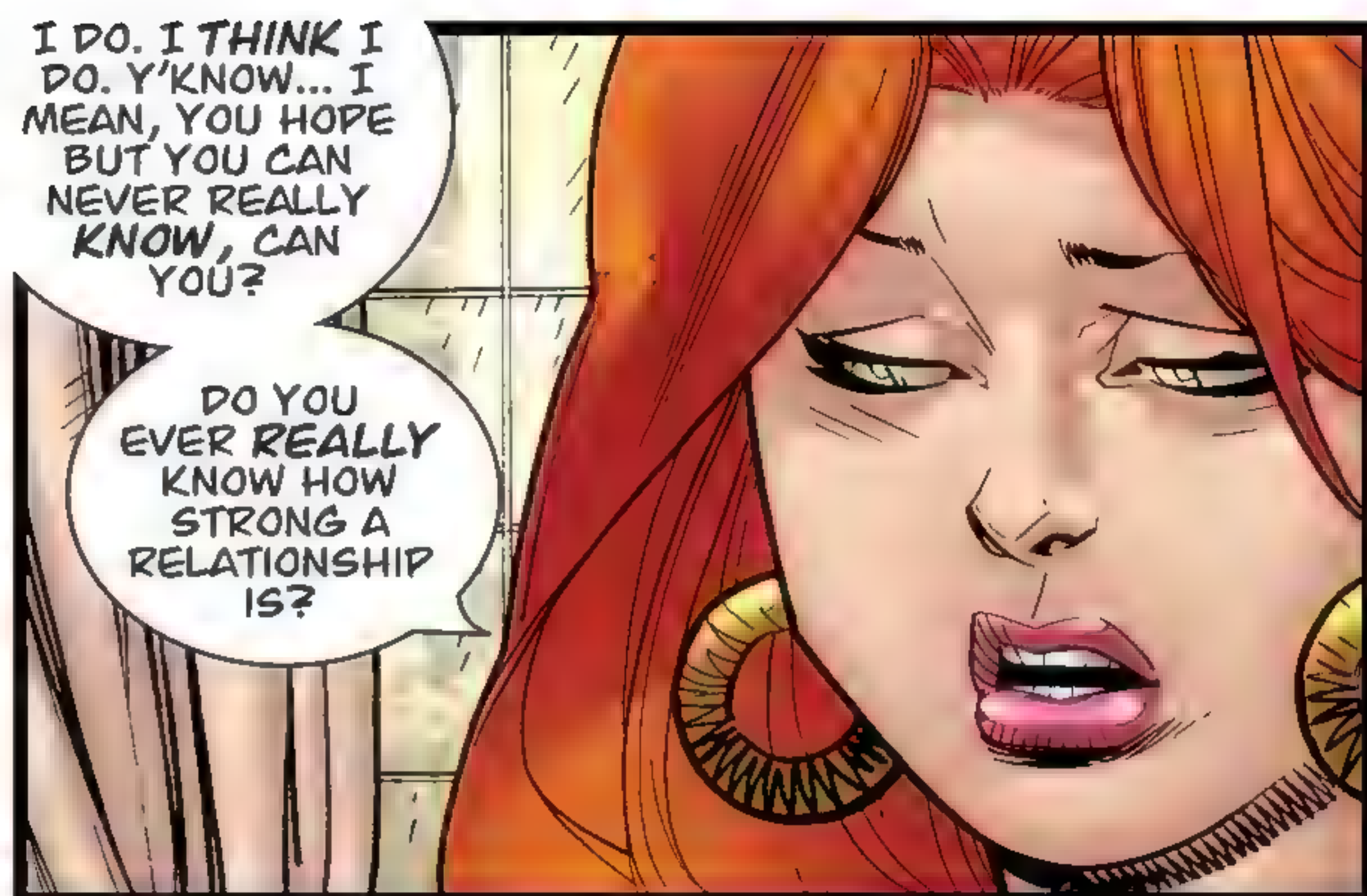


EVE, INVINCIBLE... PLEASE COME IN.

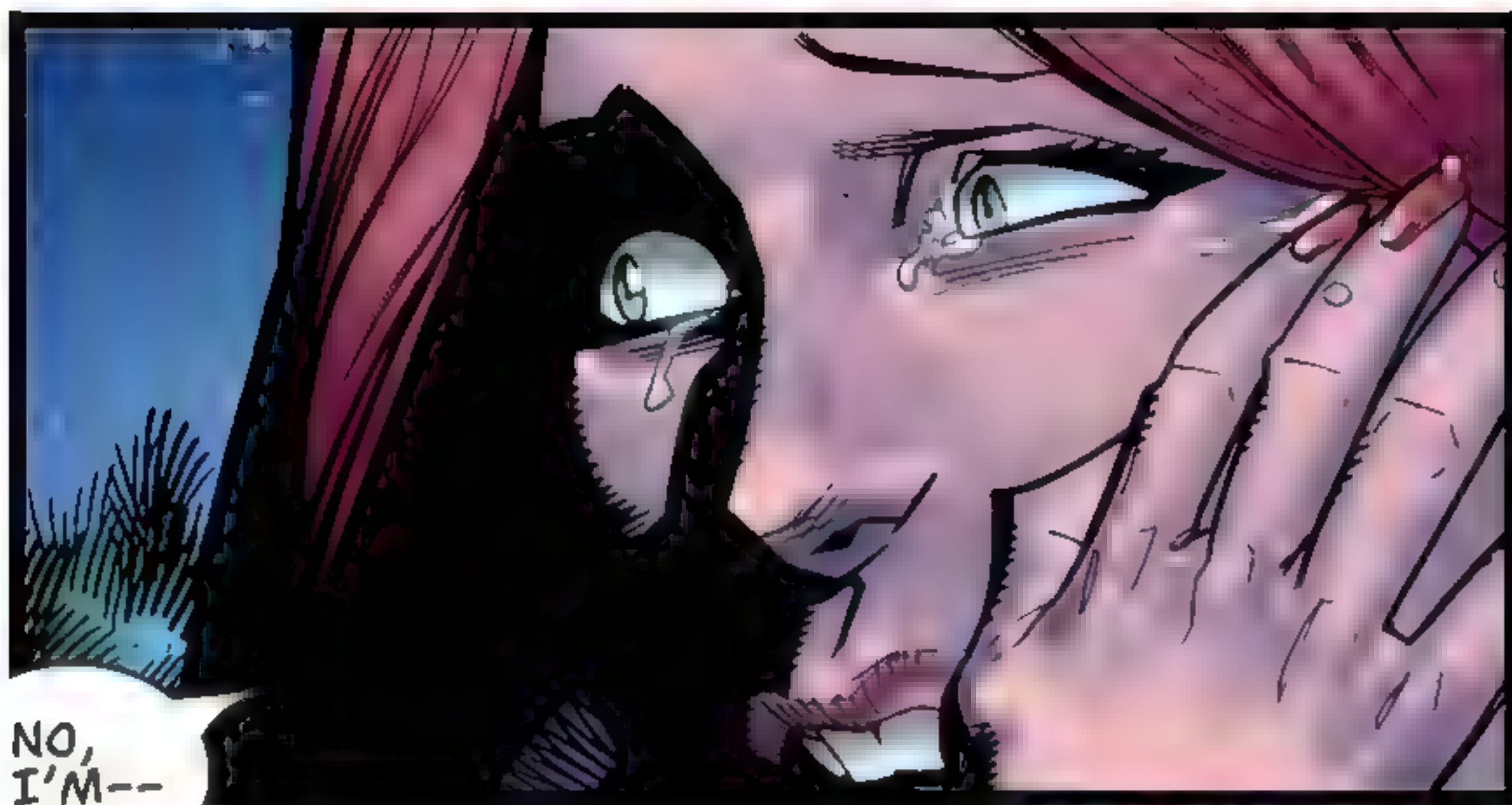
WE'RE SO GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT.

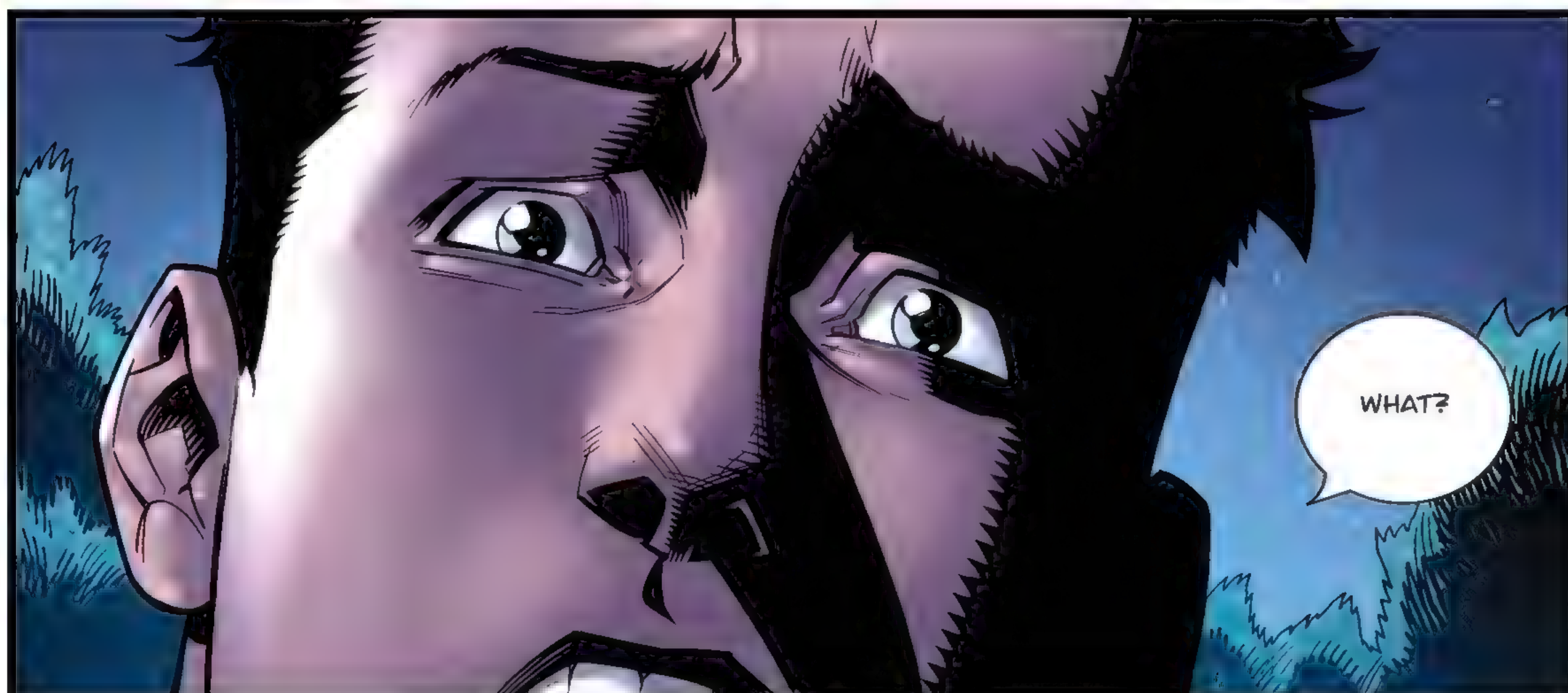
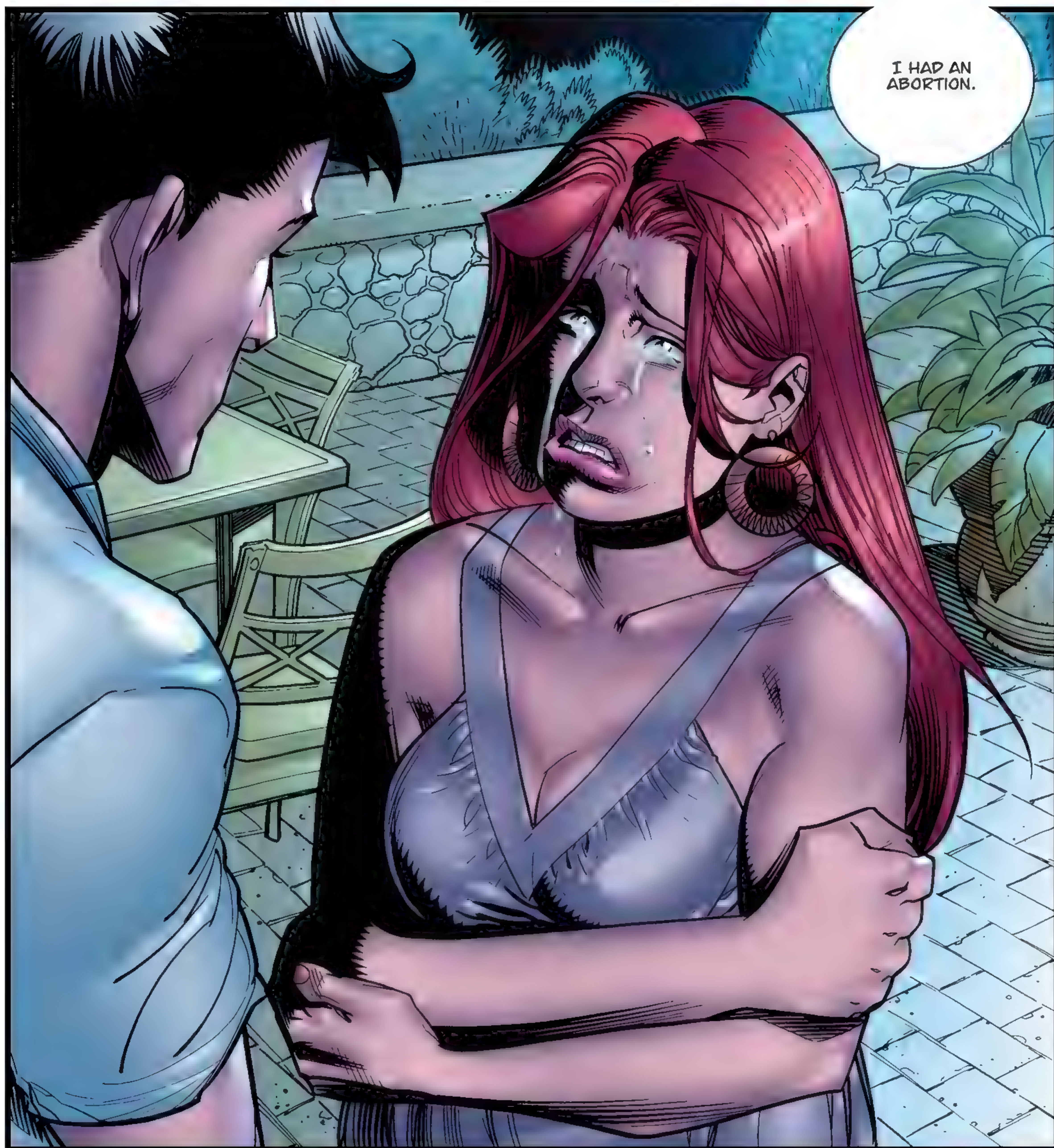


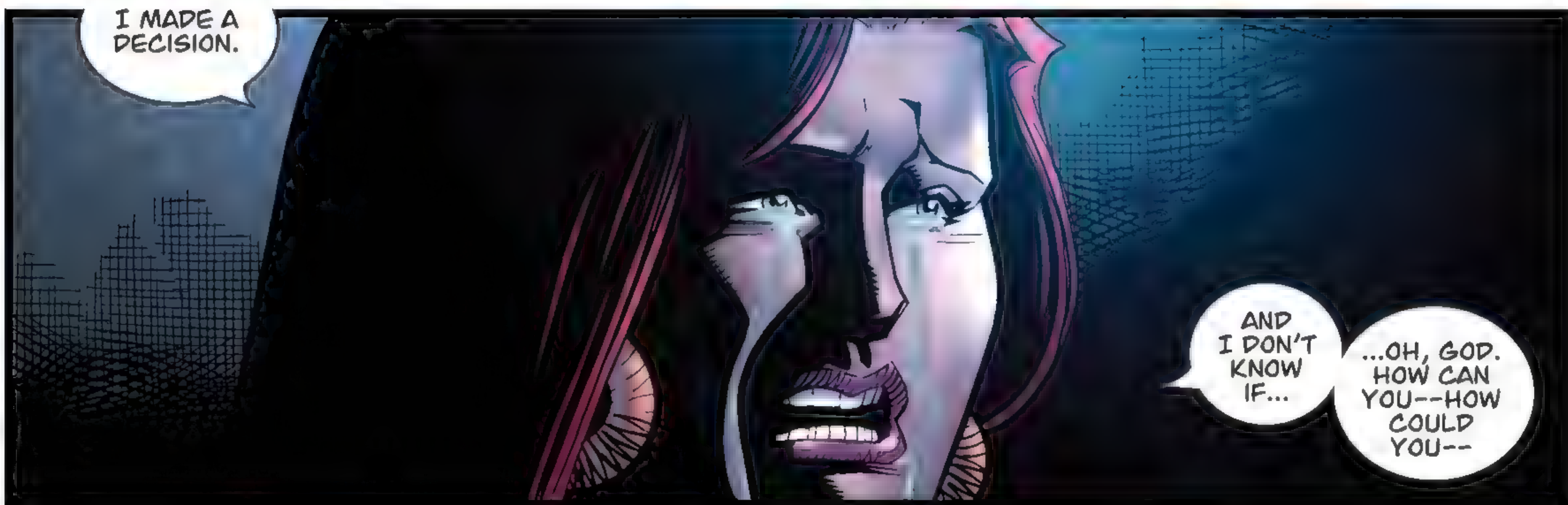






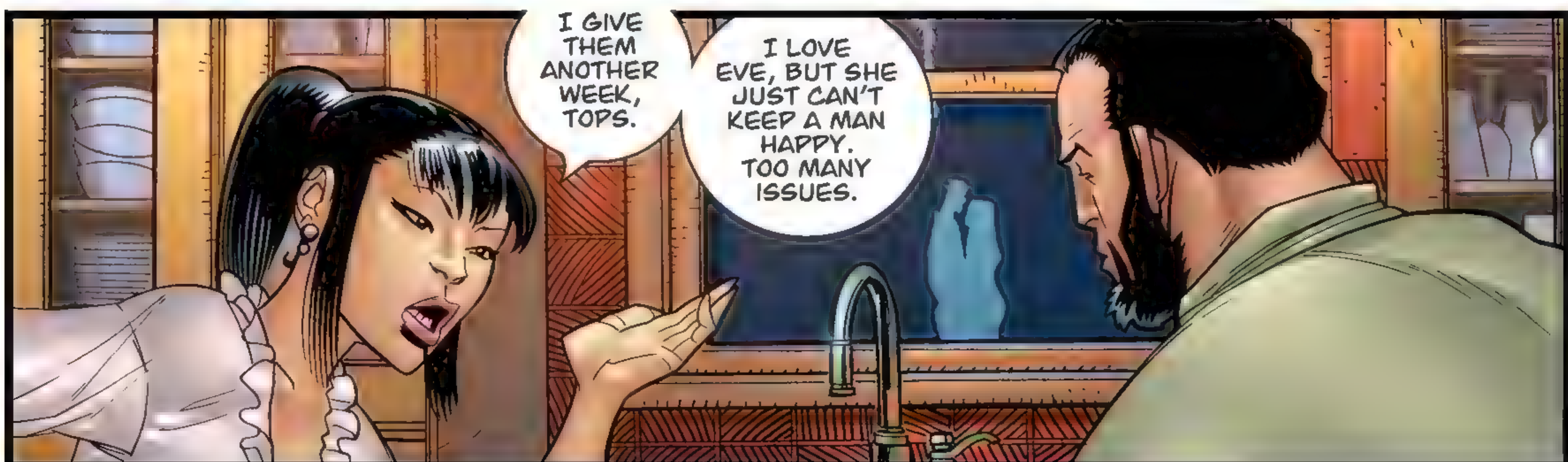
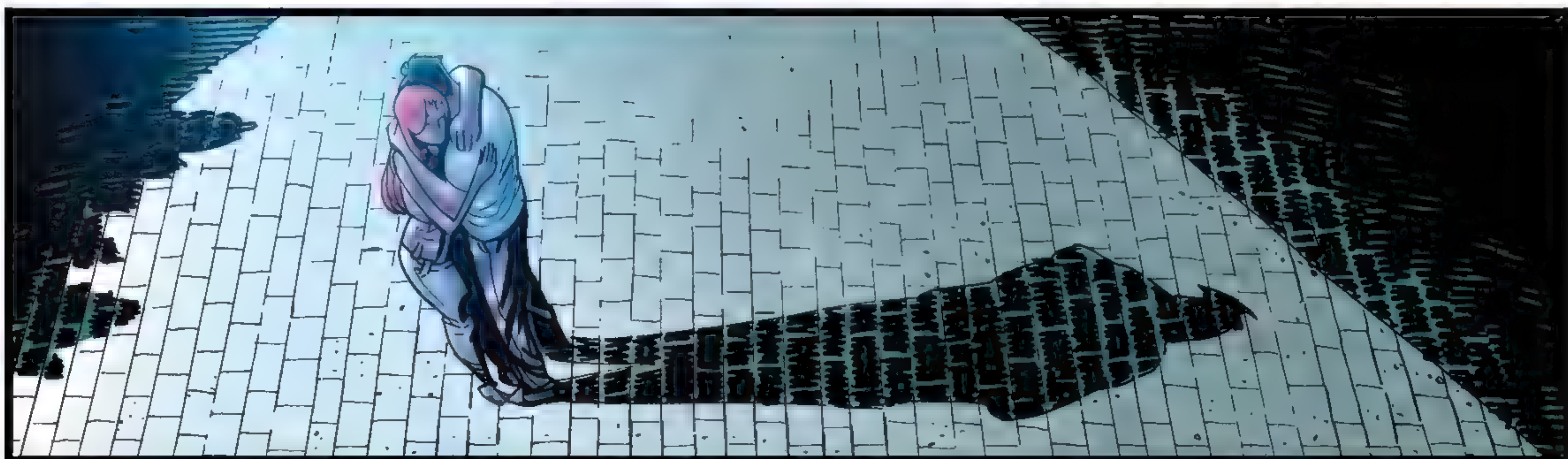
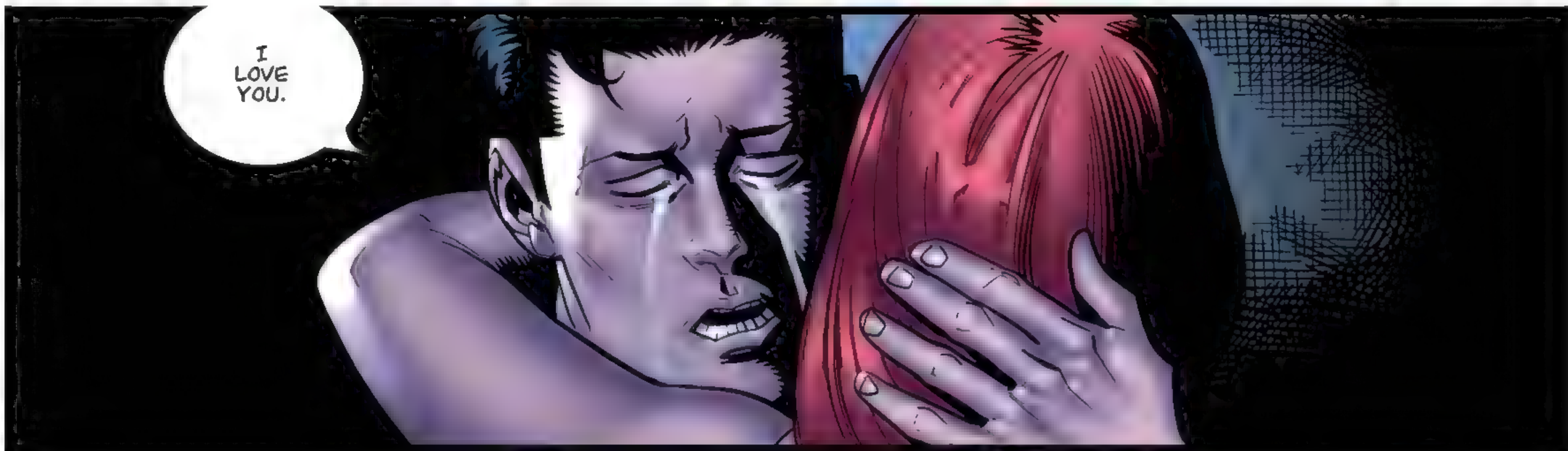






I'M
SORRY
I DID THIS
TO YOU.



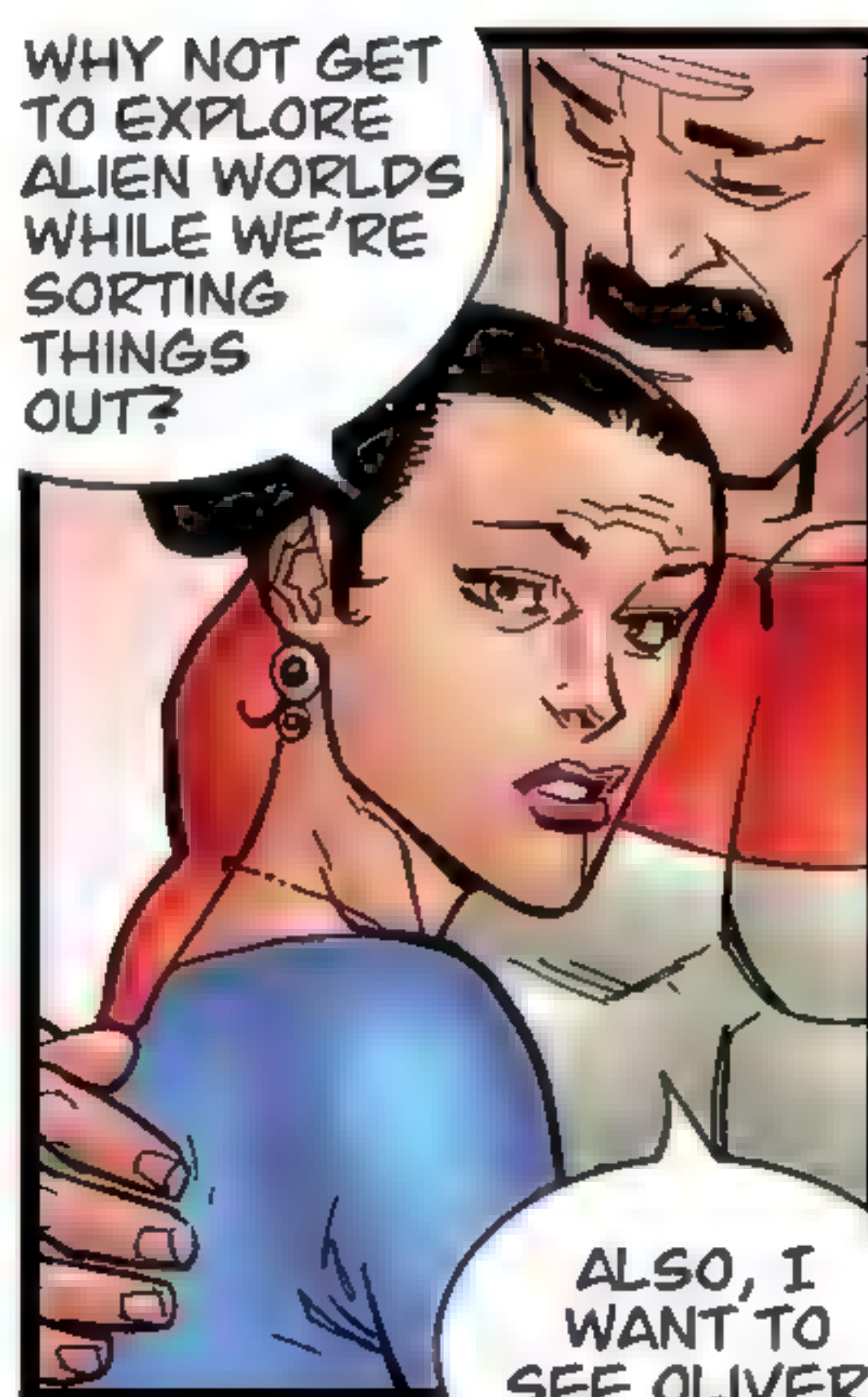
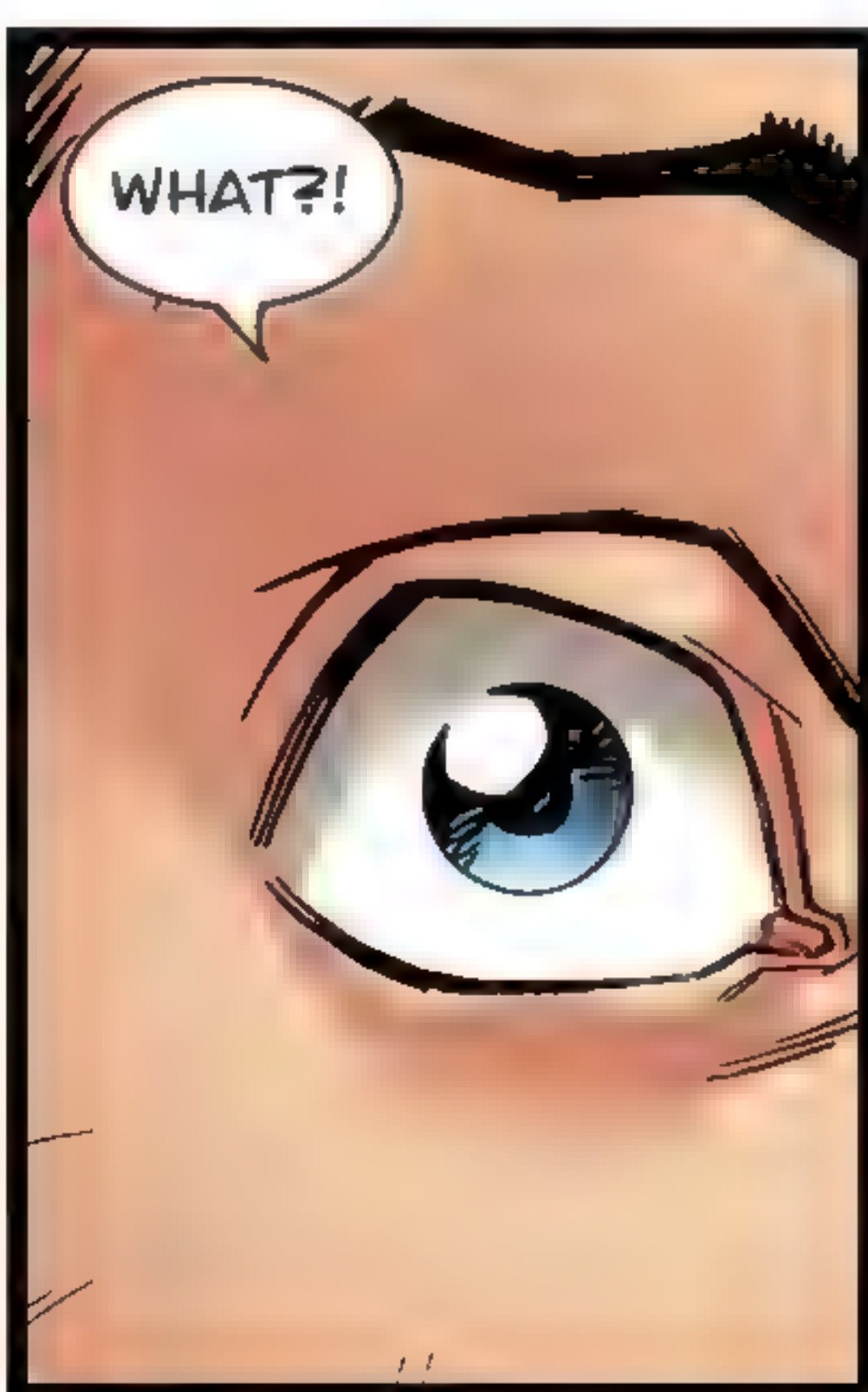
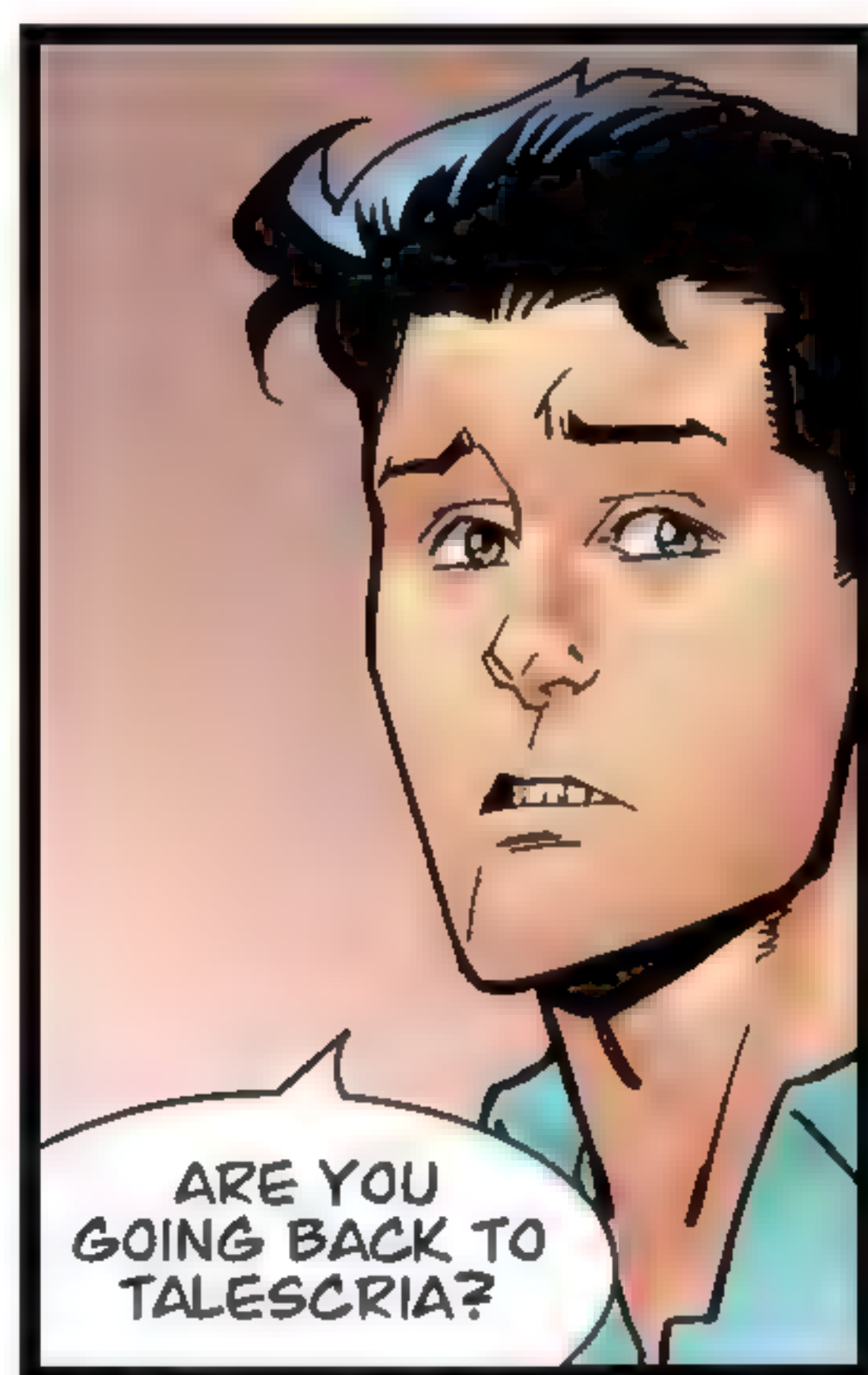
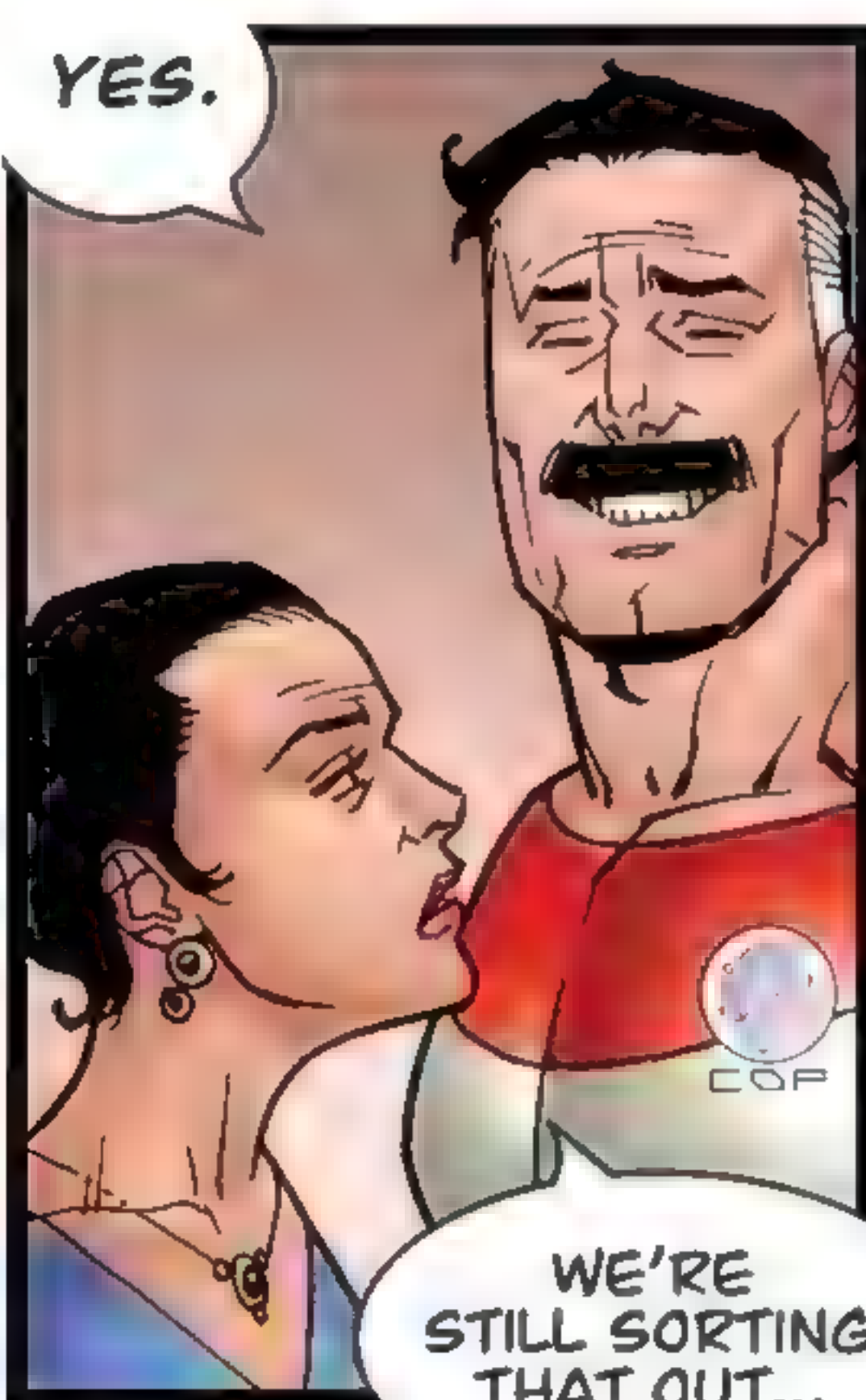
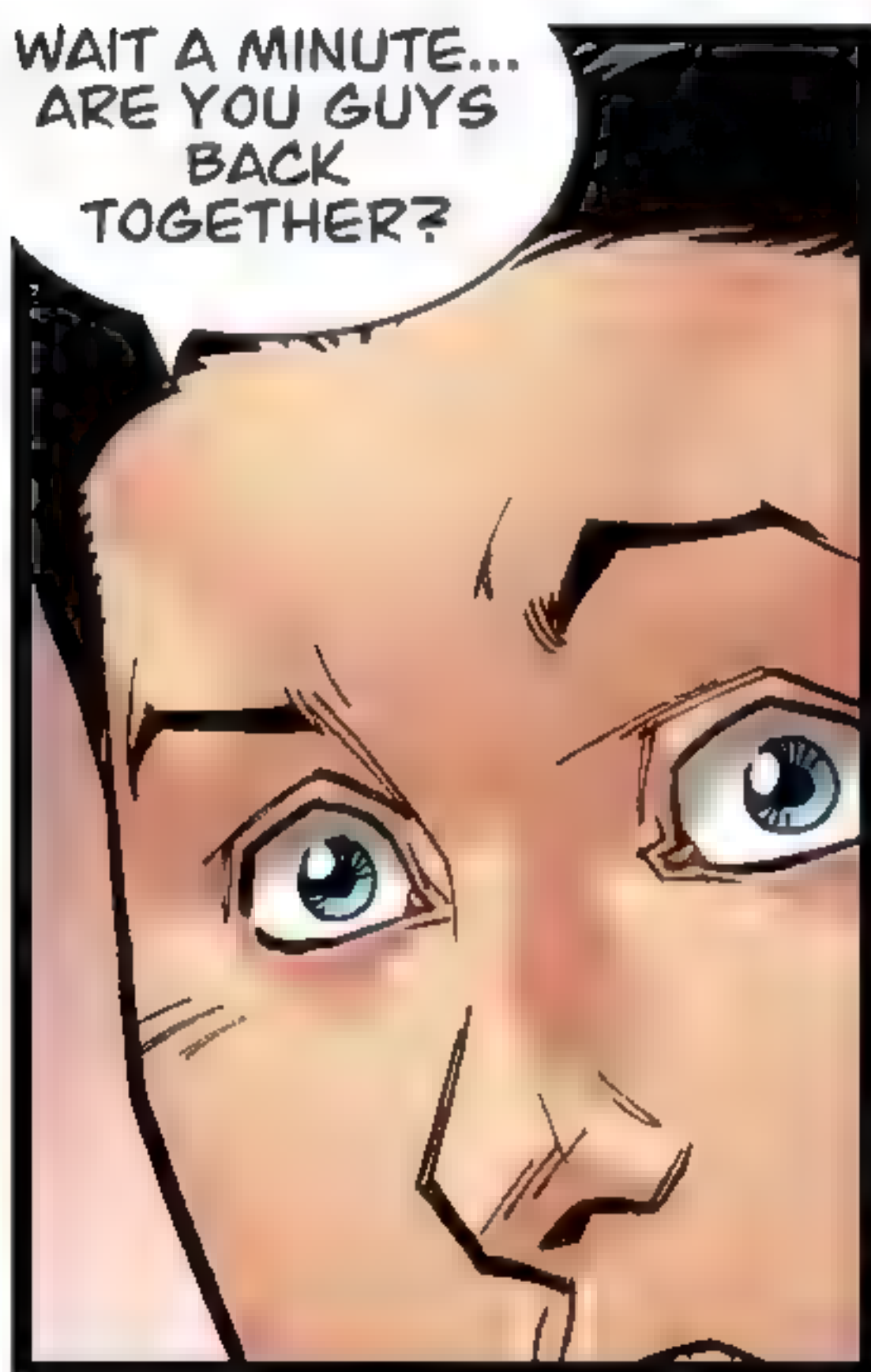
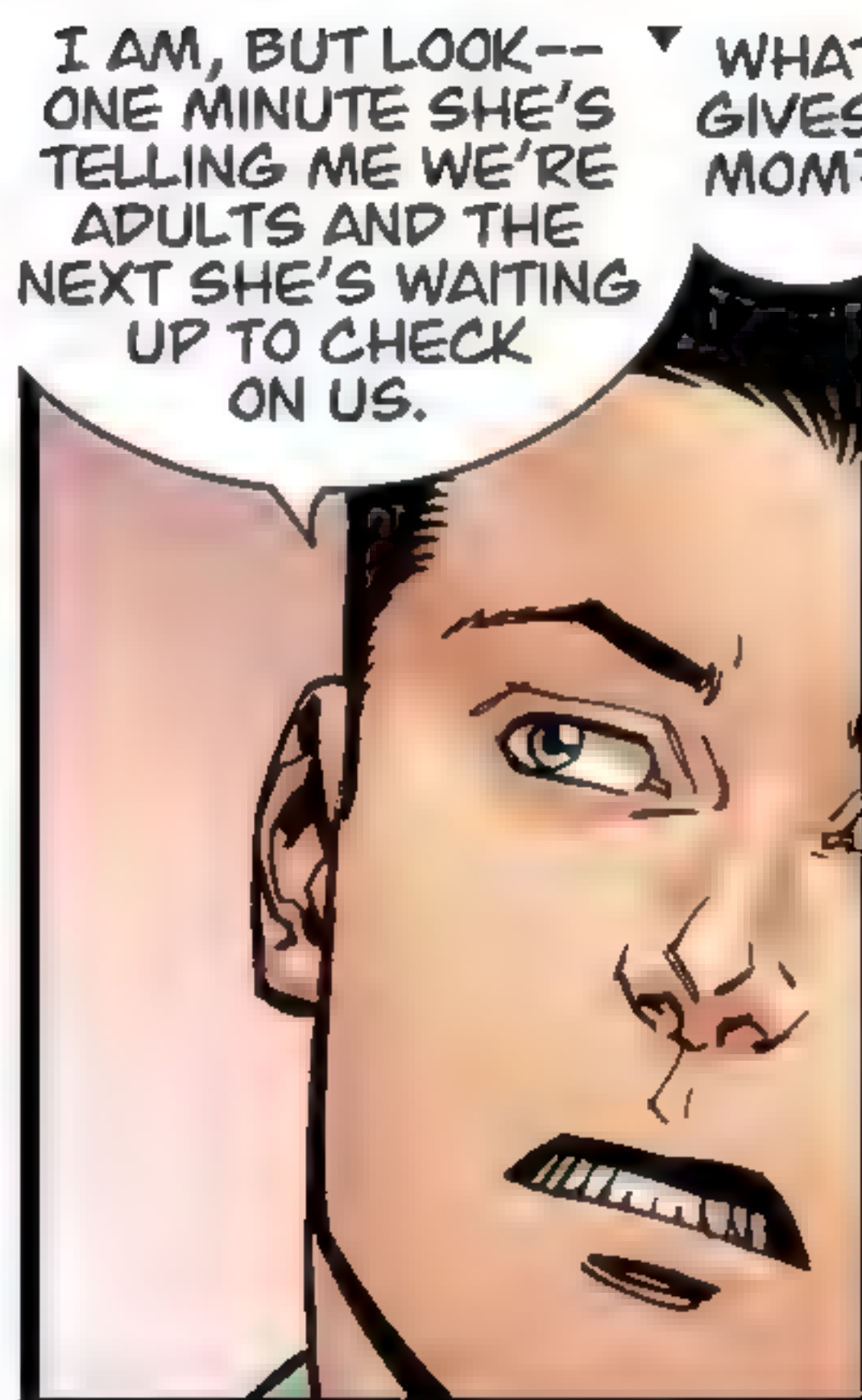
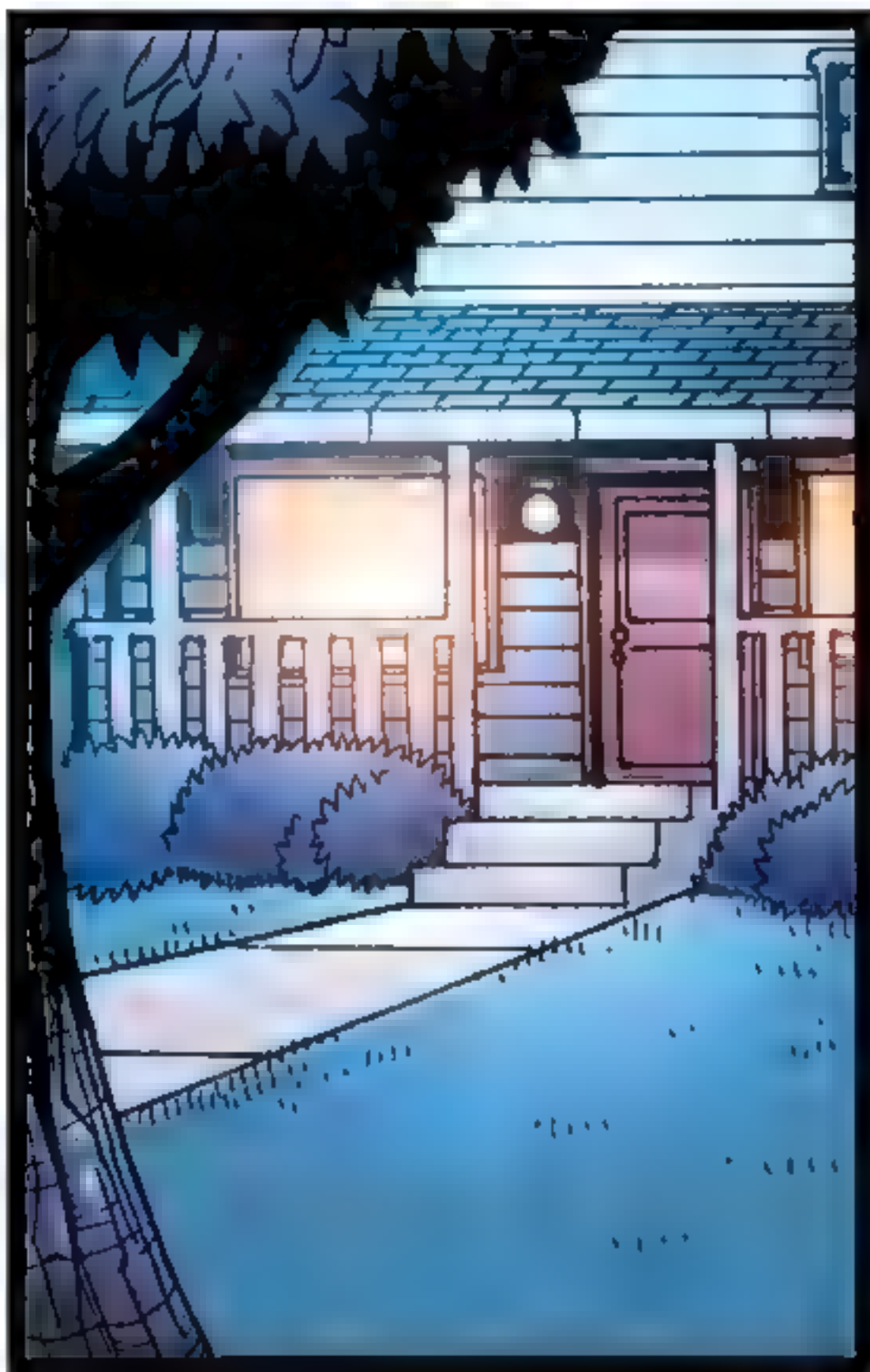


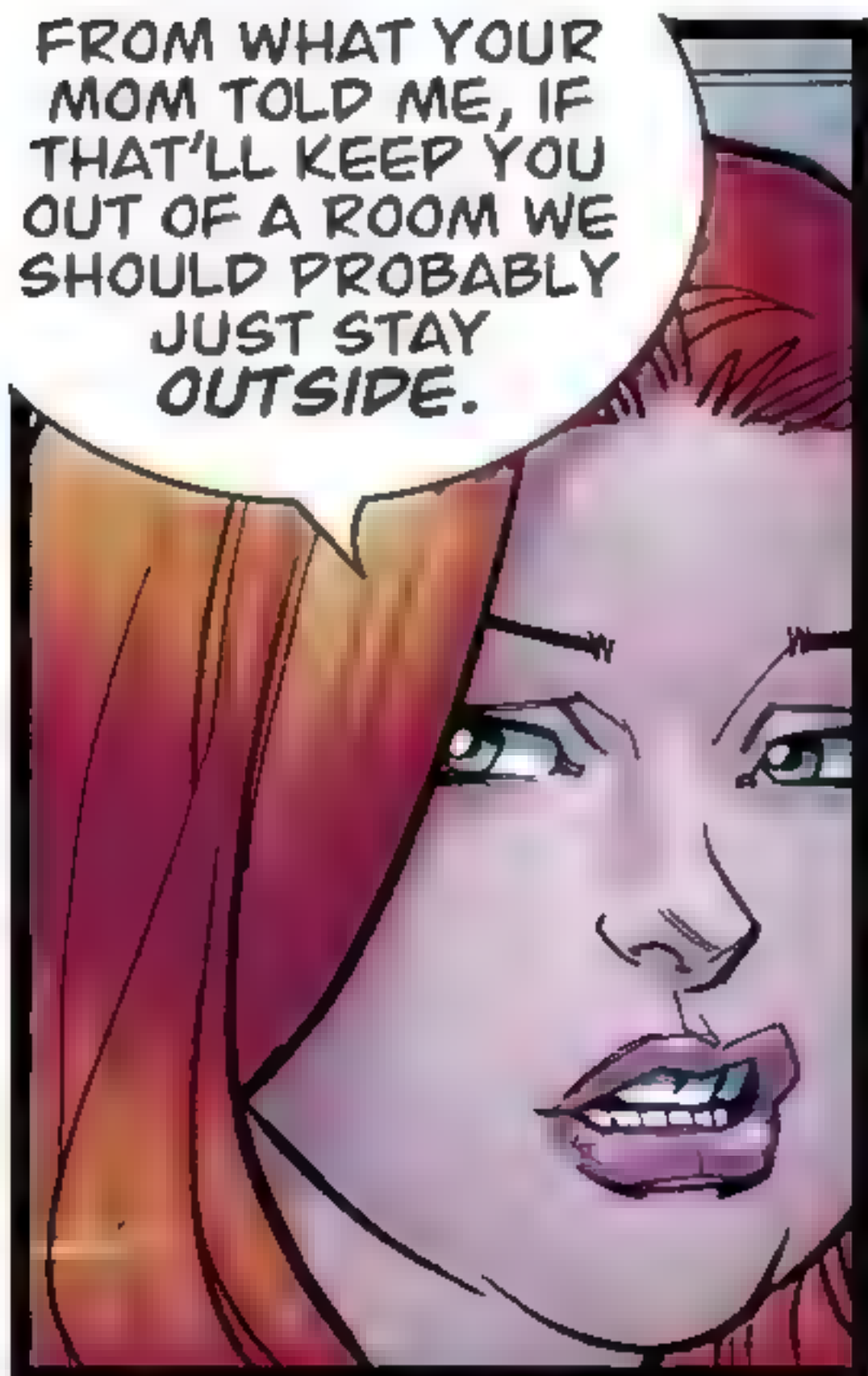
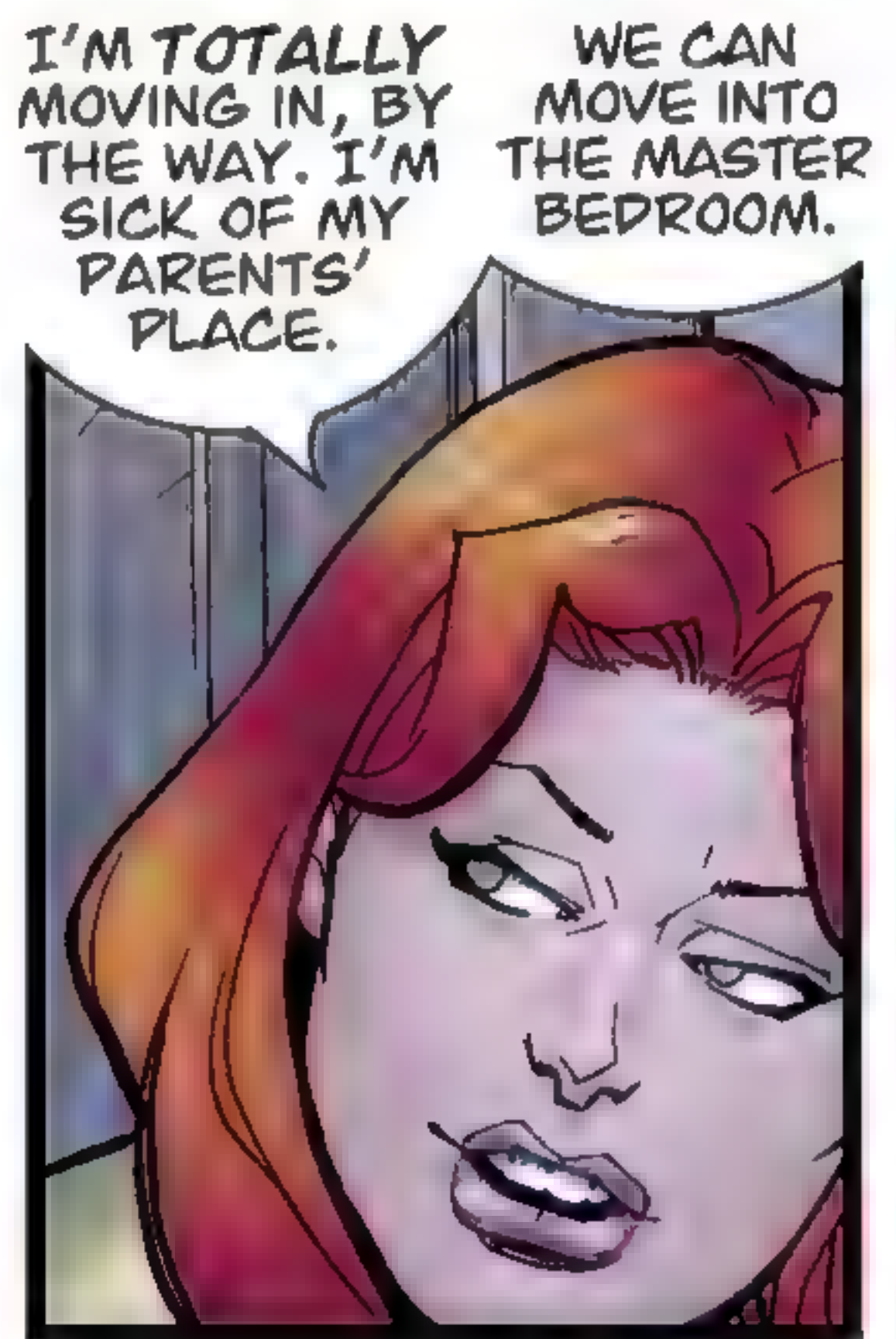
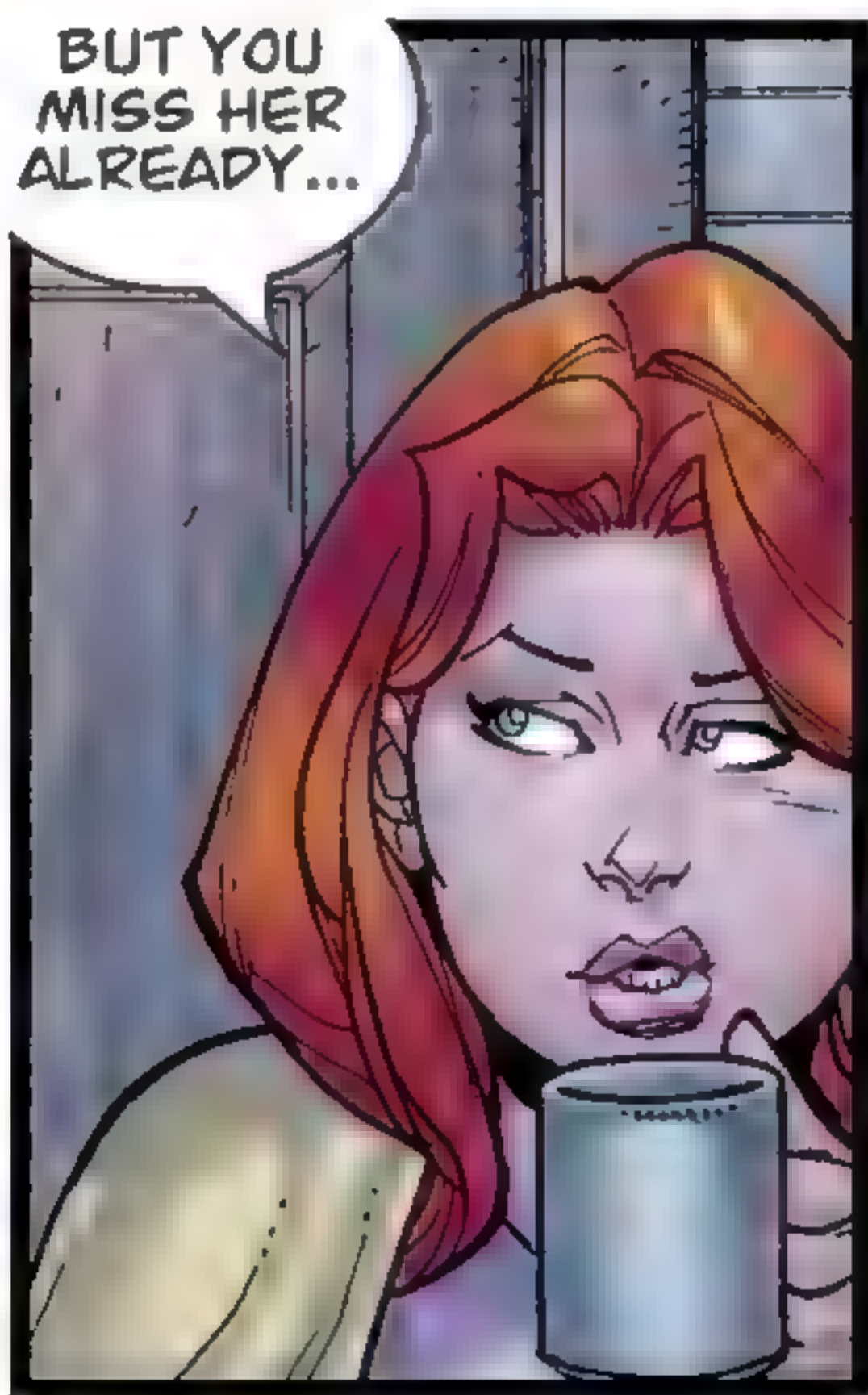
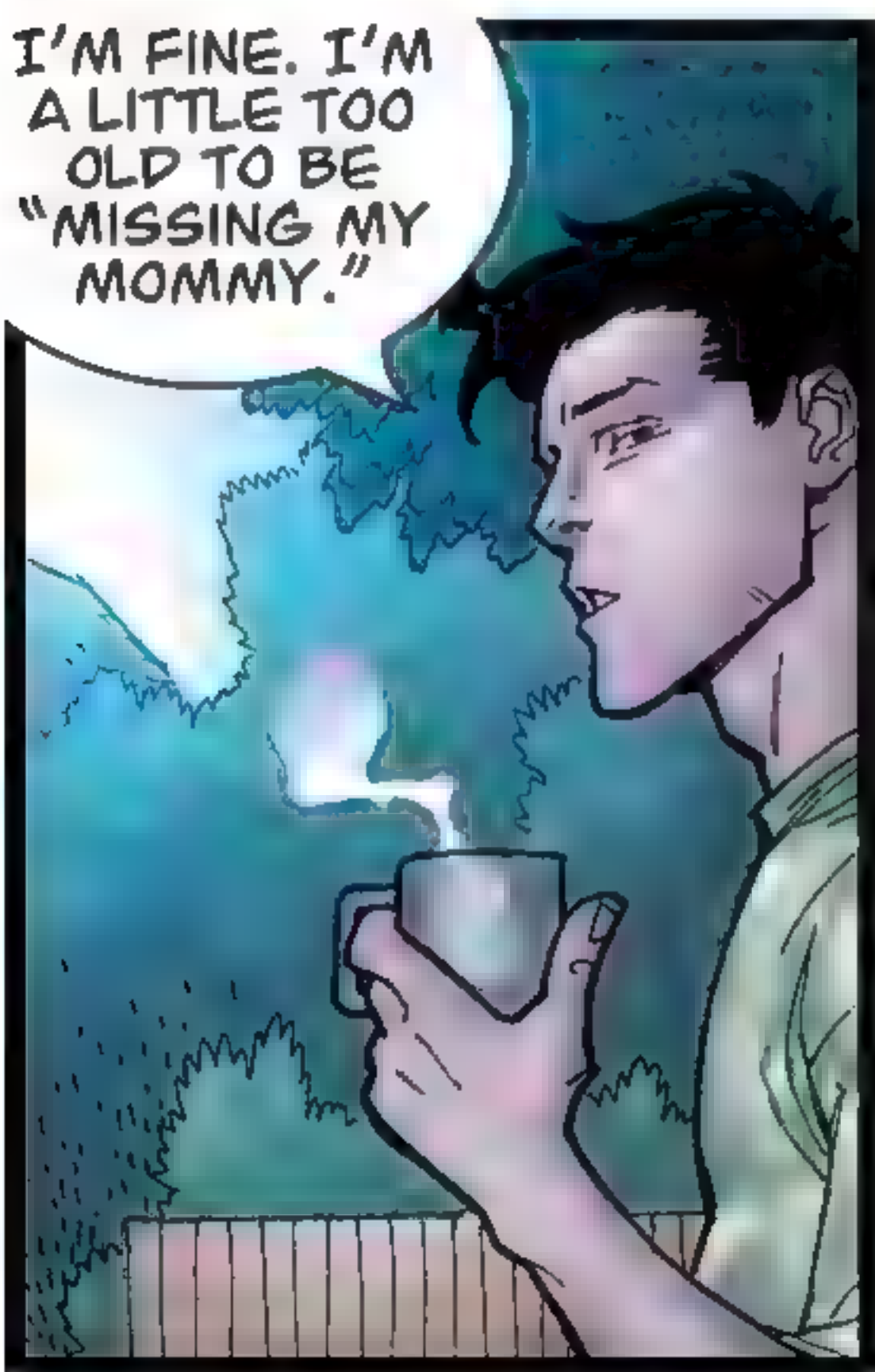
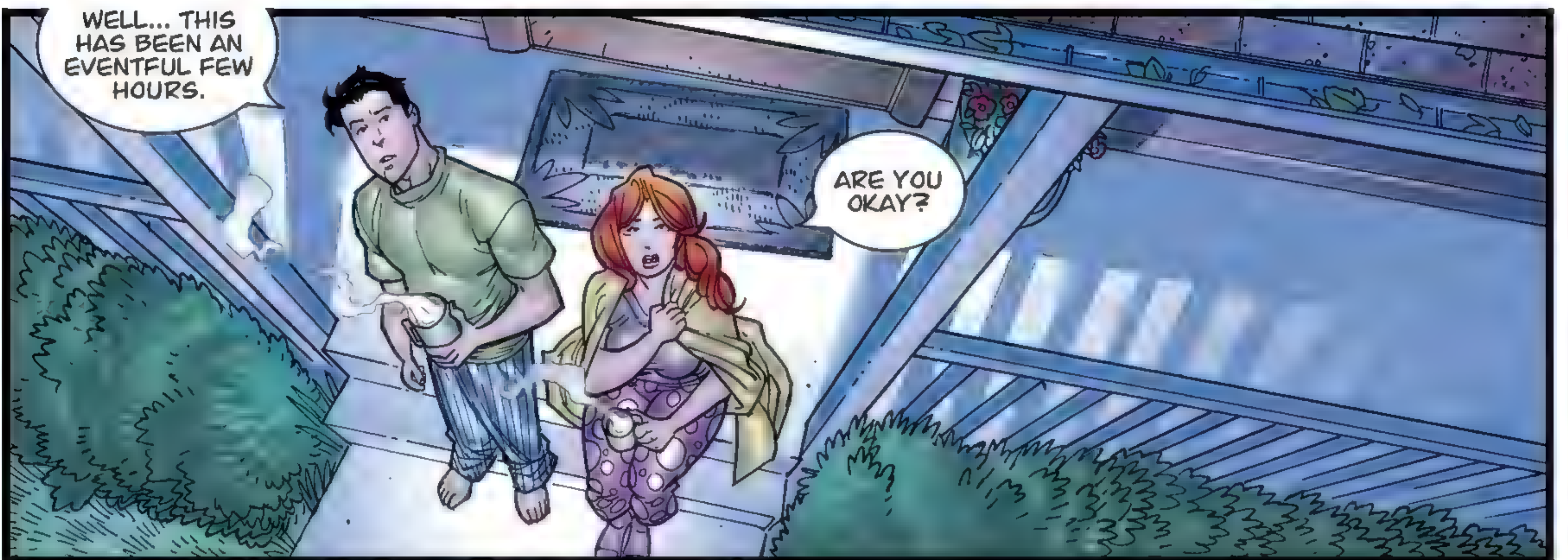
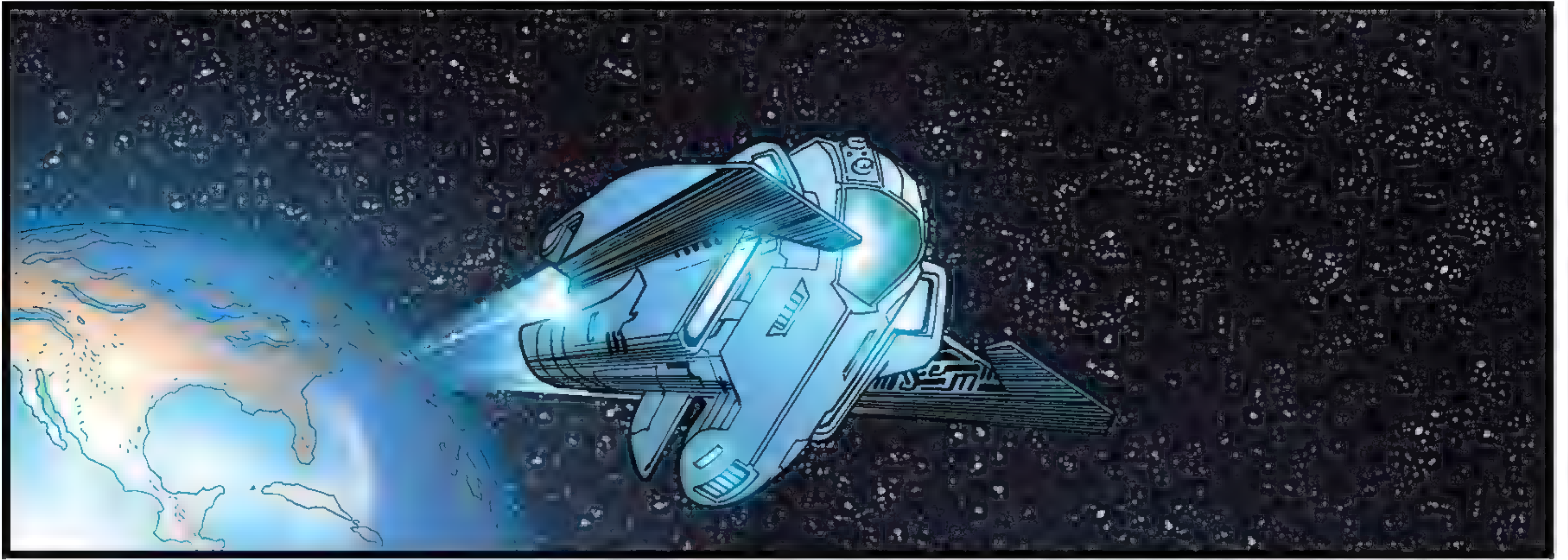


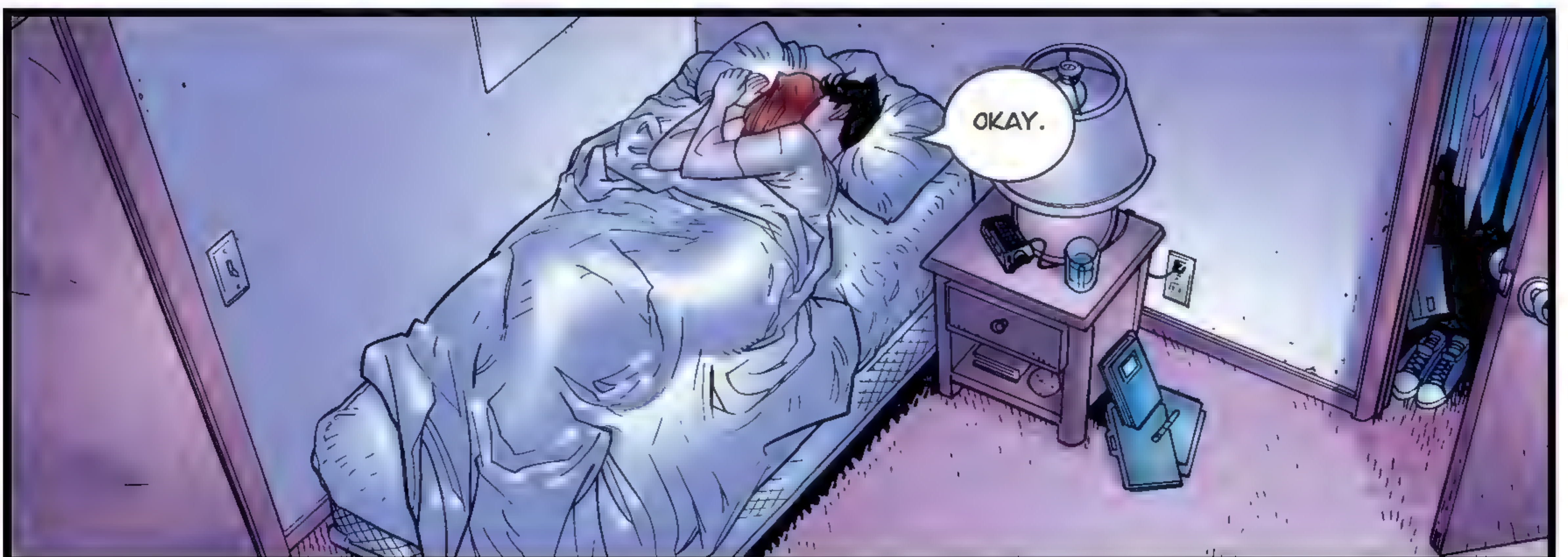
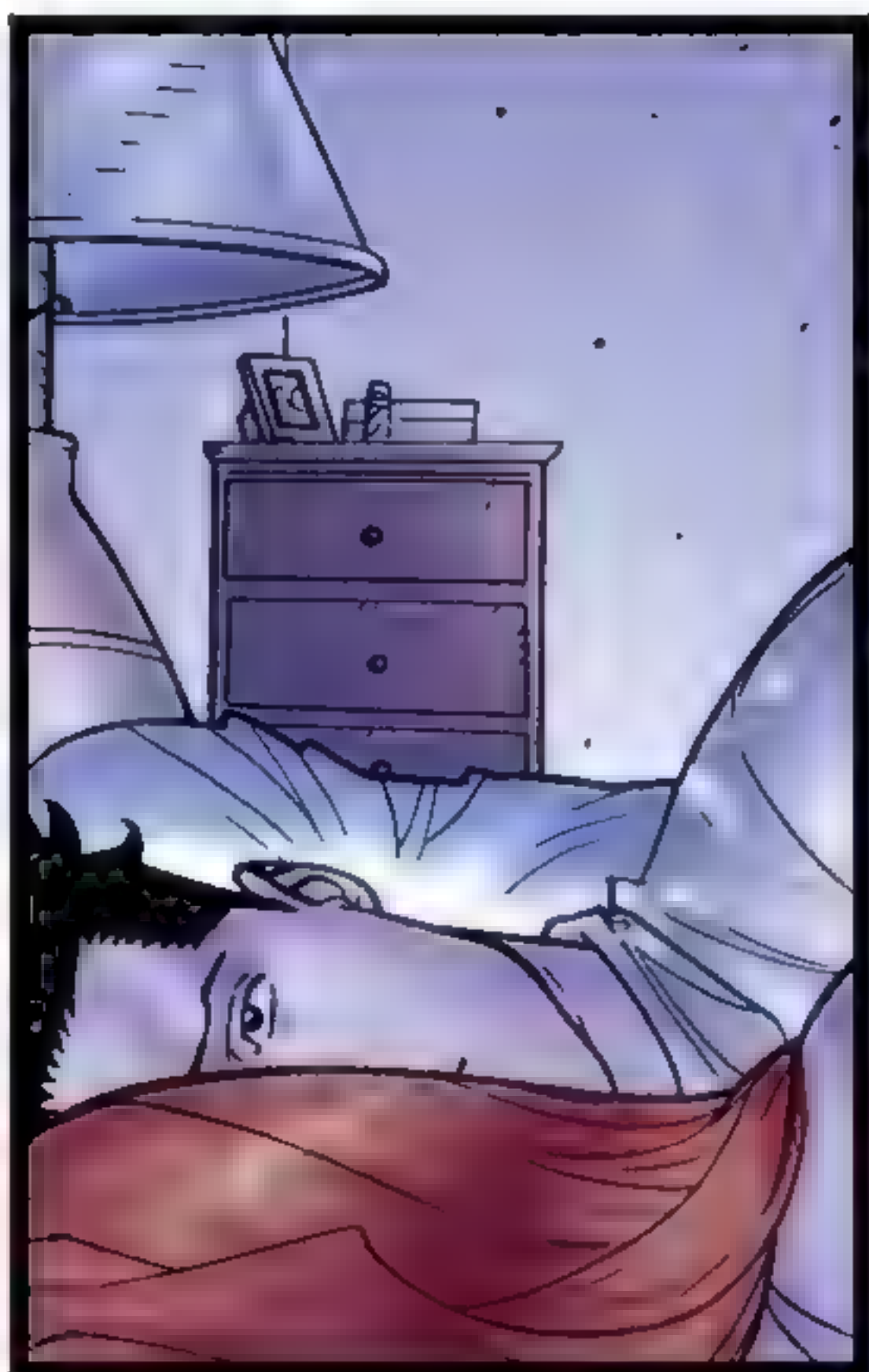
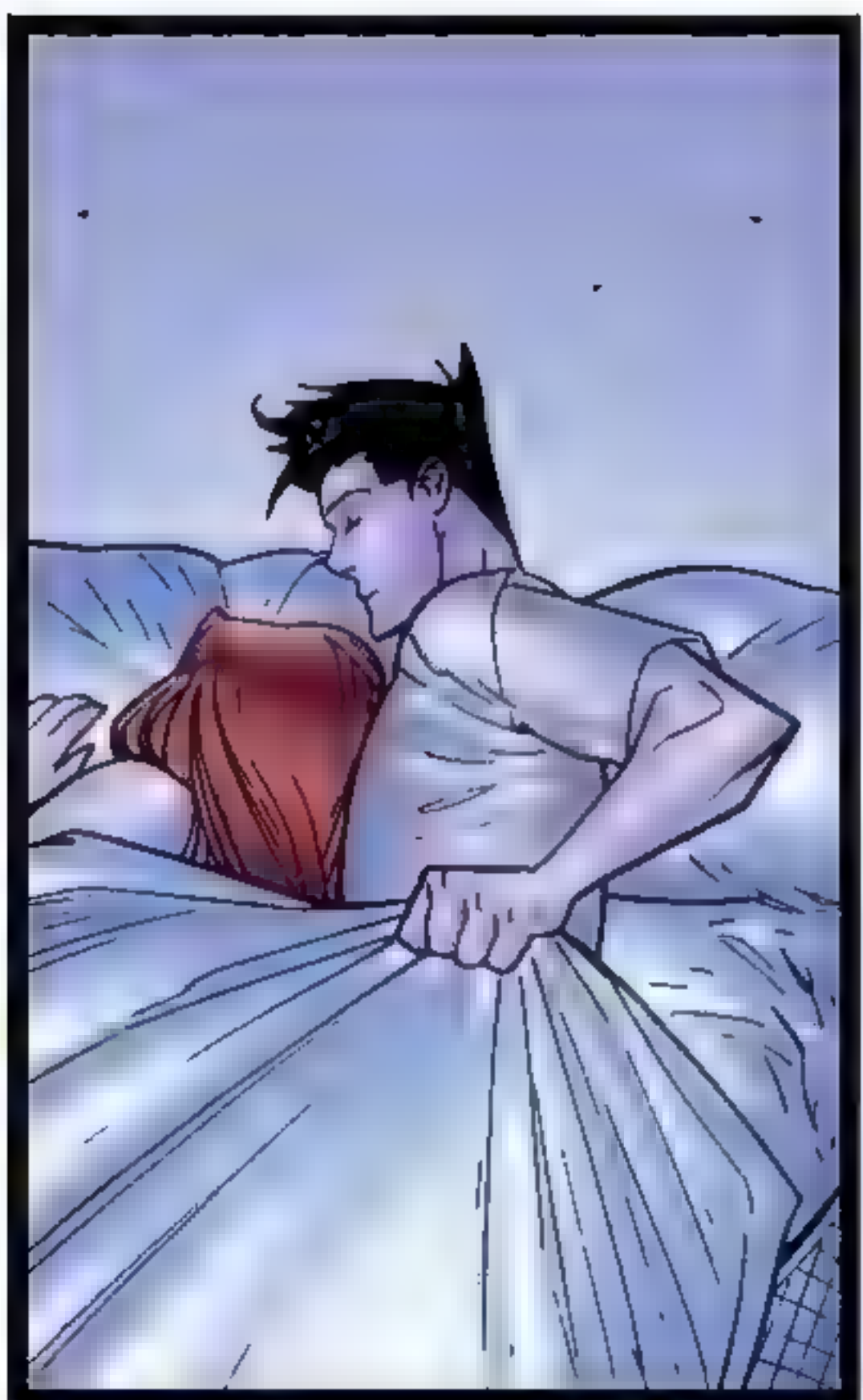
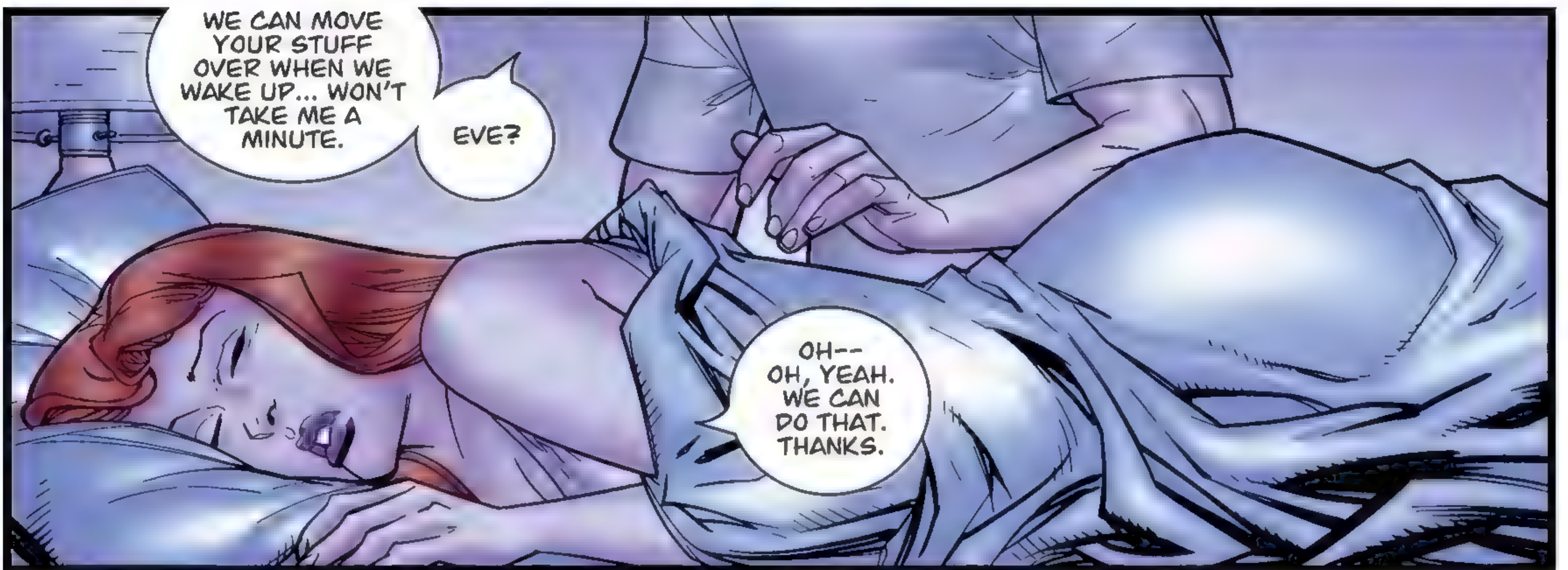
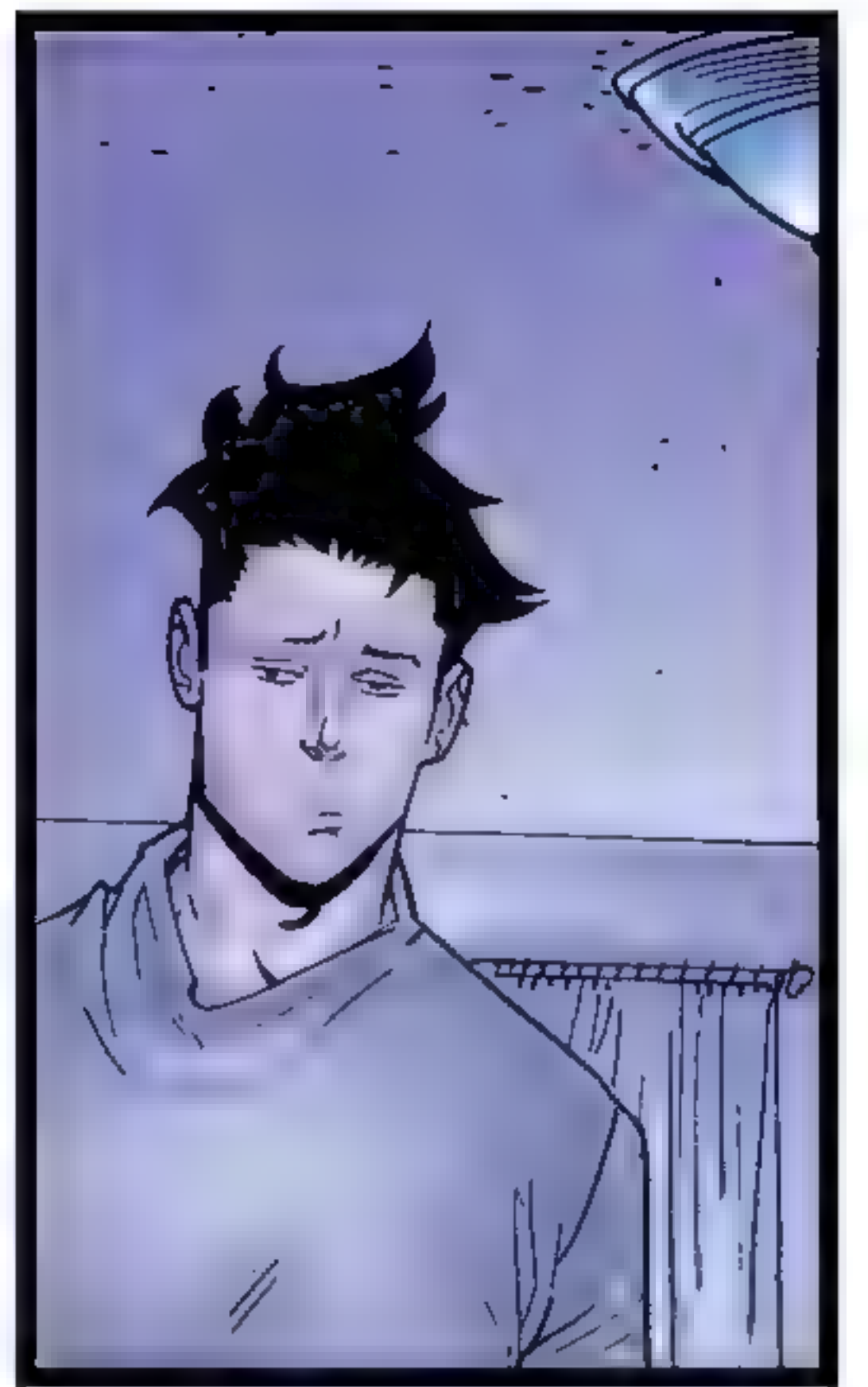
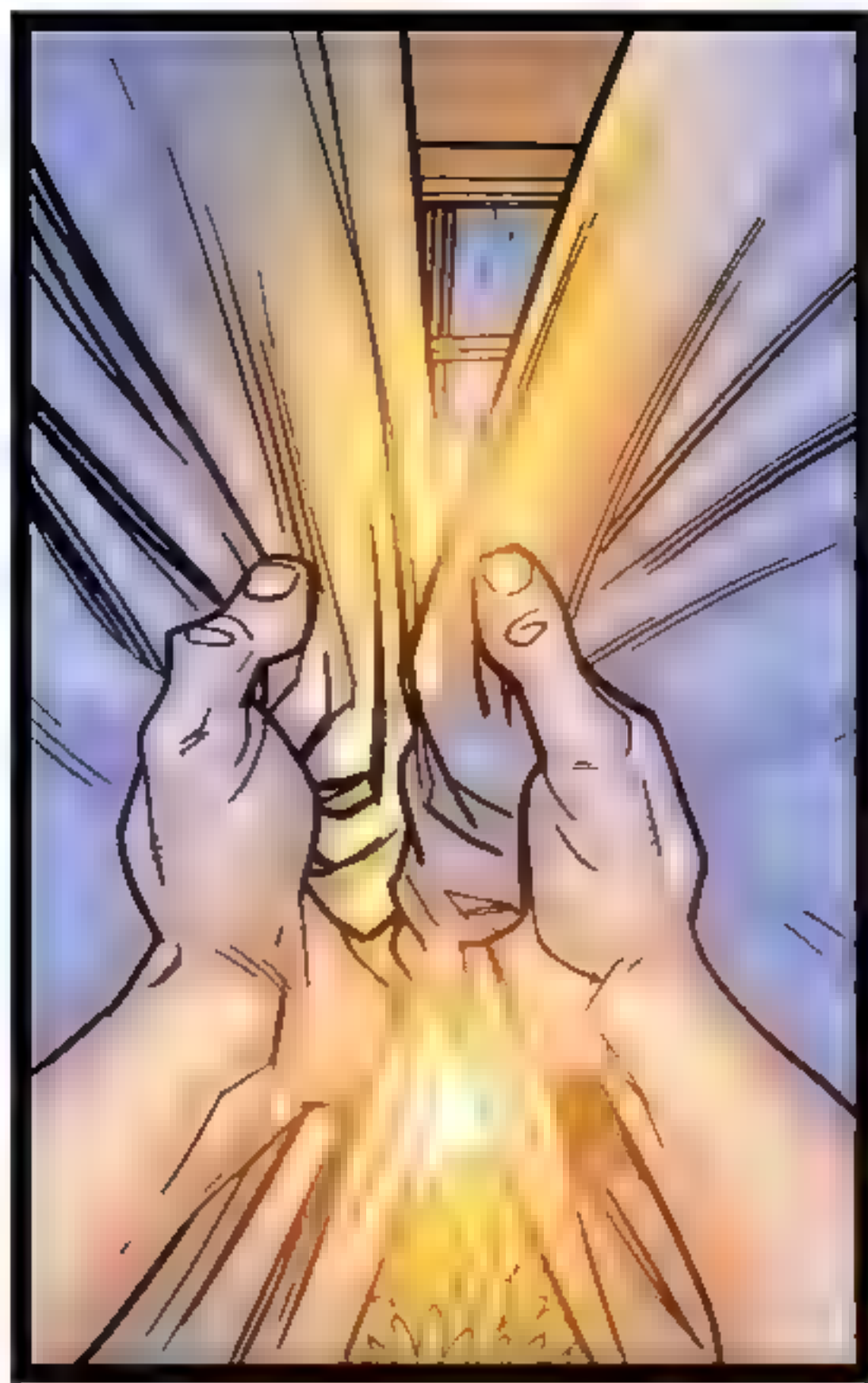


CHAPTER 80











AND FINALLY YOU COME TO VISIT. UNANNOUNCED-- AND EXACTLY AT DINNER TIME.

STILL, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, MARK.

IS IT DINNER TIME? JEEZ! SORRY.

EVE AND I WERE UP ALL NIGHT, SO WE SLEPT TODAY AND MY SCHEDULE IS ALL KINDS OF MESSED UP.

UP ALL NIGHT, HUH?

I GUESS YOU TWO ARE GETTING REACQUAINTED, THEN.

OH, HOW I'VE MISSED OUR LITTLE TALKS, WILLIAM.

YEAH, SORRY... I COULDN'T RESIST.

WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?

SHE'S MOVING IN WITH ME, BY THE WAY...

...INTO MY PARENTS' HOUSE, WHICH WE'LL LIVE IN ALONE... BECAUSE MY MOTHER HAS GONE OFF TO AN ALIEN PLANET WITH MY DAD.

BEING YOUR FRIEND IS LIKE, THE COOLEST THING EVER.

IT'S ALWAYS ALIEN PLANET THIS AND END OF THE WORLD THAT. I'VE REALLY MISSED YOU, MAN.

DINNER IS SER--

OH, WILLIAM-- I DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE HAVING COMPANY.

SORRY, RICK. I JUST POPPED IN FOR A MINUTE. I CAN'T STAY FOR DINNER ANYWAY.

WELL, WE'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU STAY. IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, MAN.

LET ME PUT THIS STUFF IN THE KITCHEN.

WHENEVER YOU'RE READY, BABE.

UH... WHAT?

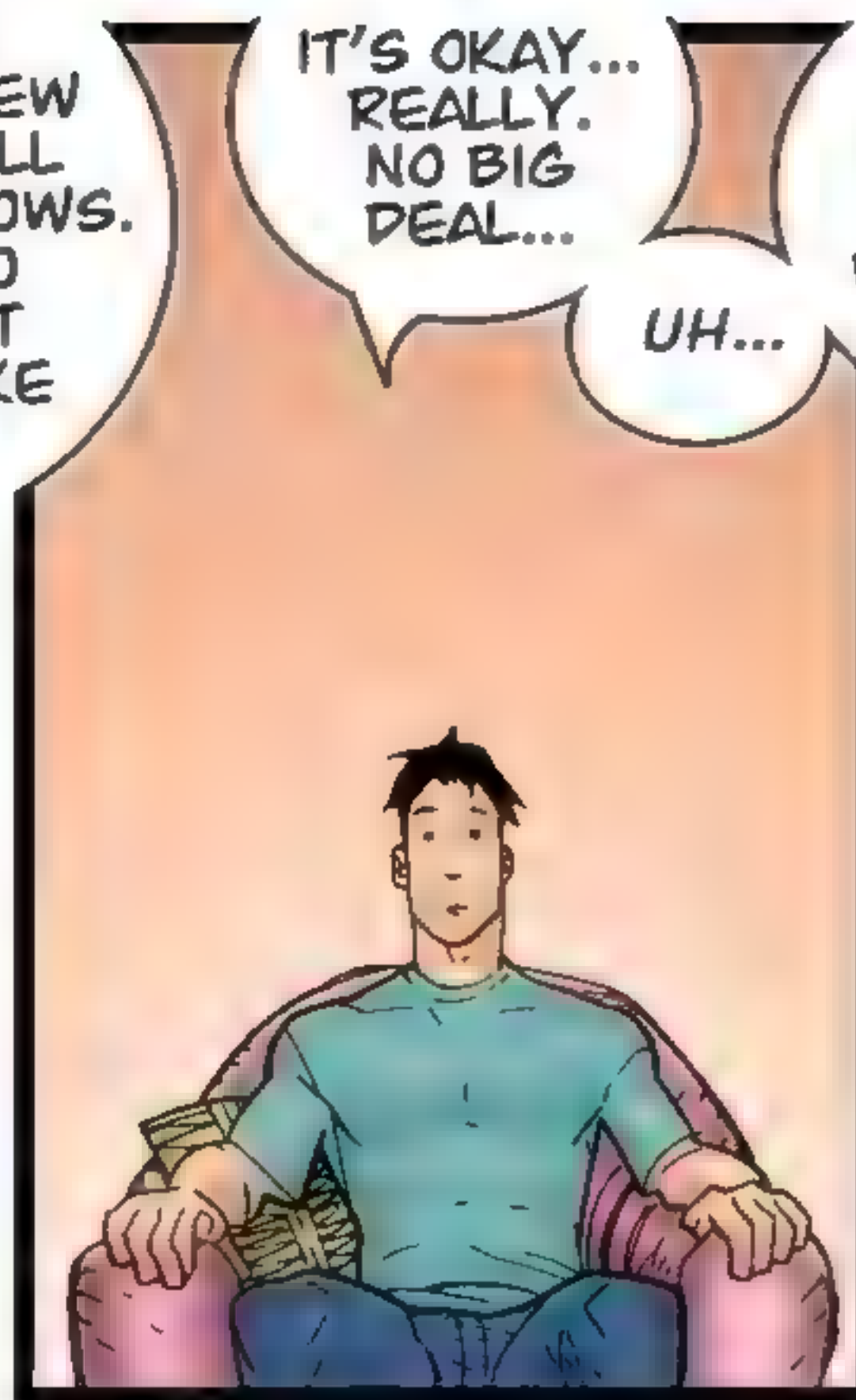


YEAH, I'VE BEEN KIND OF FIGHTING IT ALL MY LIFE... NOT WILLING TO LET MYSELF ADMIT IT.



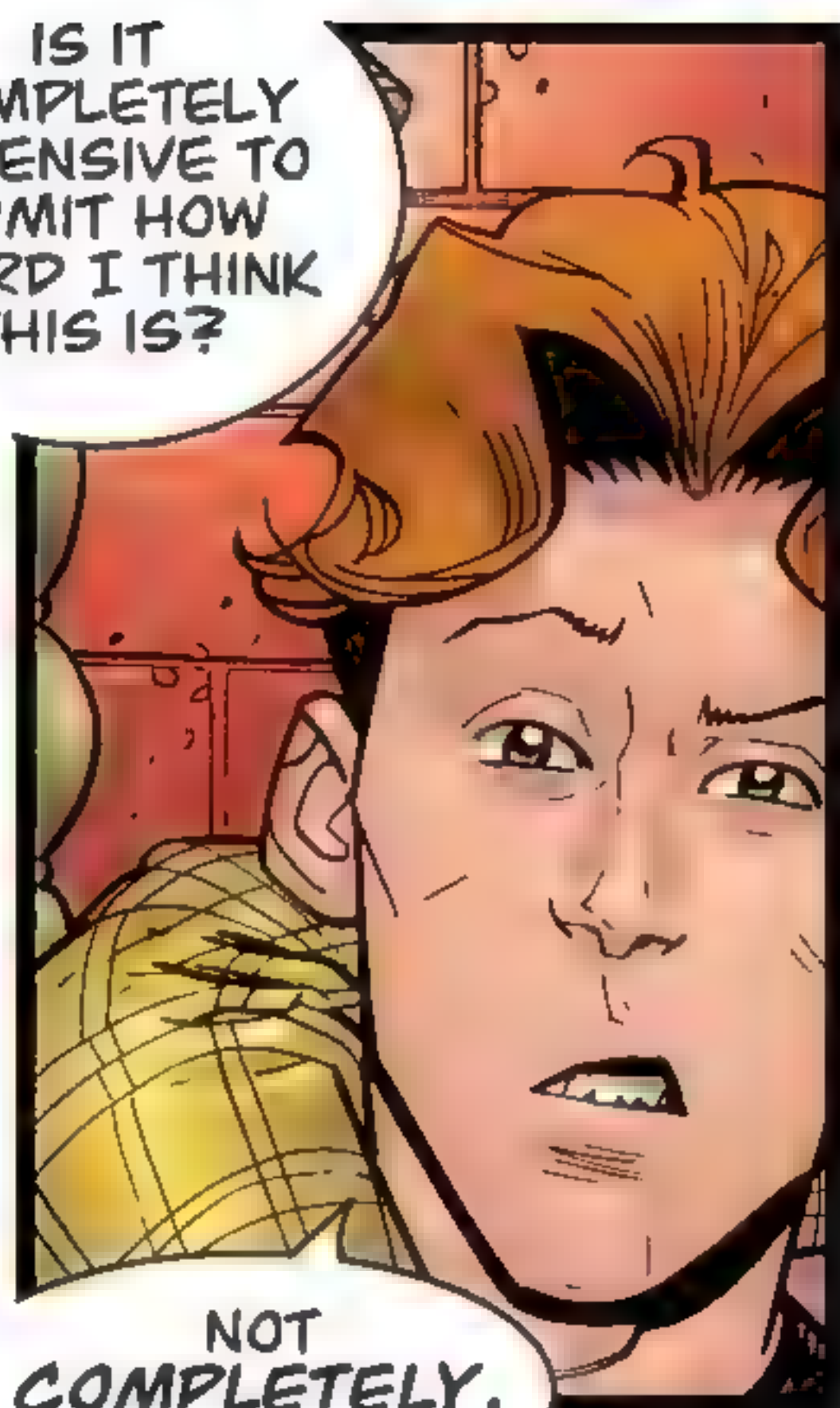
I NEVER REALLY KNEW HOW TO TELL YOU. EVE KNOWS. SORRY TO SPRING IT ON YOU LIKE THIS.

IT'S OKAY... REALLY. NO BIG DEAL...

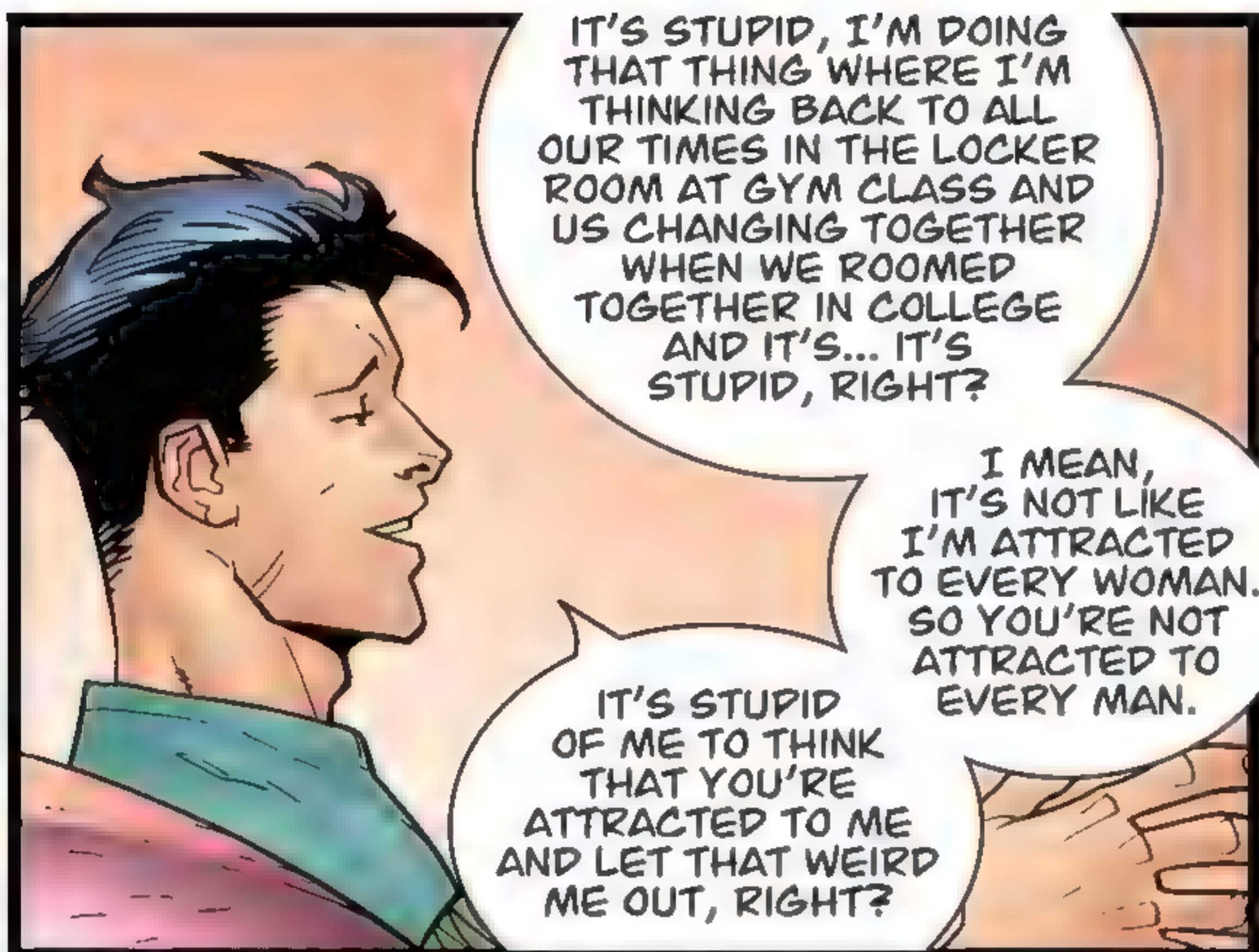


UH...

IS IT COMPLETELY OFFENSIVE TO ADMIT HOW WEIRD I THINK THIS IS?



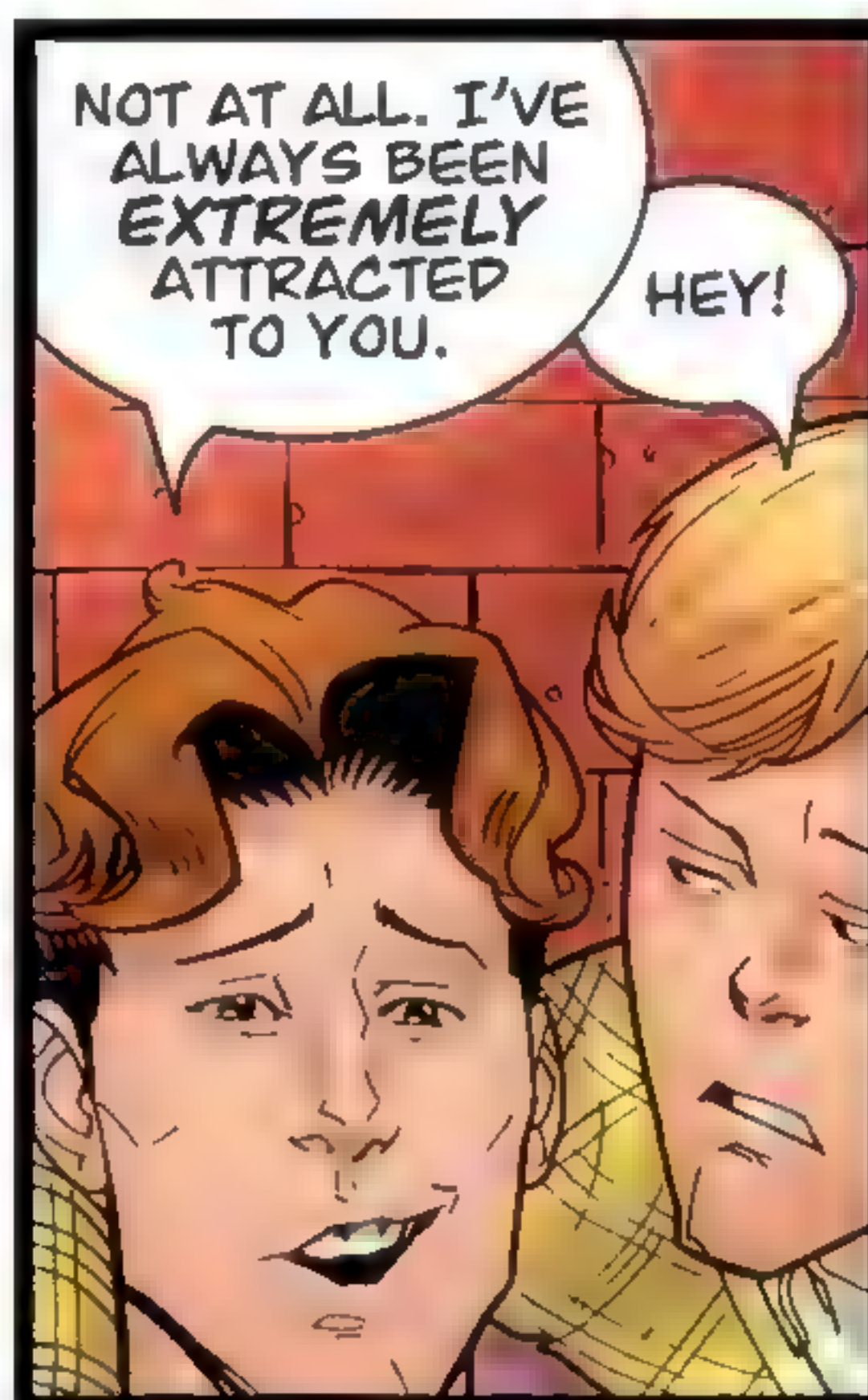
NOT COMPLETELY.



IT'S STUPID, I'M DOING THAT THING WHERE I'M THINKING BACK TO ALL OUR TIMES IN THE LOCKER ROOM AT GYM CLASS AND US CHANGING TOGETHER WHEN WE ROOMED TOGETHER IN COLLEGE AND IT'S... IT'S STUPID, RIGHT?

I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE I'M ATTRACTED TO EVERY WOMAN. SO YOU'RE NOT ATTRACTED TO EVERY MAN.

IT'S STUPID OF ME TO THINK THAT YOU'RE ATTRACTED TO ME AND LET THAT WEIRD ME OUT, RIGHT?



NOT AT ALL. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN **EXTREMELY** ATTRACTED TO YOU.

HEY!



...

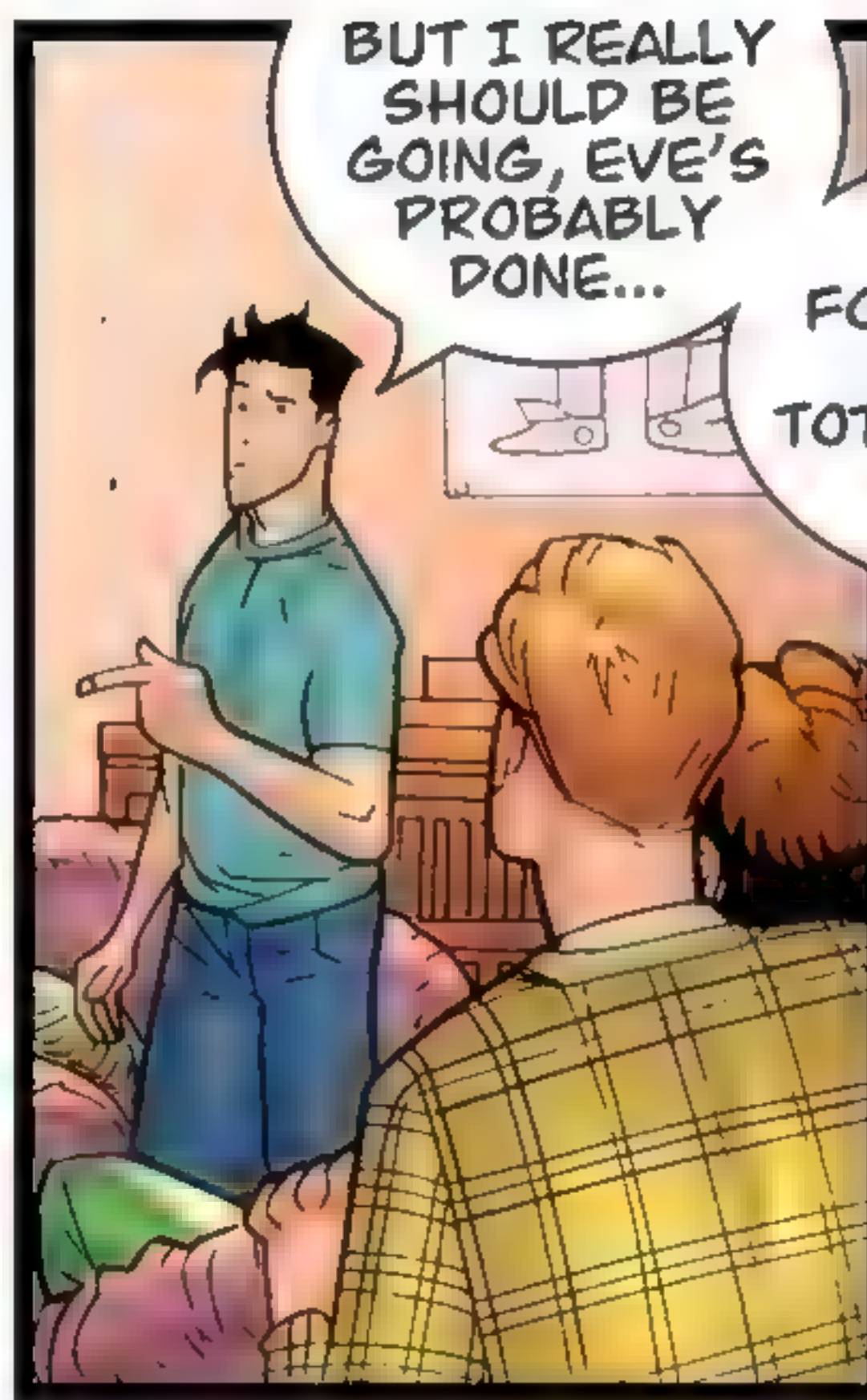


SORRY, IT'S TRUE.

IT'S OKAY, DON'T KNOW THAT I CAN REALLY BLAME YOU. HE'S QUITE THE---

OKAY... OKAY! I THINK THAT'S ENOUGH.

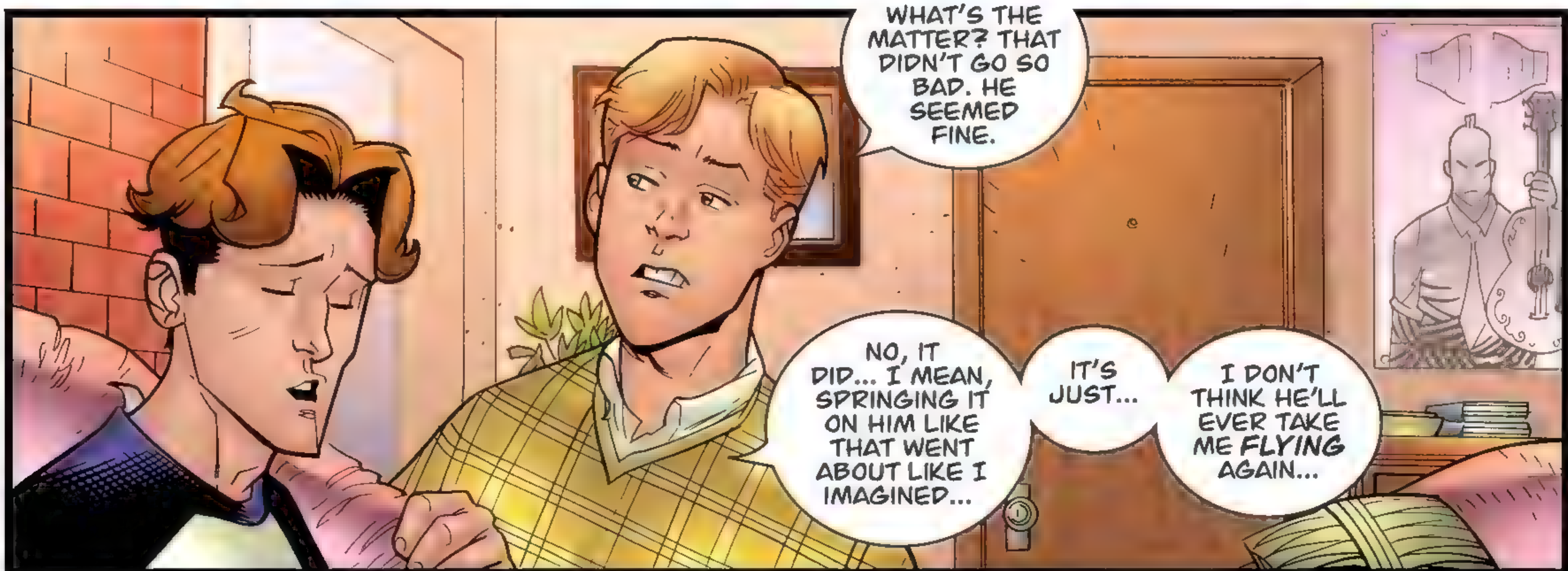
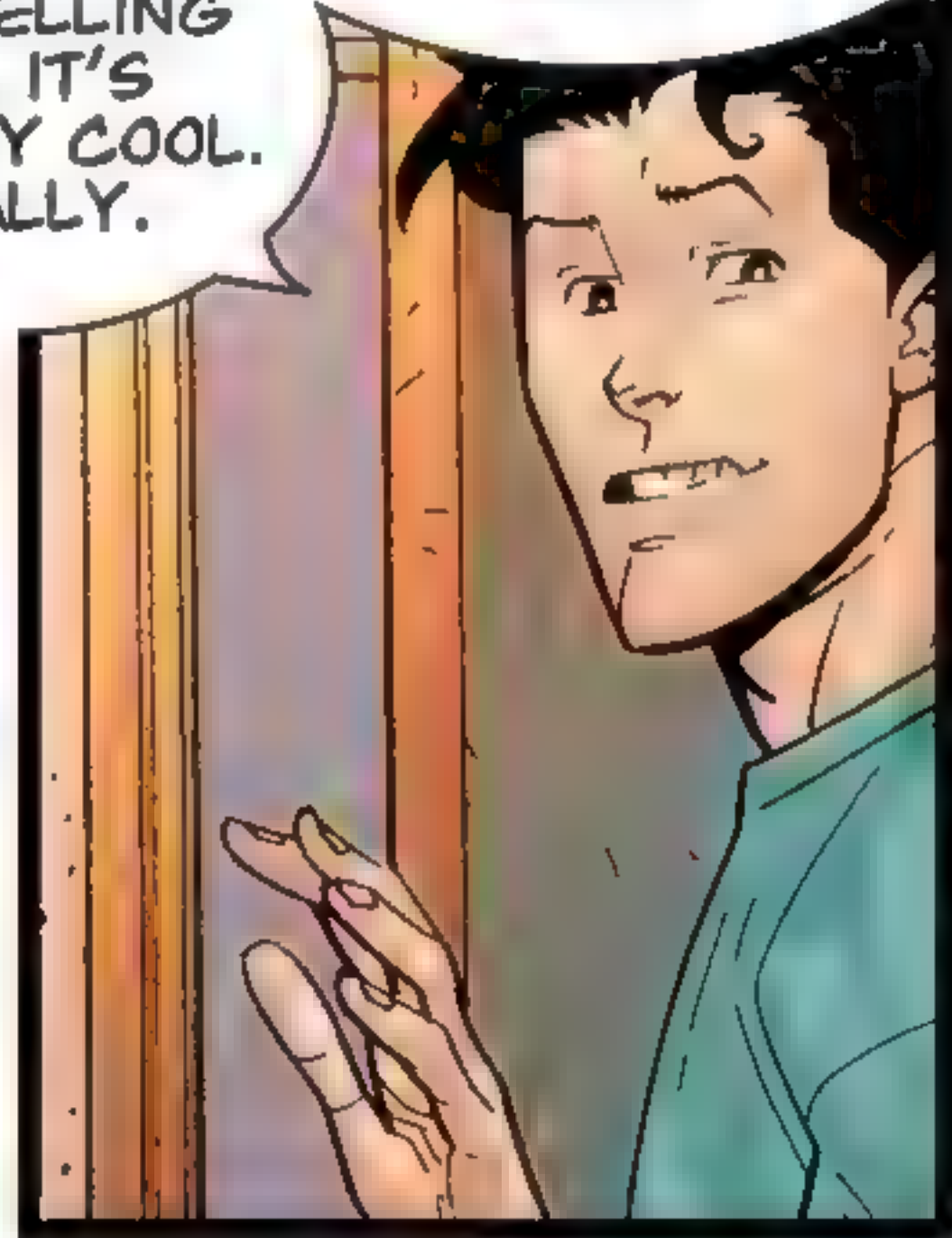
I'M VERY FLATTERED, REALLY...



BUT I REALLY SHOULD BE GOING, EVE'S PROBABLY DONE...

THANKS FOR TELLING ME, IT'S TOTALLY COOL. REALLY.

I'LL CALL YOU. WE NEED TO HANG OUT SOME TIME---MAYBE WE CAN DOUBLE-DATE.

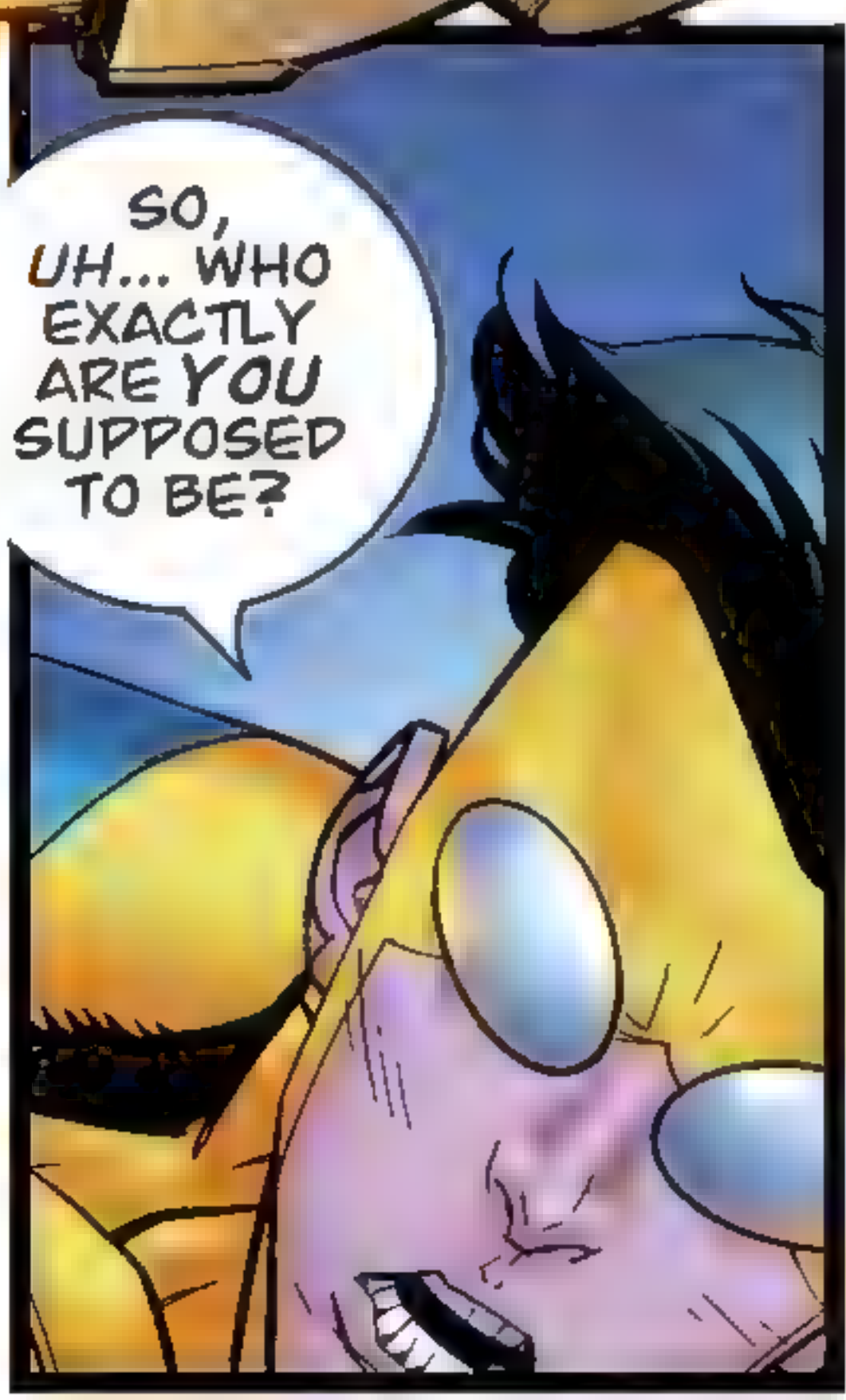


WHAT'S THE MATTER? THAT DIDN'T GO SO BAD. HE SEEMED FINE.

NO, IT DID... I MEAN, SPRINGING IT ON HIM LIKE THAT WENT ABOUT LIKE I IMAGINED...

IT'S JUST...

I DON'T THINK HE'LL EVER TAKE ME FLYING AGAIN...



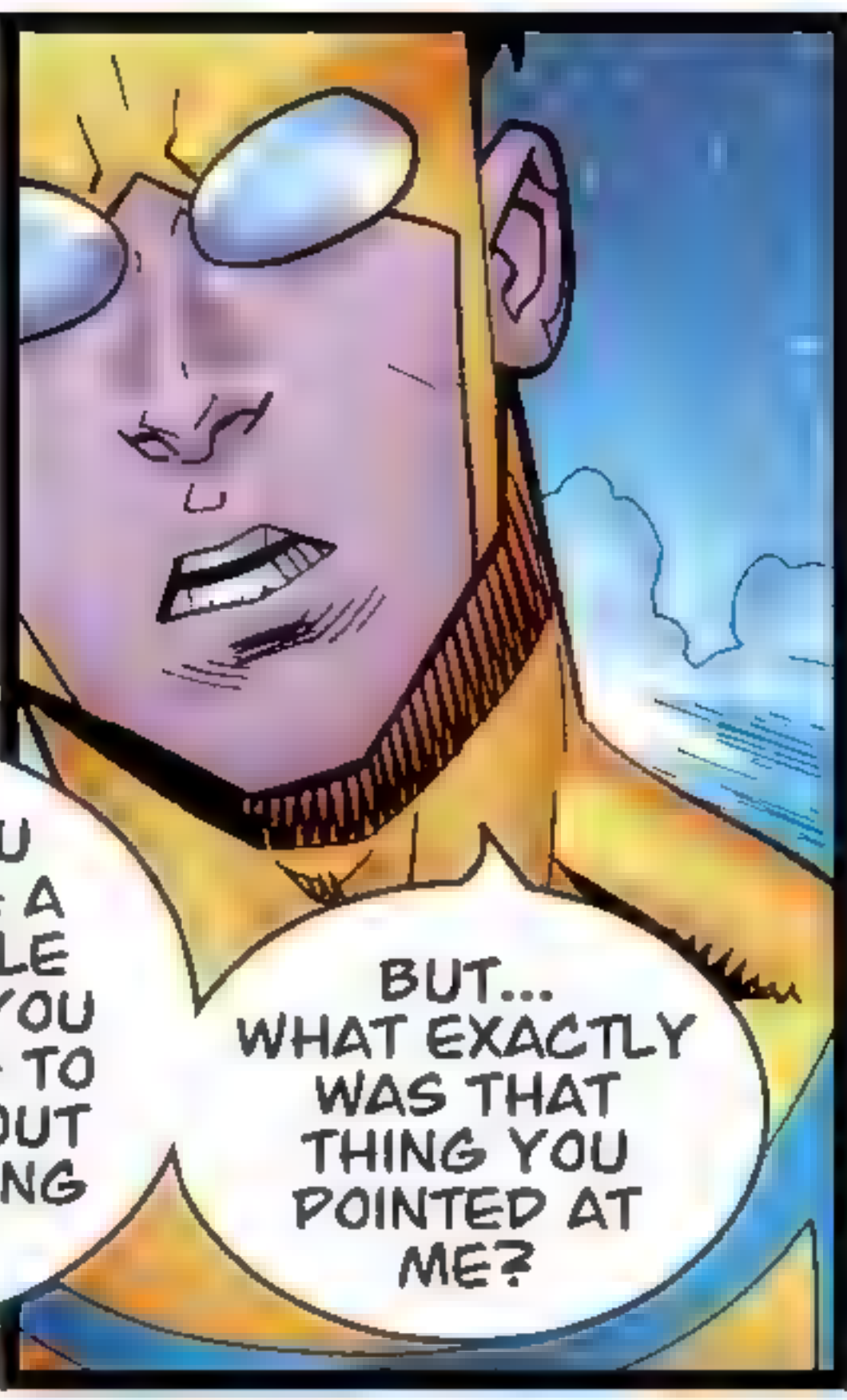


I CAN'T FIGHT YOU, I DON'T STAND A CHANCE. I THOUGHT I'D RUN INTO SOMEONE LIKE REX SPODE, I COULD HANDLE THAT.

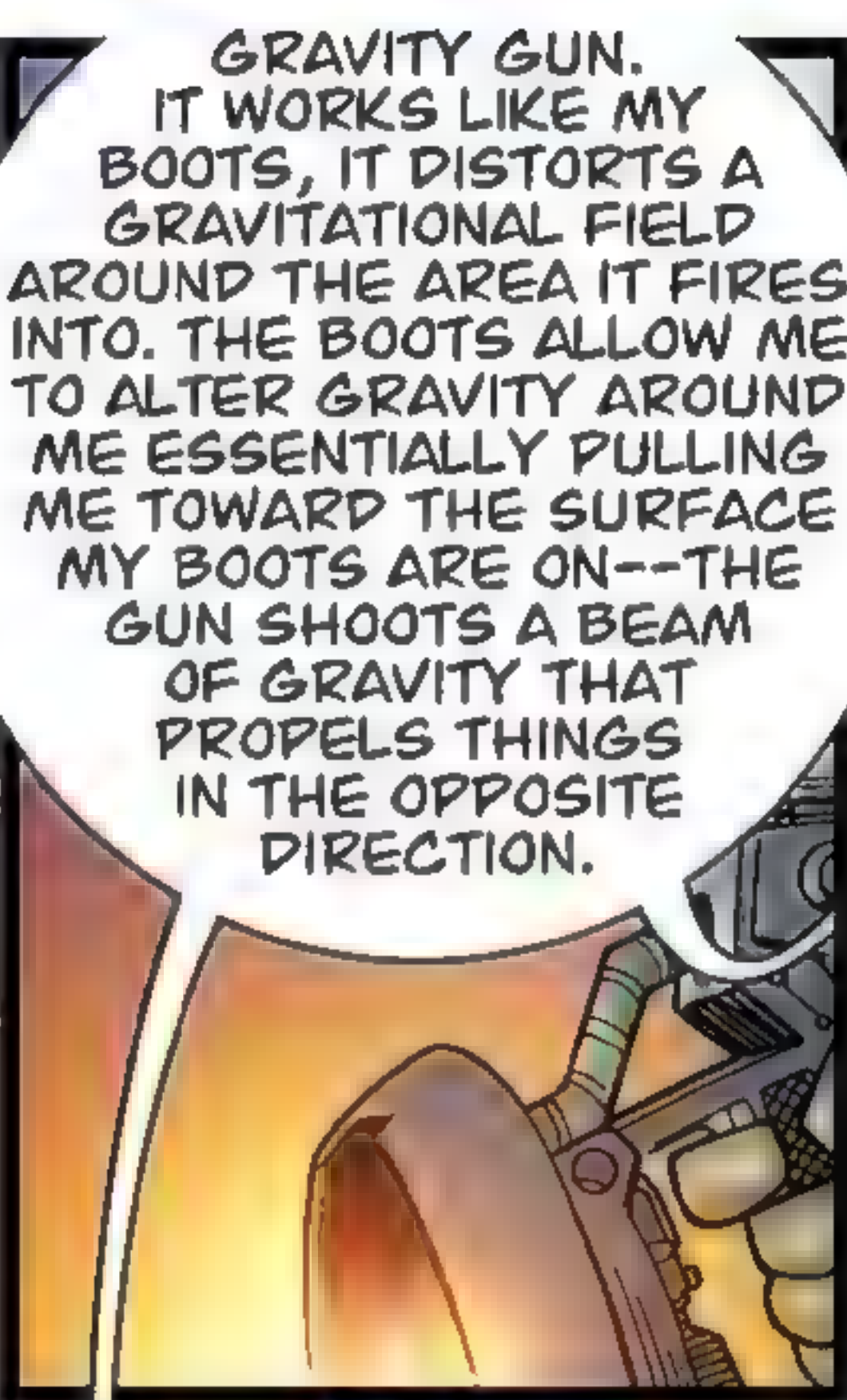
REX SPODE IS DEAD.

JEEZ, I'M SORRY. I HAD NO IDEA. I... LOOK, I SURRENDER OKAY? JUST-- PLEASE DON'T PUNCH ME OR ANYTHING.

WELL, YOU SEEM LIKE A REASONABLE GUY... SO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME PUNCHING YOU.



BUT... WHAT EXACTLY WAS THAT THING YOU POINTED AT ME?



GRAVITY GUN. IT WORKS LIKE MY BOOTS, IT DISTORTS A GRAVITATIONAL FIELD AROUND THE AREA IT FIRES INTO. THE BOOTS ALLOW ME TO ALTER GRAVITY AROUND ME ESSENTIALLY PULLING ME TOWARD THE SURFACE MY BOOTS ARE ON--THE GUN SHOOTS A BEAM OF GRAVITY THAT PROPELS THINGS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.



IT'S A PRETTY GOOD NON-LETHAL WEAPON-- PROBABLY WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU, THOUGH.

PROBABLY NOT. CAN I BE HONEST WITH YOU? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU DID. YOU DID DO SOMETHING WRONG, RIGHT?



I ROBBED A BANK, I'VE GOT TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND IN BONDS HERE.

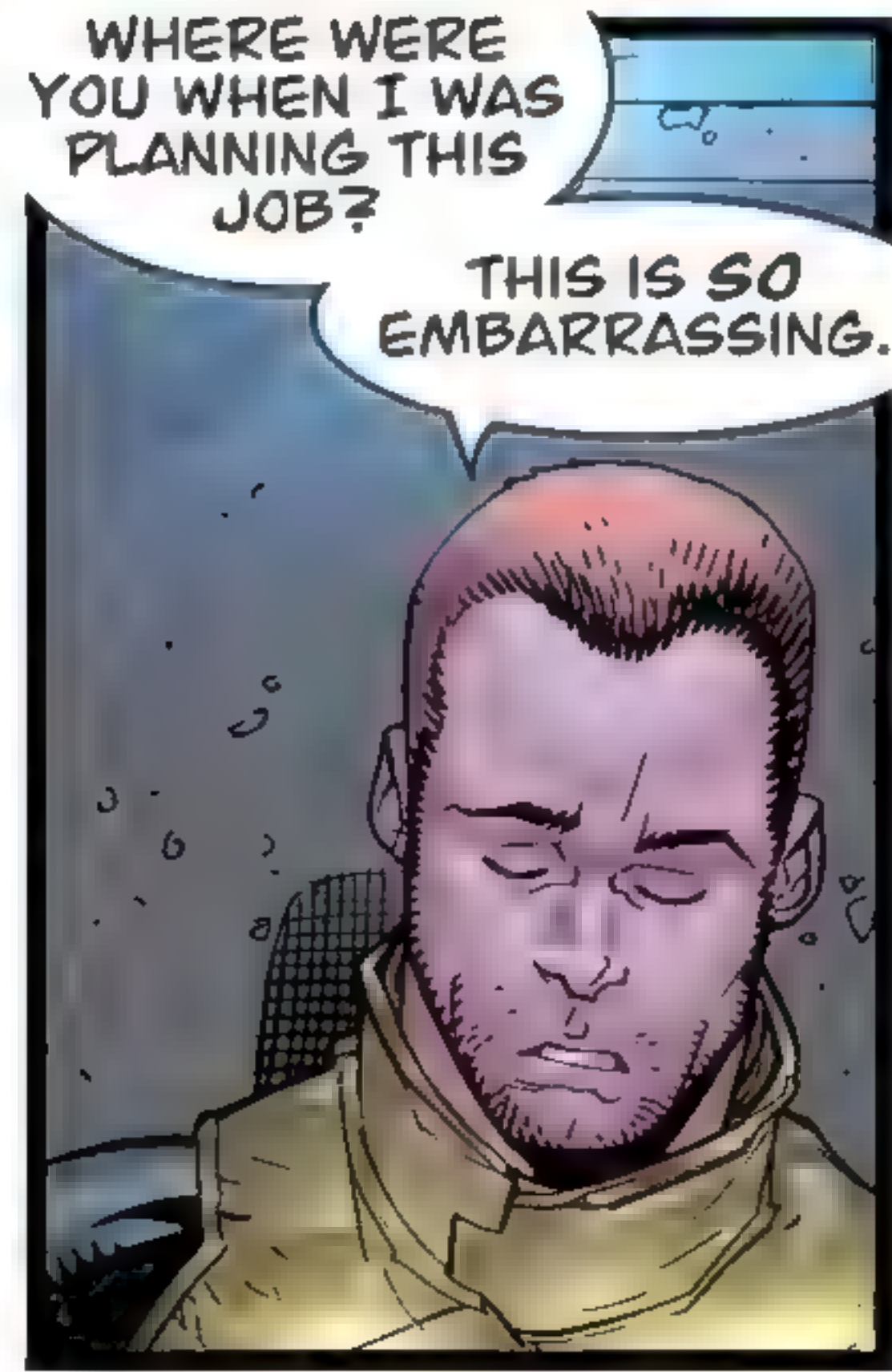
IT WAS A CINCH WITH THE BOOTS, NOBODY SAW ME-- NO ONE LOOKS UP.



YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME. SO THE GETUP, NECESSARY INSIDE THE BANK, SURE--BUT OUTSIDE?

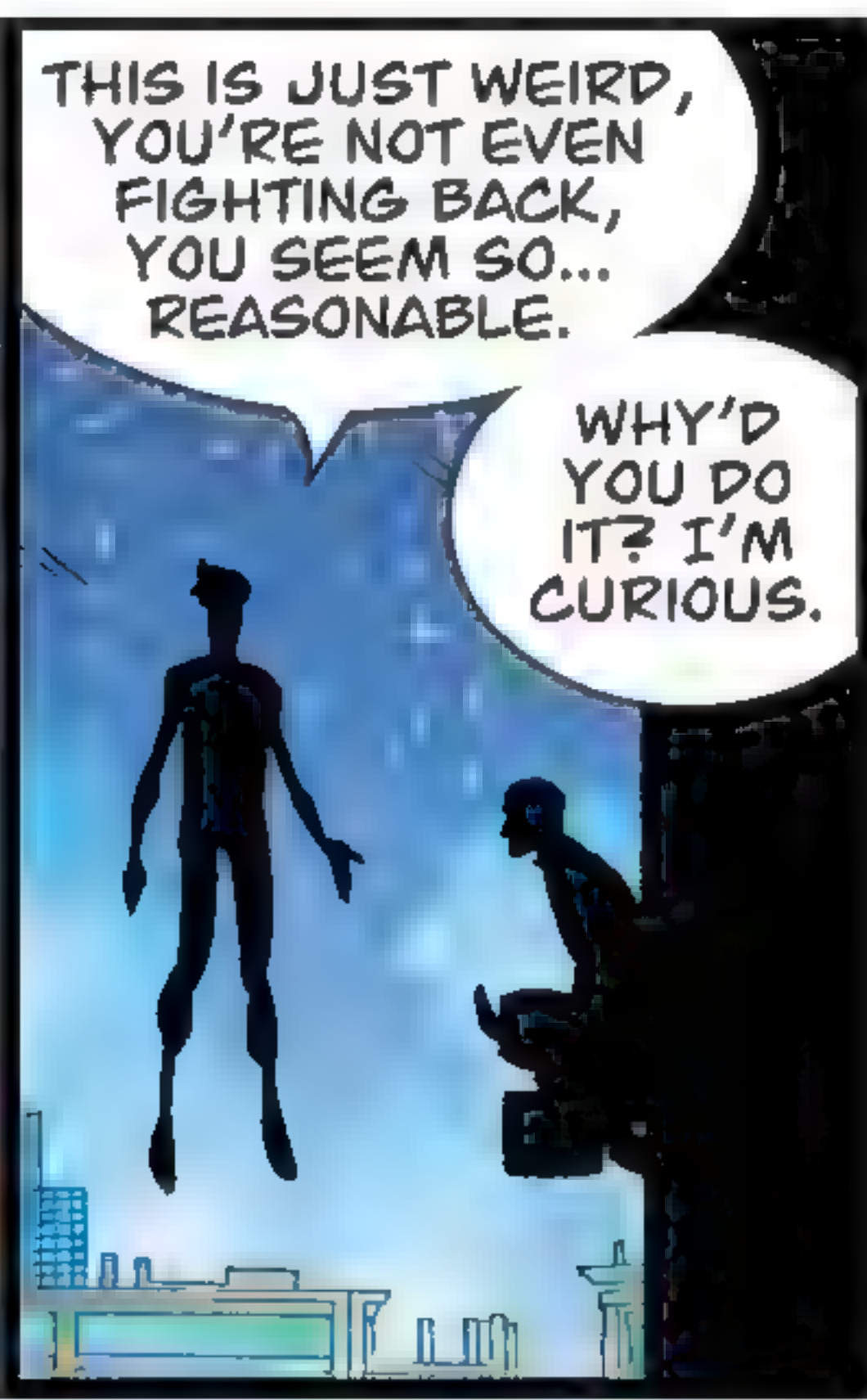
I MEAN, IF YOU'D JUST BEEN WALKING DOWN THE STREET WITH A BRIEFCASE, I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE EVEN NOTICED YOU.

JUST SAYING.



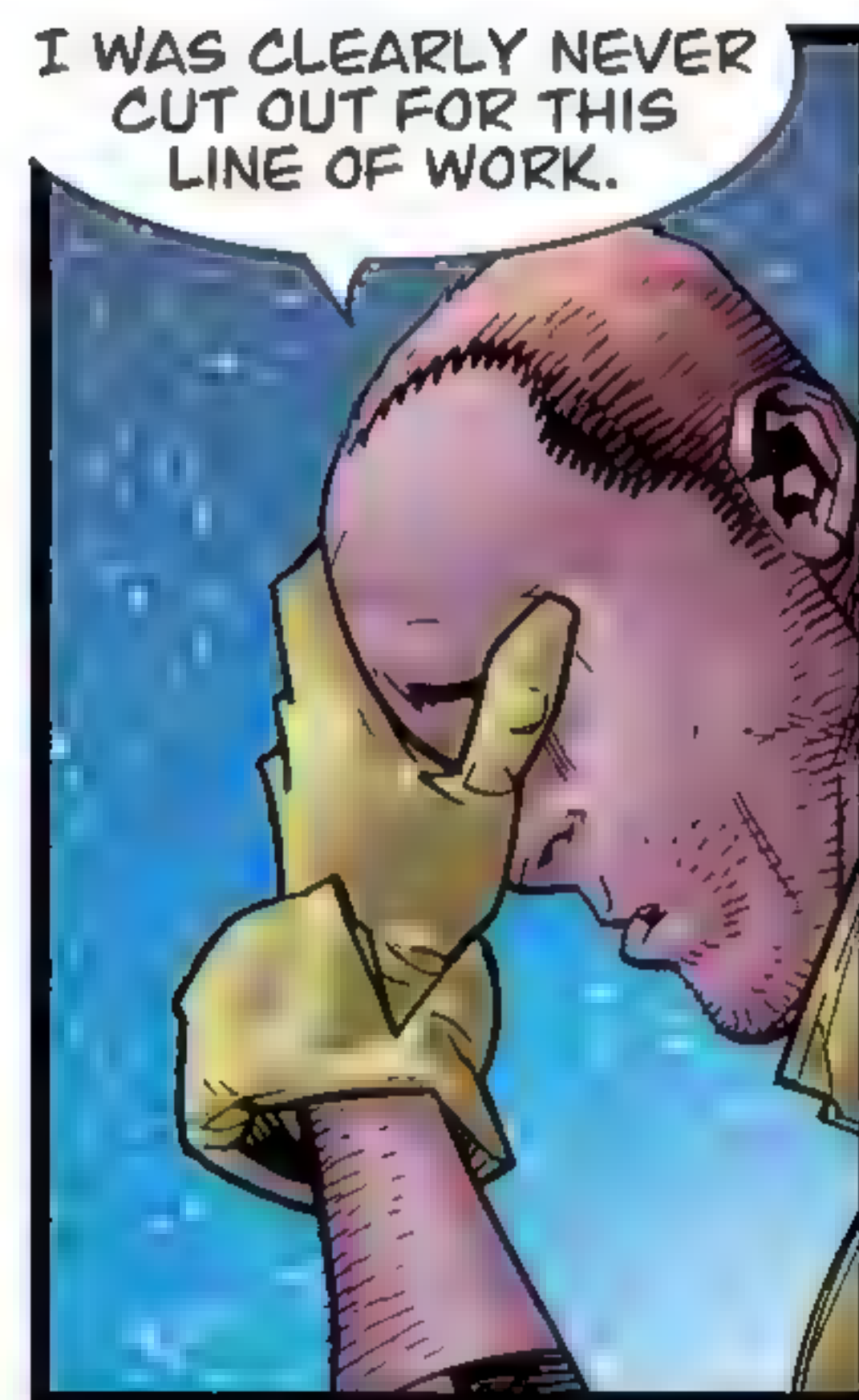
WHERE WERE YOU WHEN I WAS PLANNING THIS JOB?

THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING.

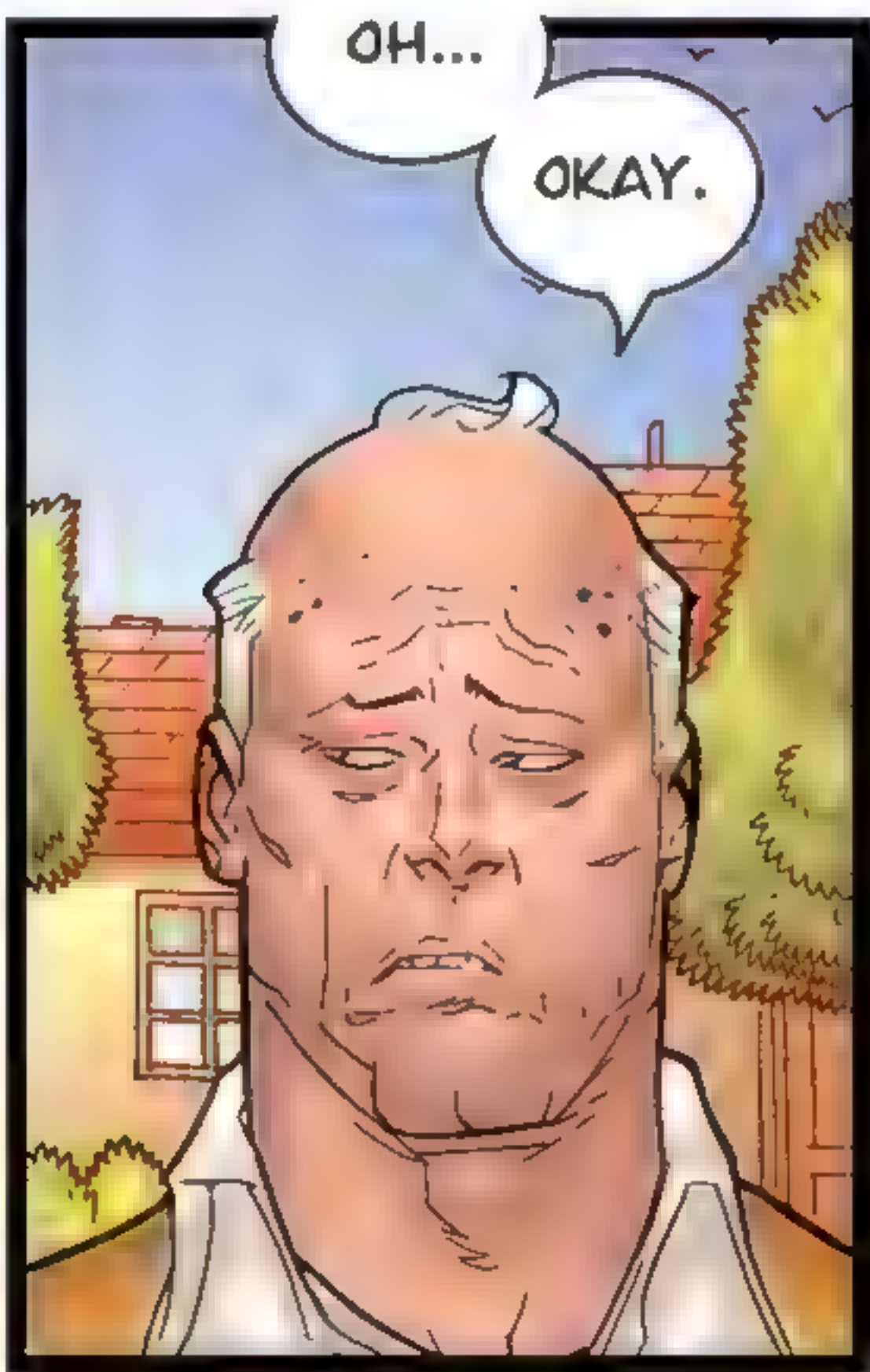
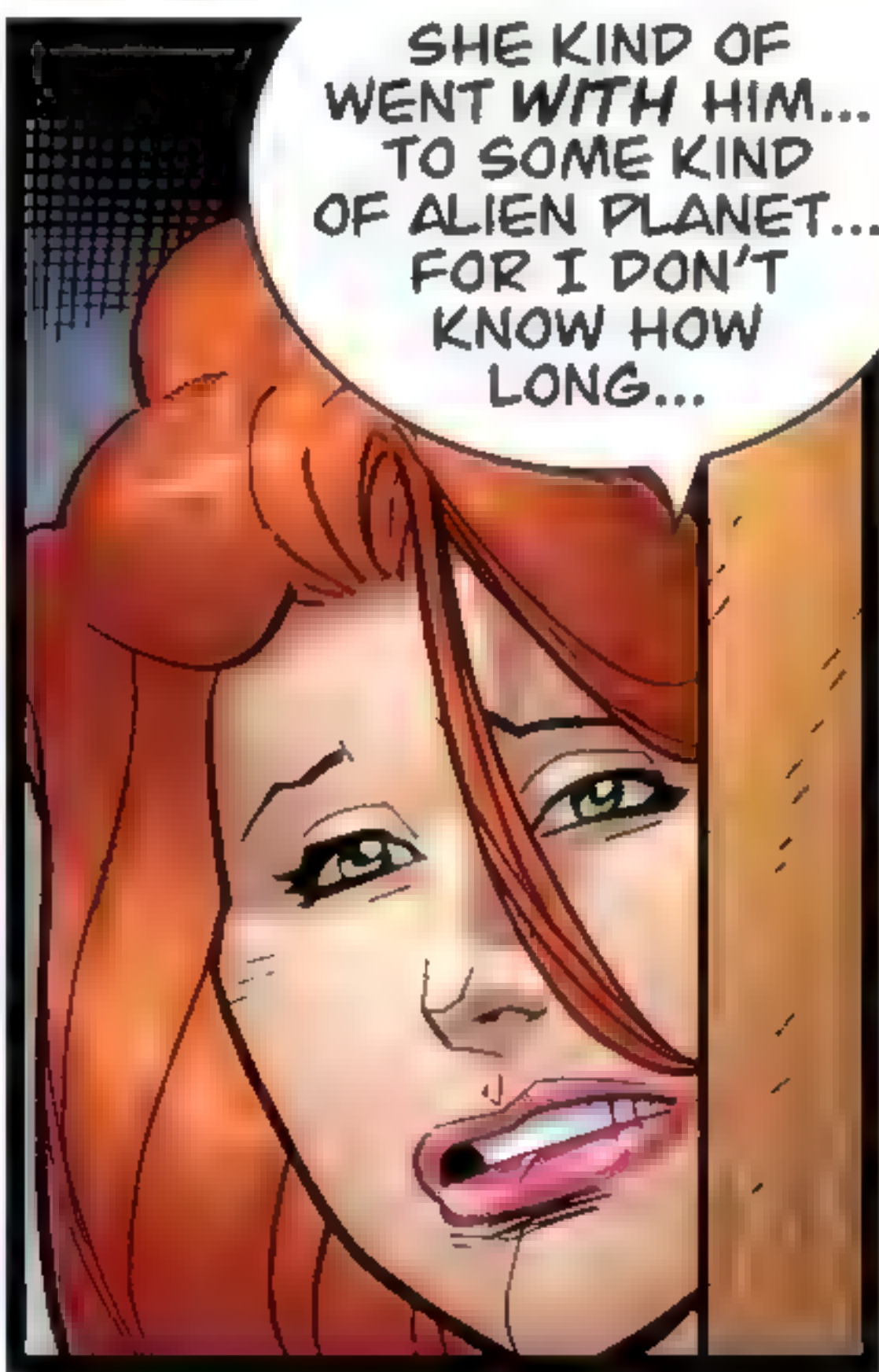
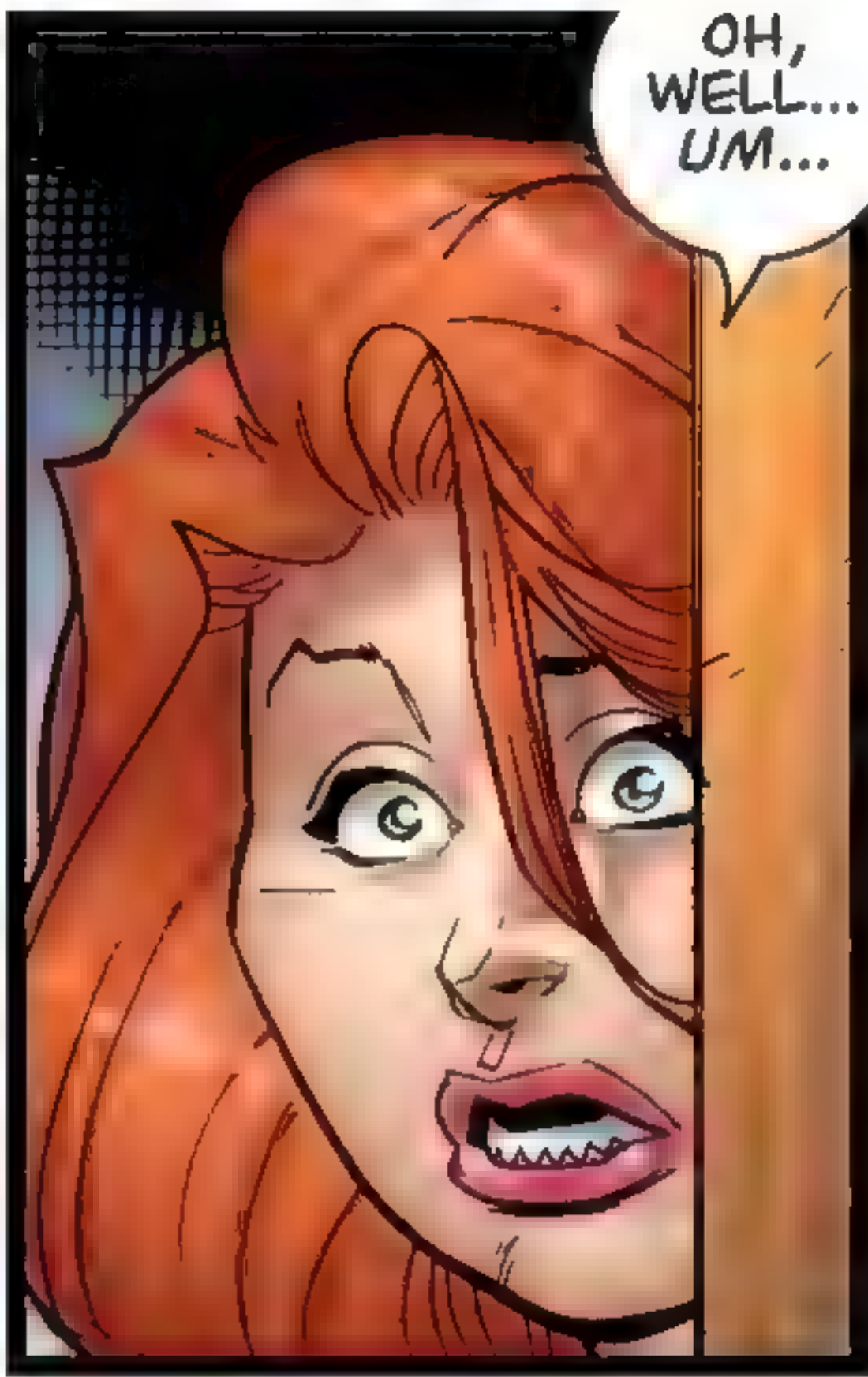
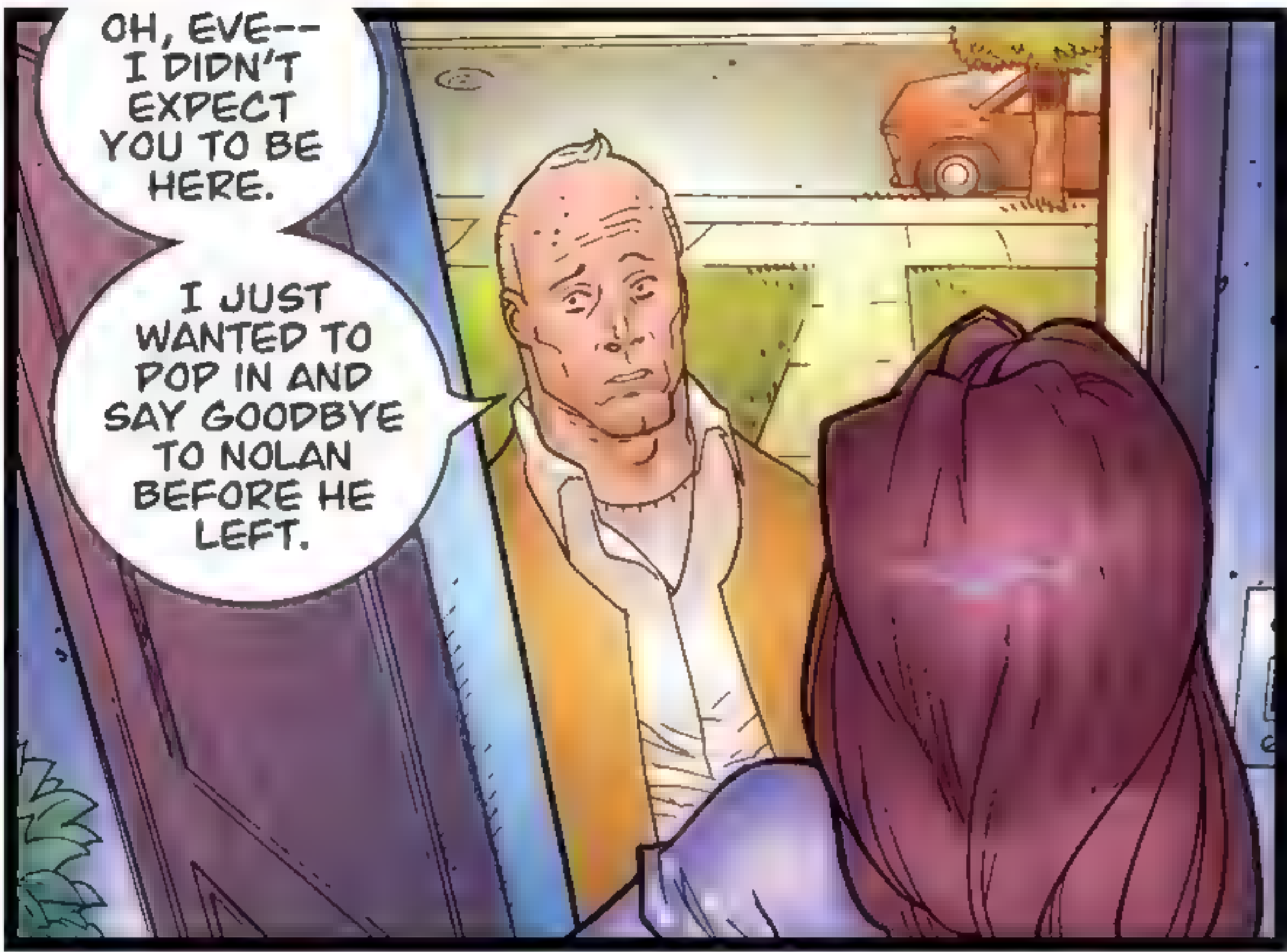
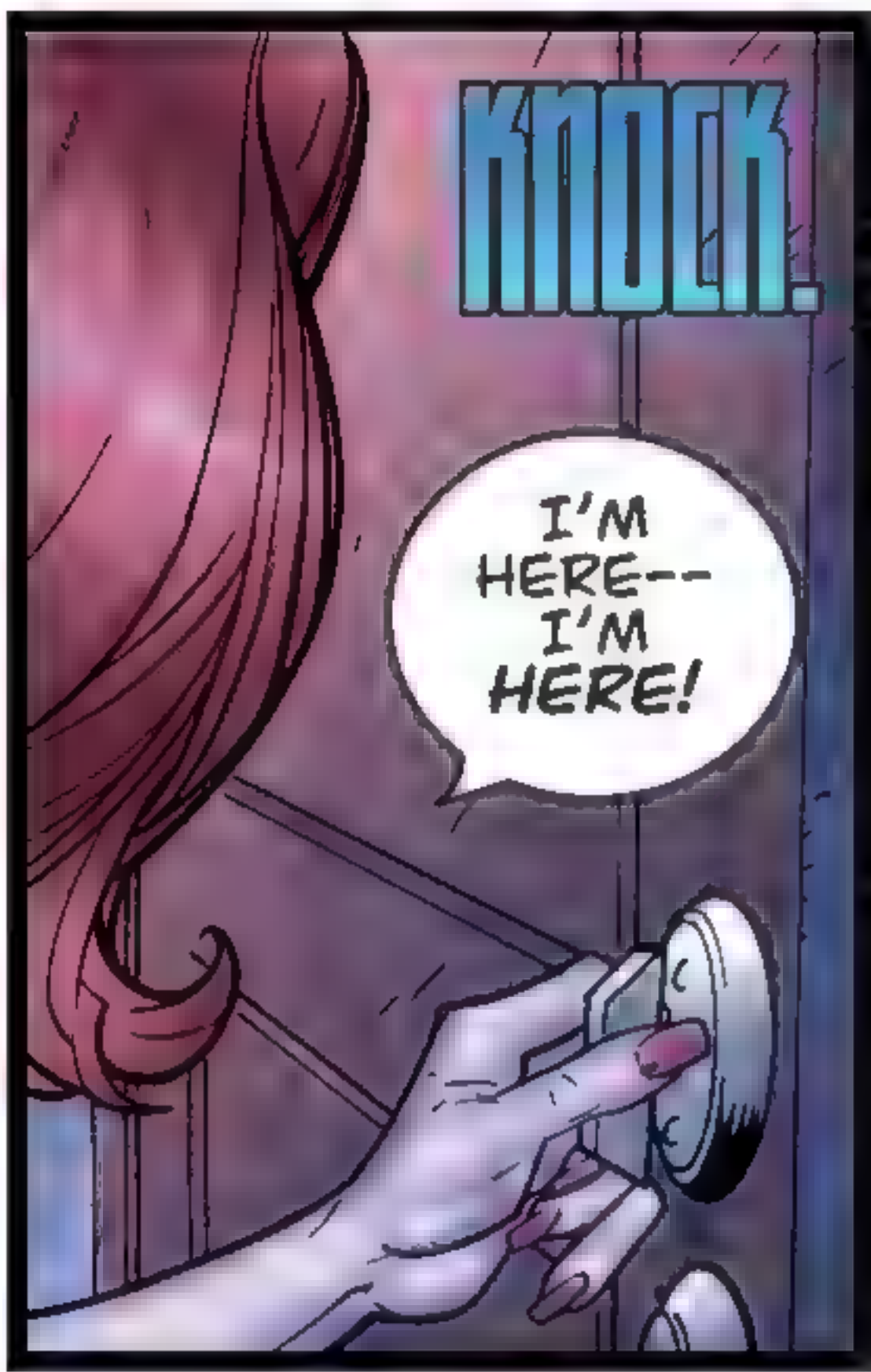
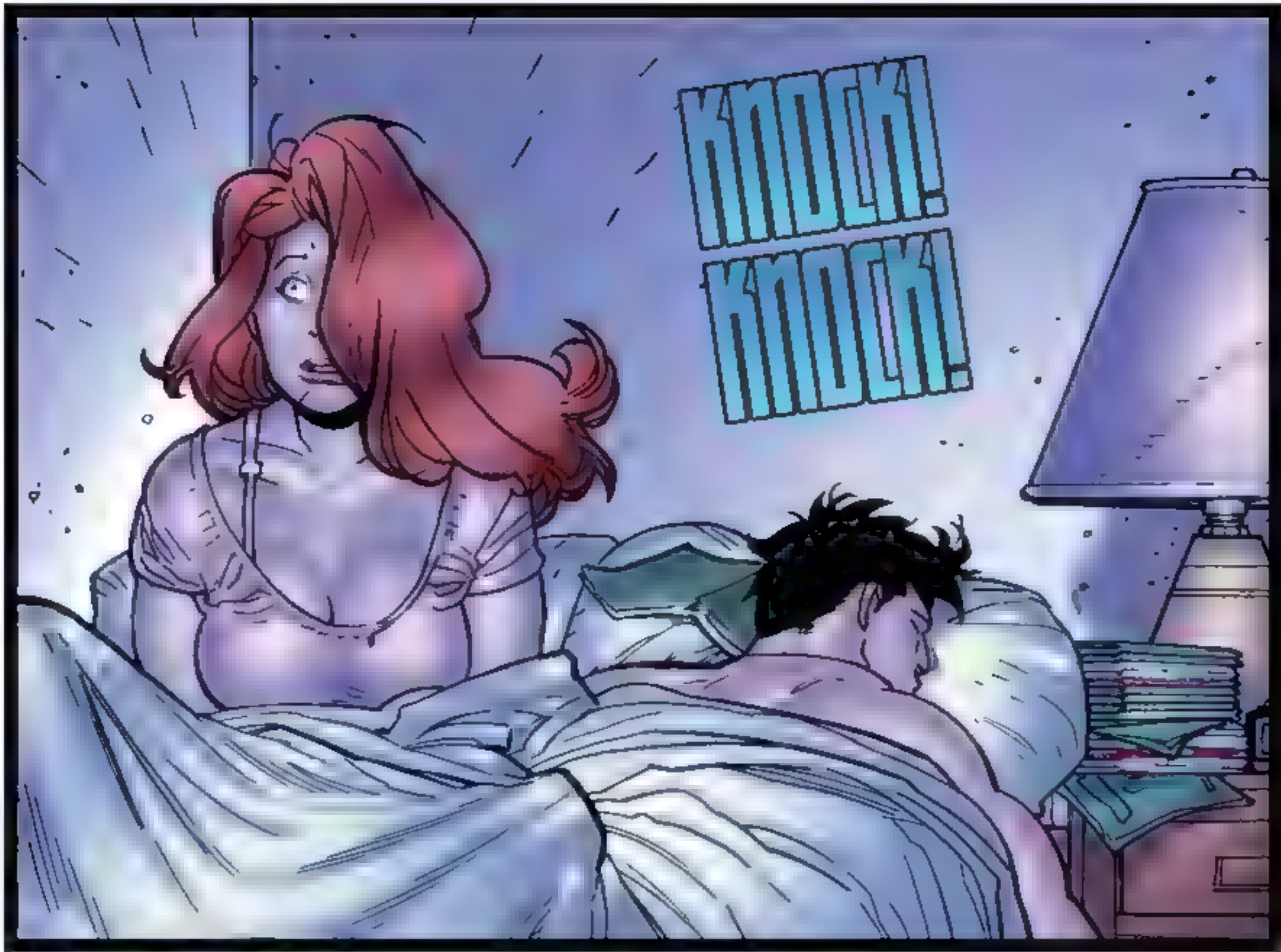


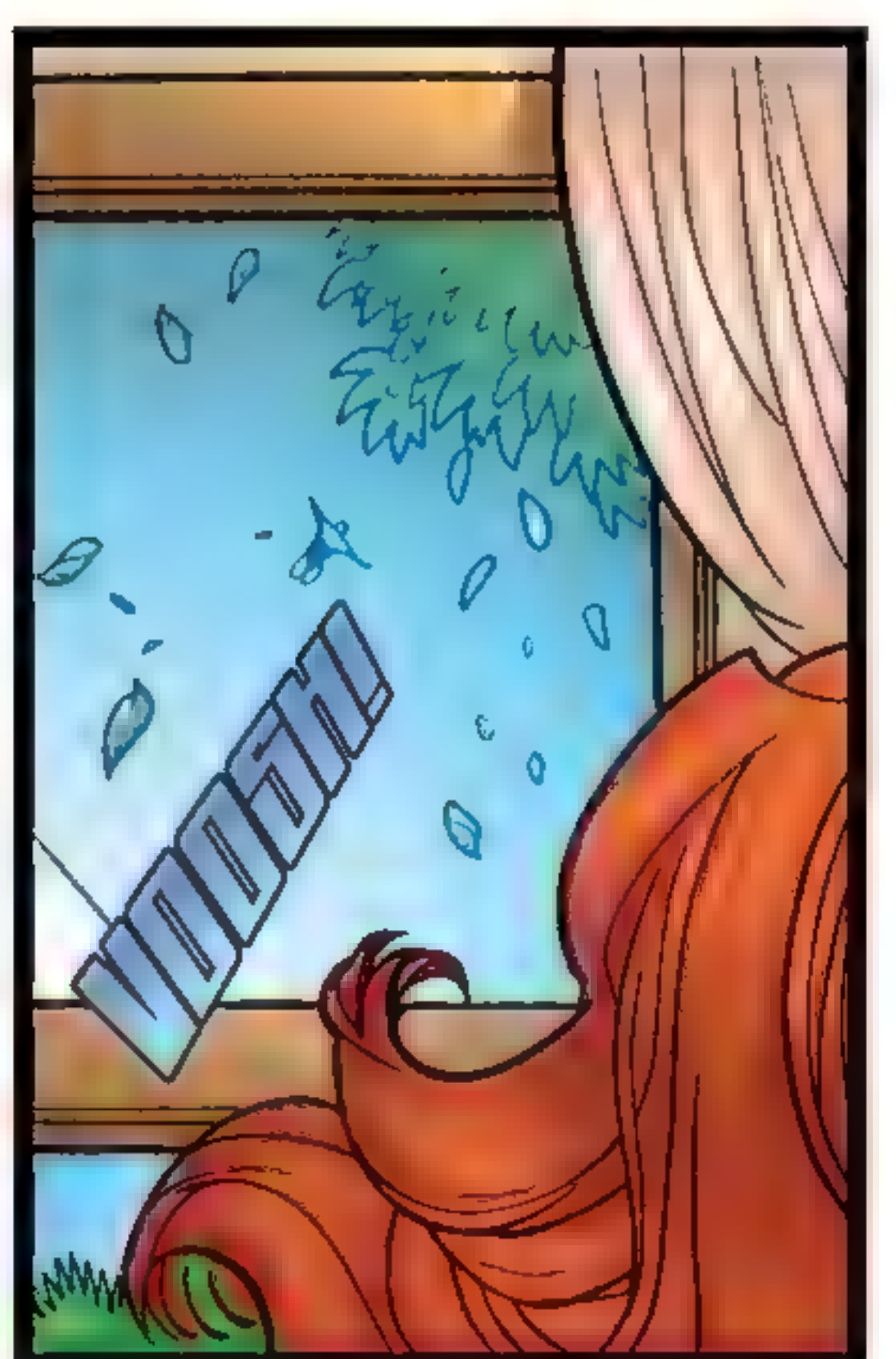
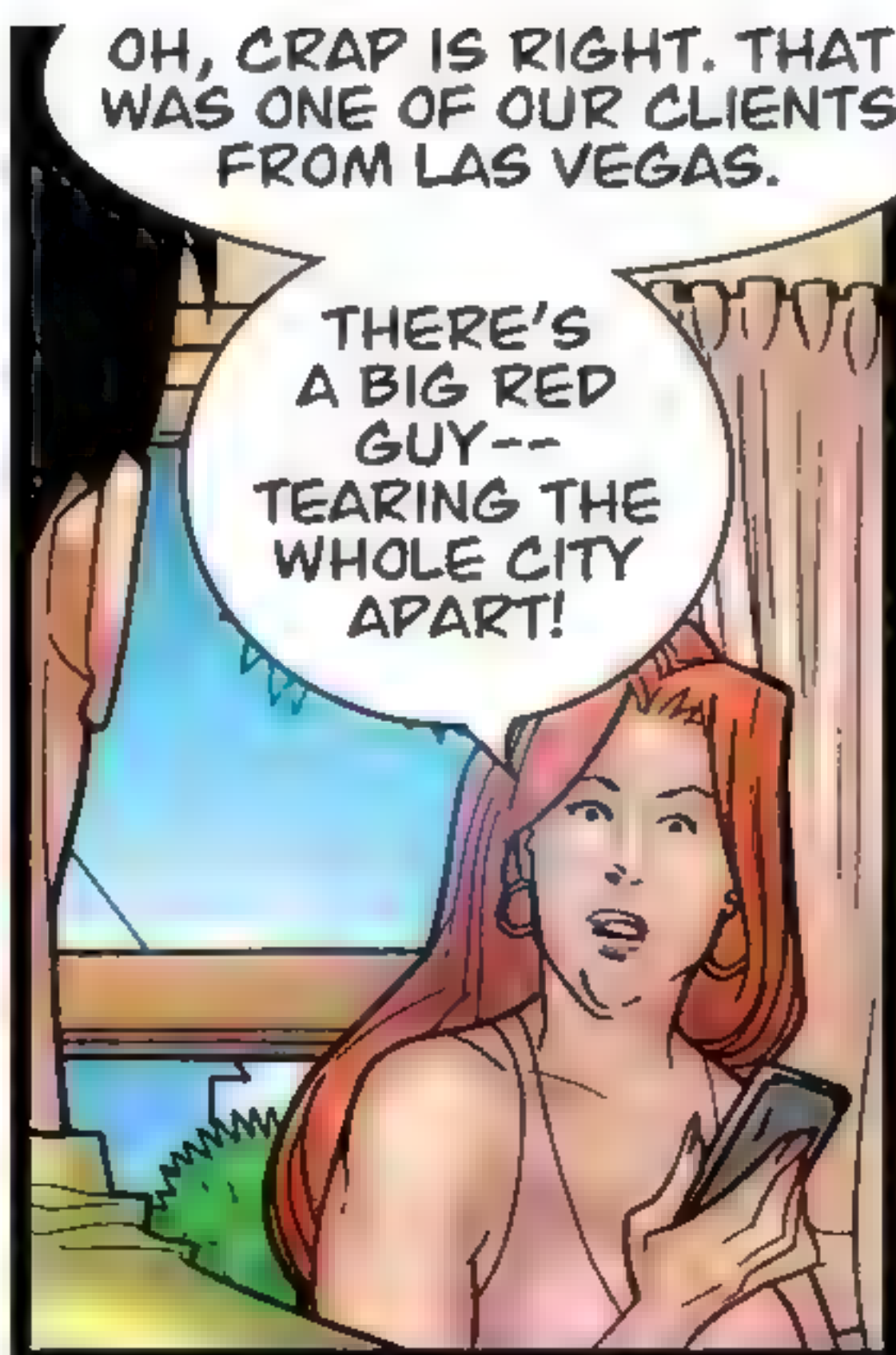
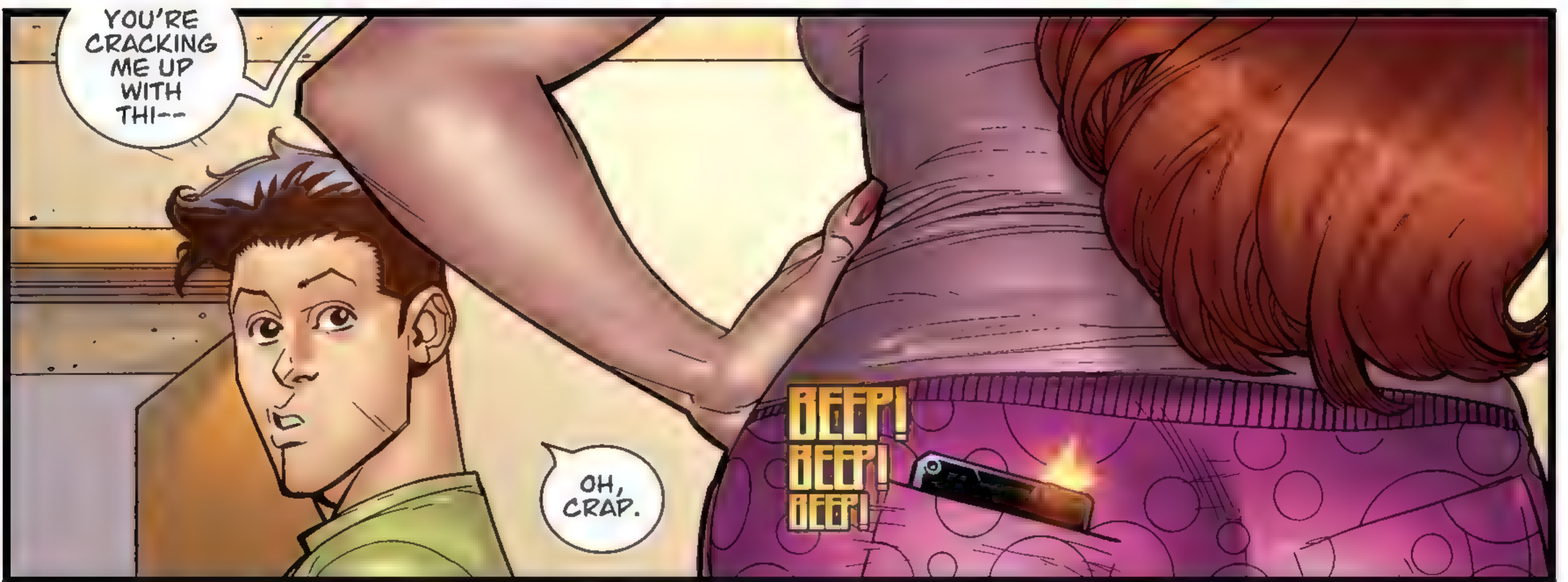
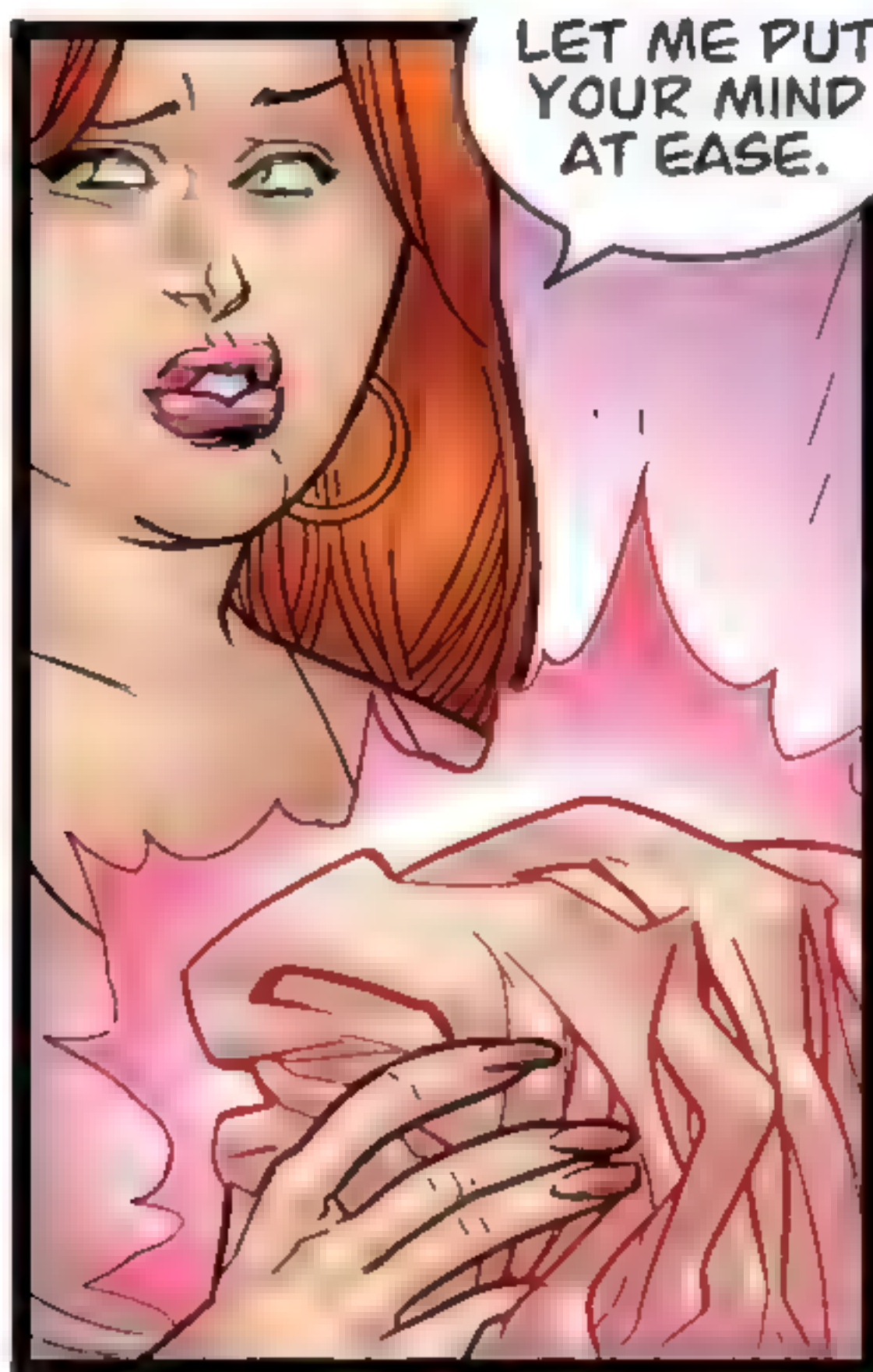
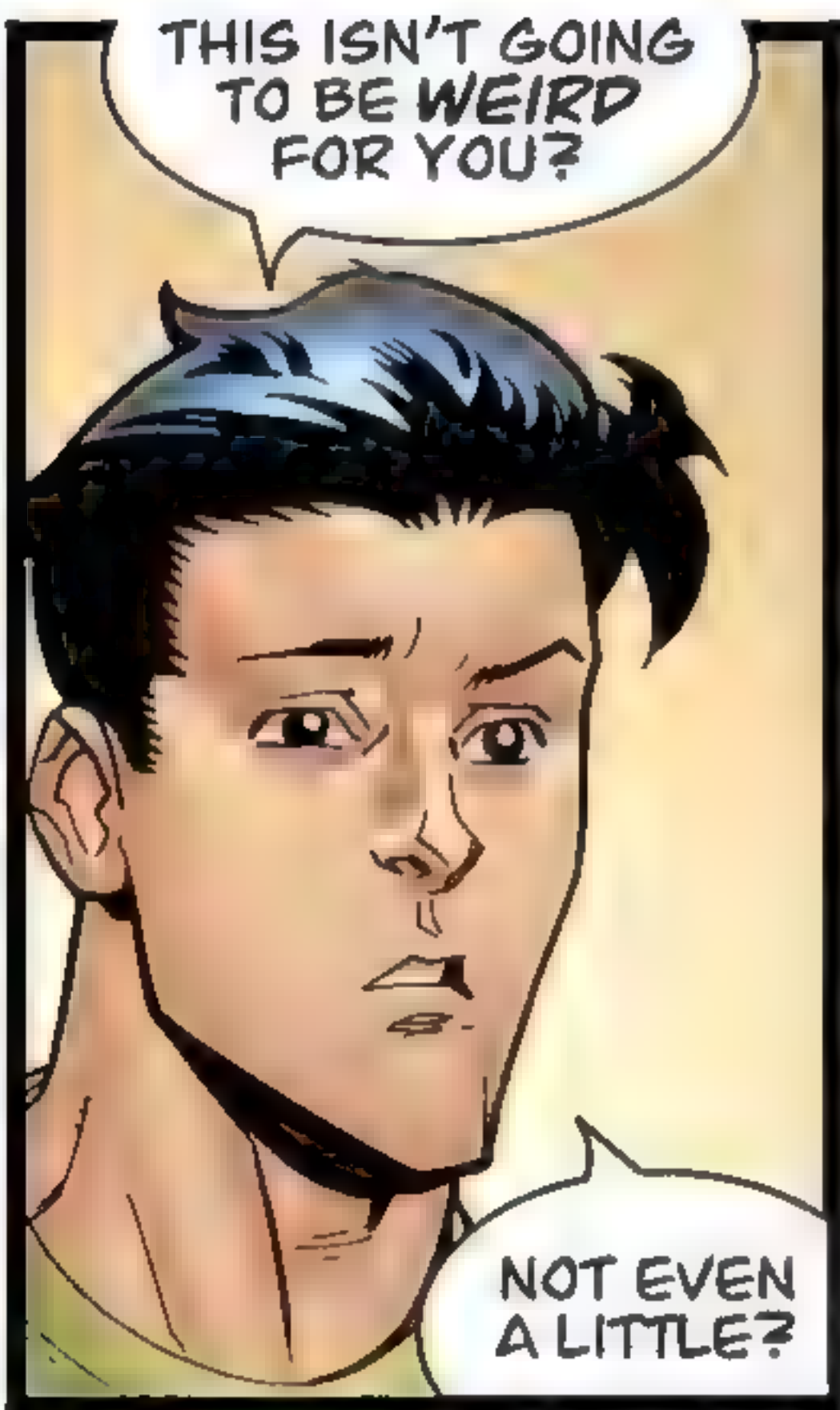
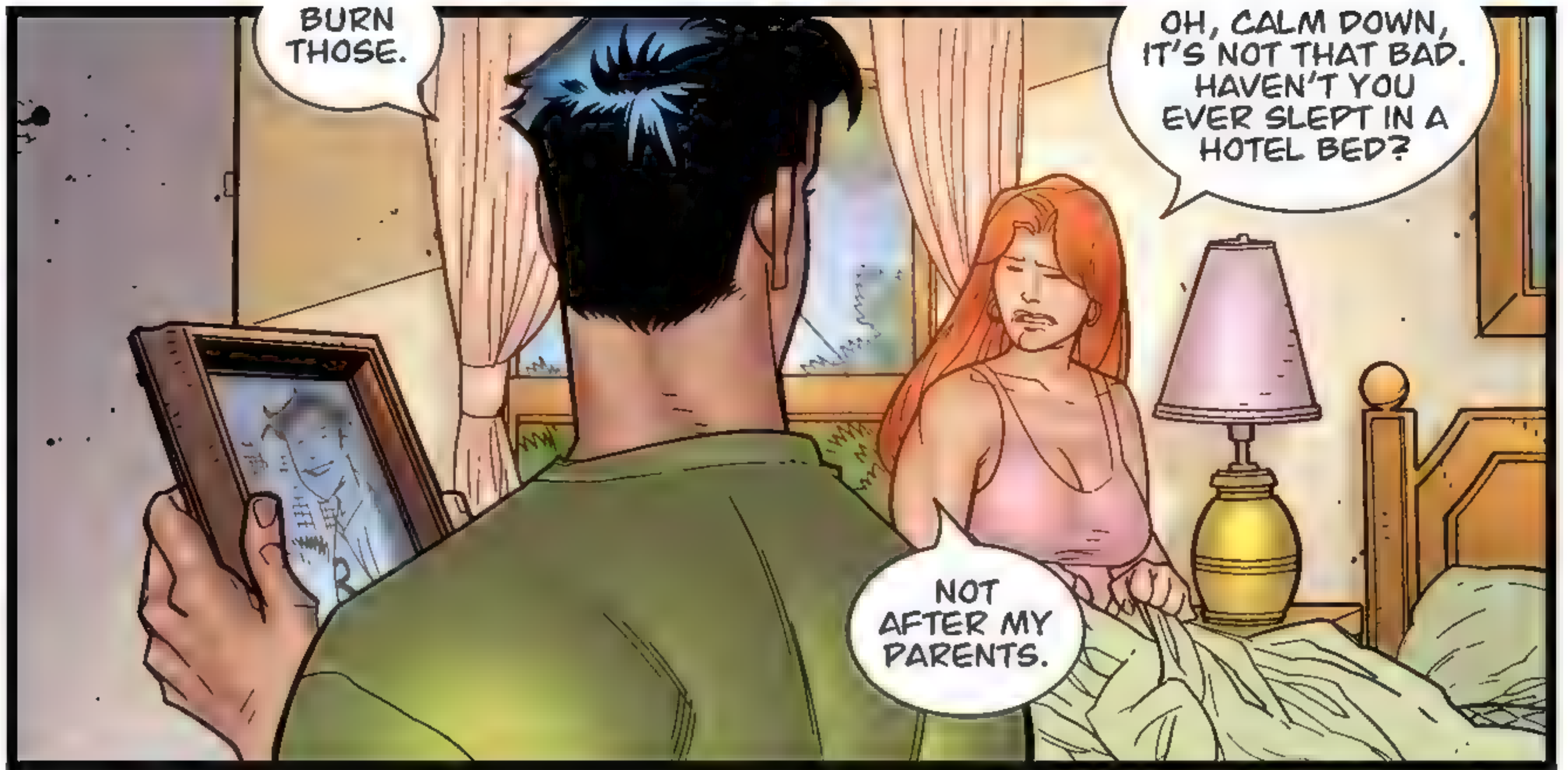
THIS IS JUST WEIRD, YOU'RE NOT EVEN FIGHTING BACK, YOU SEEM SO... REASONABLE.

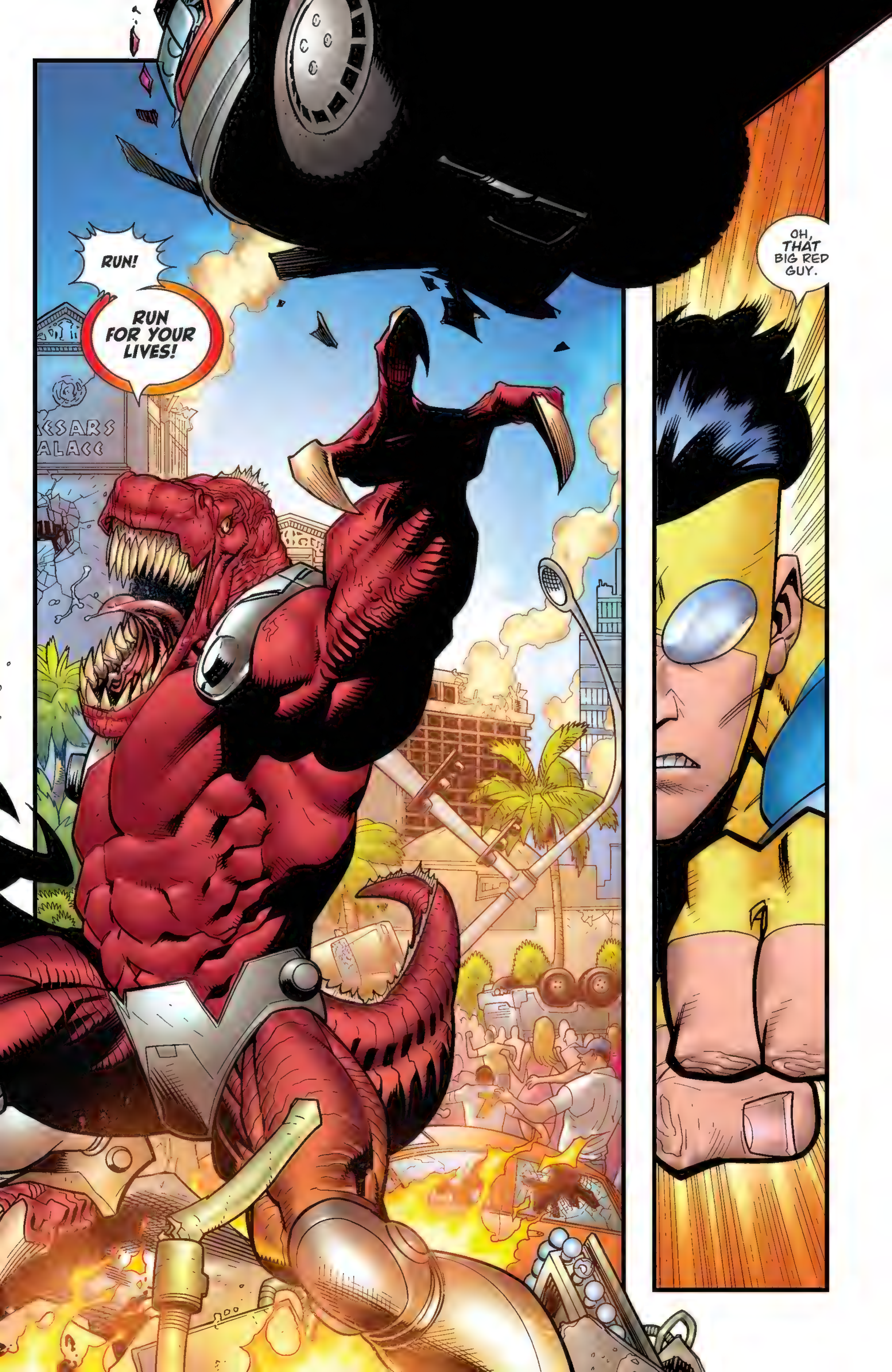
WHY'D YOU DO IT? I'M CURIOUS.











RUN!

RUN
FOR YOUR
LIVES!

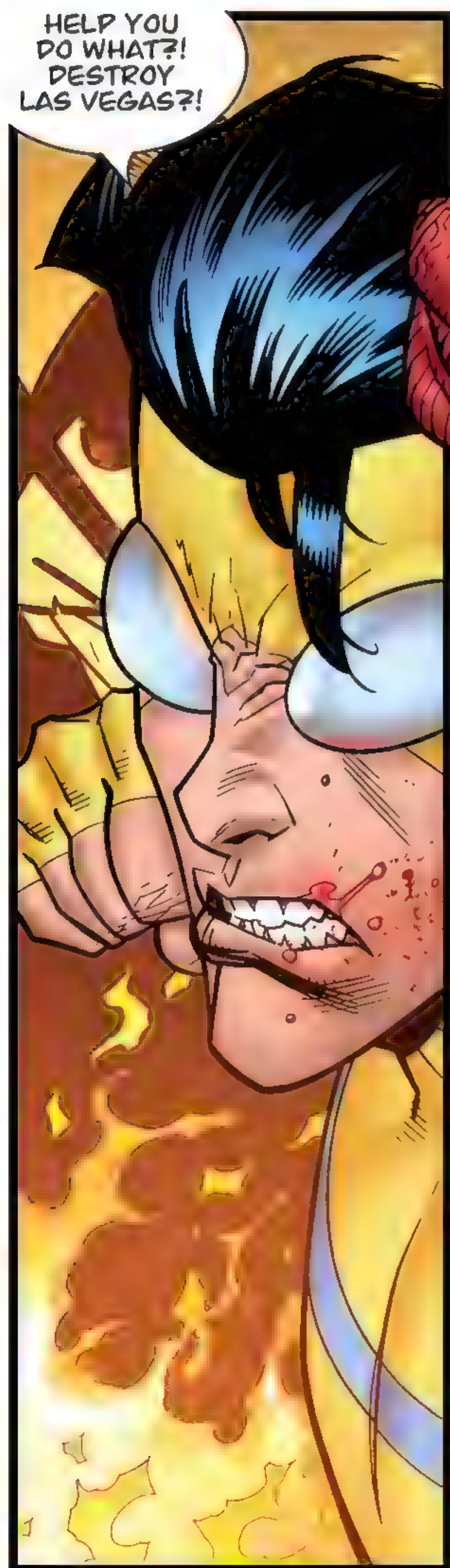
OH,
THAT
BIG RED
GUY.



YOU? COME TO PLAY THE HERO AGAIN, SO THAT YOU CAN TRY TO MURDER MY WEAKER SELF WHEN IT'S ALL OVER?

IF YOU WERE A TRUE HERO, YOU'D BE HELPING ME!

WRRAAM!



HELP YOU DO WHAT?! DESTROY LAS VEGAS?!



NO! YOU'D HELP ME EVACUATE LAS VEGAS BEFORE IT IS DESTROYED!

THIS CITY IS AN ABOMINATION ON THIS EARTH. IT WAS NOT MEANT TO BE HERE. A MAN-MADE OASIS IN THE MIDDLE OF A NATURALLY FORMED DESERT!

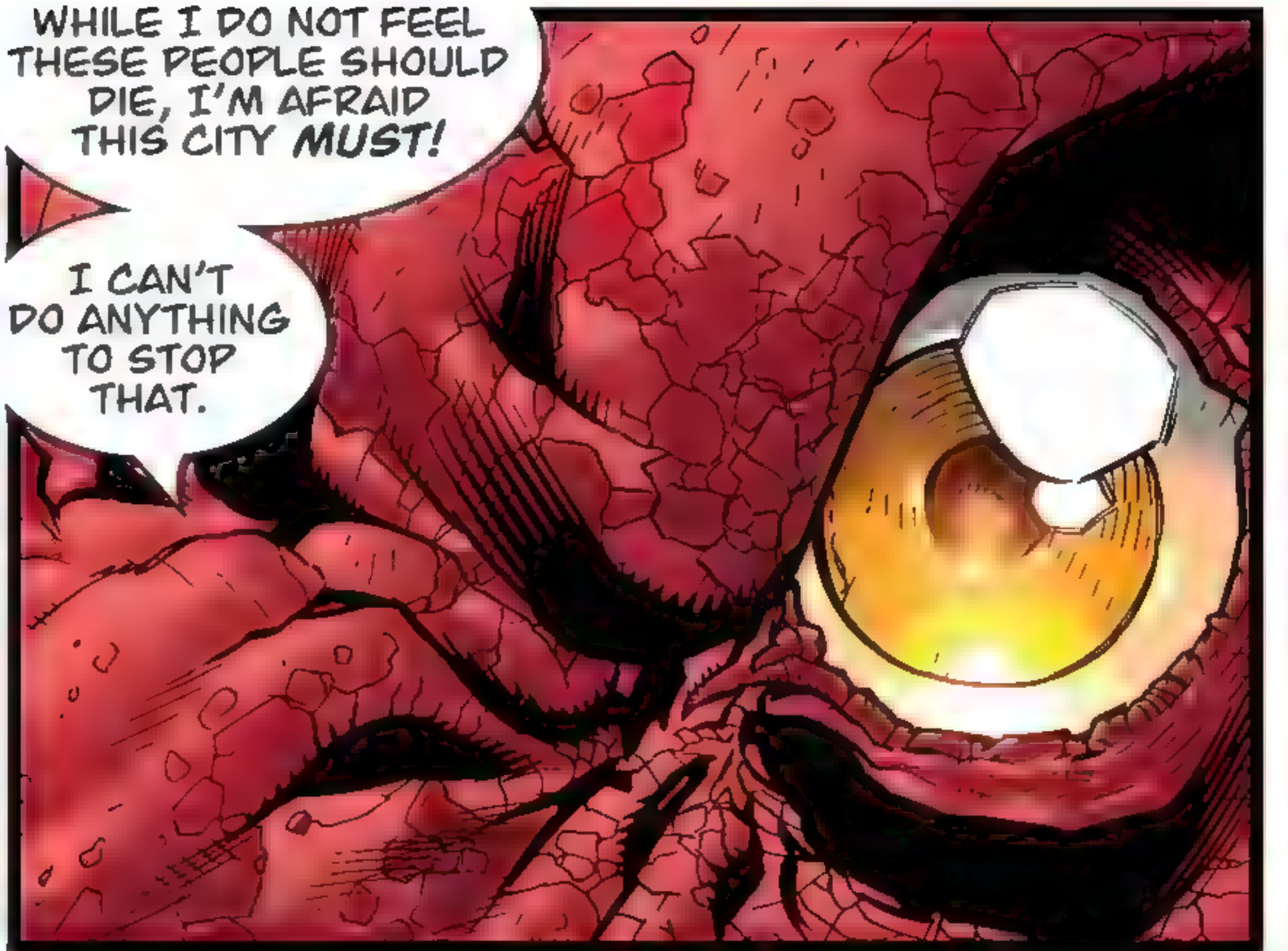
IN MINUTES, THIS CITY WILL BE NOTHING MORE THAN A MEMORY-- BUT THESE PEOPLE DON'T HAVE TO DIE!

KROKKI!



IF YOU DON'T WANT THESE PEOPLE TO DIE--TELL ME **HOW** THIS CITY IS BEING DESTROYED AND HELP ME **STOP IT!**

I'VE HEARD YOUR SPIEL-- YOU THINK YOU'RE REALLY HELPING PEOPLE, WELL... **DO IT!**



WHILE I DO NOT FEEL THESE PEOPLE SHOULD DIE, I'M AFRAID THIS CITY **MUST!**

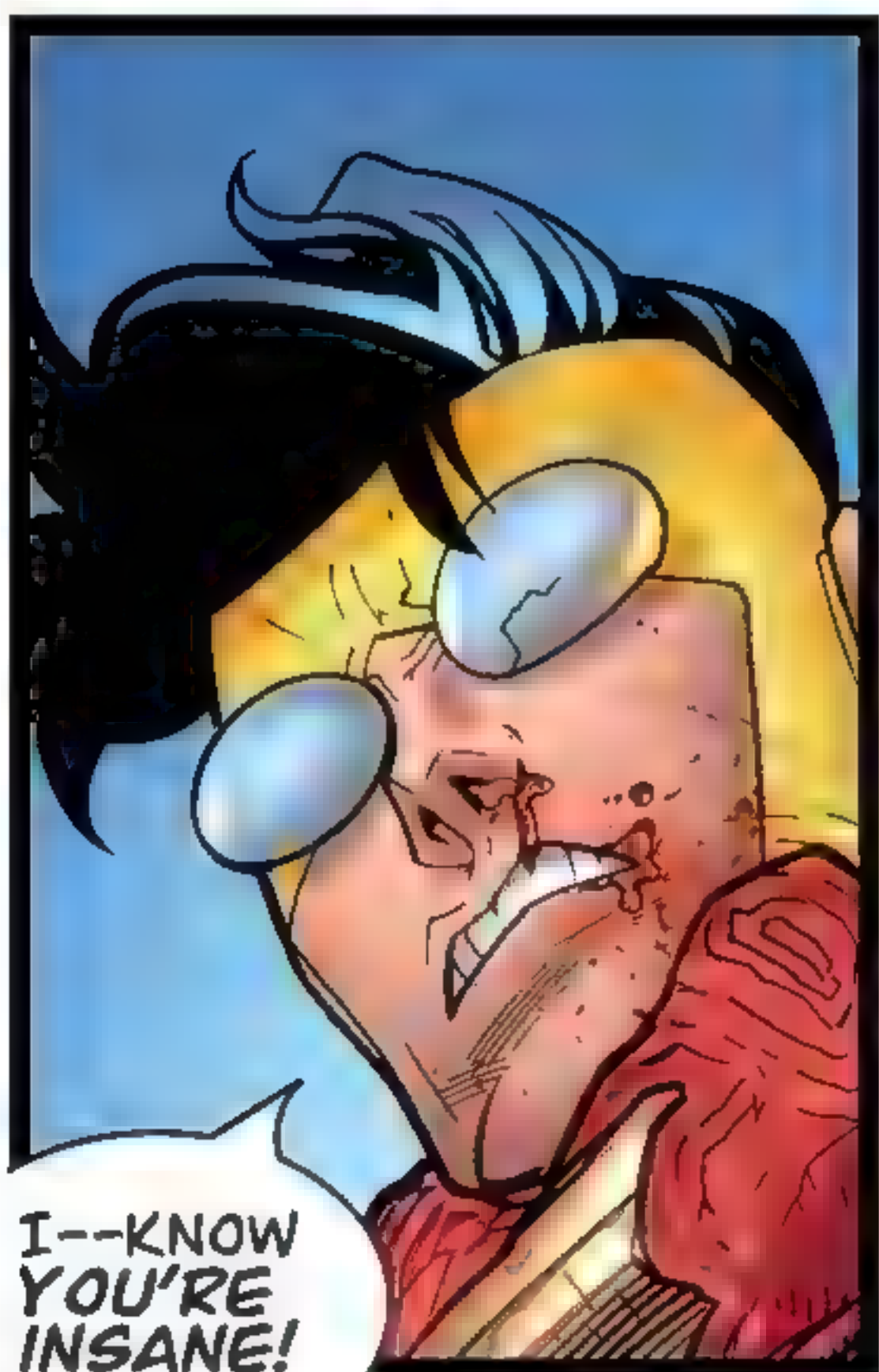
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO STOP THAT.



THIS CITY IS A DRAIN ON NATURAL RESOURCES OF EPIC PROPORTIONS. THE COLORADO RIVER WILL SOON DRY UP. THIS REGION CAN'T SUSTAIN ITSELF.

FURTHERMORE-- IF IT WERE DESTROYED, THE AREA WOULD BE IDEAL FOR A SOLAR POWER STATION LARGE ENOUGH TO POWER THIS COUNTRY WITH CLEAN ENERGY, FREEING IT FROM THE BURDEN OF FOSSIL FUELS.

YOU MAY TRY TO FIGHT ME--BUT DEEP DOWN, I KNOW YOU KNOW I'M RIGHT.

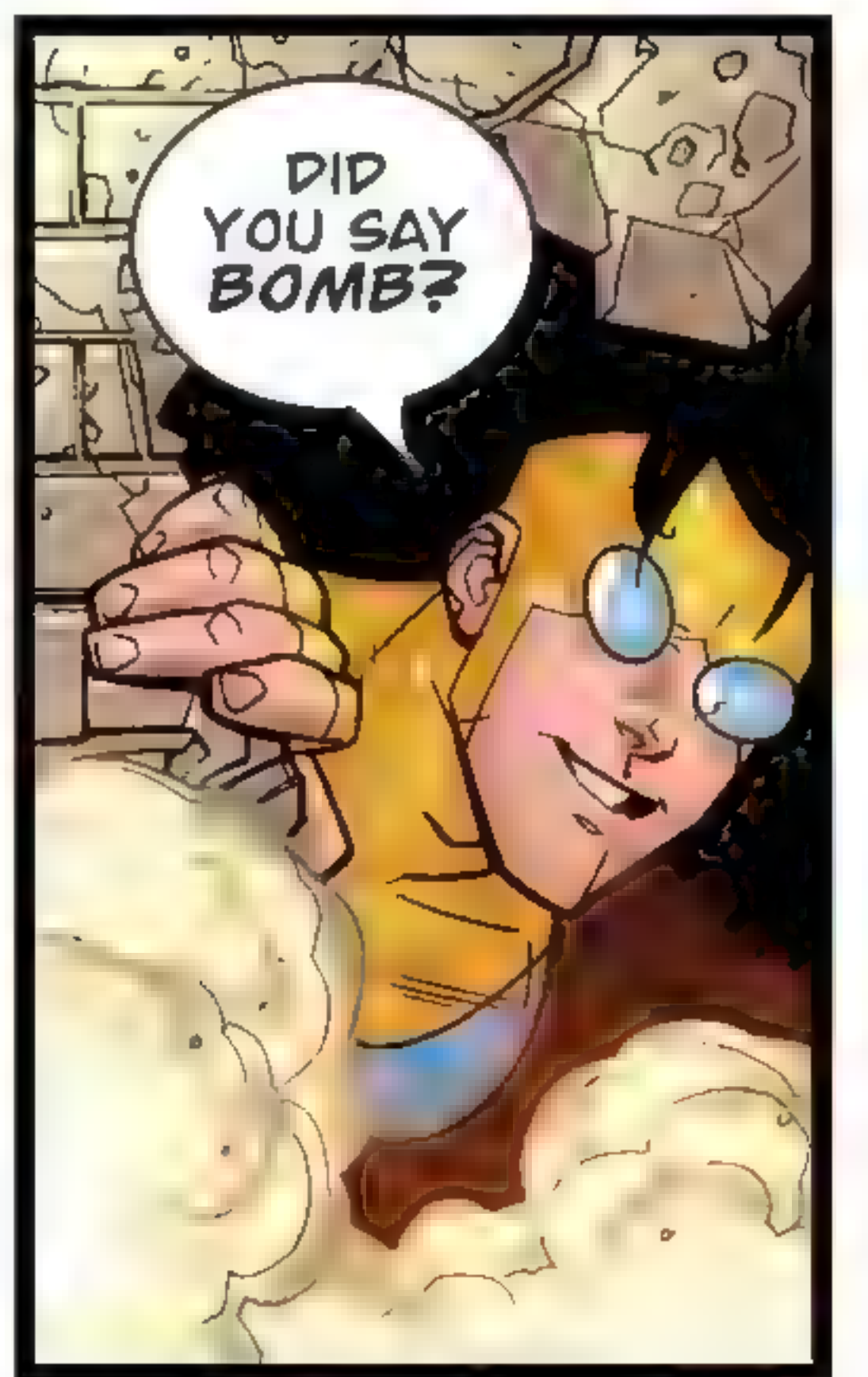


I--KNOW YOU'RE INSANE!

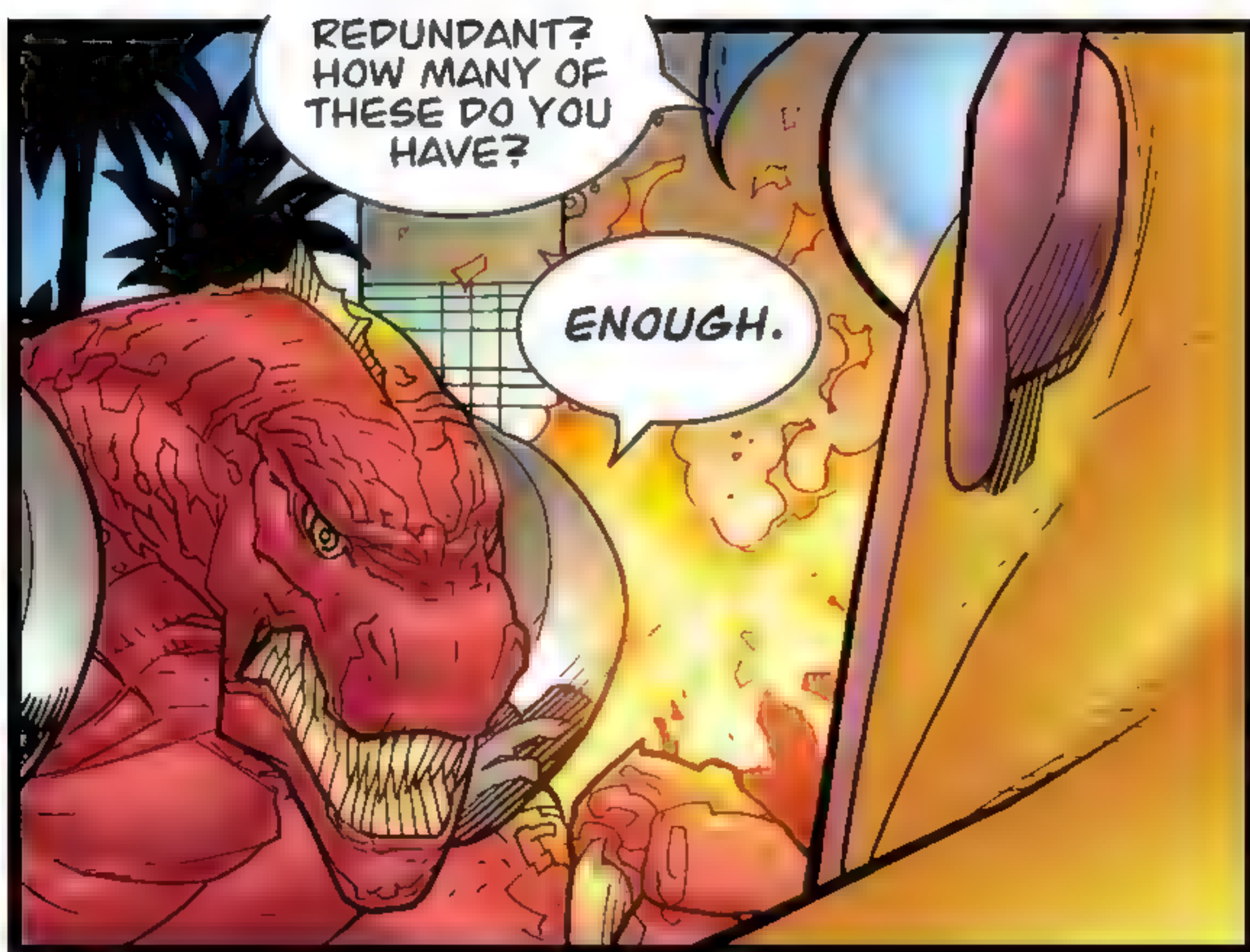
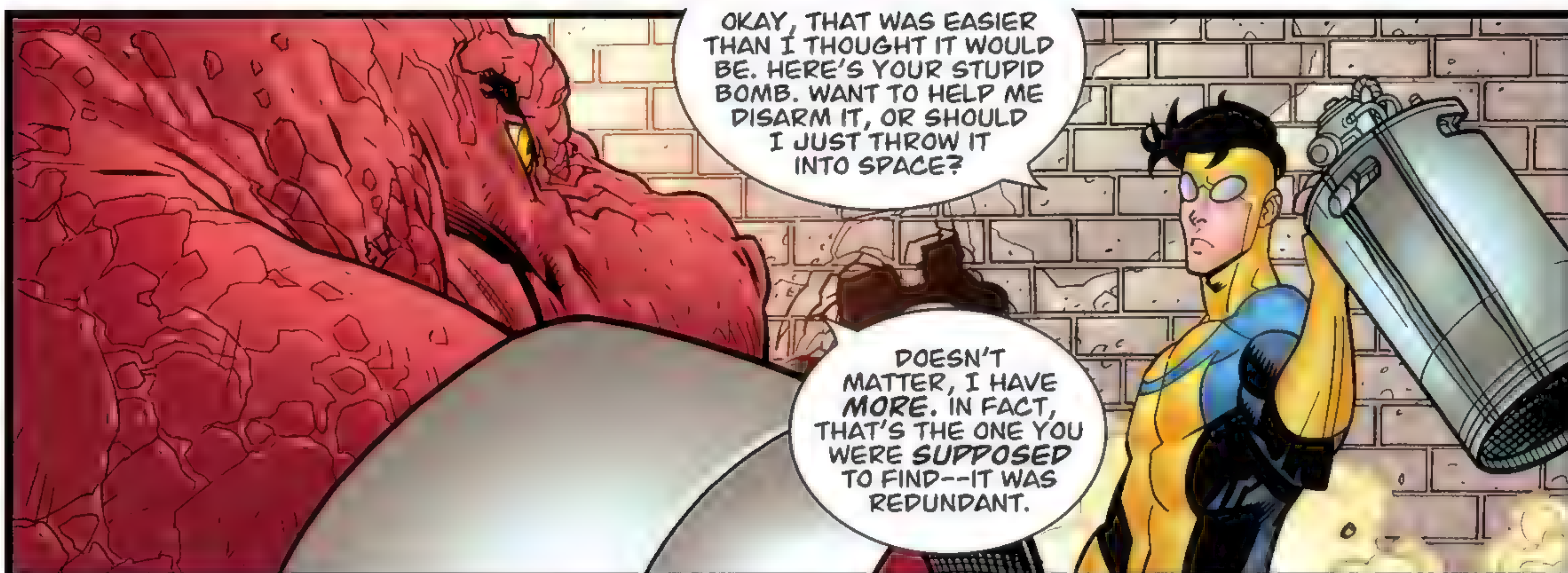
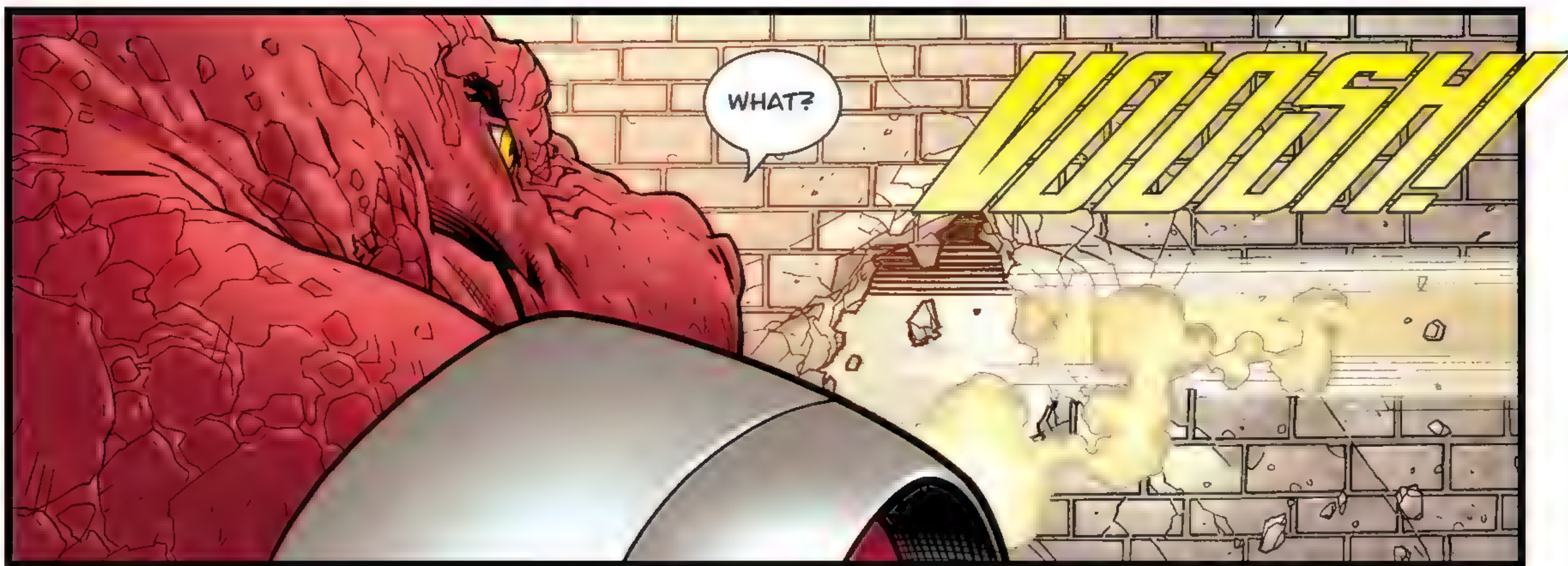


IT DOESN'T MATTER, NOTHING DOES.

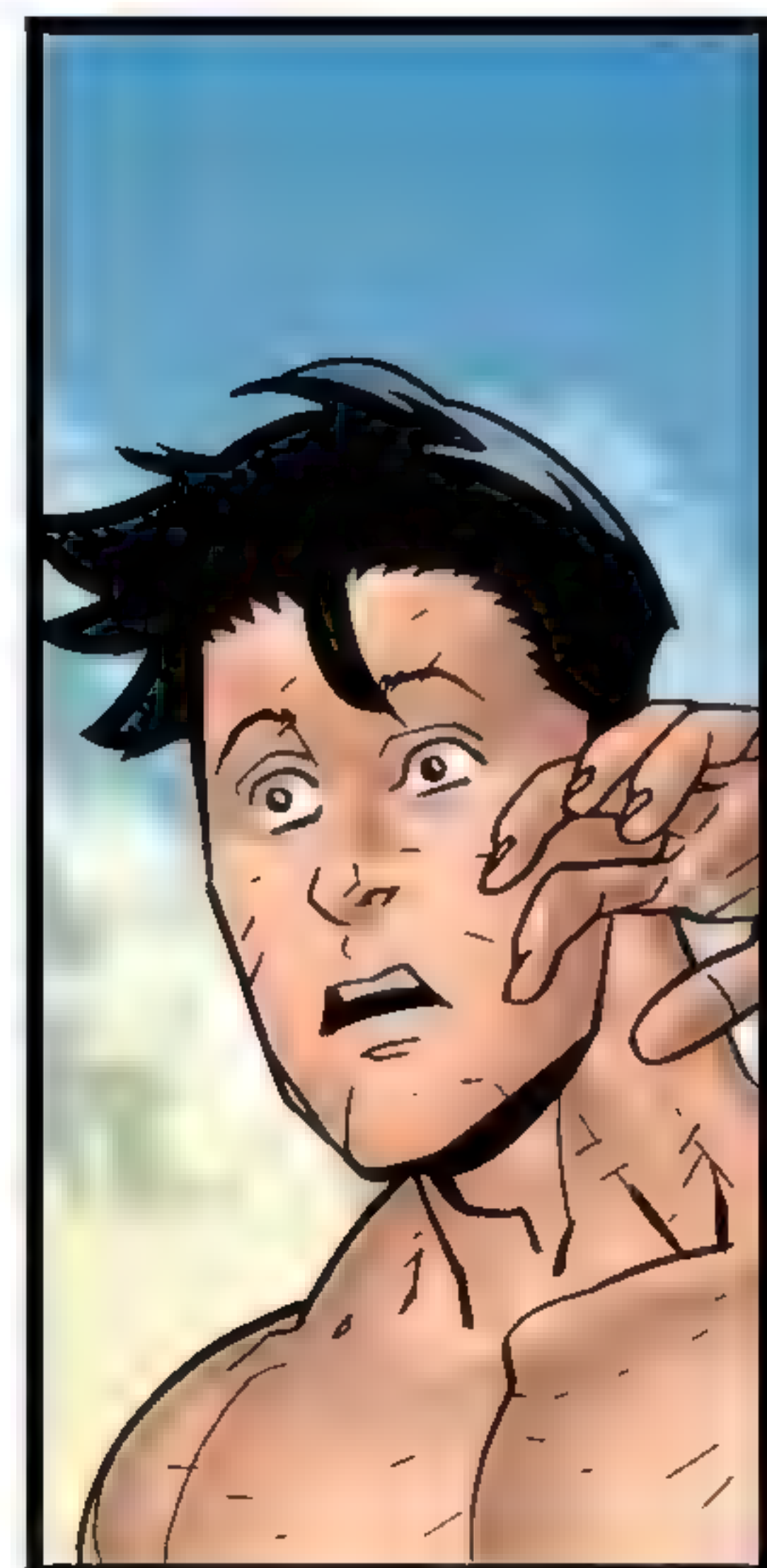
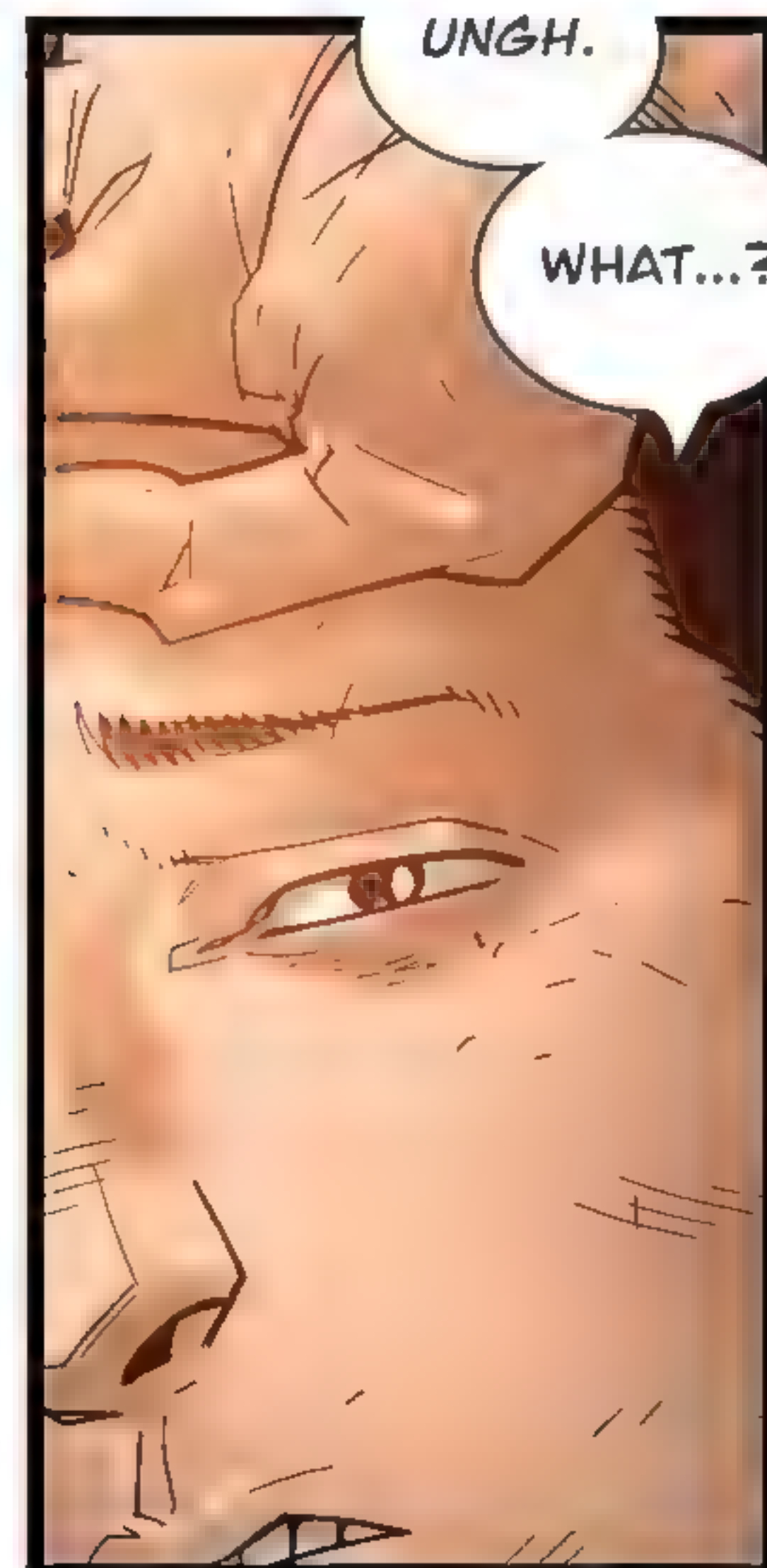
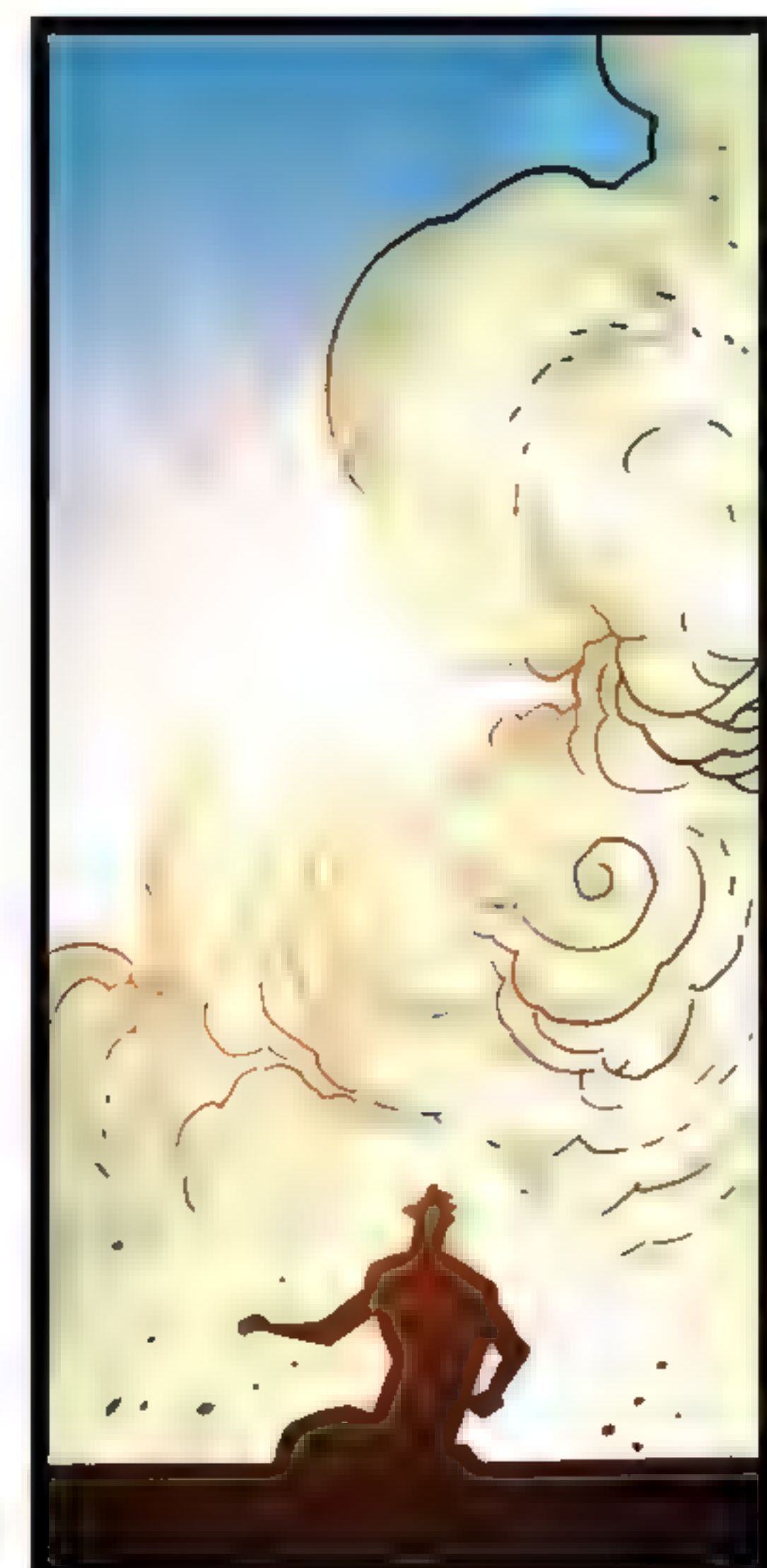
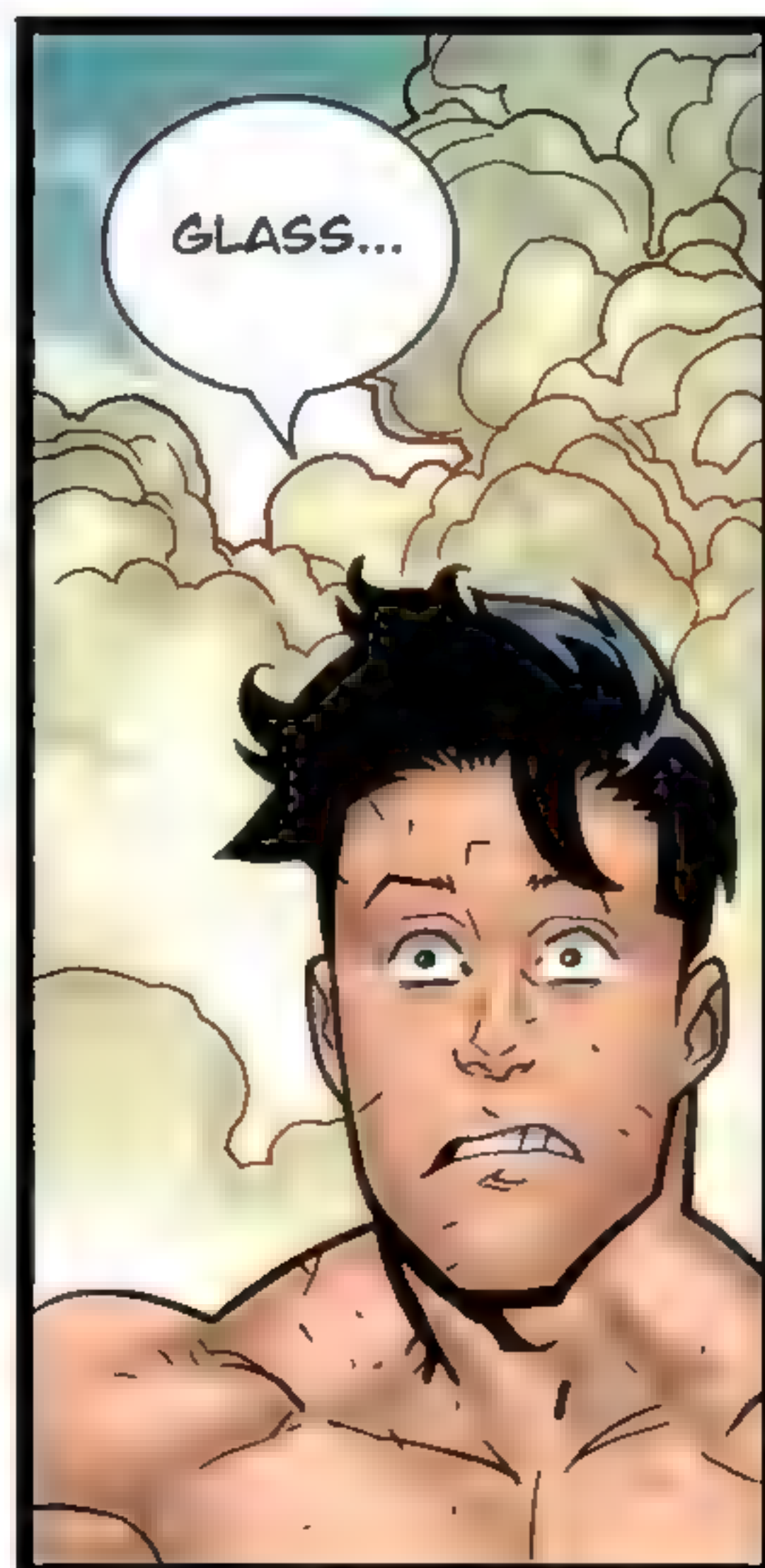
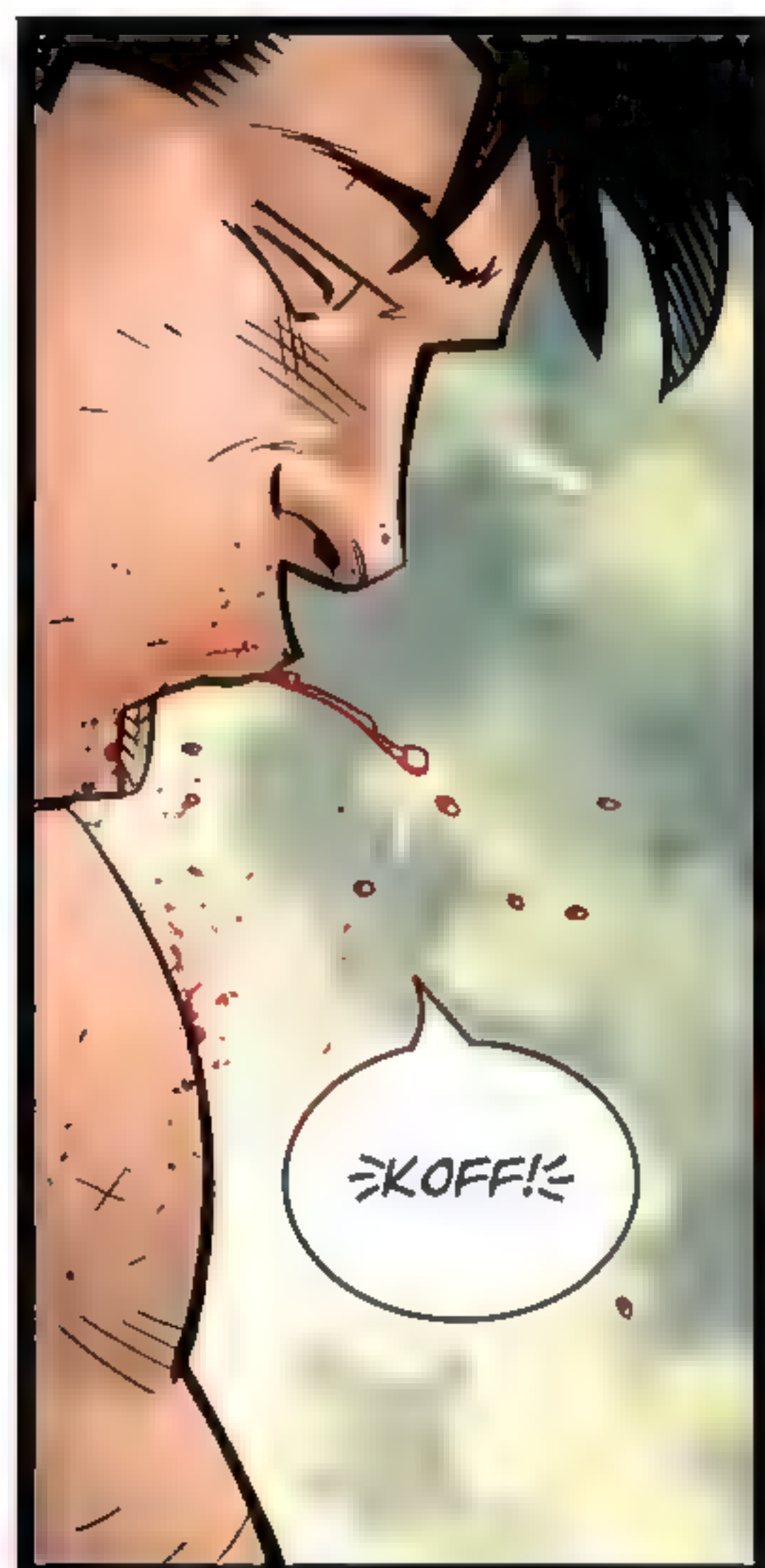
IT'S TOO LATE, MY BOMB--

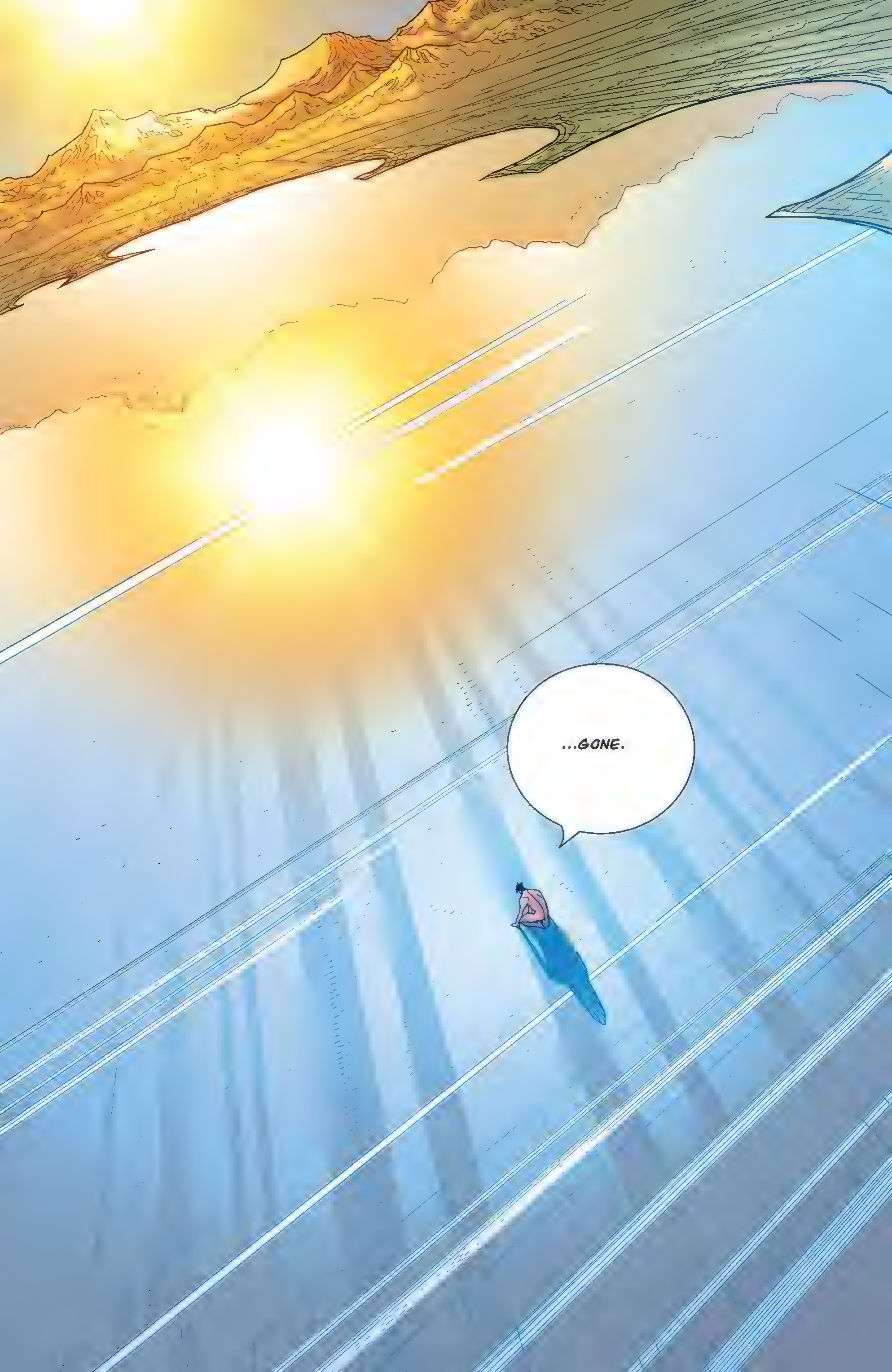


DID YOU SAY BOMB?







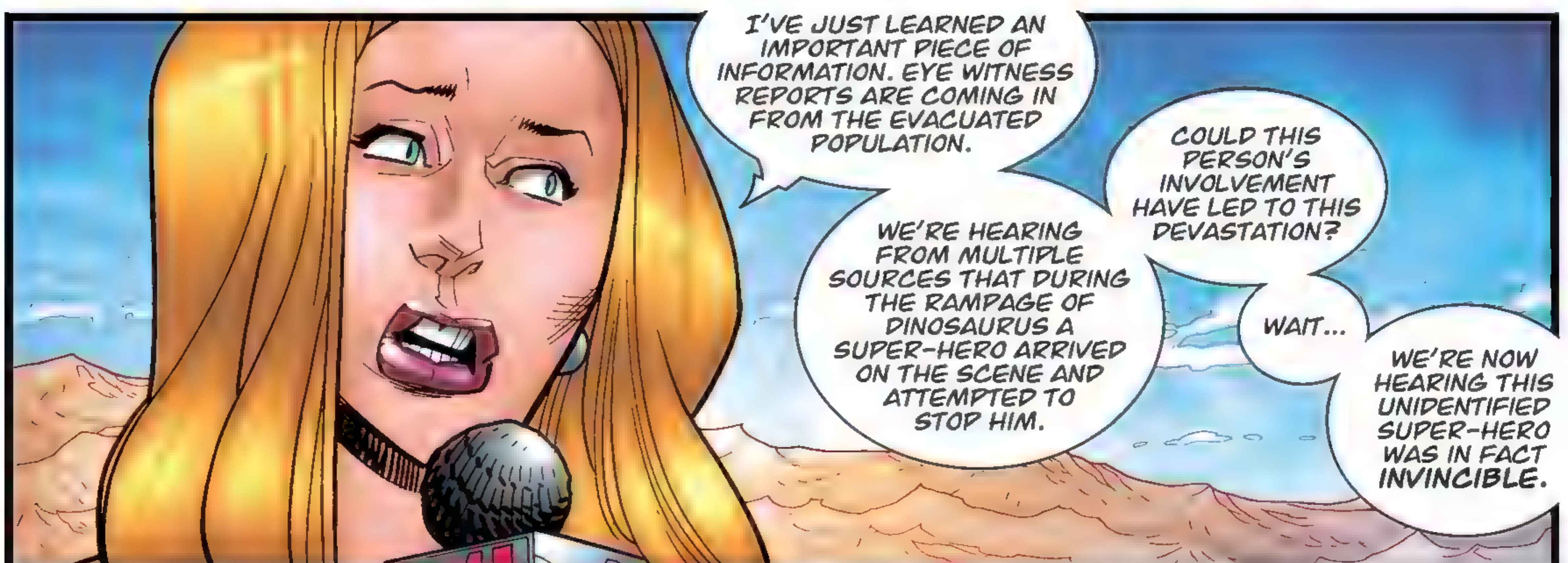
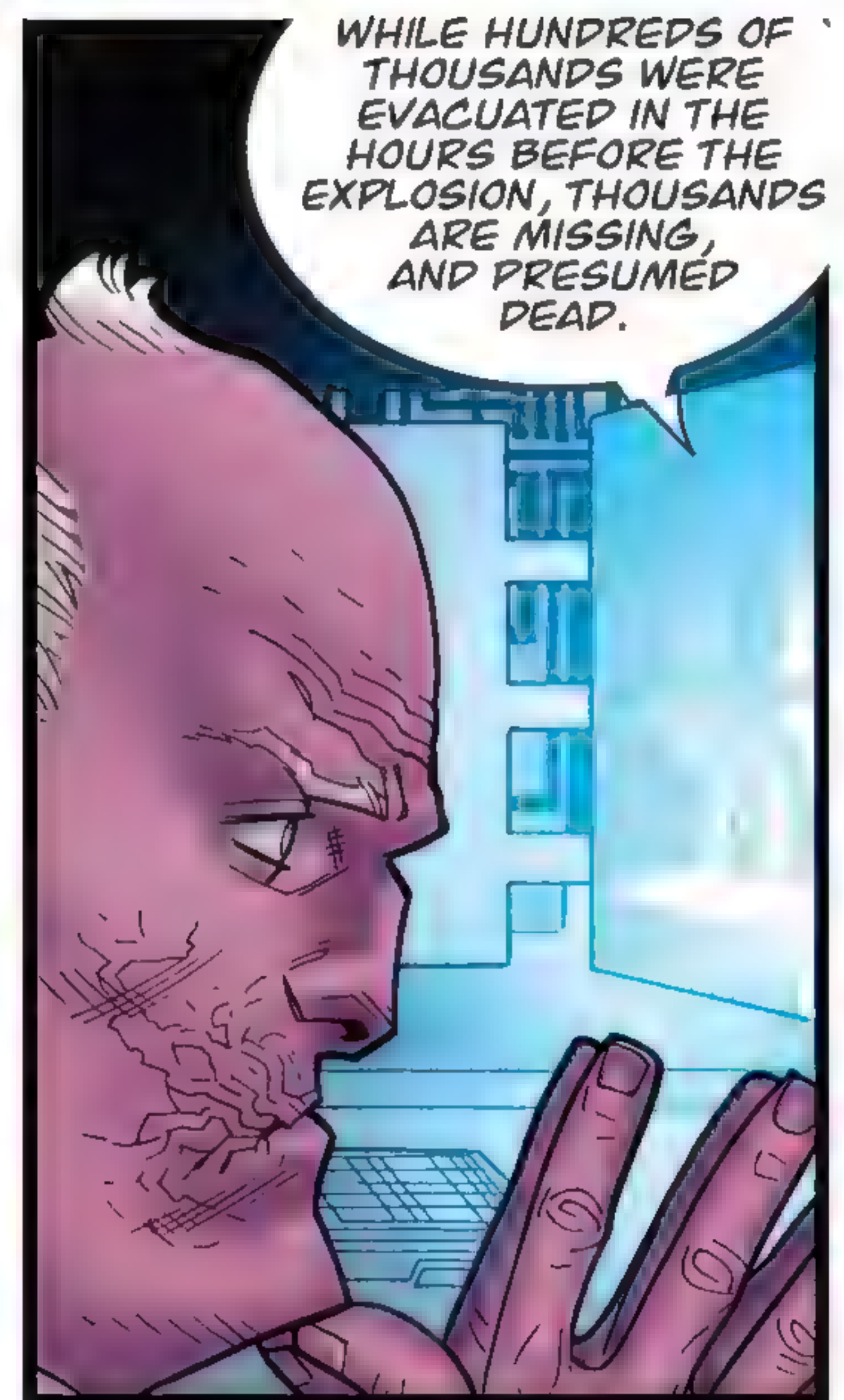
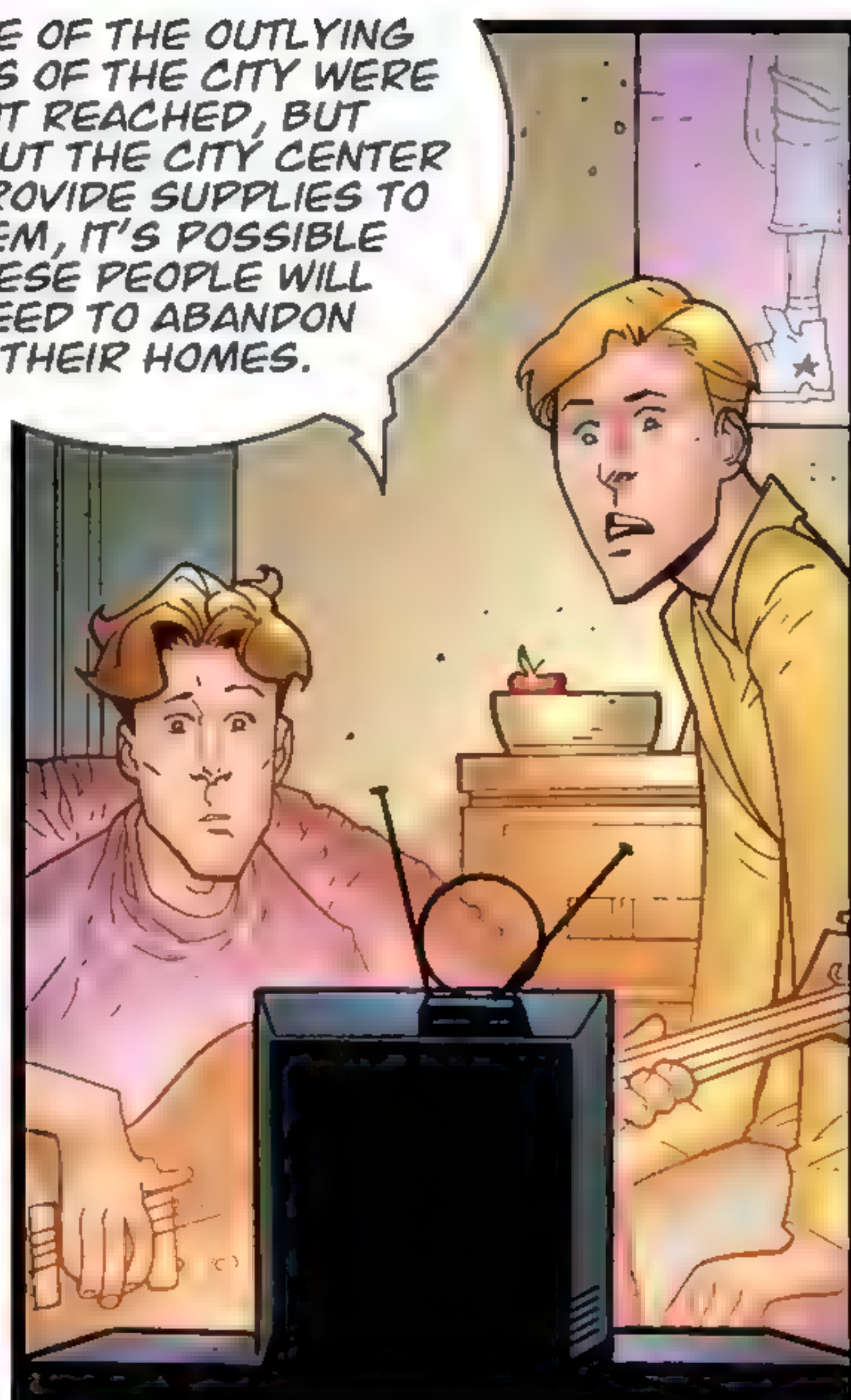
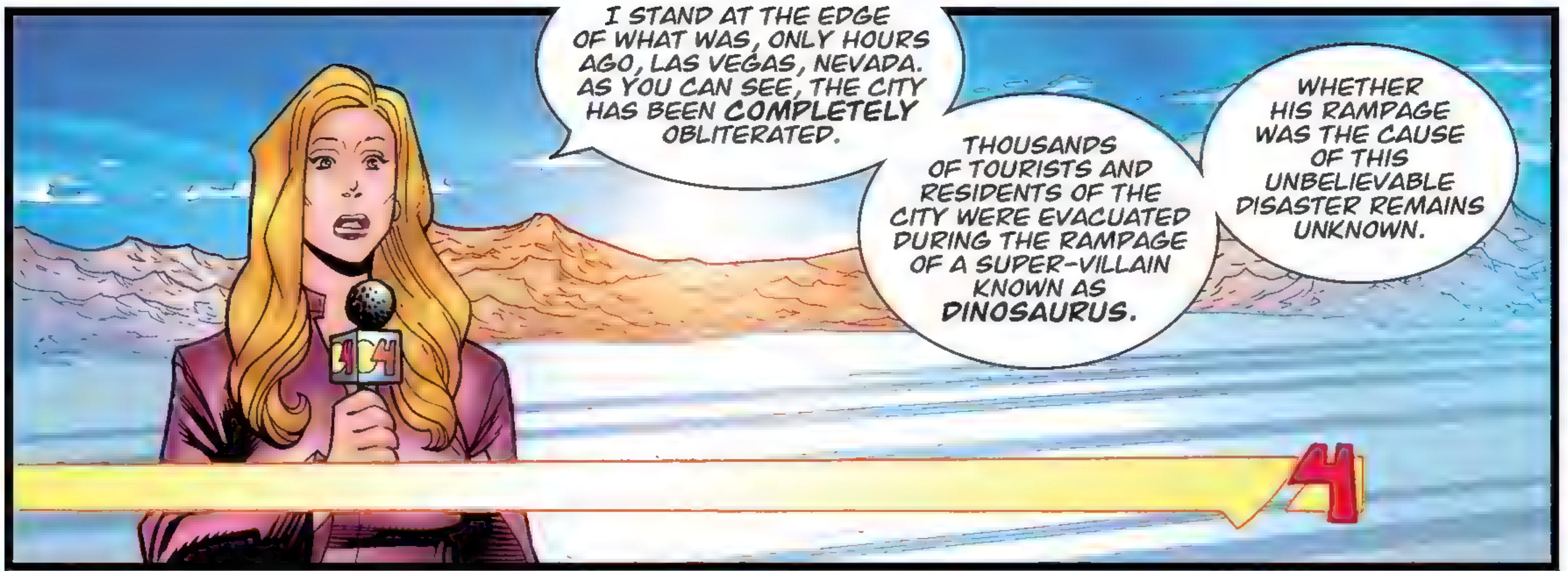


...GONE.



CHAPTER 81





WHAT?!





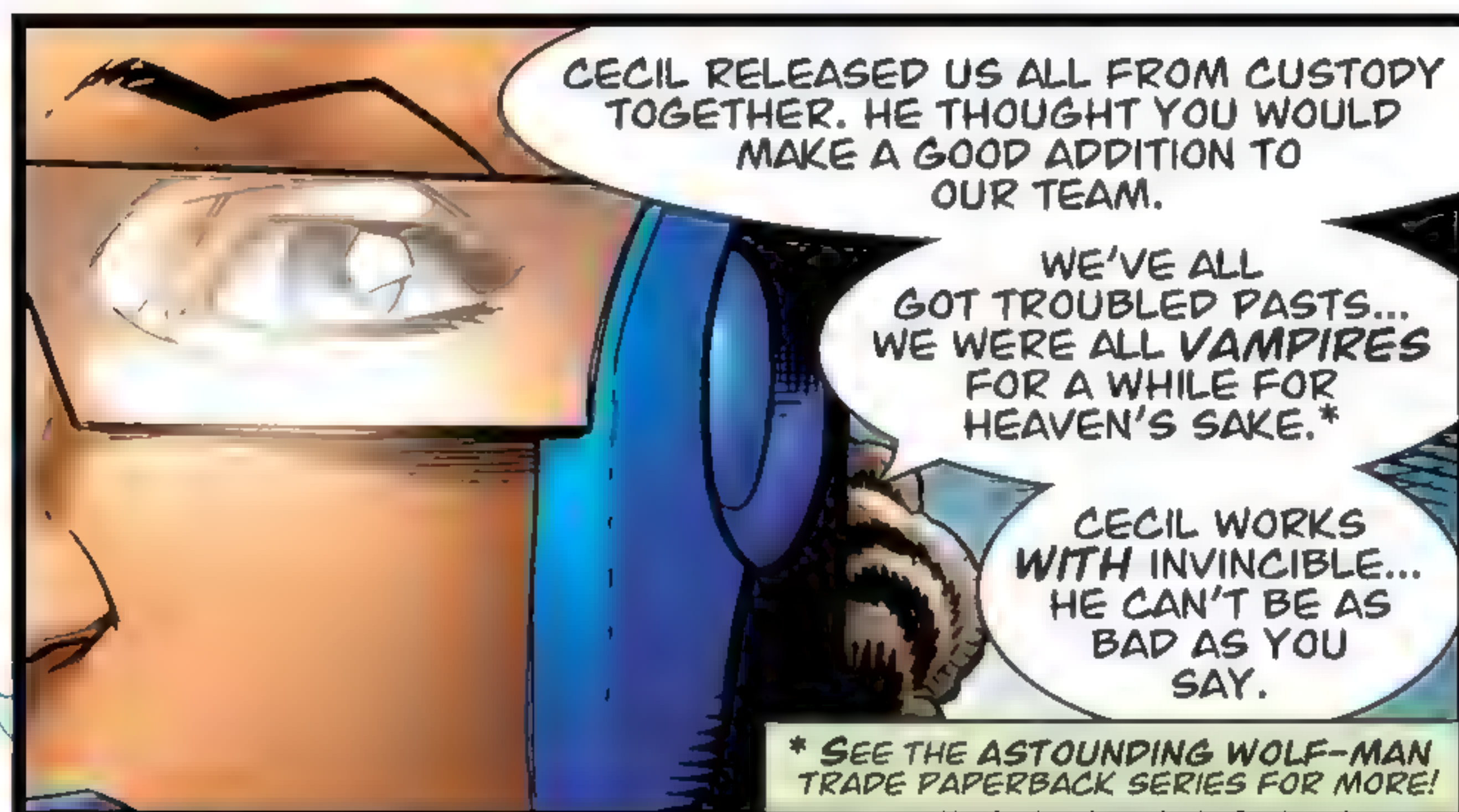
POWERPLEX,
PLEASE...
CALM DOWN.
THIS ISN'T
LIKE YOU
AT ALL.

I KNOW
YOUR HISTORY
WITH INVINCIBLE,
BUT THIS
JUST ISN'T
ACCEPTABLE
BEHAVIOR.

I KNOW... I'M
SORRY, KINETIC.
IT'S JUST, I WASN'T
READY FOR THIS.
WHEN INVINCIBLE
DISAPPEARED FOR
SO LONG, I
THOUGHT IT
WAS OVER.

I'M THANKFUL
THAT YOU GUYS
HAVE TAKEN ME IN,
ALLOWED ME TO JOIN
THE ACTIONEERS...
AND I'M REALLY
TRYING TO CONTROL
MYSELF.

I JUST...
WASN'T
PREPARED.
I'M SORRY IF
I STARTLED
YOU.

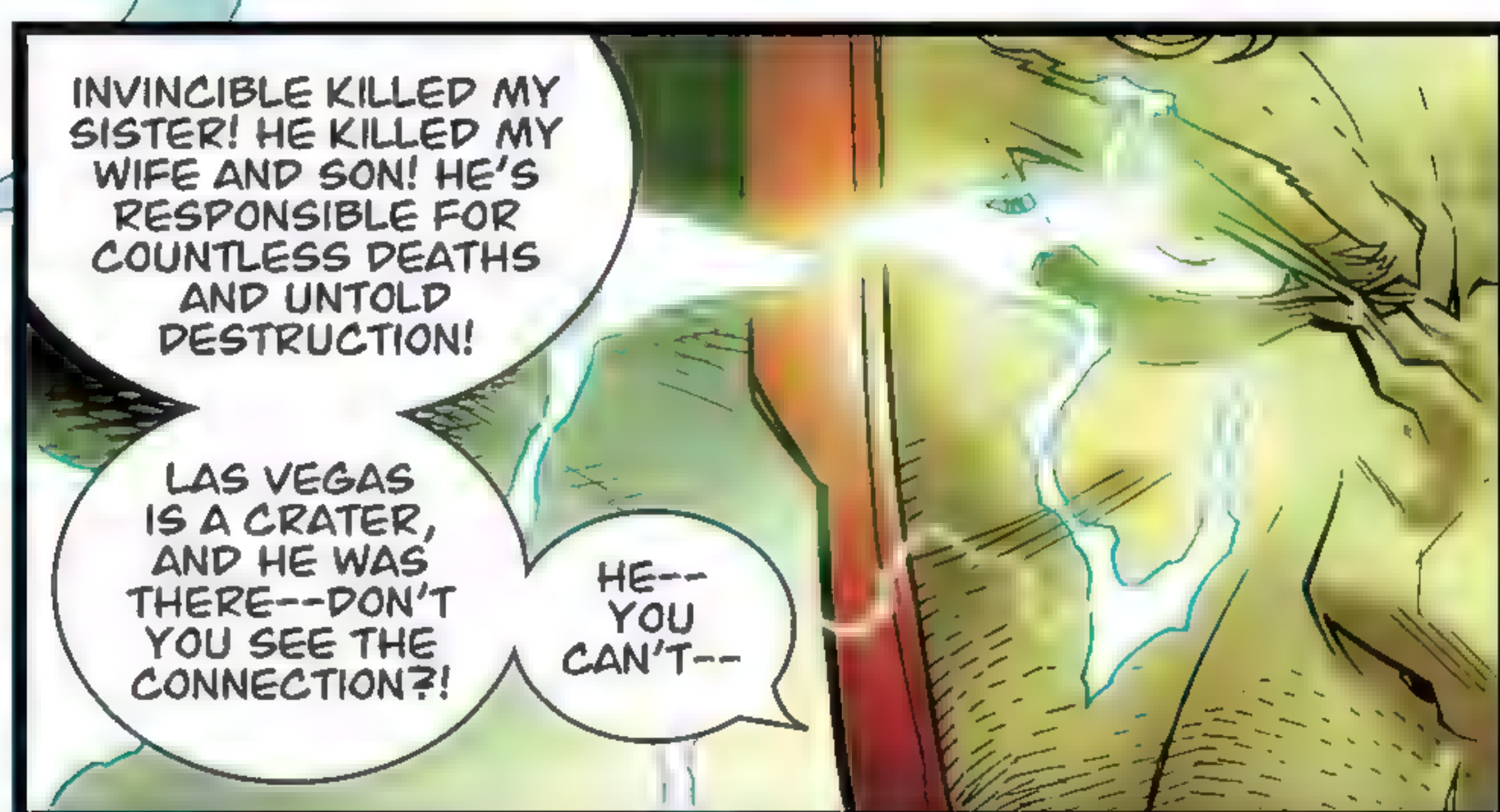


CECIL RELEASED US ALL FROM CUSTODY
TOGETHER. HE THOUGHT YOU WOULD
MAKE A GOOD ADDITION TO
OUR TEAM.

WE'VE ALL
GOT TROUBLED PASTS...
WE WERE ALL VAMPIRES
FOR A WHILE FOR
HEAVEN'S SAKE.*

CECIL WORKS
WITH INVINCIBLE...
HE CAN'T BE AS
BAD AS YOU
SAY.

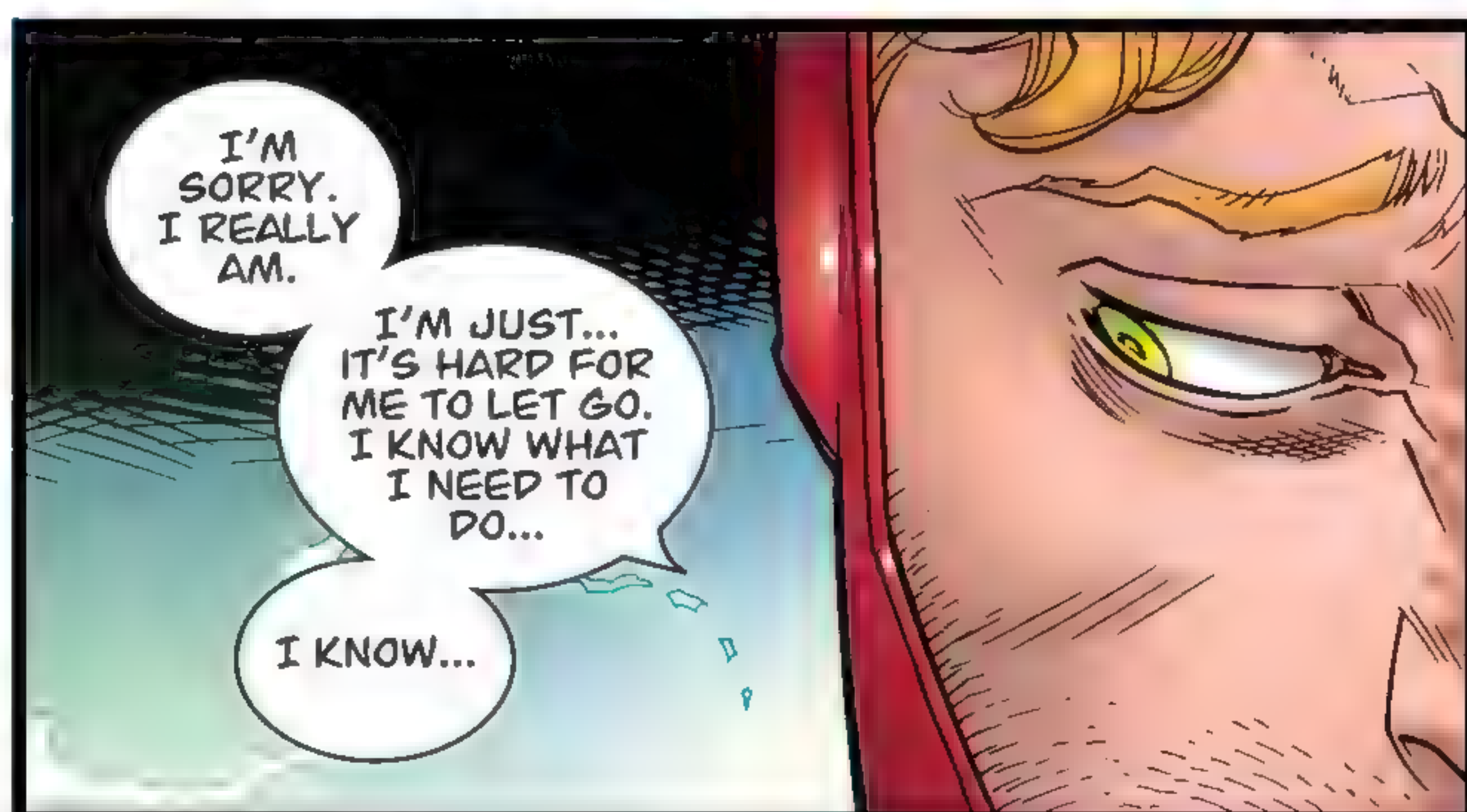
* SEE THE ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN
TRADE PAPERBACK SERIES FOR MORE!



INVINCIBLE KILLED MY
SISTER! HE KILLED MY
WIFE AND SON! HE'S
RESPONSIBLE FOR
COUNTLESS DEATHS
AND UNTOLD
DESTRUCTION!

LAS VEGAS
IS A CRATER,
AND HE WAS
THERE--DON'T
YOU SEE THE
CONNECTION?!

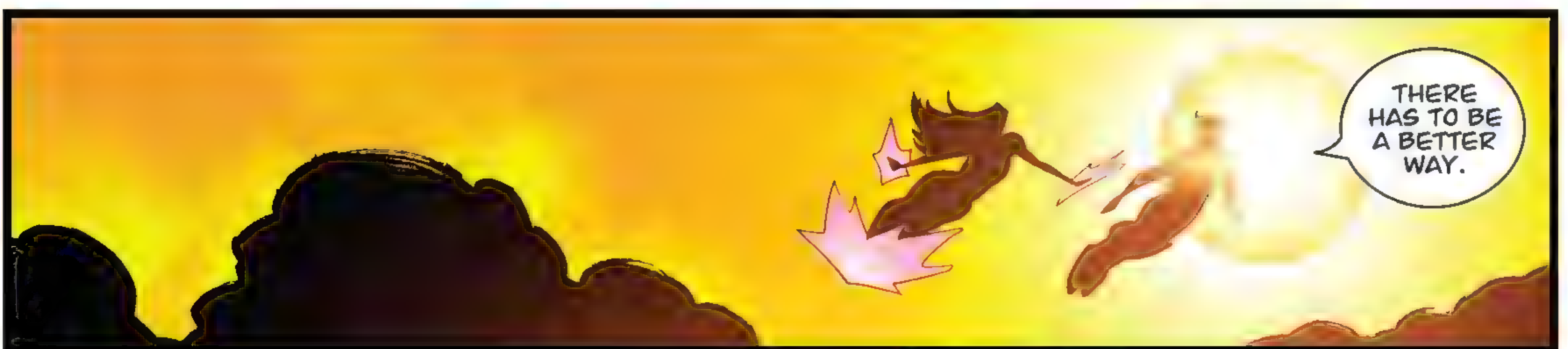
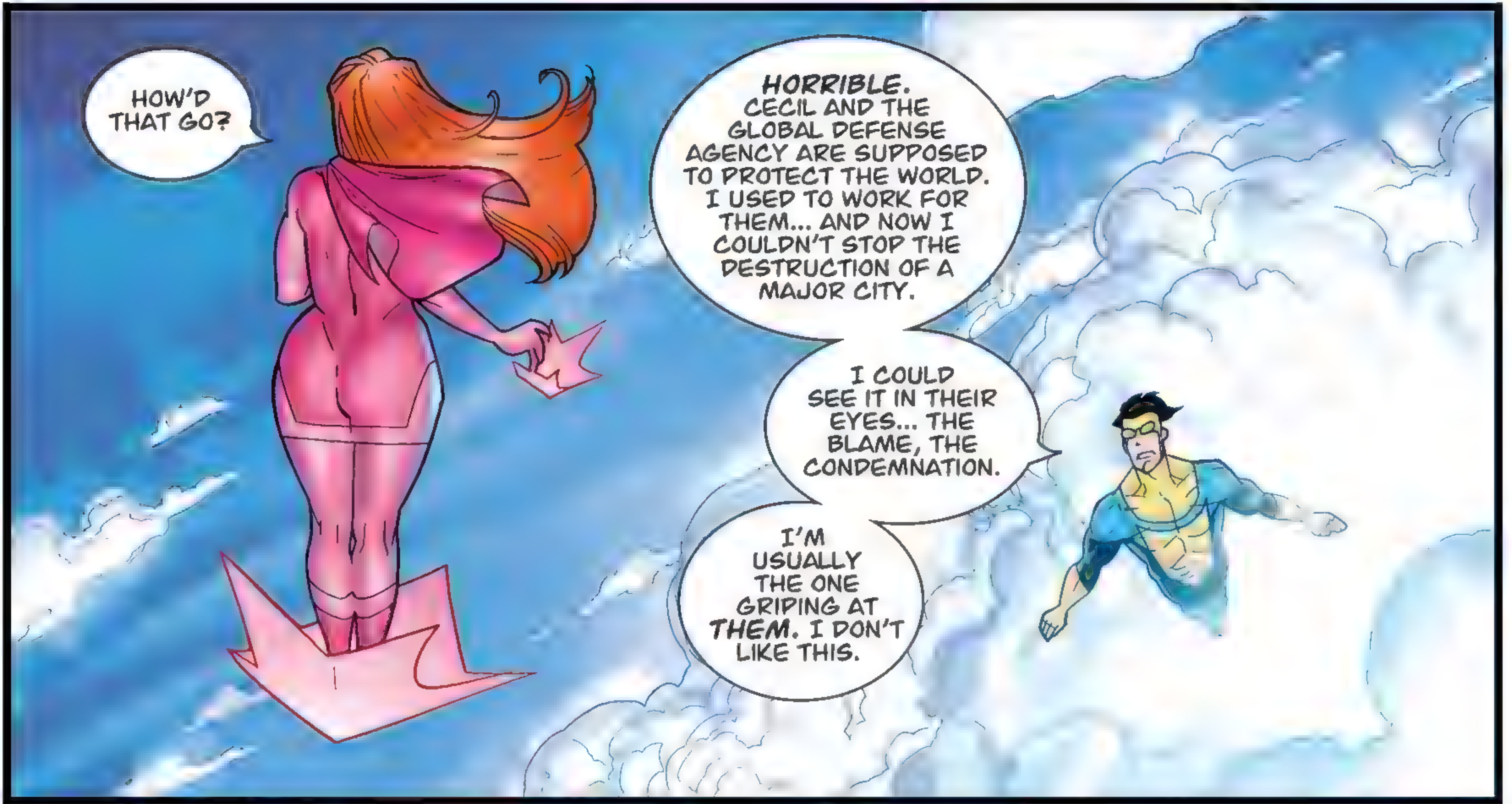
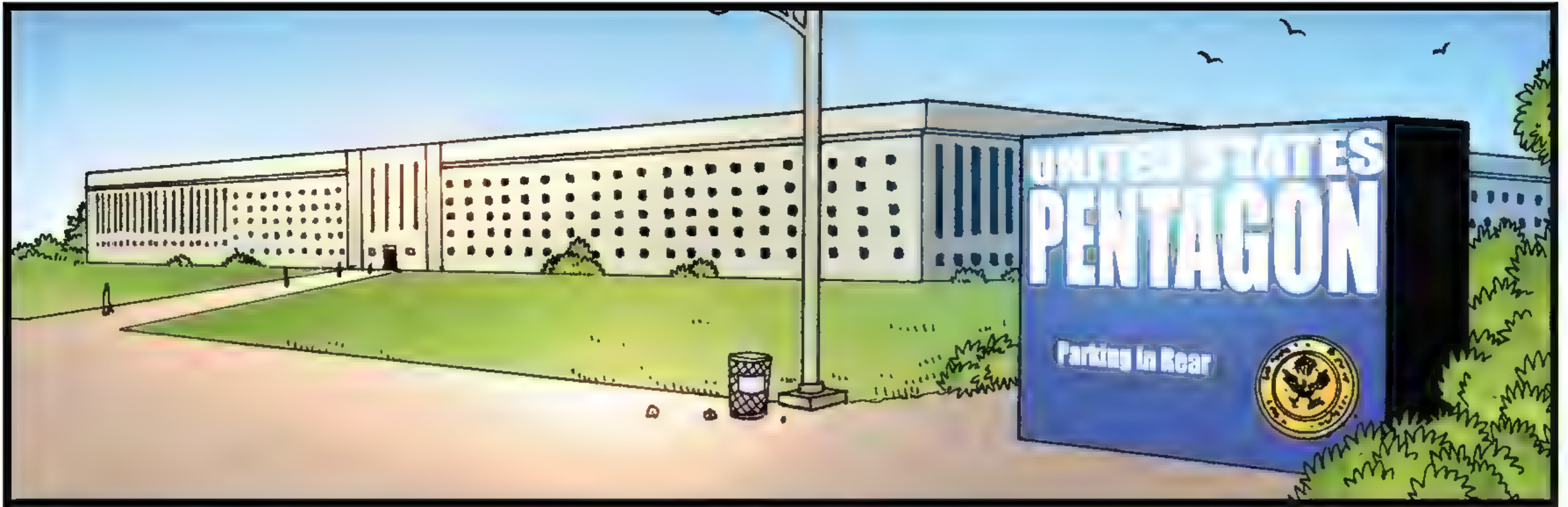
HE--
YOU
CAN'T--

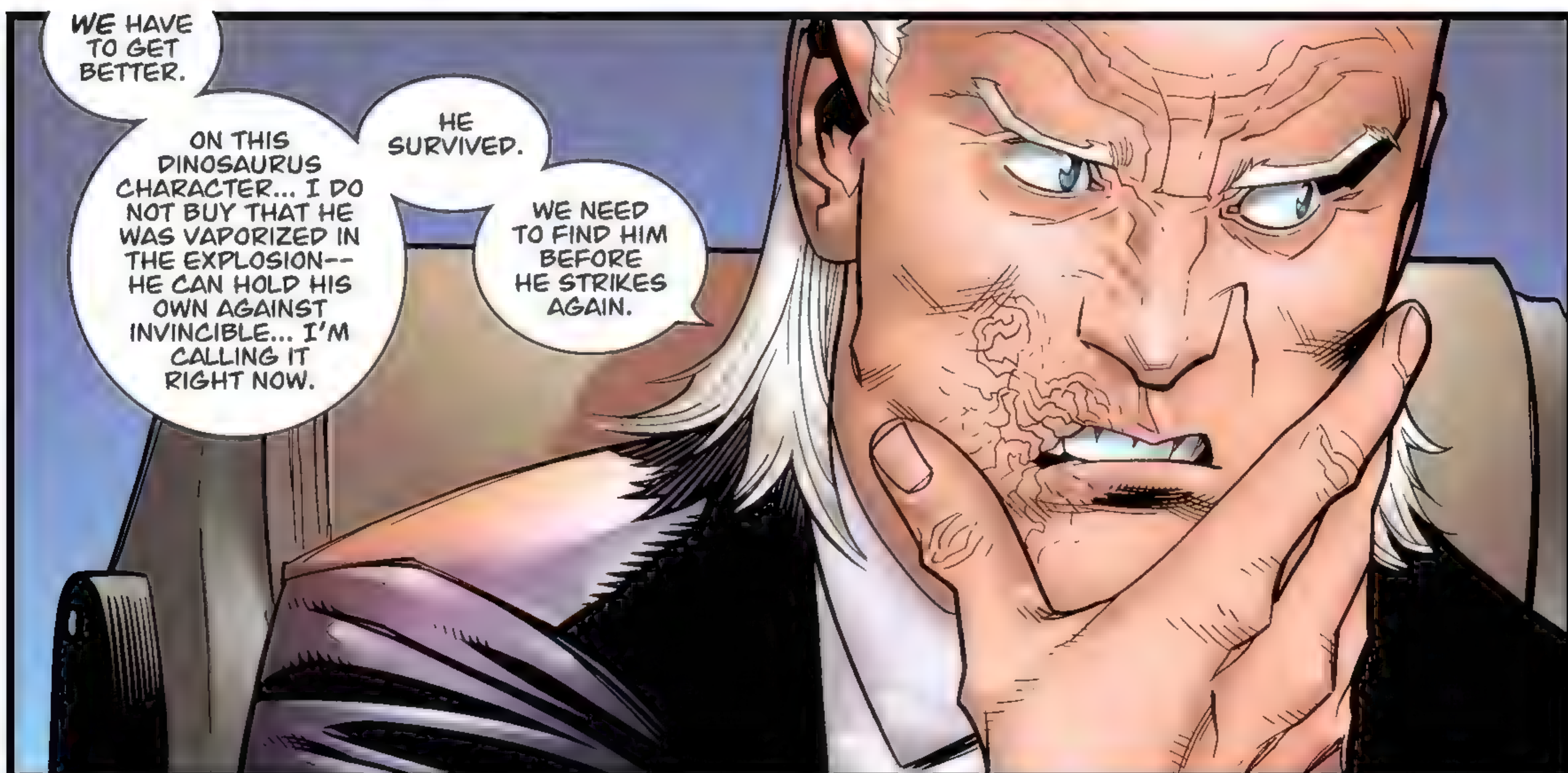
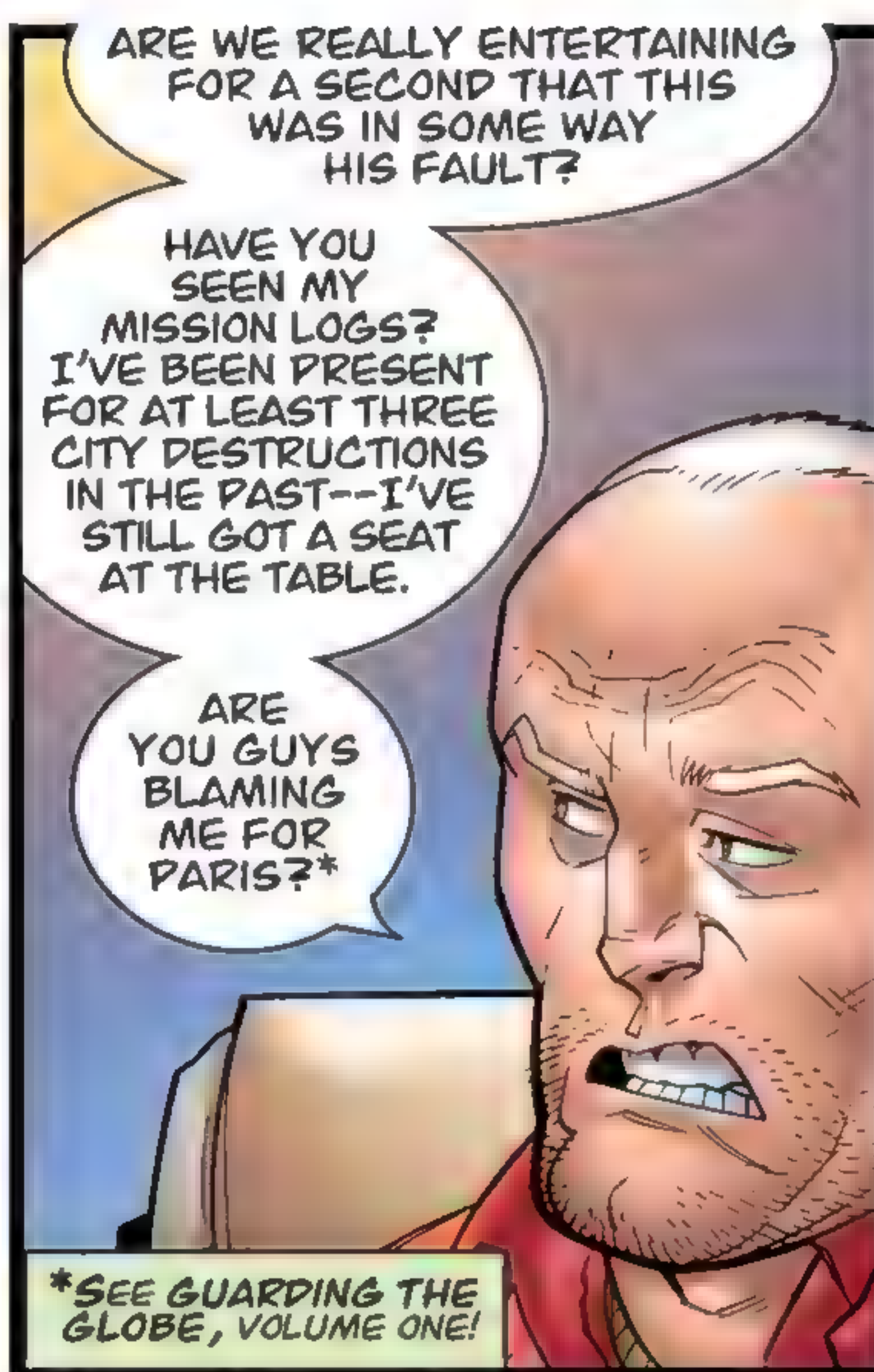


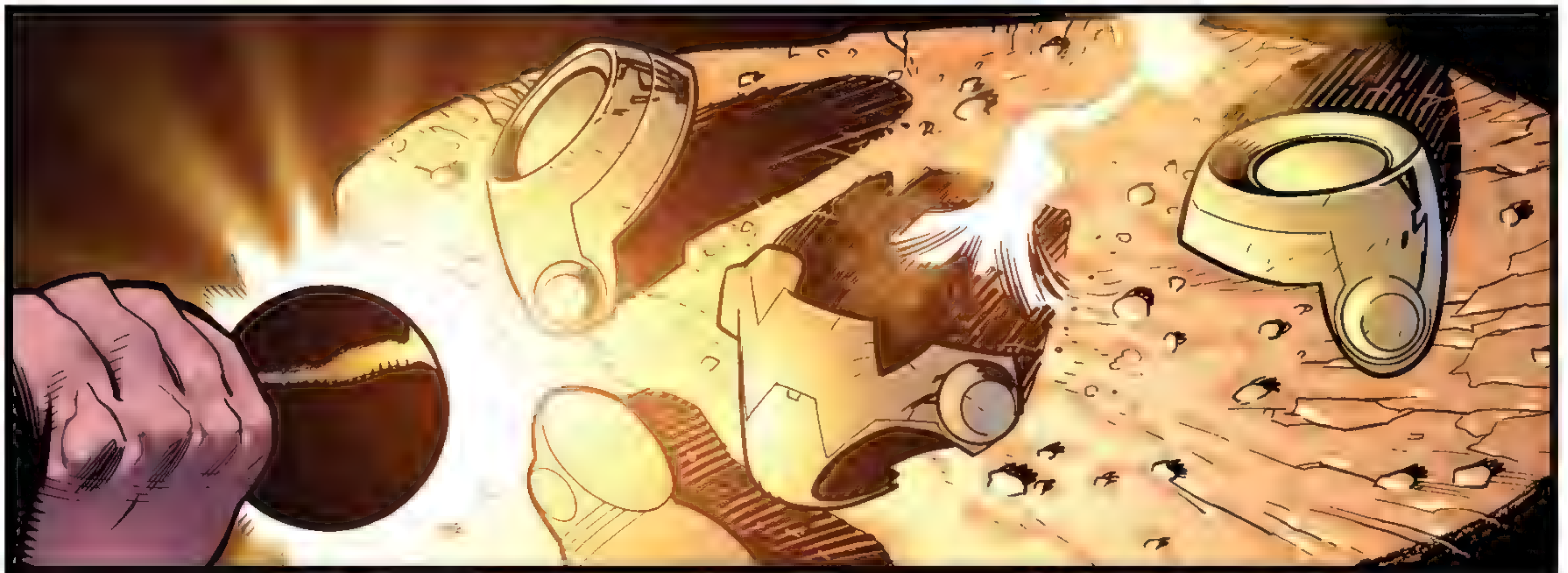
I'M
SORRY.
I REALLY
AM.

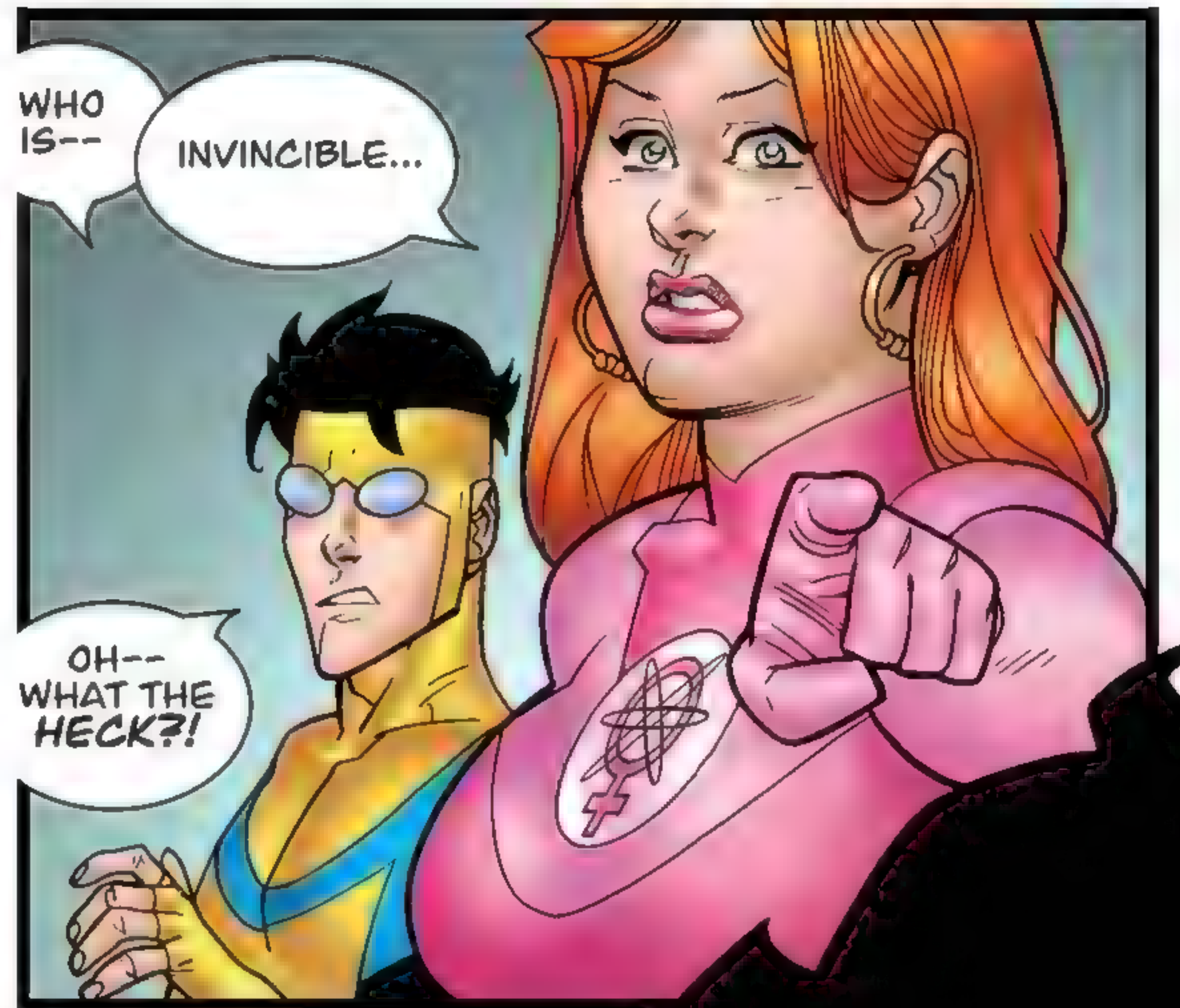
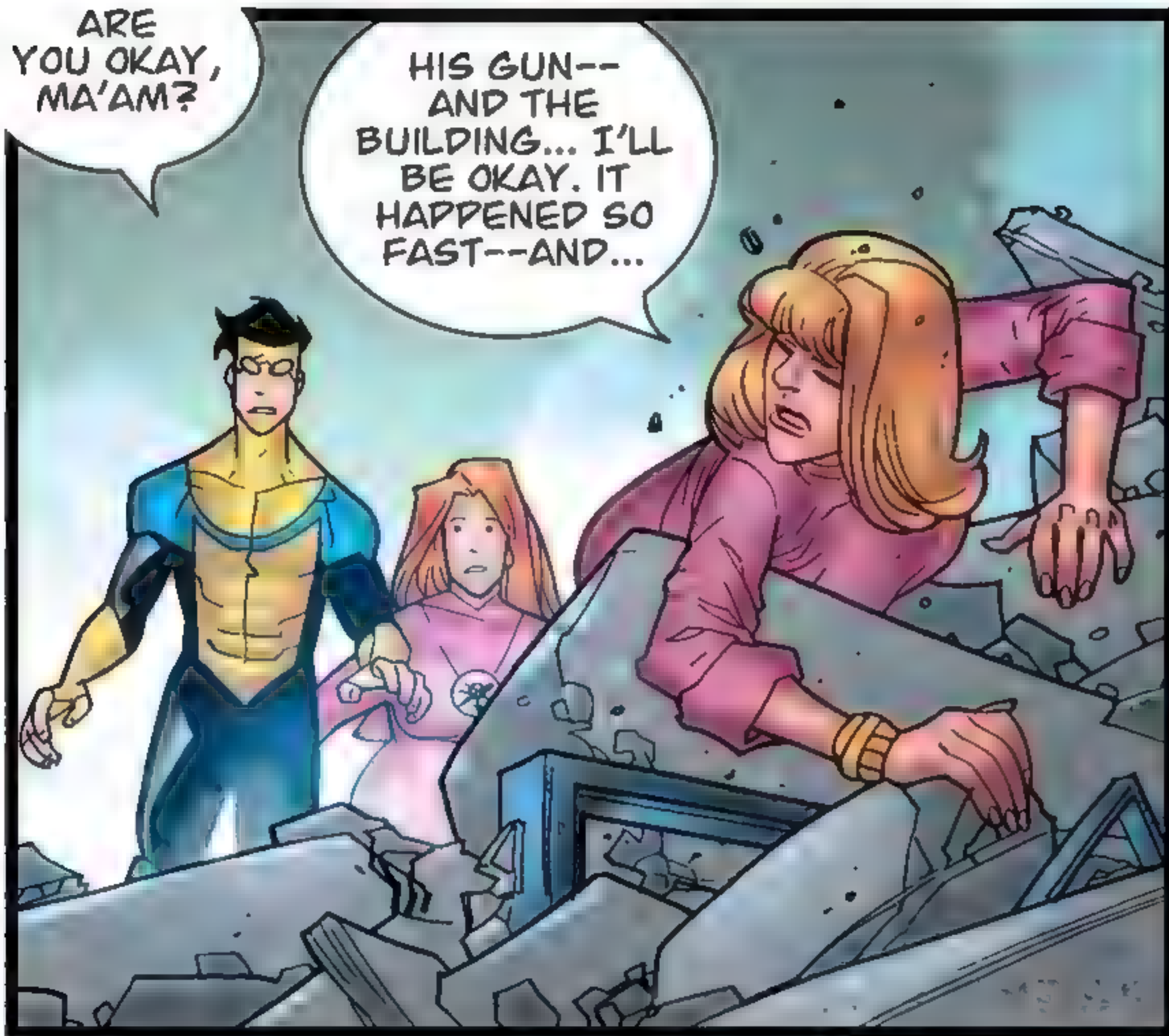
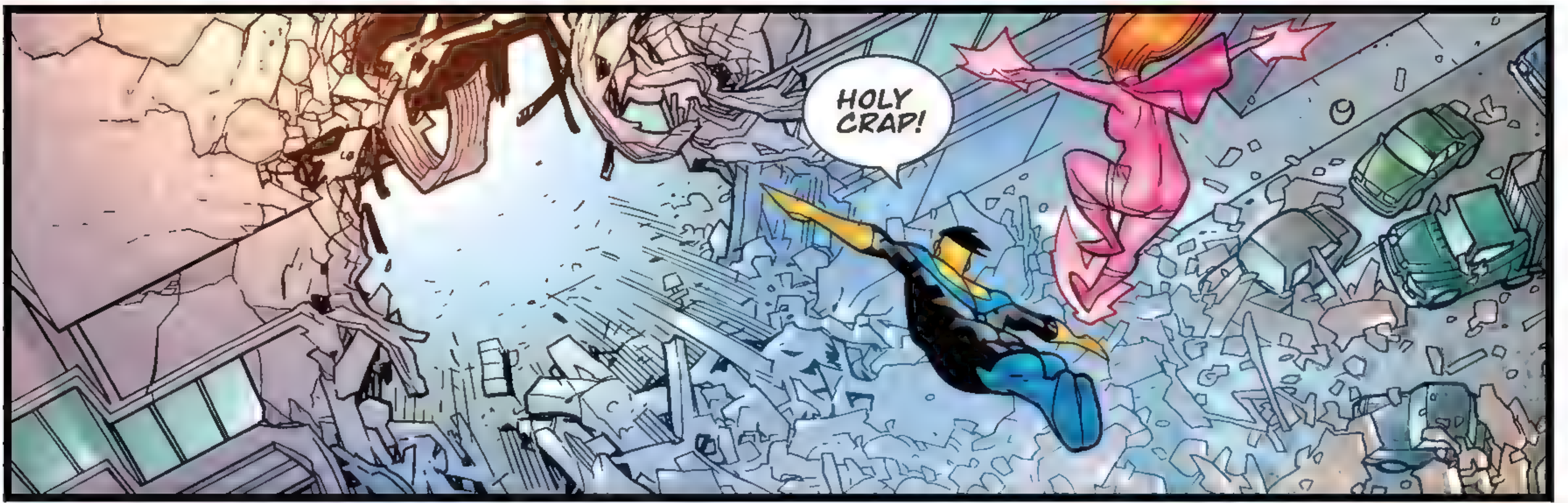
I'M JUST...
IT'S HARD FOR
ME TO LET GO.
I KNOW WHAT
I NEED TO
DO...

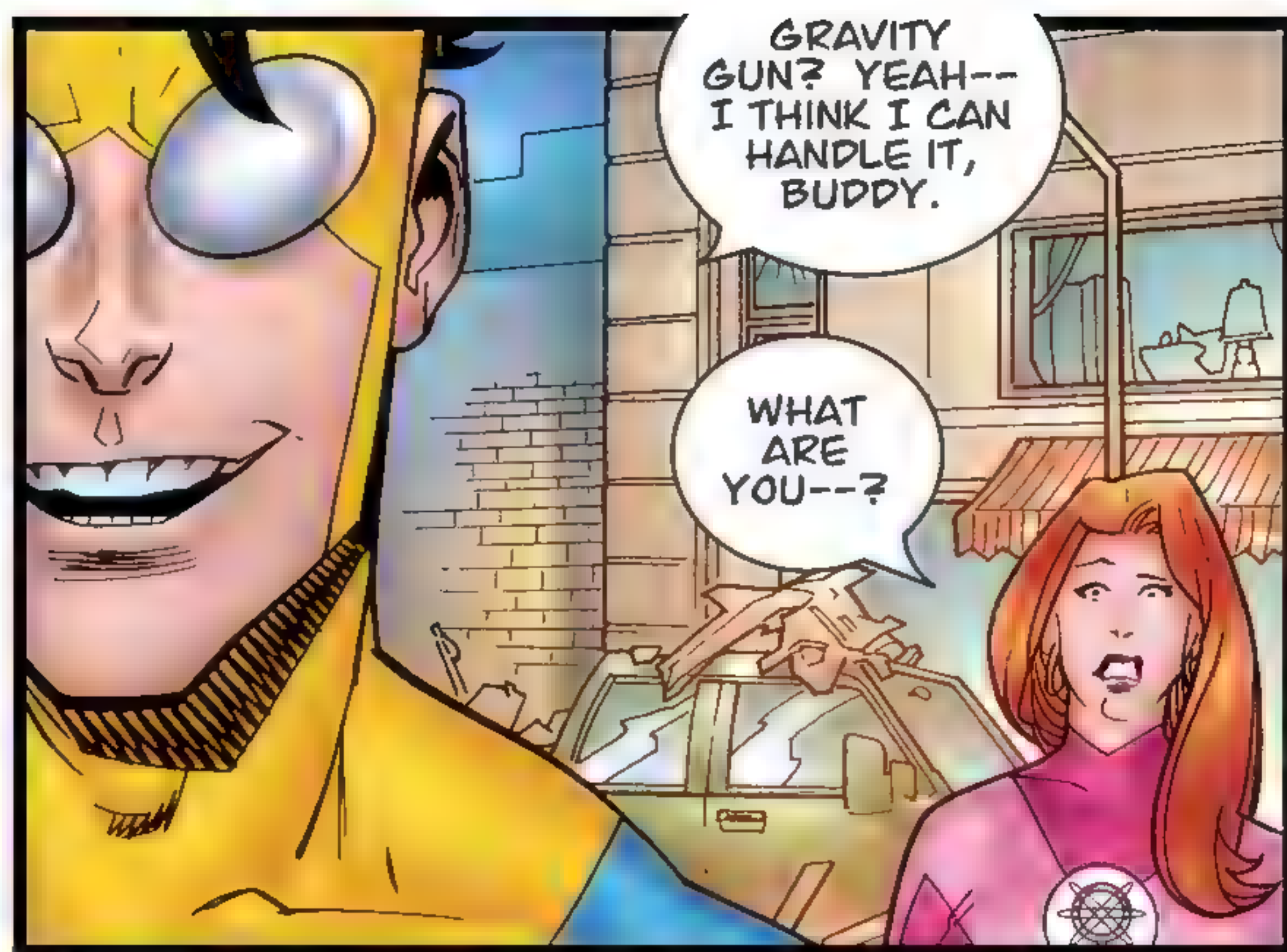
I KNOW...

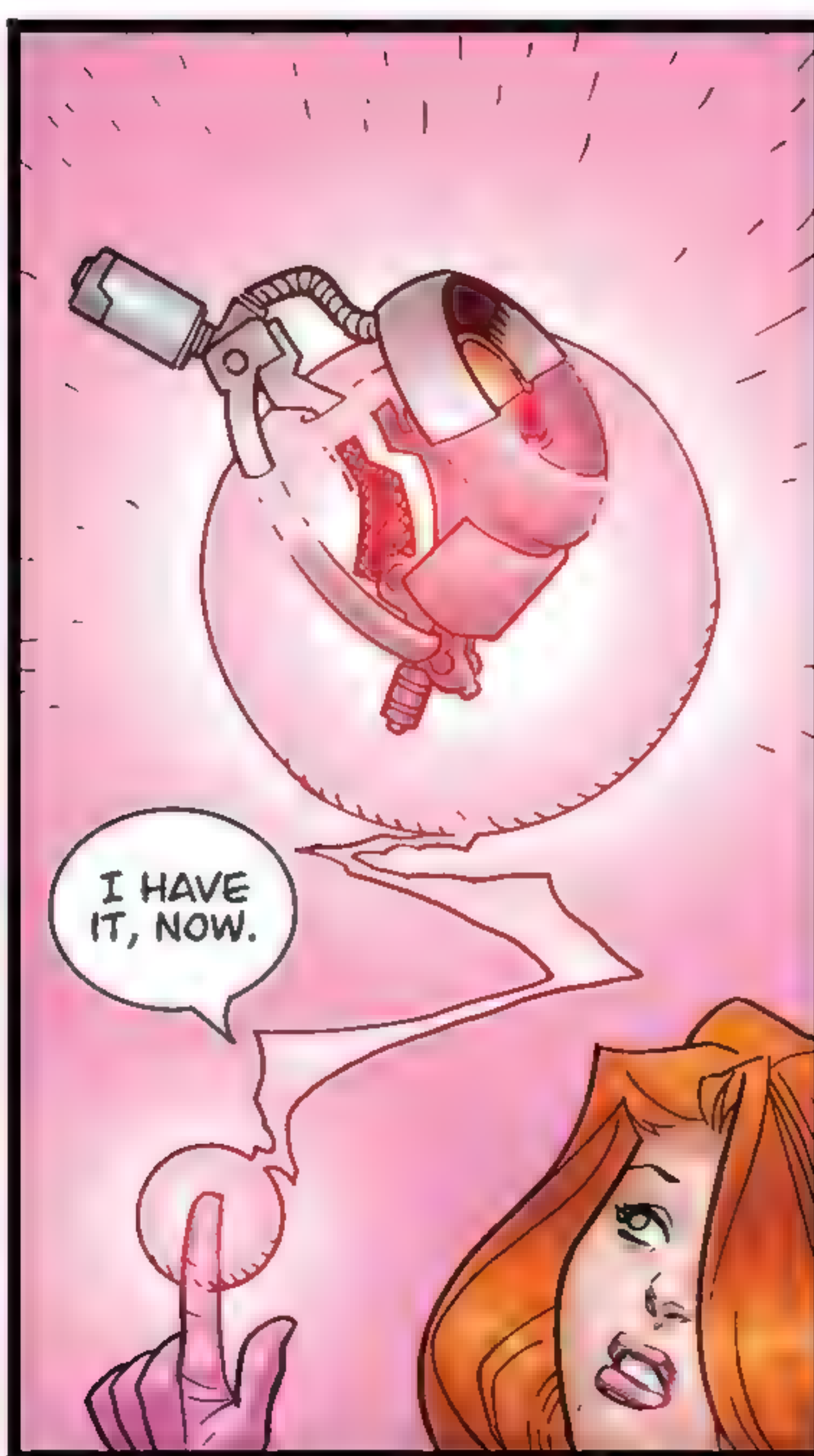
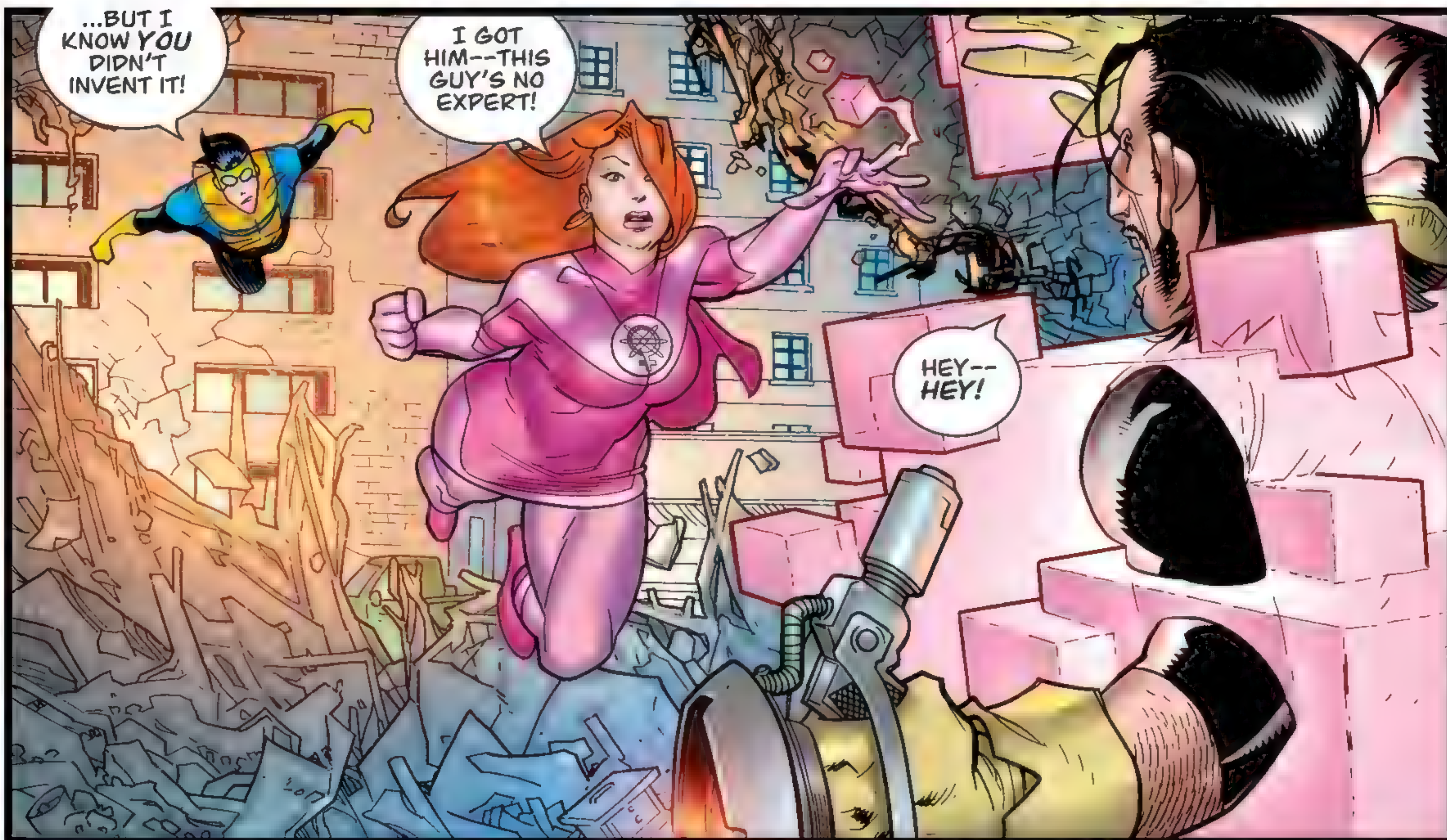


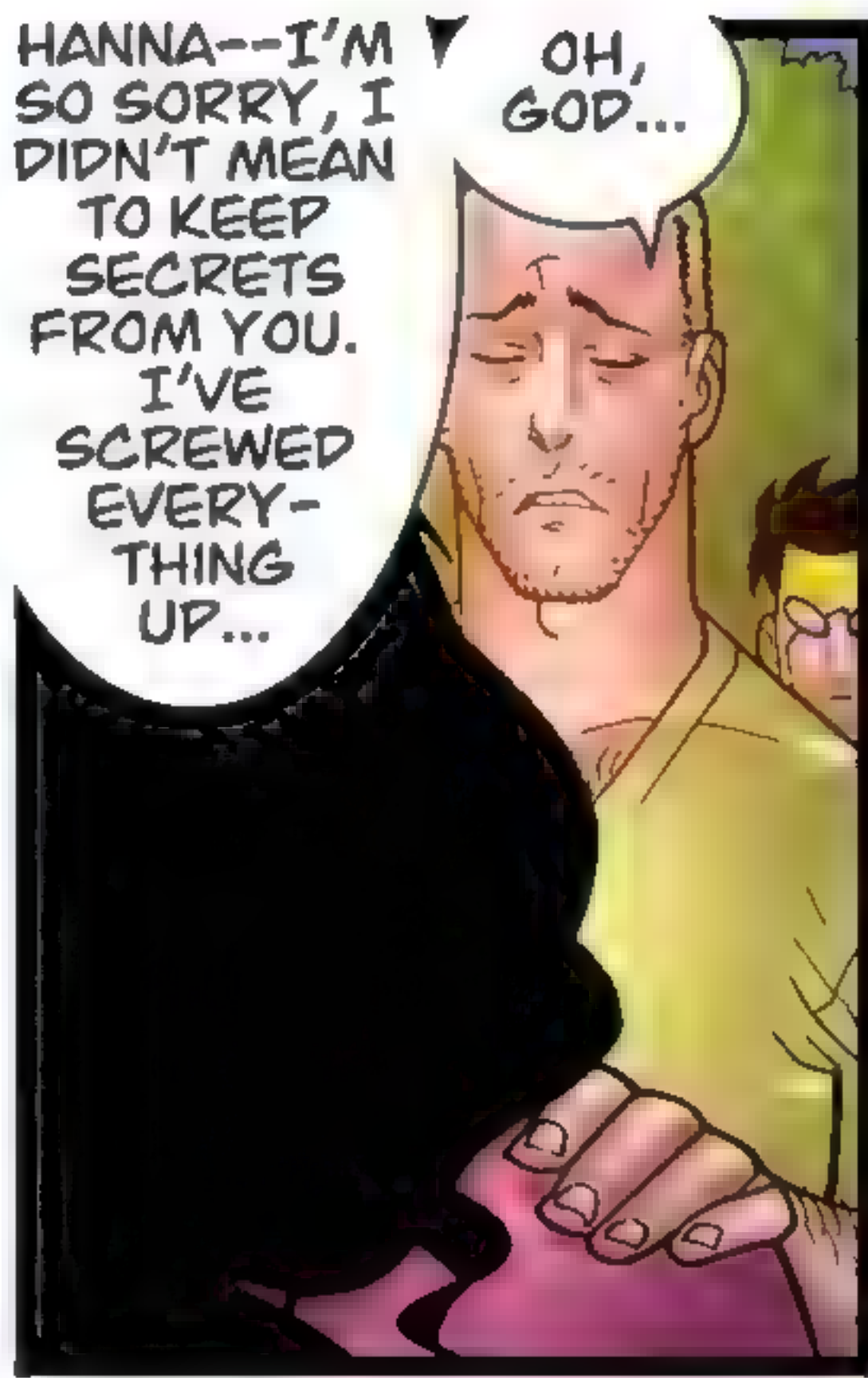
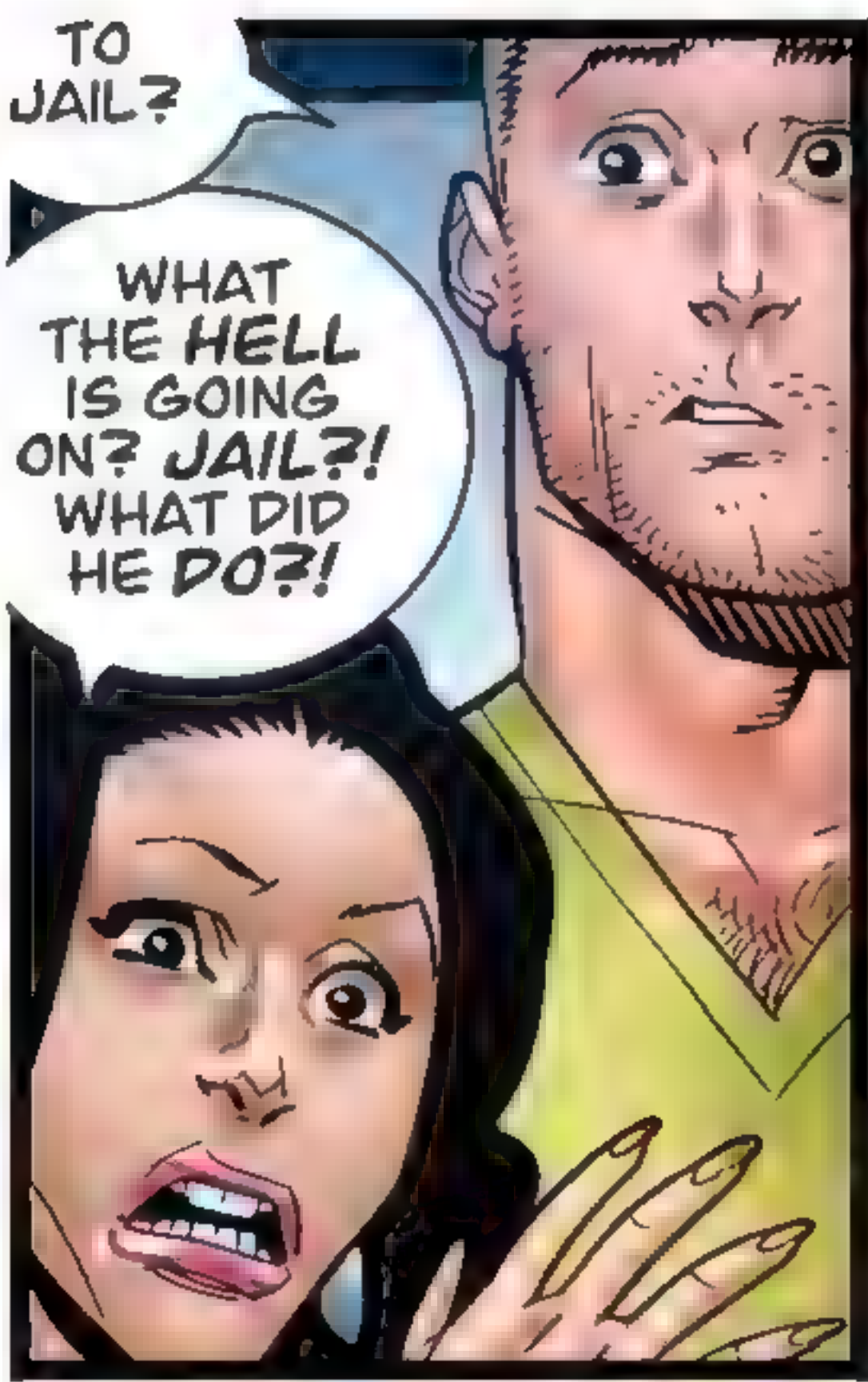
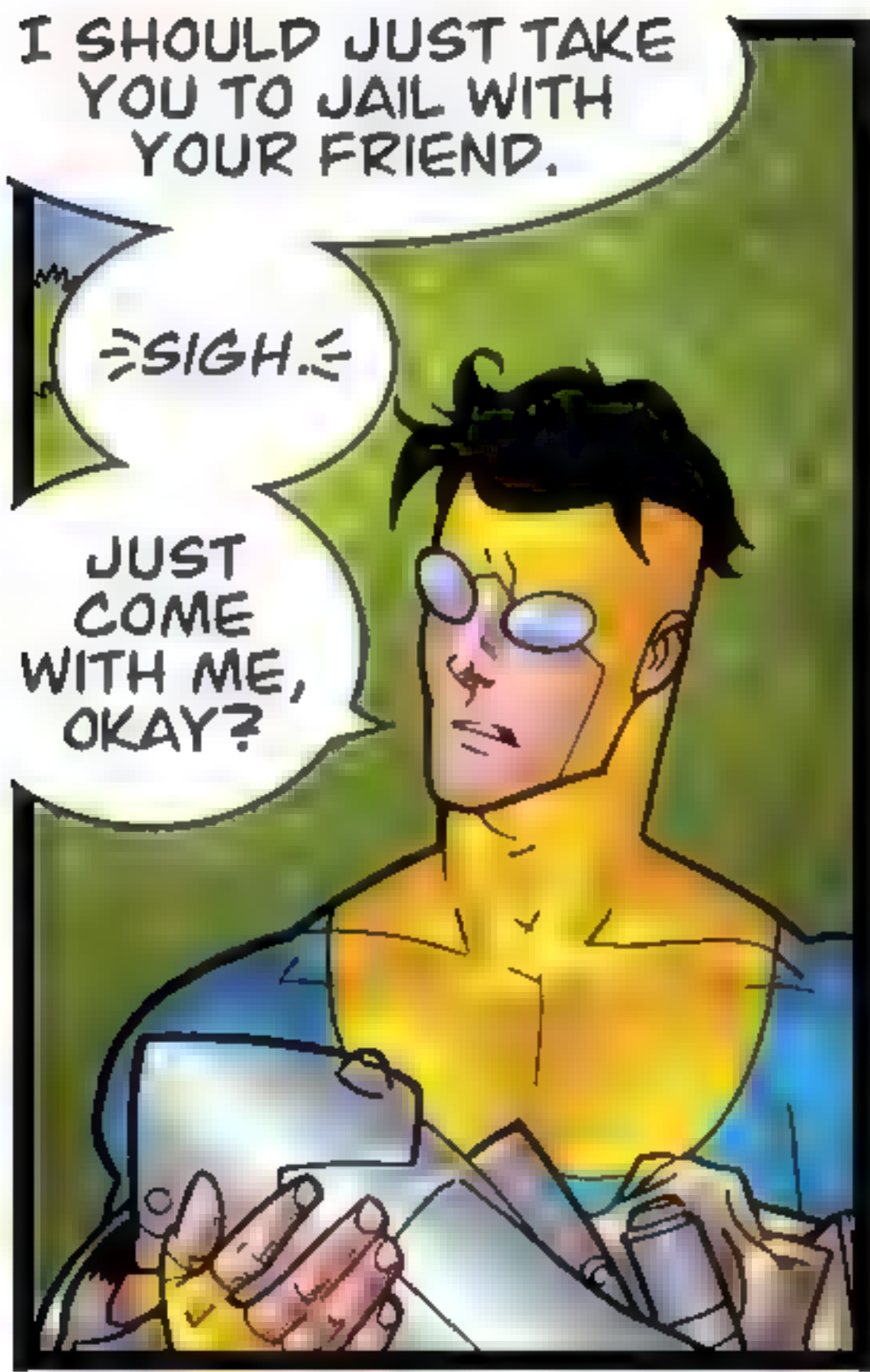
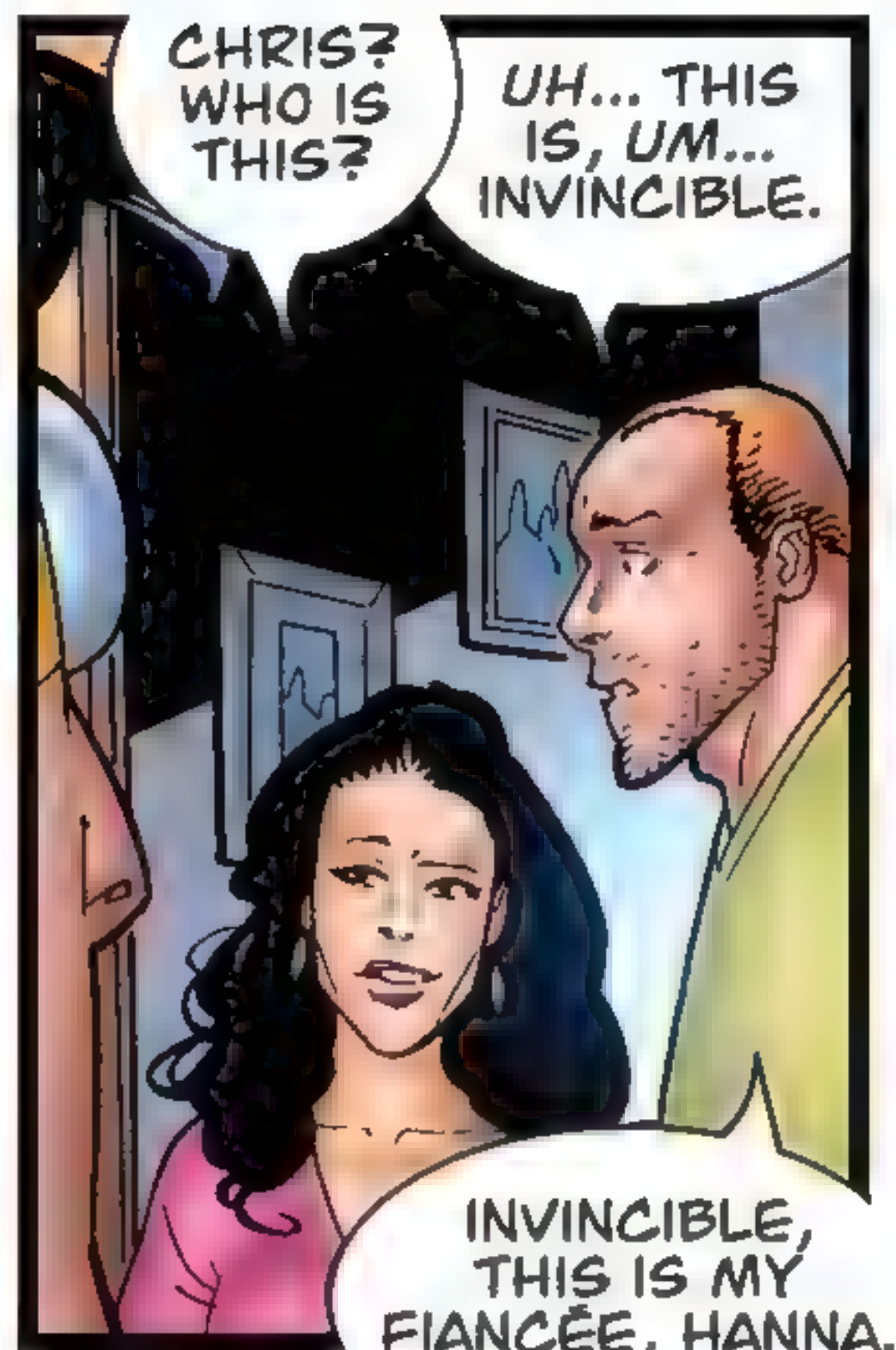
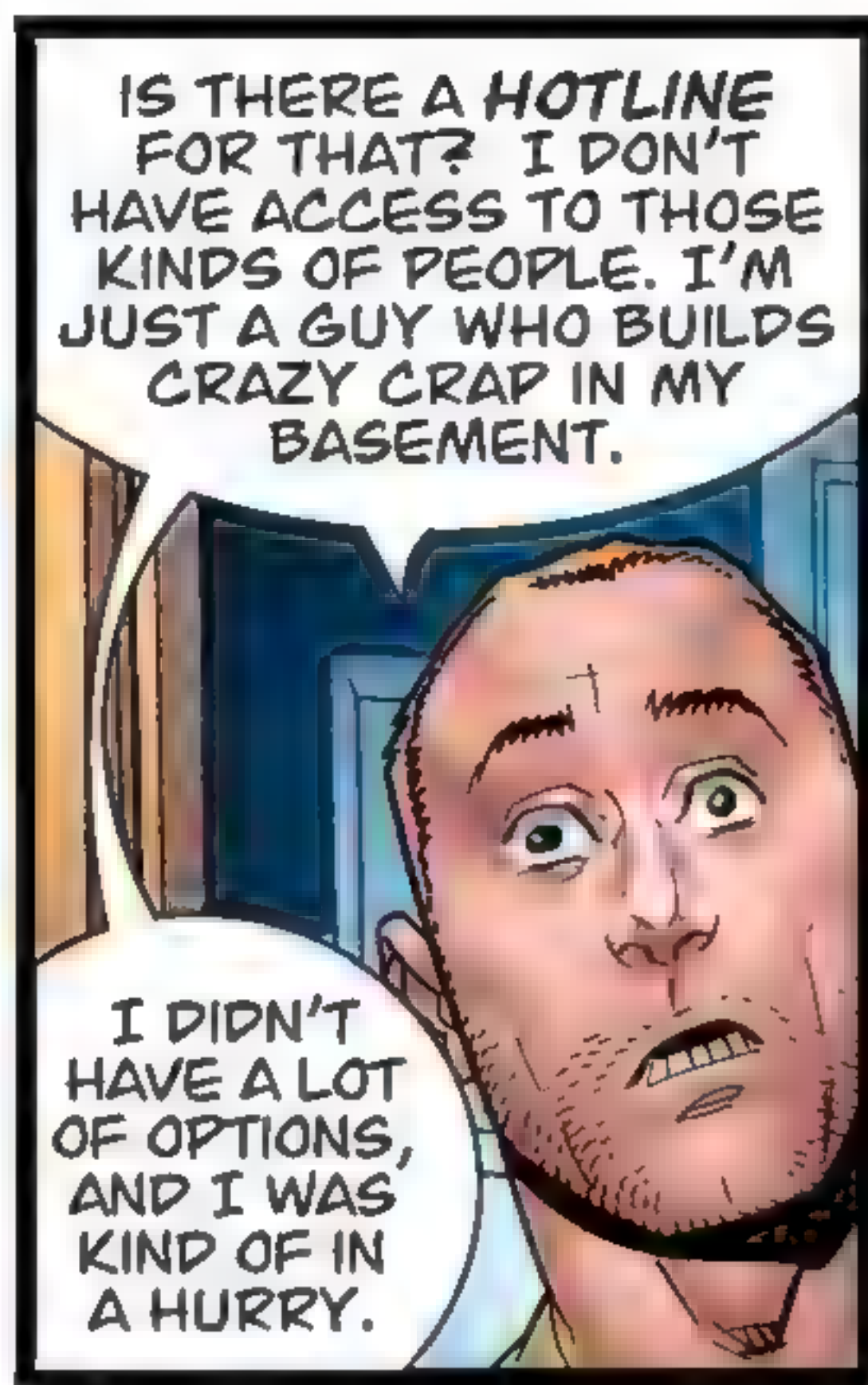
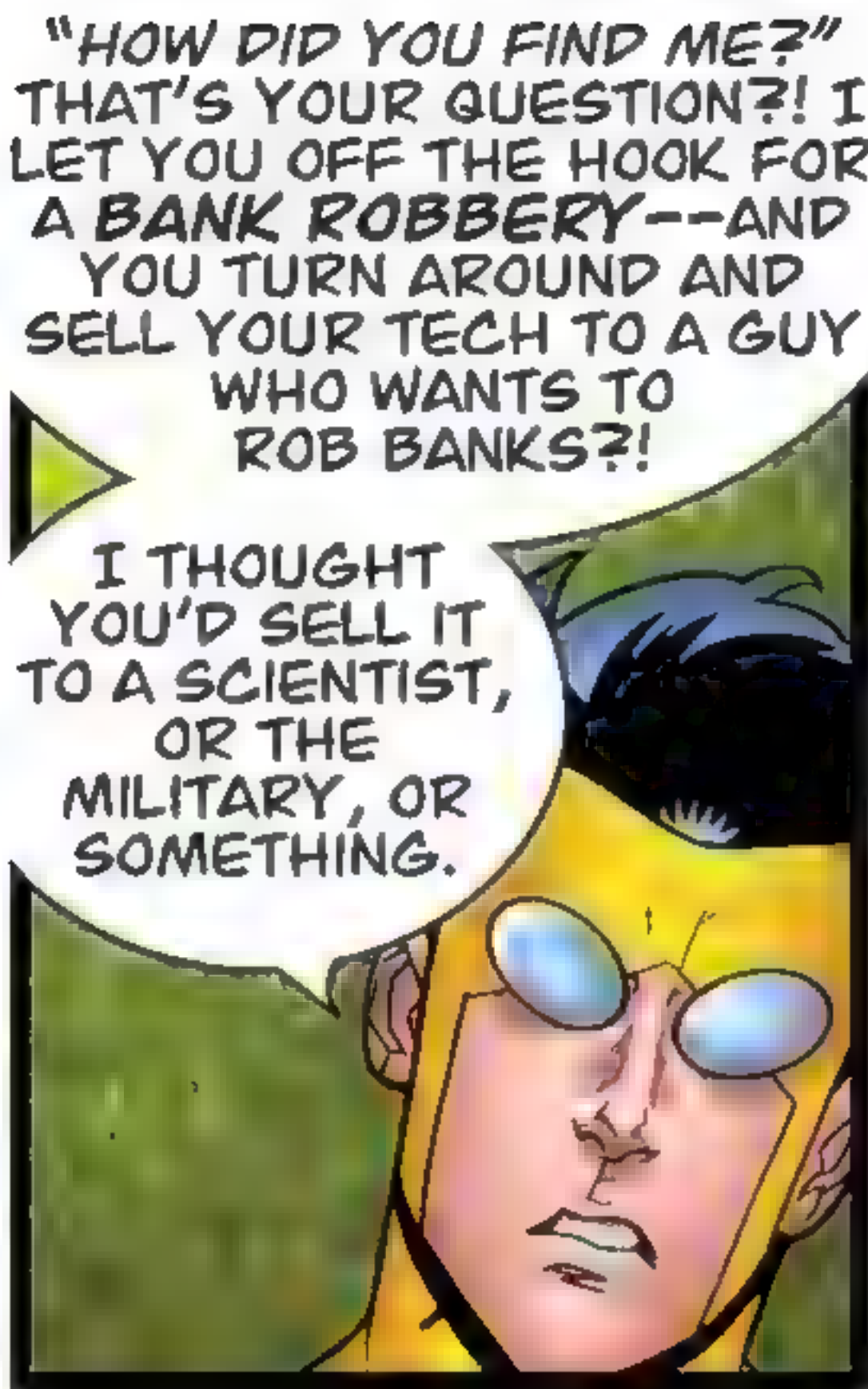


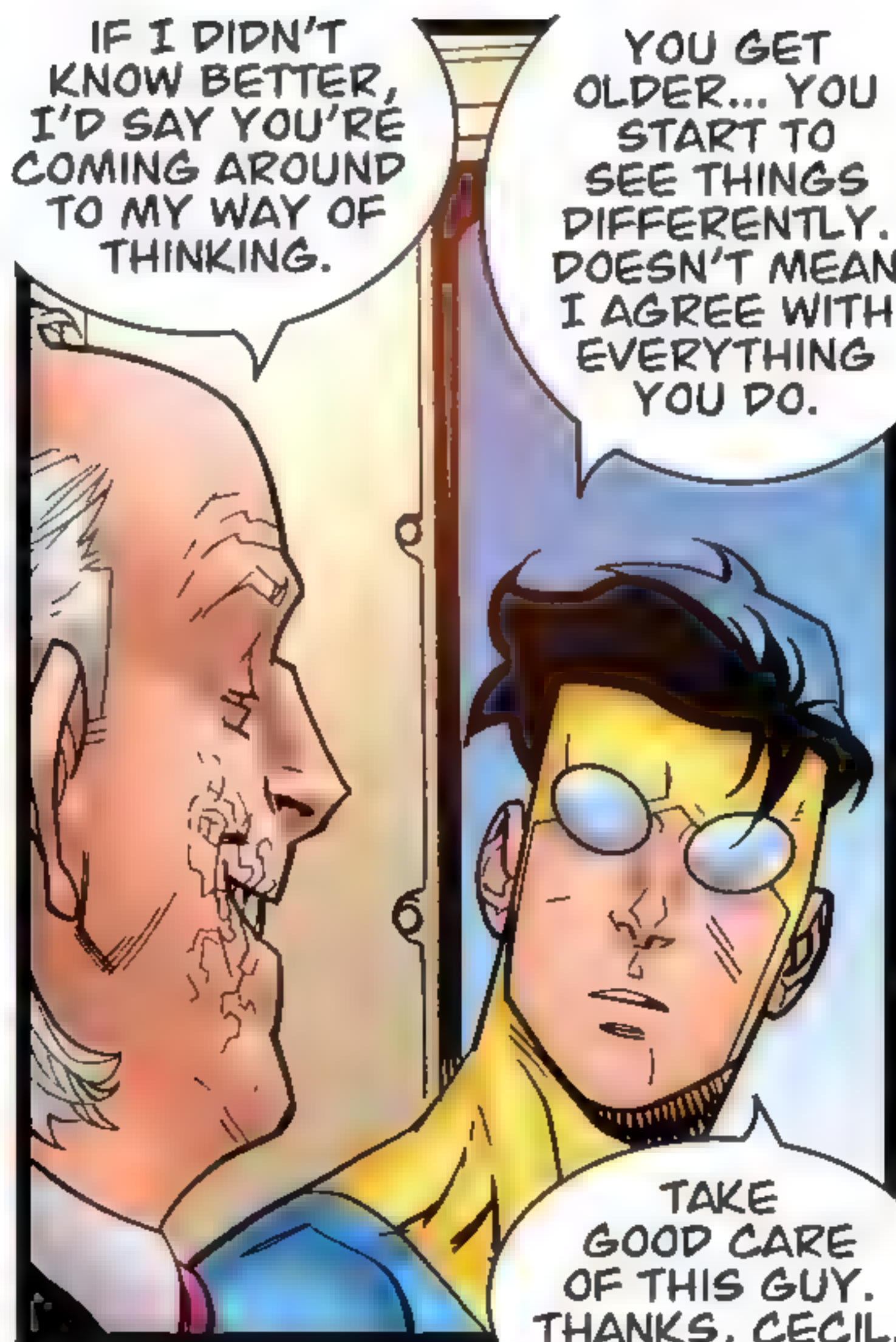
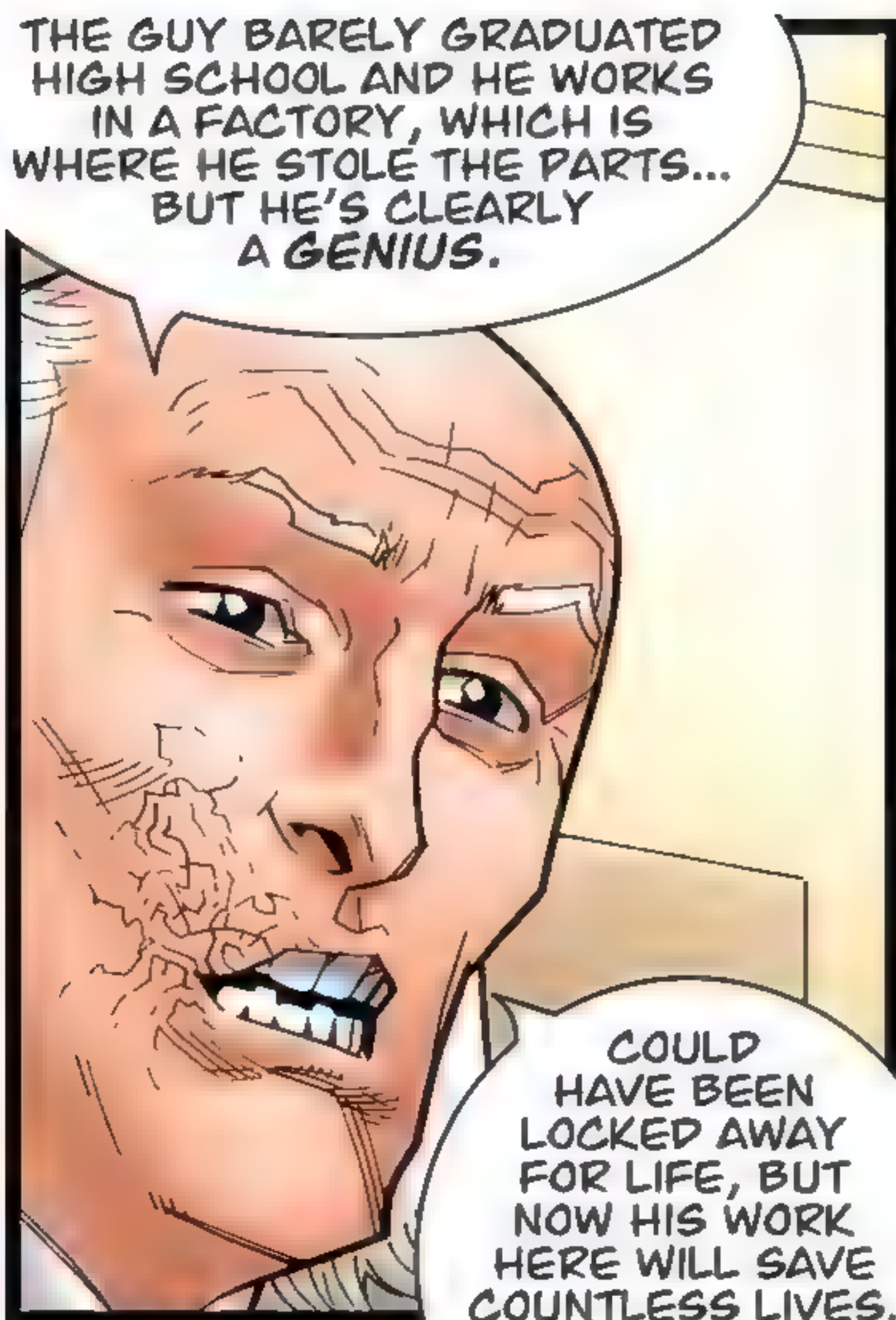
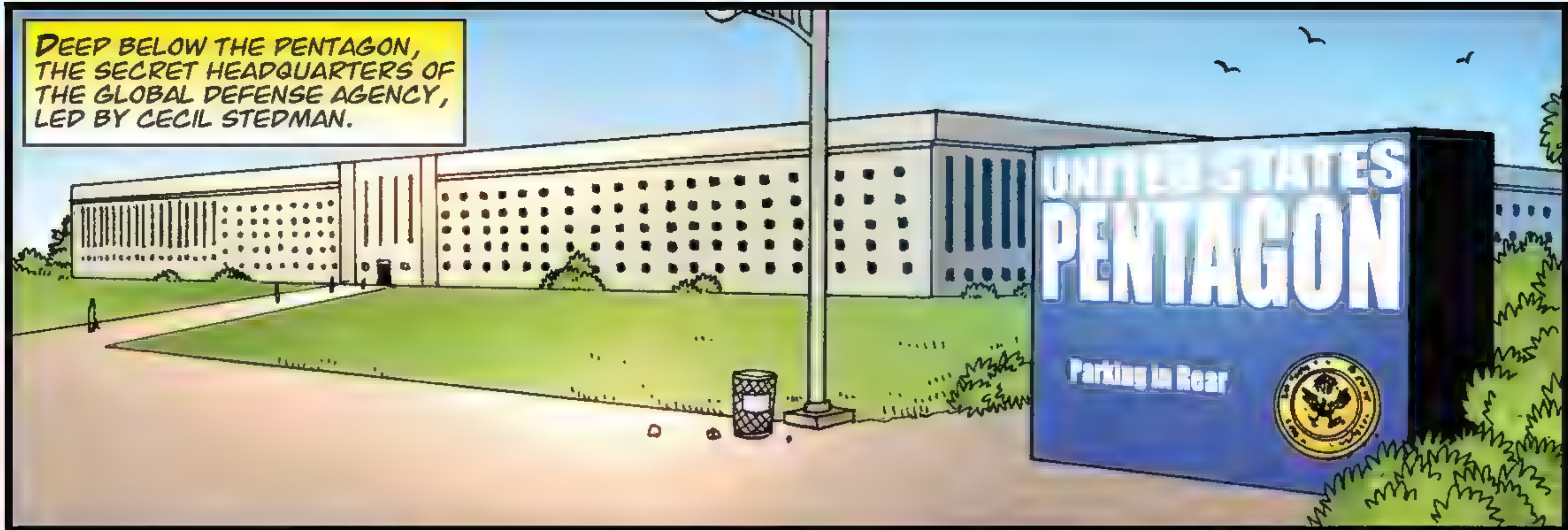


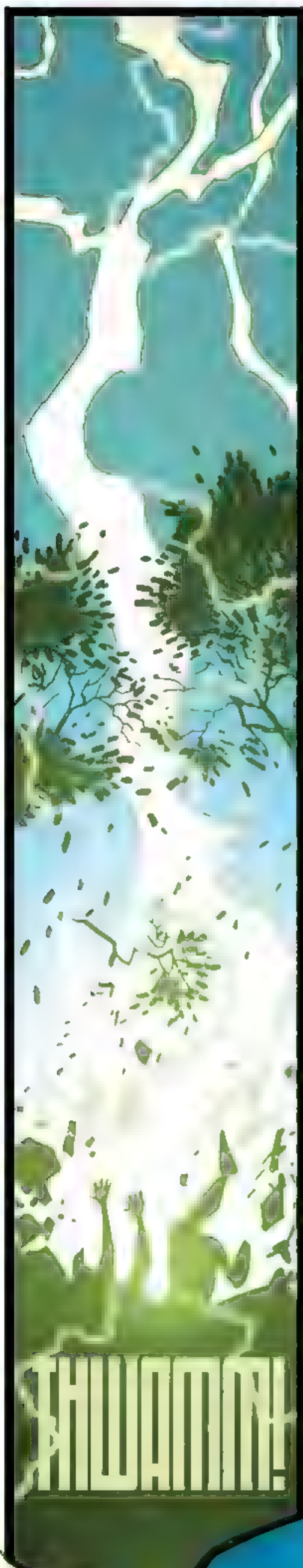
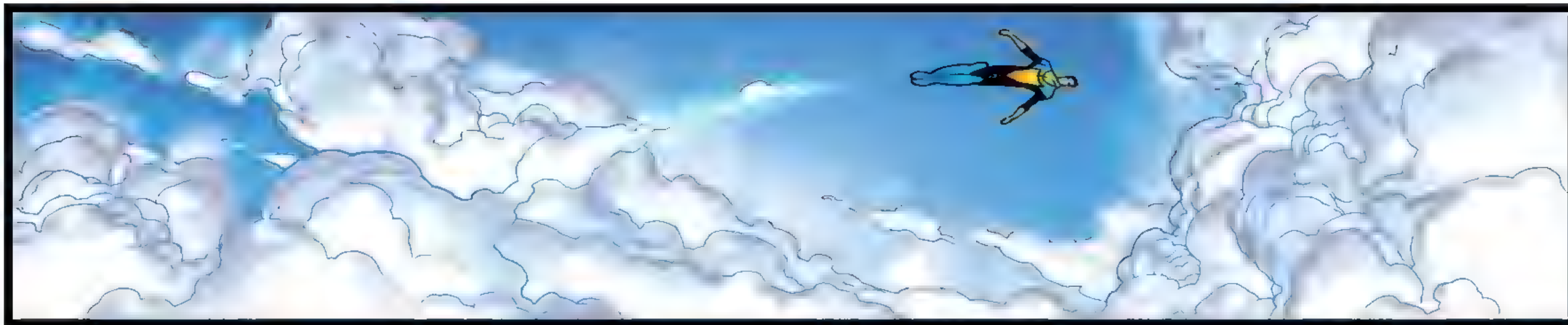














WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE STAYED IN SPACE?! THINGS WERE SO MUCH BETTER WITHOUT YOU HERE!

I WAS GETTING MY LIFE IN ORDER... DEALING WITH BECKY AND JACK'S DEATH... I WAS COPING--DOING SOME GOOD EVEN.

I WAS RELEASED, I JOINED THE ACTIONEERS!



THANKS FOR THE UPDATE?

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY?



LAS VEGAS!

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TO DIE BEFORE YOU SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?! ARE YOU REALLY OBLIVIOUS TO THE DESTRUCTION YOU CAUSE?



NO. HOW COULD I BE?!

I KNOW HOW MANY DEATHS I'VE CAUSED... IT WEIGHS ON ME.

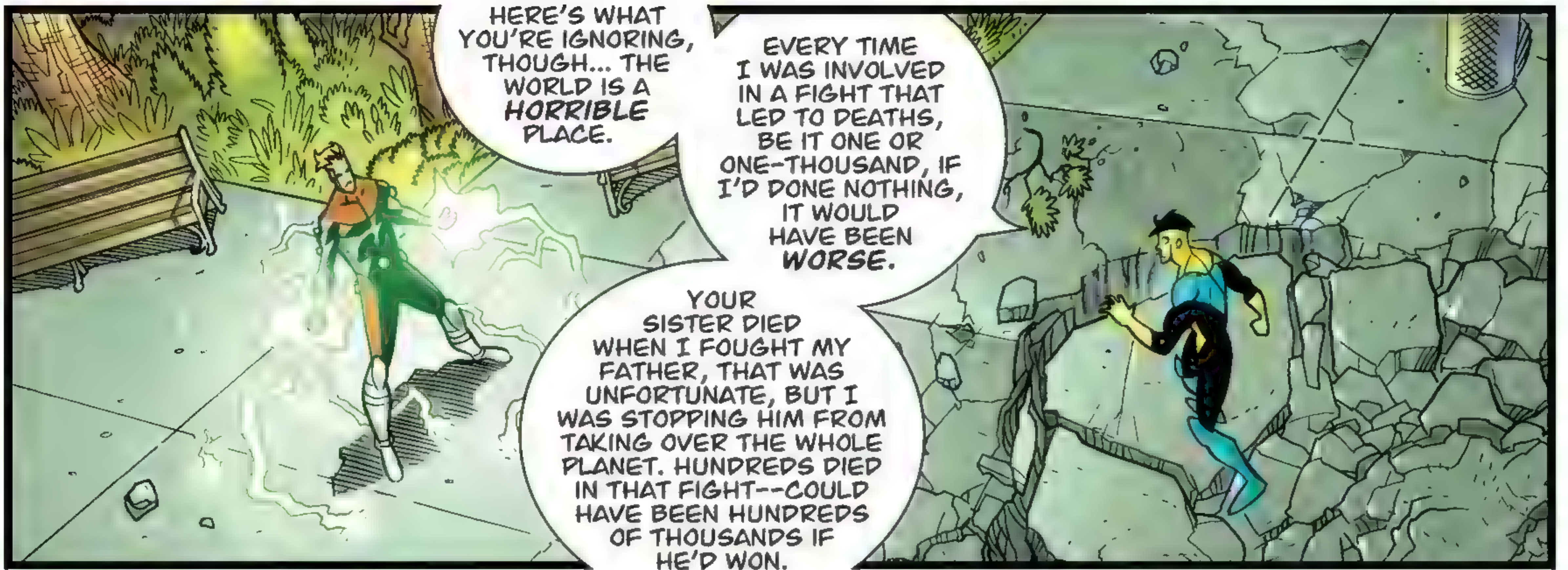


WHAT?



DO YOU THINK I'M STUPID? OR CRAZY? I'M NOT EVIL.

NOT A DAY GOES BY THAT I DON'T THINK ABOUT IT.



HERE'S WHAT YOU'RE IGNORING, THOUGH... THE WORLD IS A HORRIBLE PLACE.

EVERY TIME I WAS INVOLVED IN A FIGHT THAT LED TO DEATHS, BE IT ONE OR ONE-THOUSAND, IF I'D DONE NOTHING, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WORSE.

YOUR SISTER DIED WHEN I FOUGHT MY FATHER, THAT WAS UNFORTUNATE, BUT I WAS STOPPING HIM FROM TAKING OVER THE WHOLE PLANET. HUNDREDS DIED IN THAT FIGHT--COULD HAVE BEEN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS IF HE'D WON.



YOU LIE!



ACK!

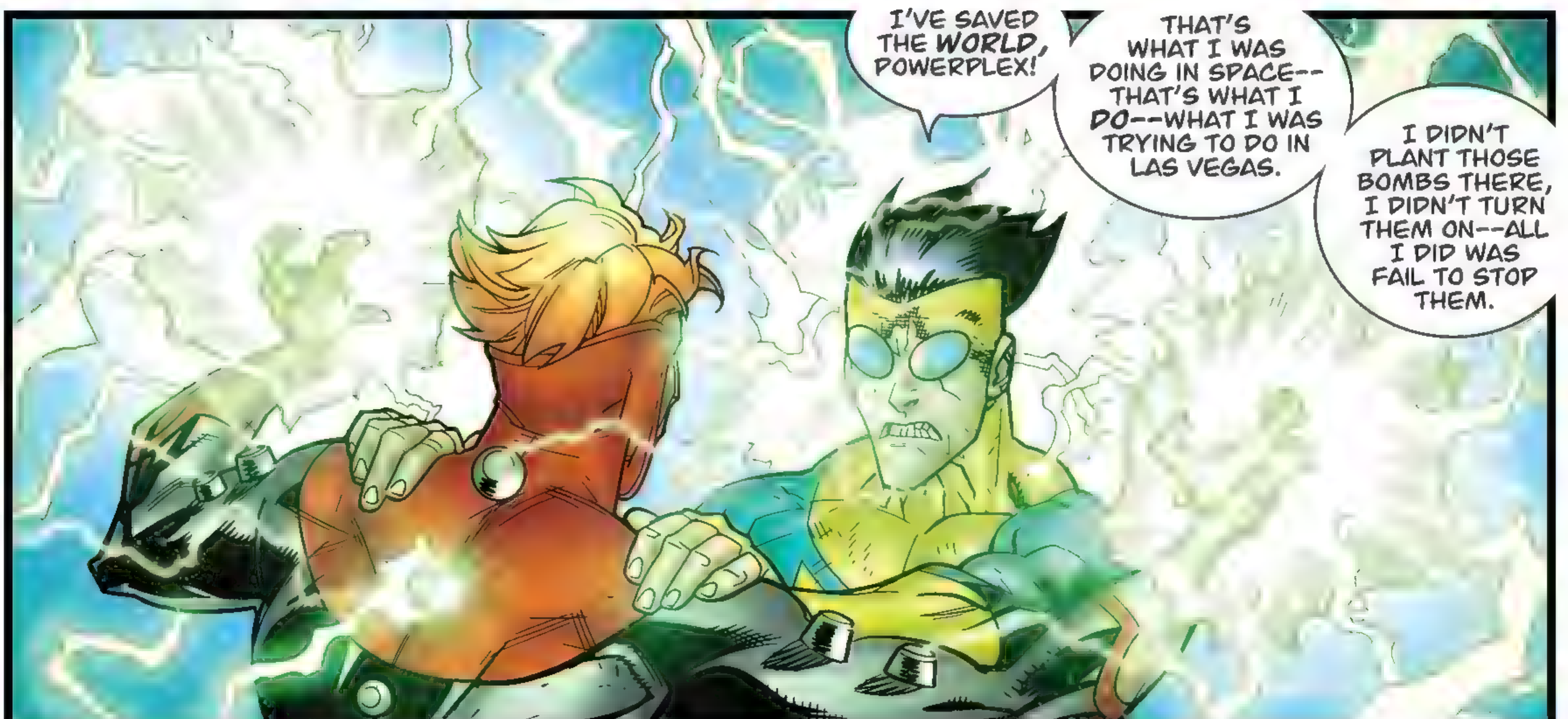
I'M NOT--LYING--AND I'M--NOT GOING TO FIGHT YOU--I KNOW HOW YOU ABSORB ENERGY.



COUNTLESS DEATHS ARE THE RESULT OF YOUR BATTLES! I REFUSE TO BELIEVE THINGS WOULDN'T BE BETTER WITHOUT YOU!

YOU'RE RECKLESS, SLOPPY-- YOU MAKE SITUATIONS WORSE!

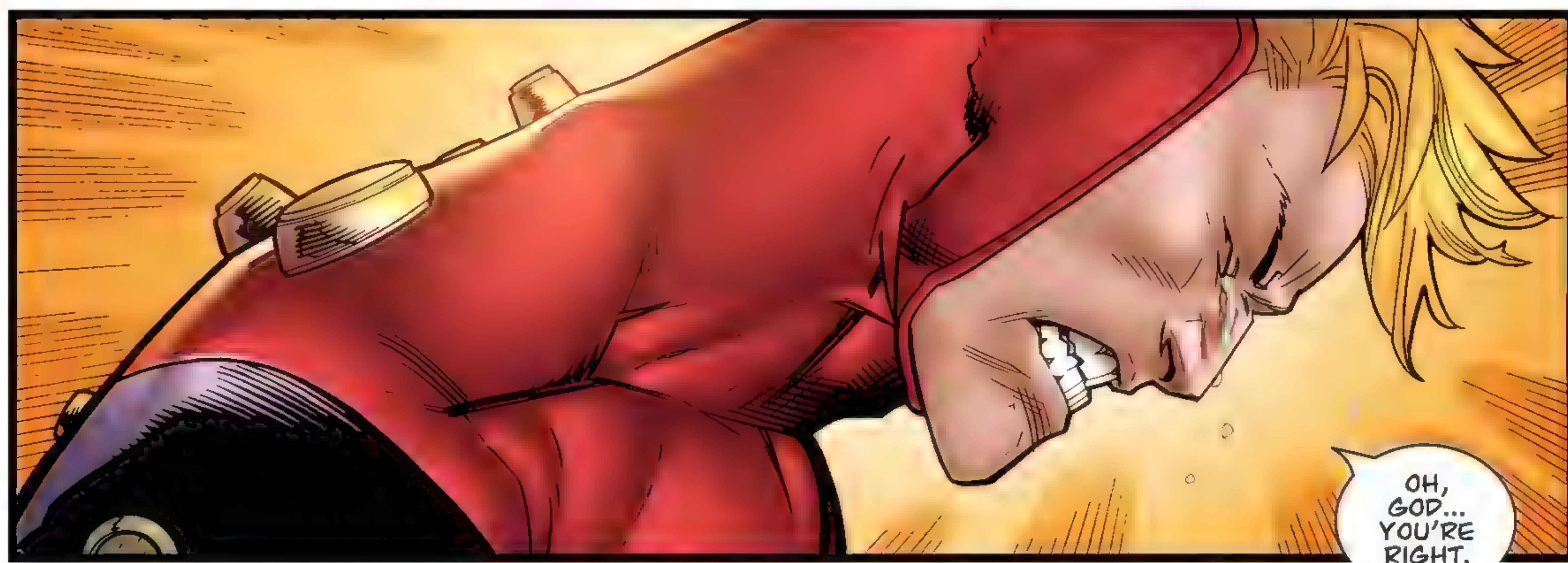
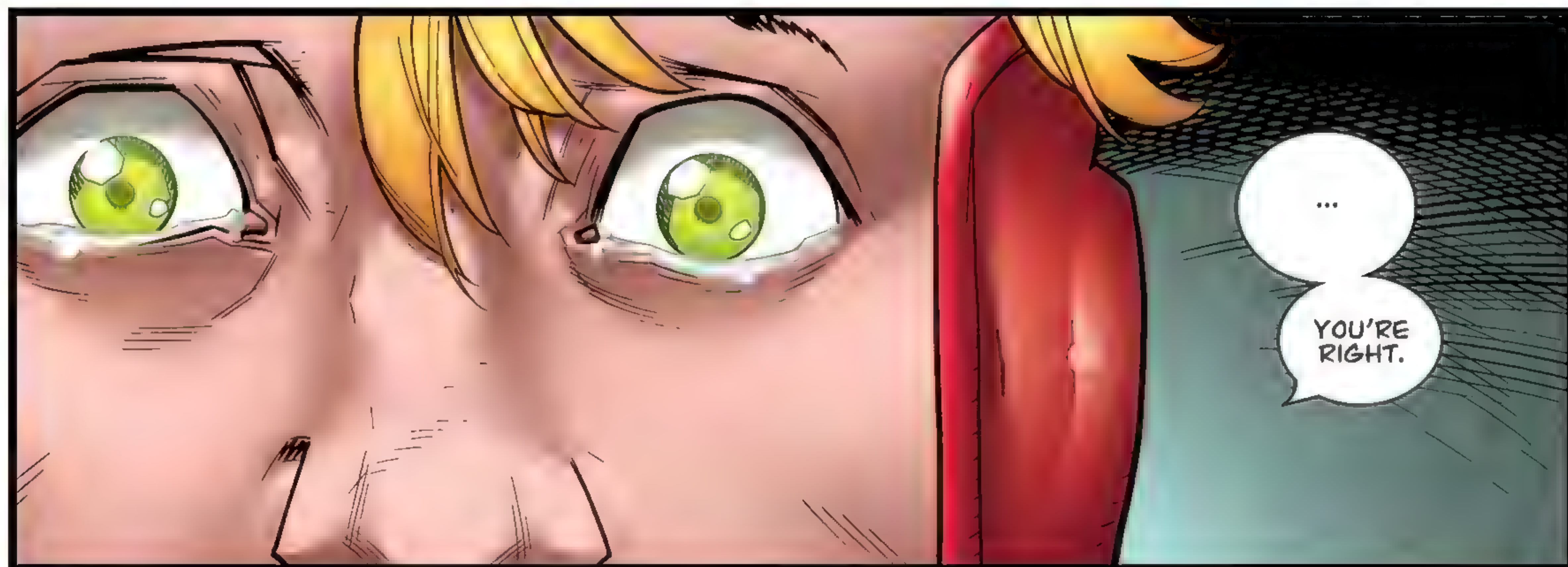
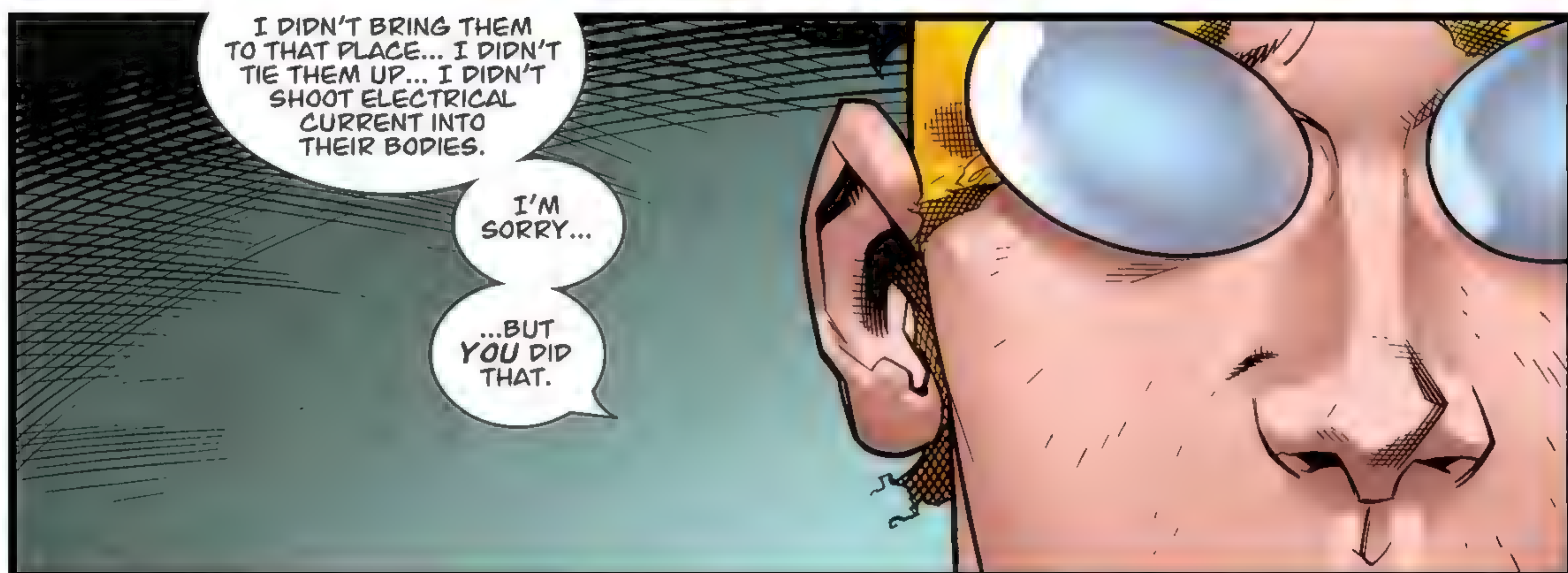
YOU'RE WRONG-- AND YOU'RE ALMOST OUT OF ENERGY, YOUR BLASTS ARE--WEAKER.

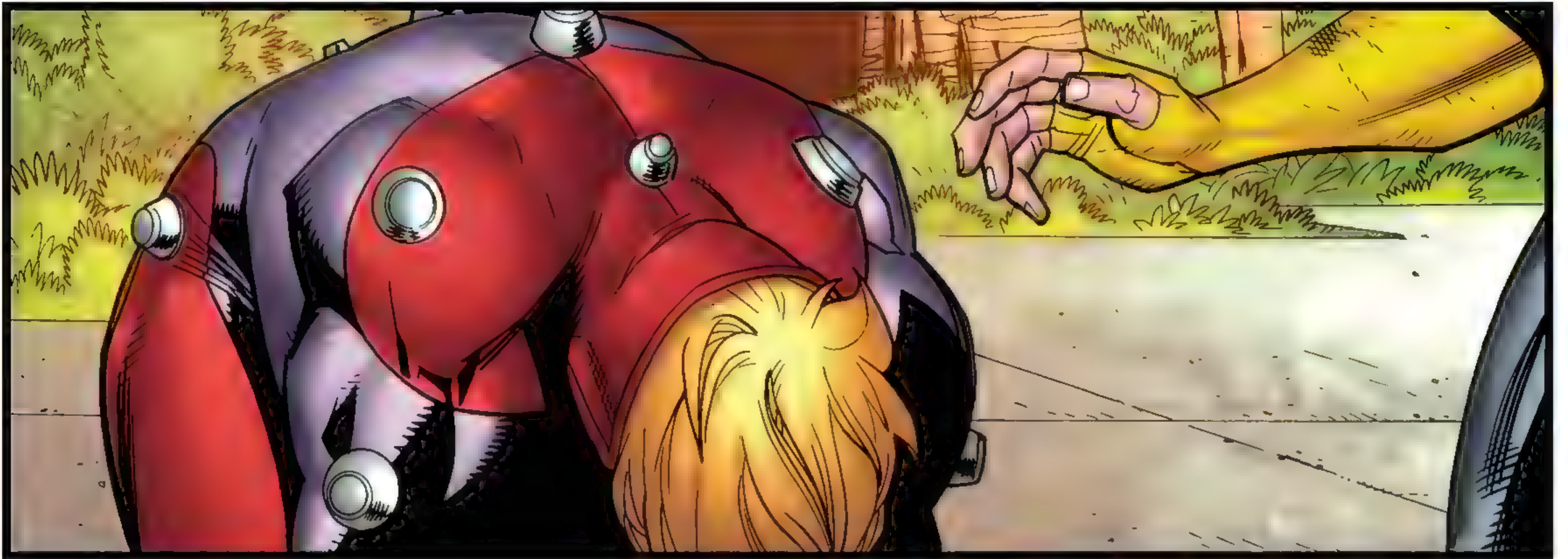
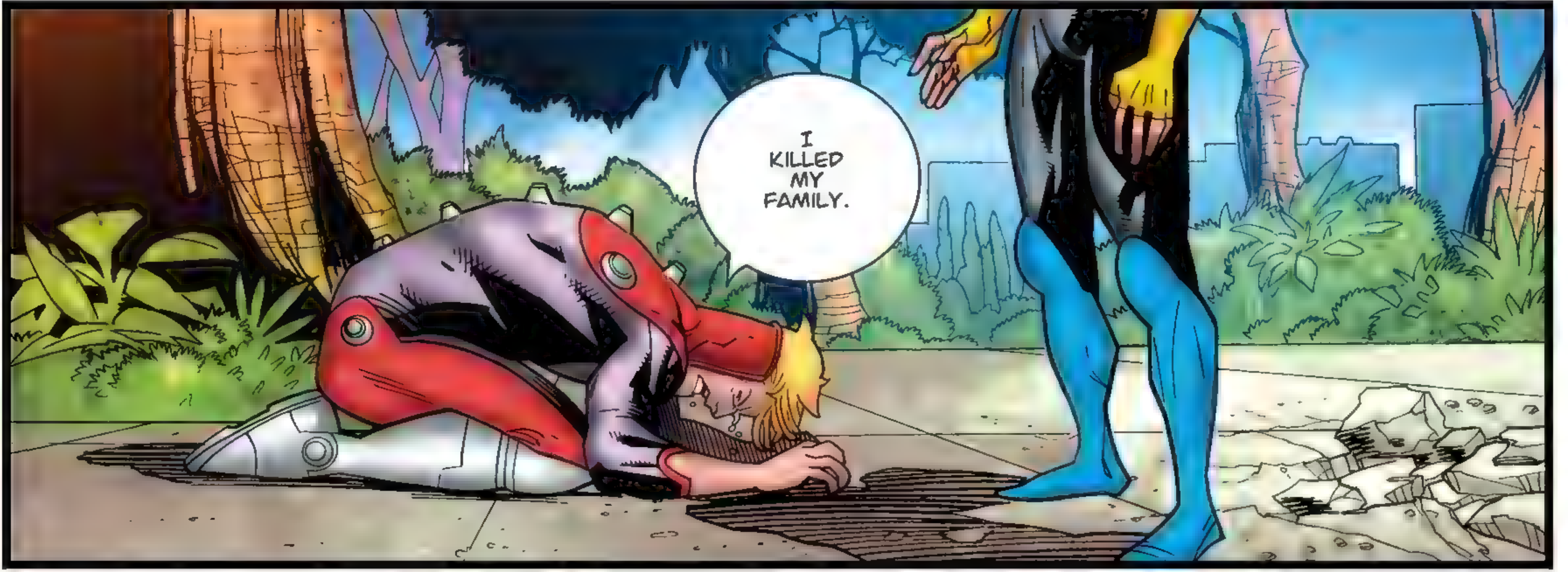


I'VE SAVED THE WORLD, POWERPLEX!

THAT'S WHAT I WAS DOING IN SPACE-- THAT'S WHAT I DO--WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO IN LAS VEGAS.

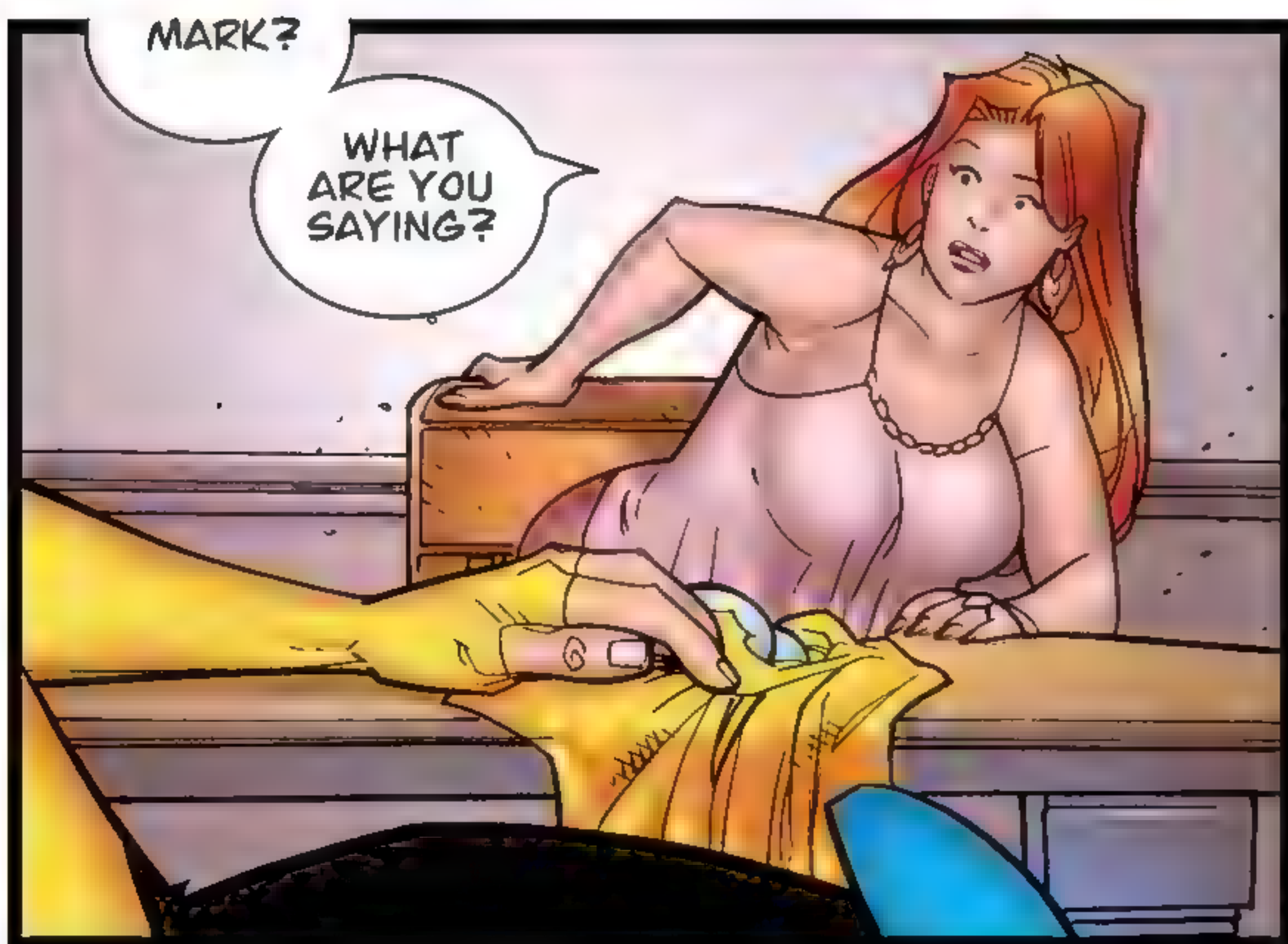
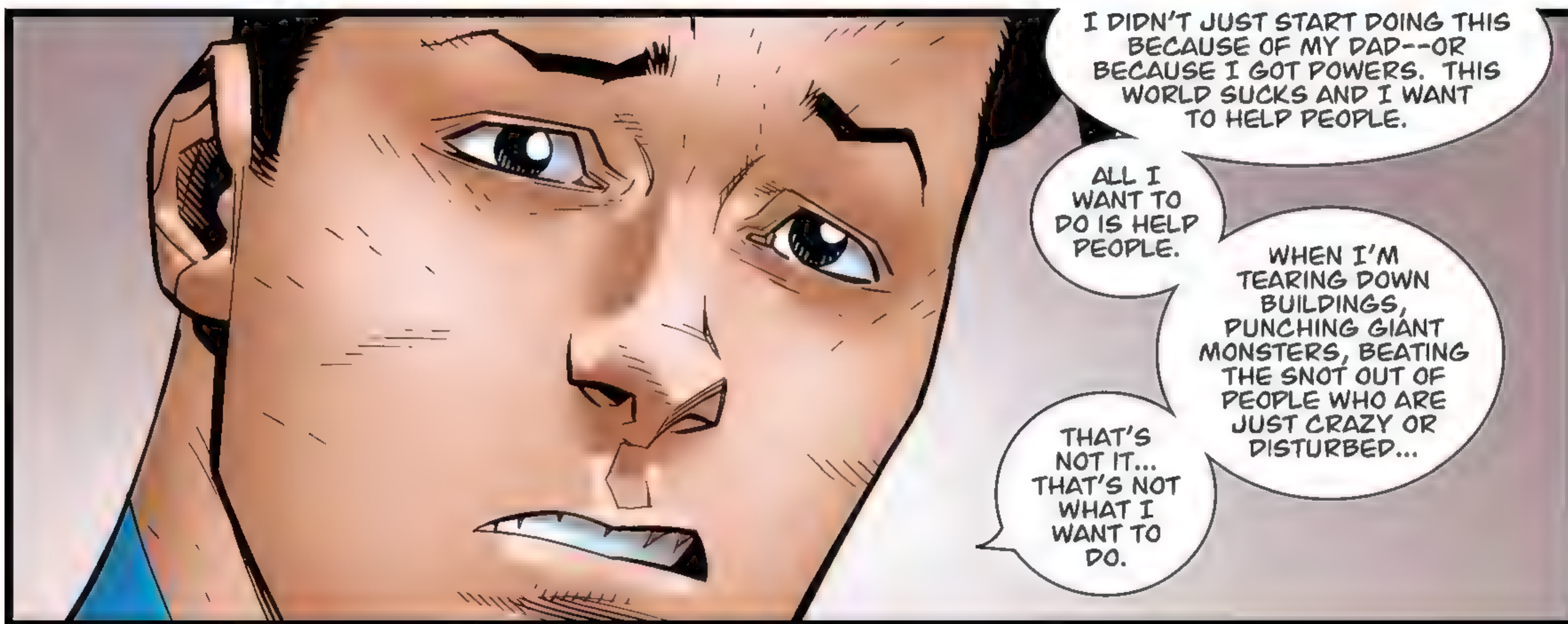
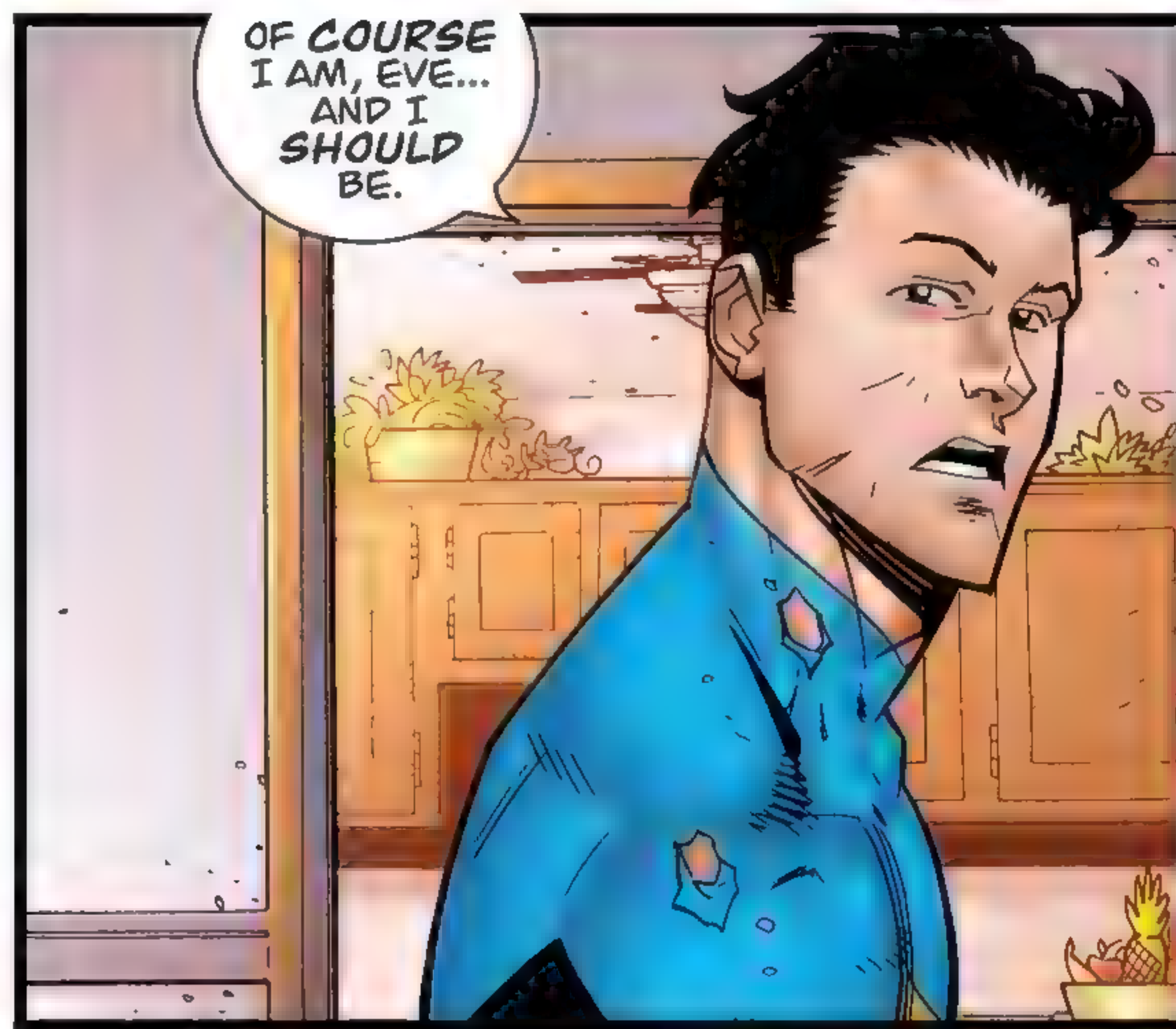
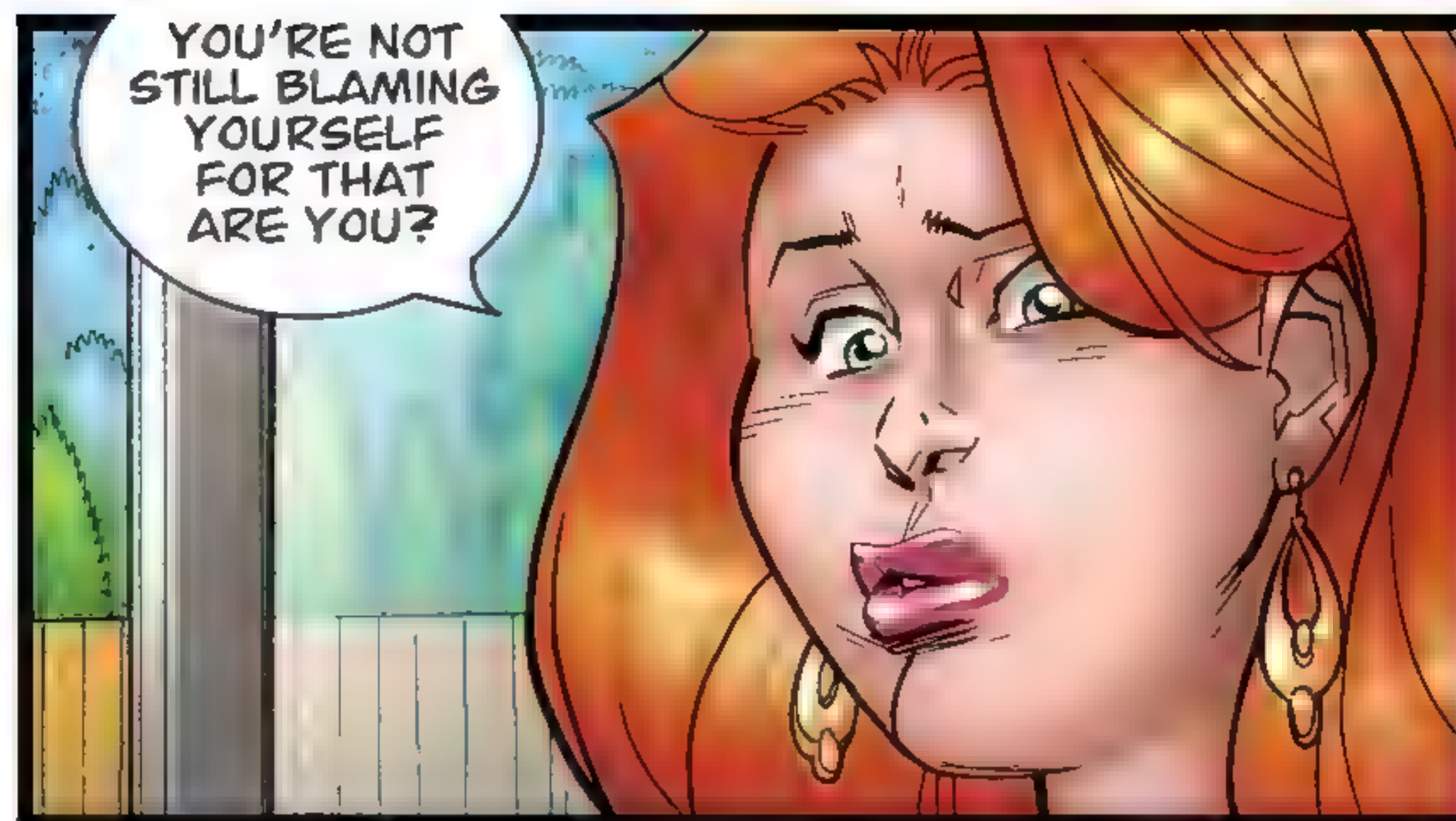
I DIDN'T PLANT THOSE BOMBS THERE, I DIDN'T TURN THEM ON--ALL I DID WAS FAIL TO STOP THEM.

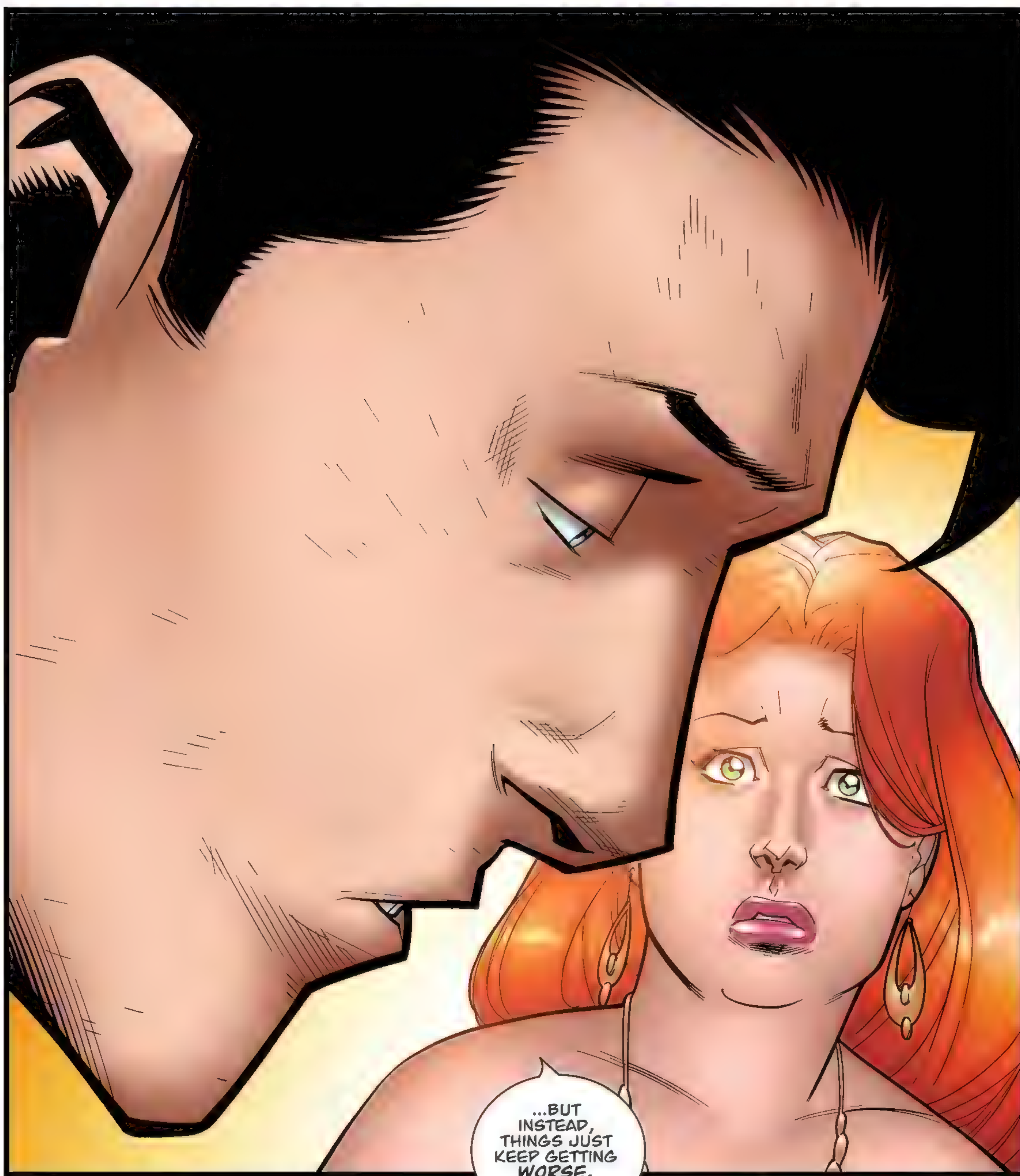
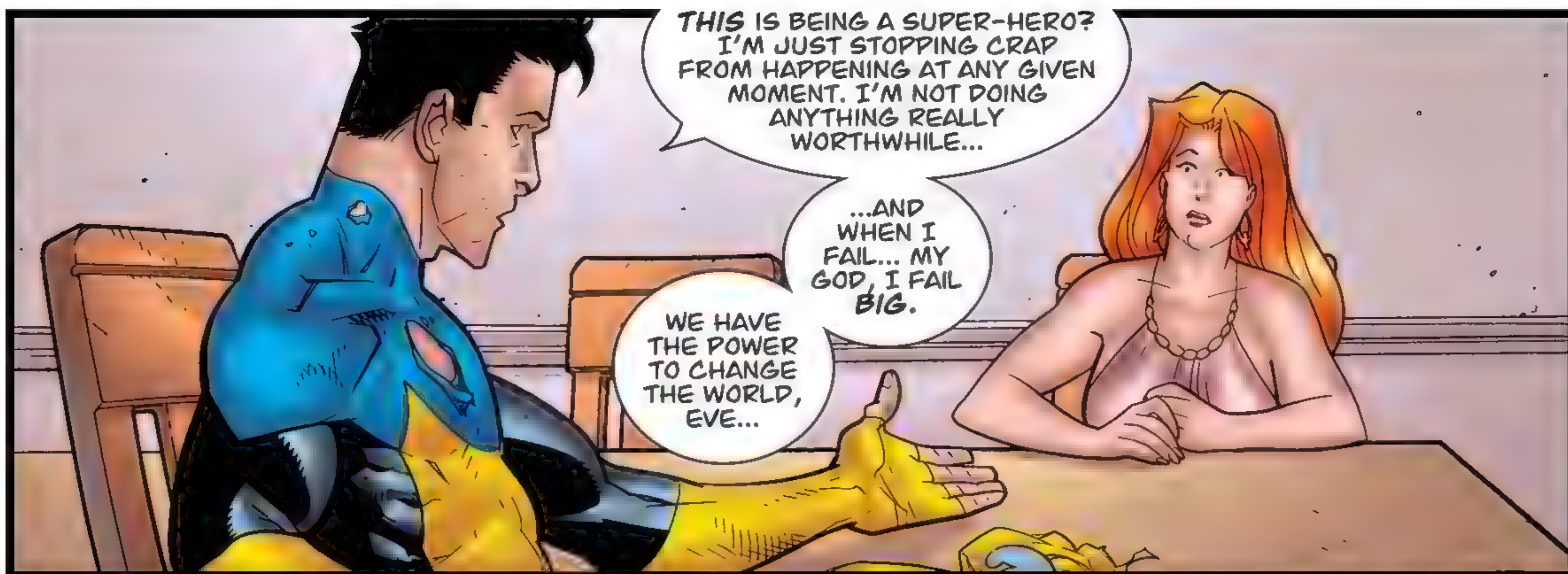














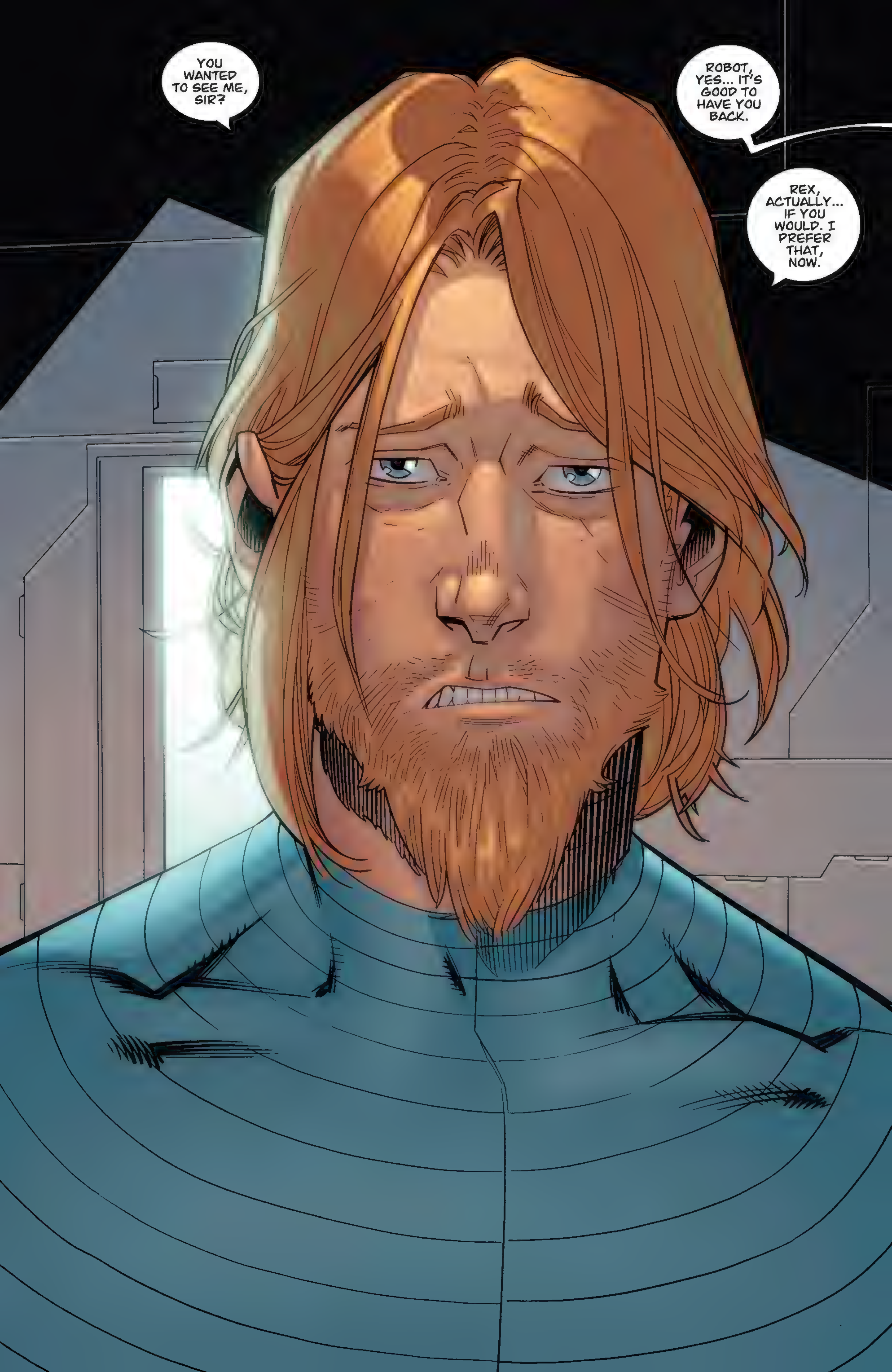
CHAPTER 82

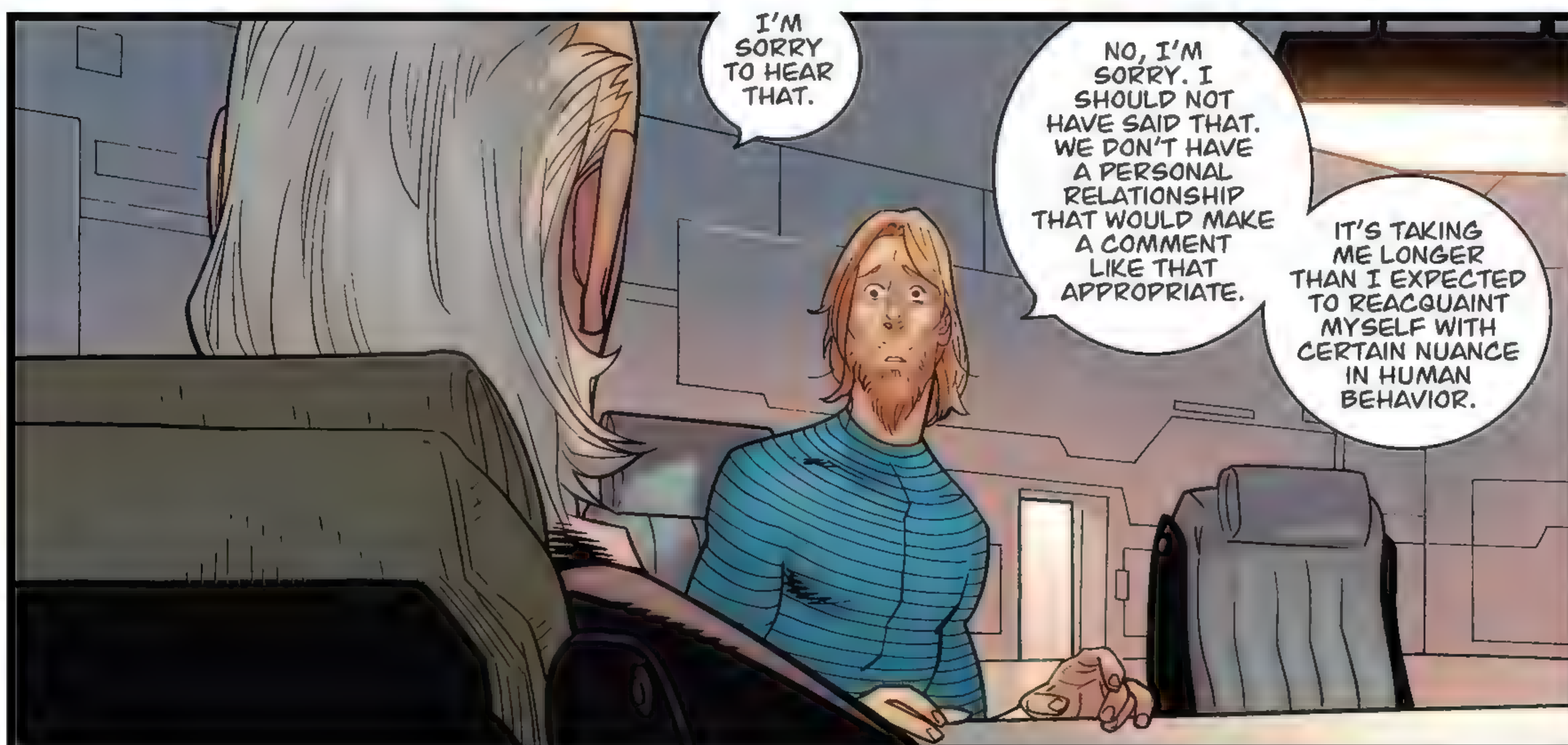
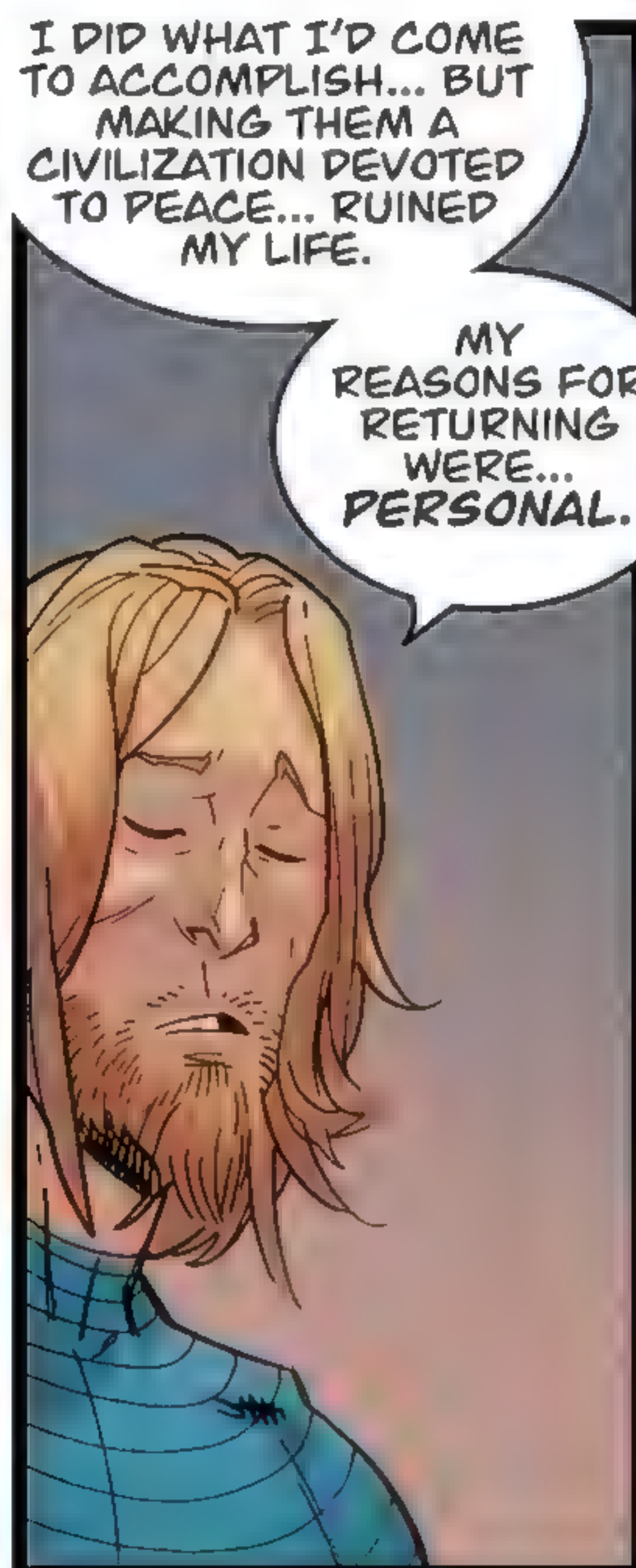
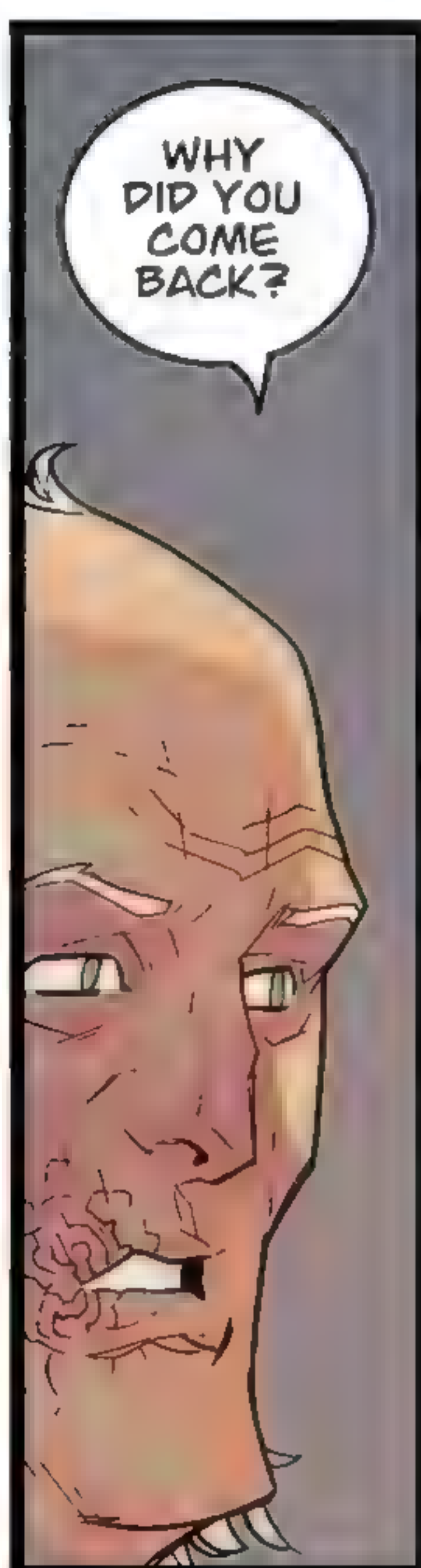
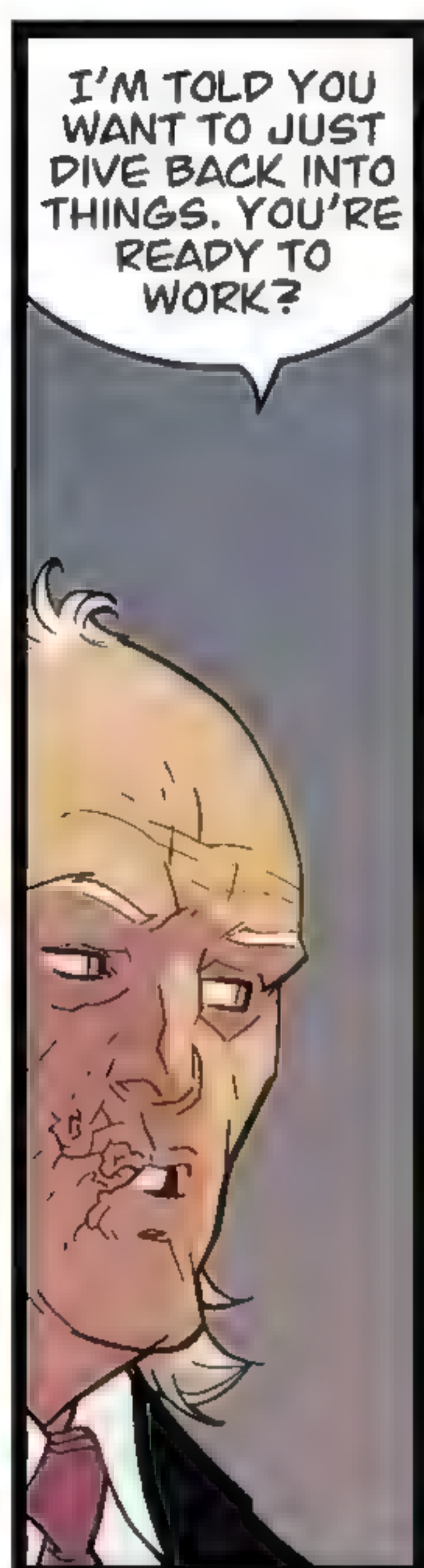
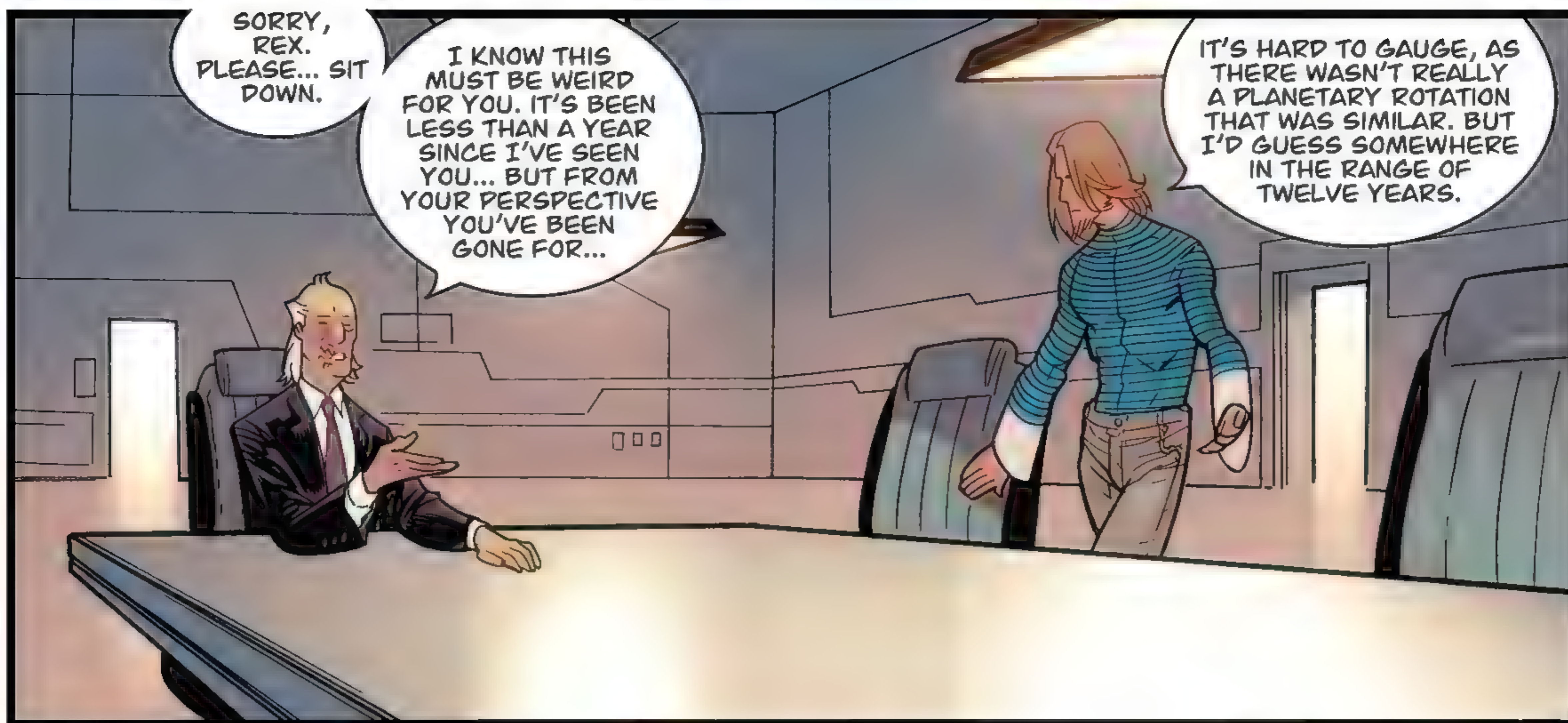


YOU
WANTED
TO SEE ME,
SIR?

ROBOT,
YES... IT'S
GOOD TO
HAVE YOU
BACK.

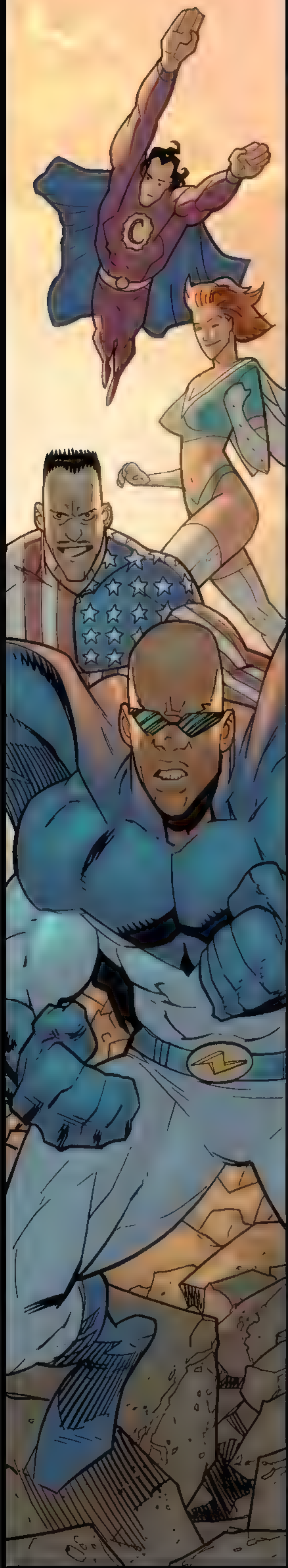
REX,
ACTUALLY...
IF YOU
WOULD. I
PREFER
THAT,
NOW.







I'VE GOT ORGANIZED
TEAMS OF HEROES
BY THE DOZENS.
I'VE GOT CAPES,
INCORPORATED.



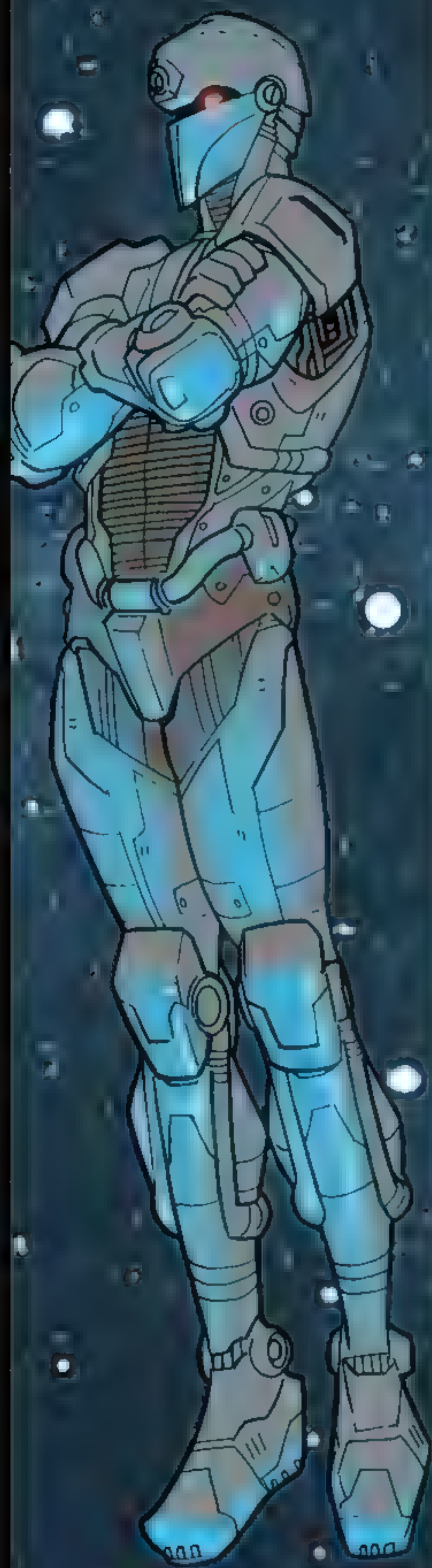
THE ACTIONEERS.



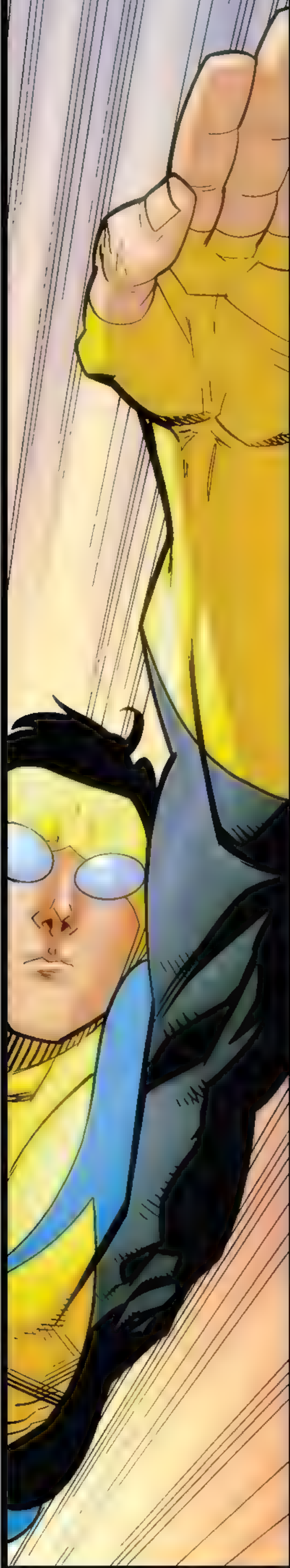
WOLF-MAN
AND THE
WOLF C.O.R.P.S.



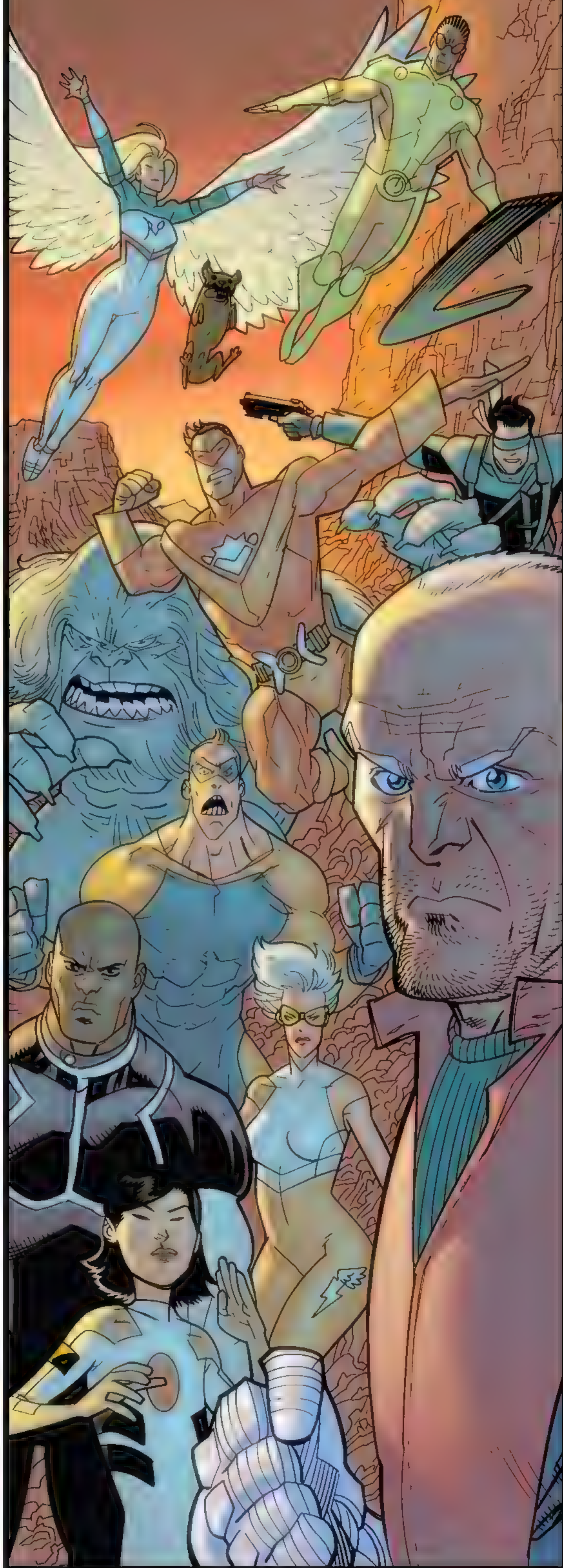
TECH JACKET.

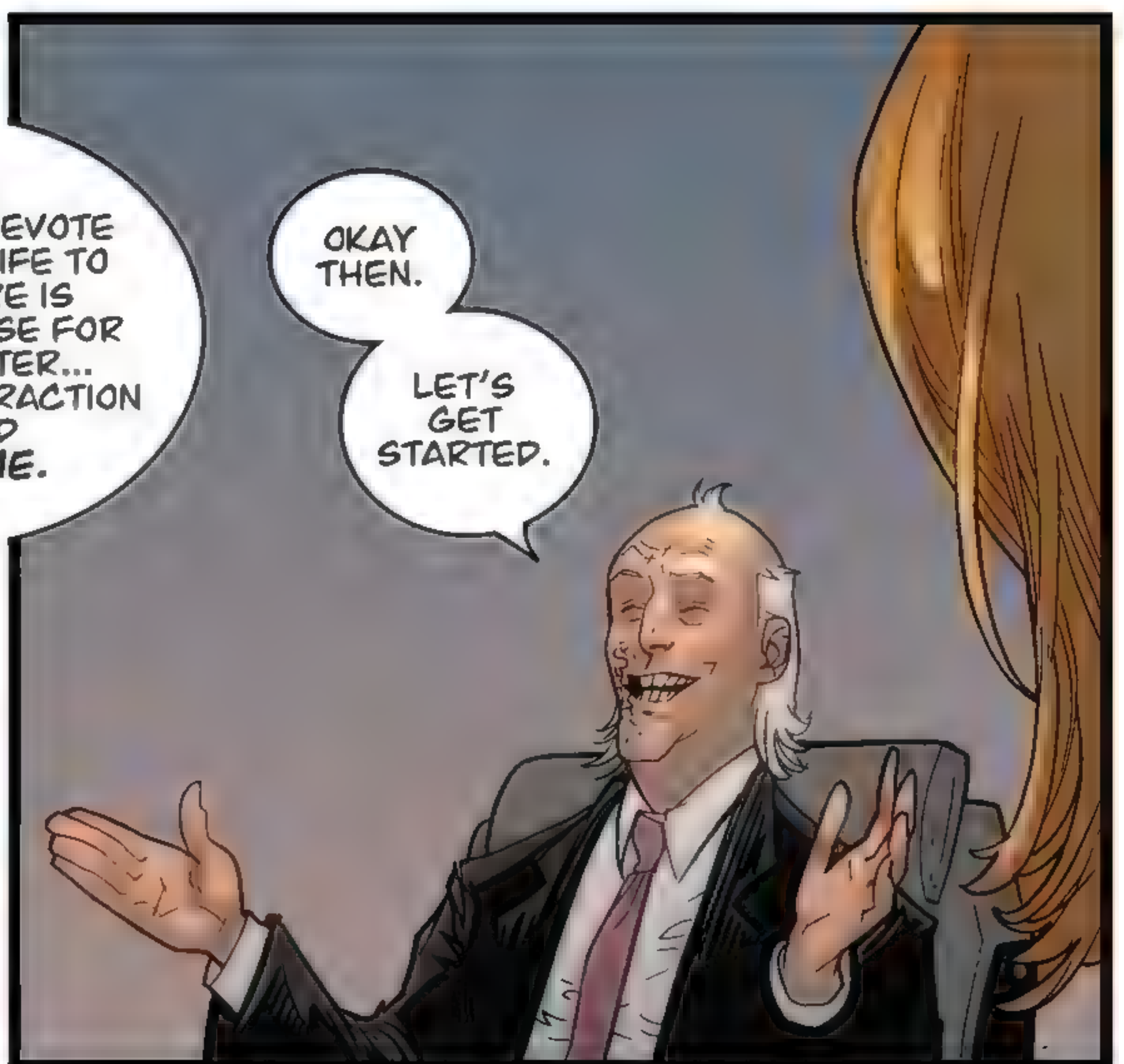
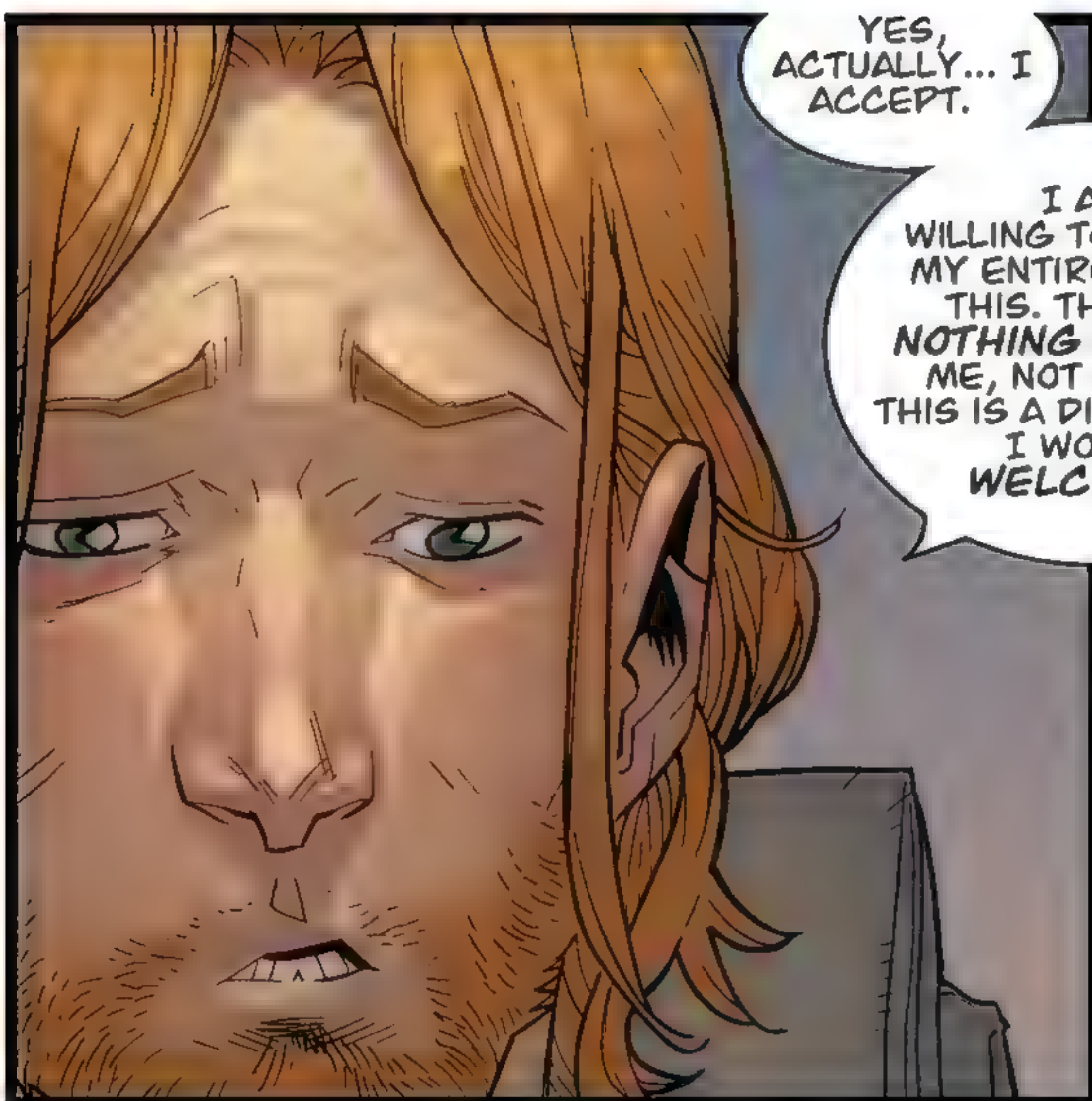
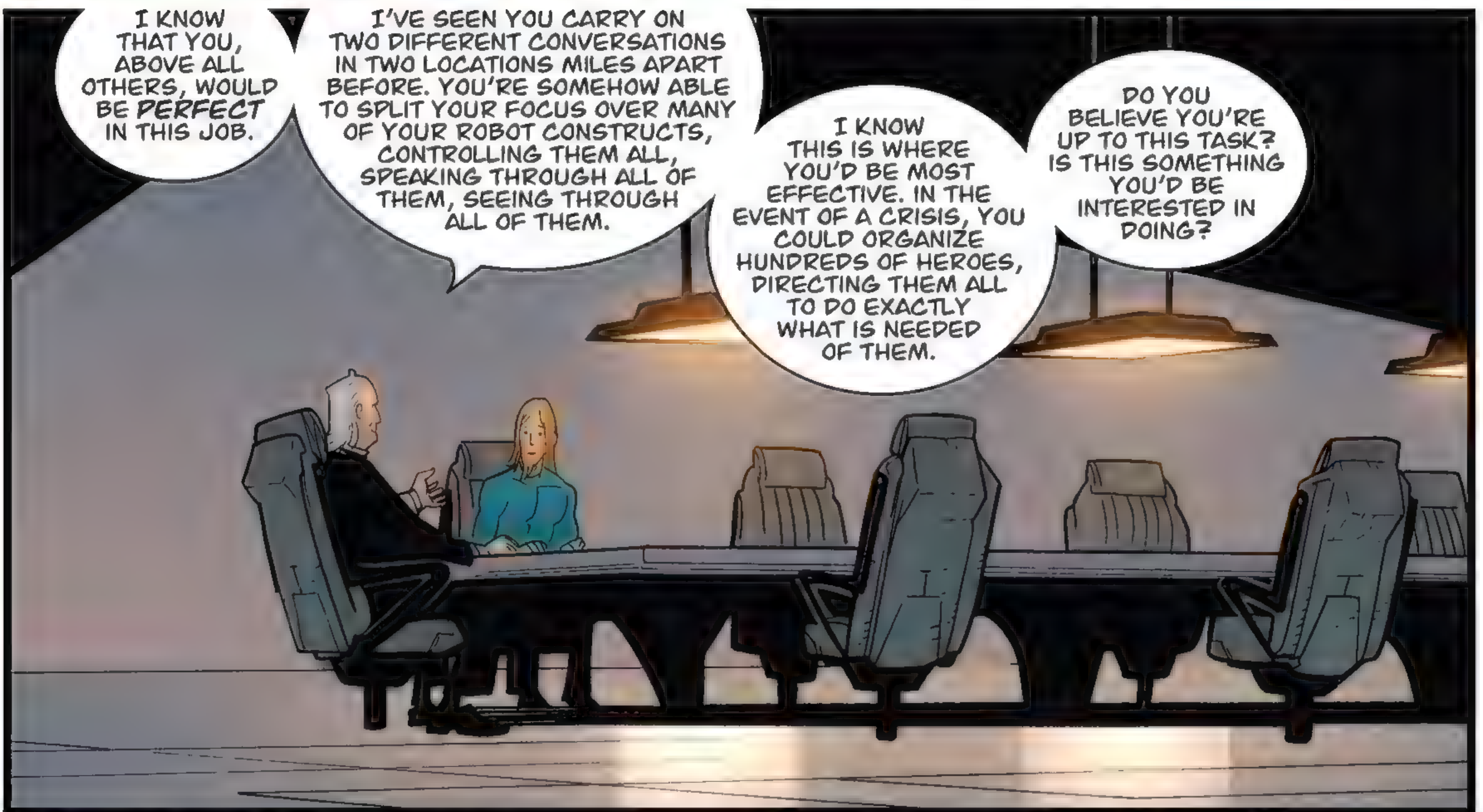
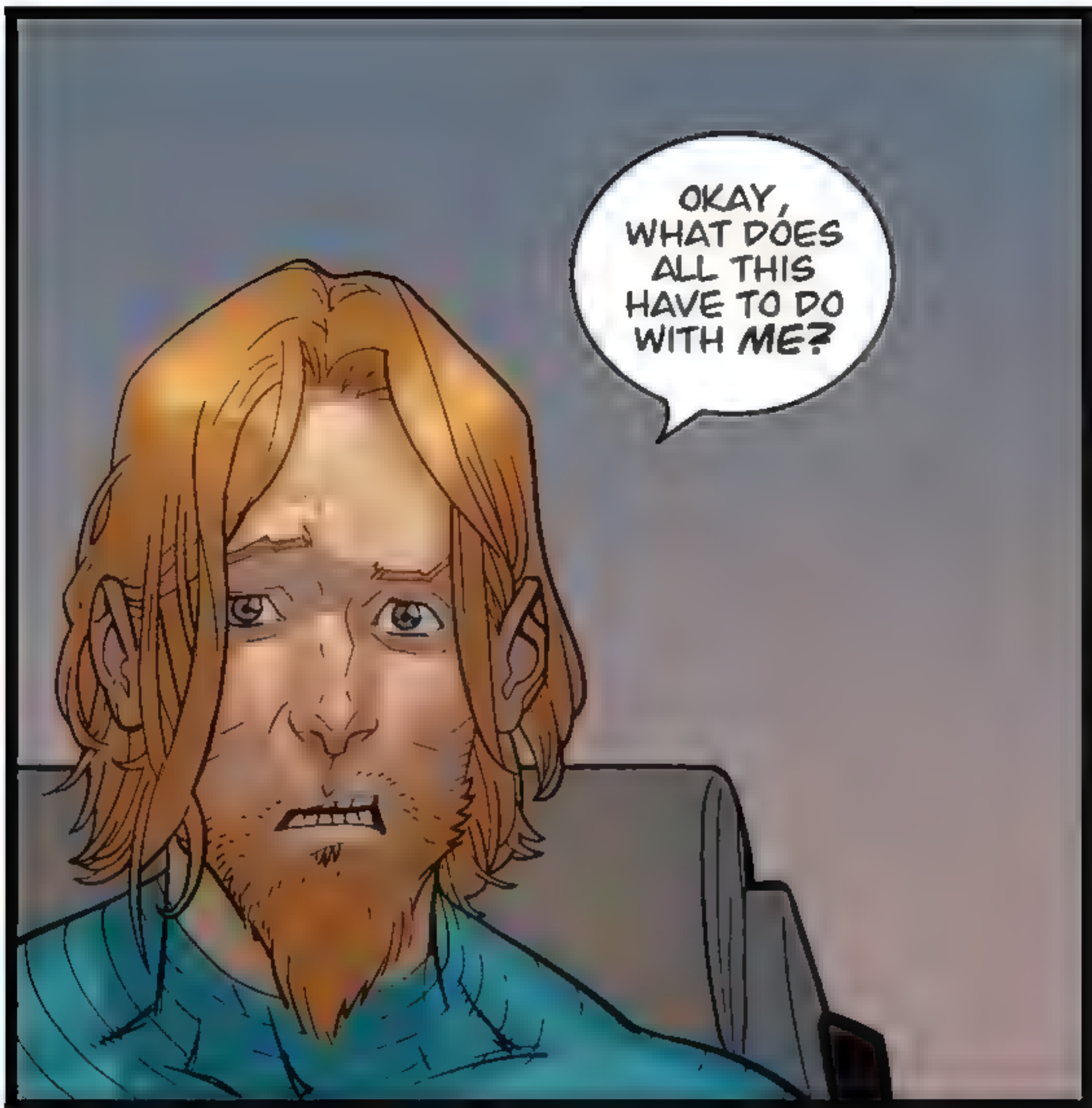


THOUGH HE DOESN'T
DIRECTLY ANSWER
TO ME, THERE'S ALSO
INVINCIBLE.



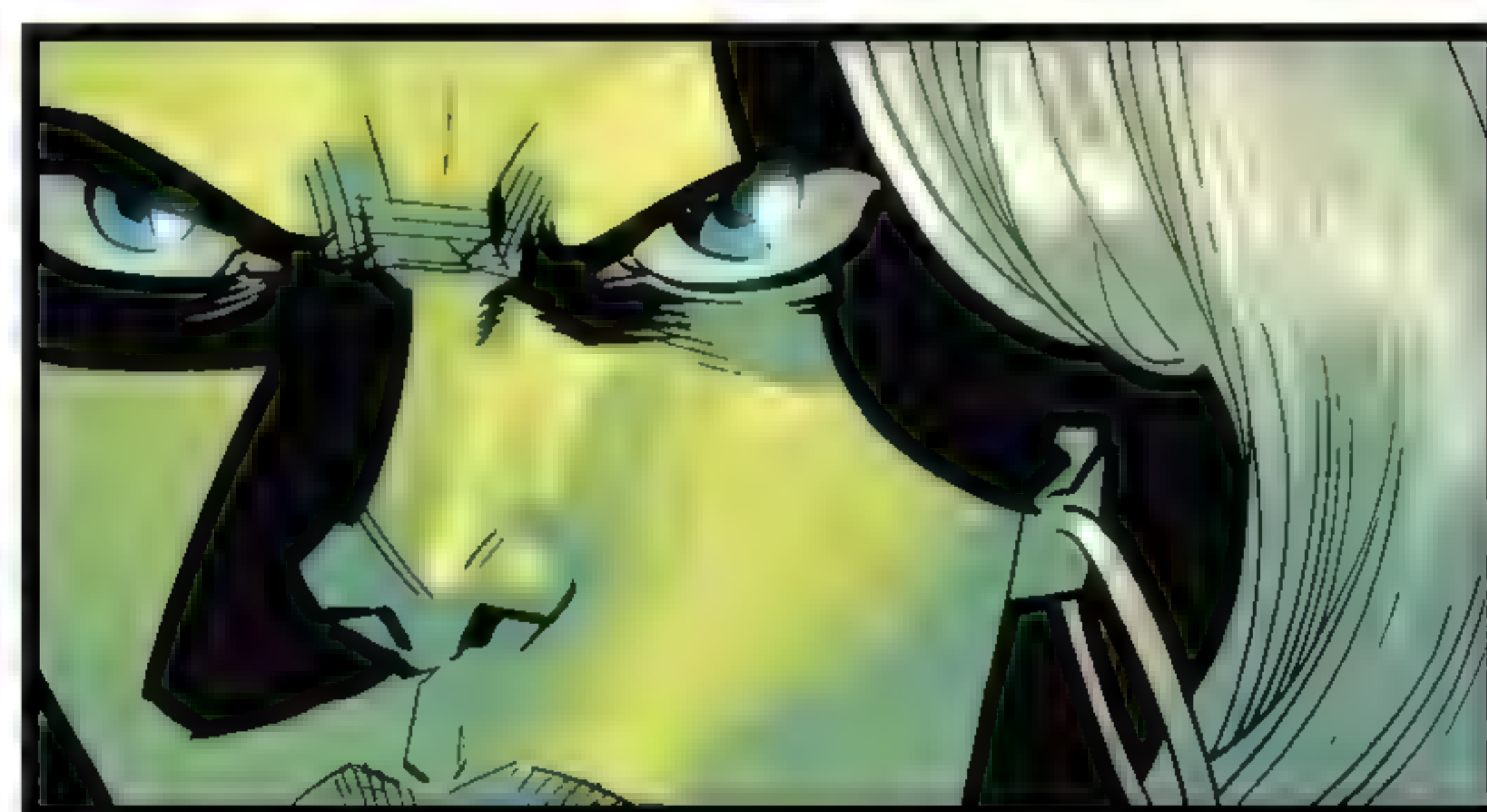
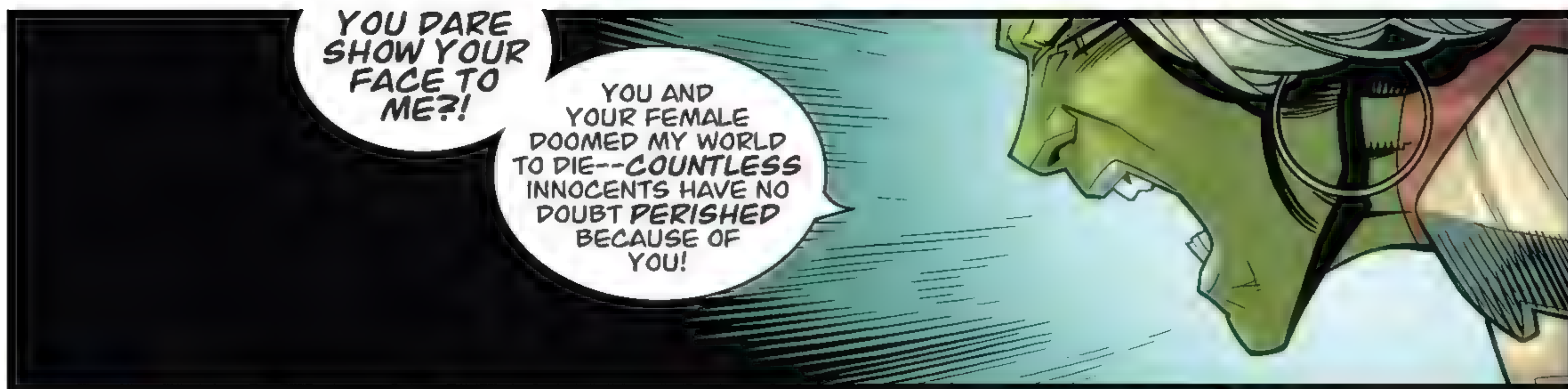
AND THEN THERE'S THE
NEWLY EXPANDED ROSTER
OF THE GUARDIANS
OF THE GLOBE.













THEIR FATHER IS PROBABLY LETTING THEM WATCH TV THE WHOLE TIME I'M GONE... WHICH THEY'LL LOVE. AND REALLY, THANKS FOR CALLING. ANY EXCUSE FOR ME TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE.

I LOVE MY KIDS, I REALLY DO. BUT I TAKE EVERY LITTLE BREAK I CAN.

I WAS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN. I'M SORRY HOW LAST TIME--



OH, AND SALAD TIME! I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE UNTIL NOW.

BRAVO, GIRL.

YOU LOSING THE WEIGHT FOR MARK NOW THAT HE'S BACK?



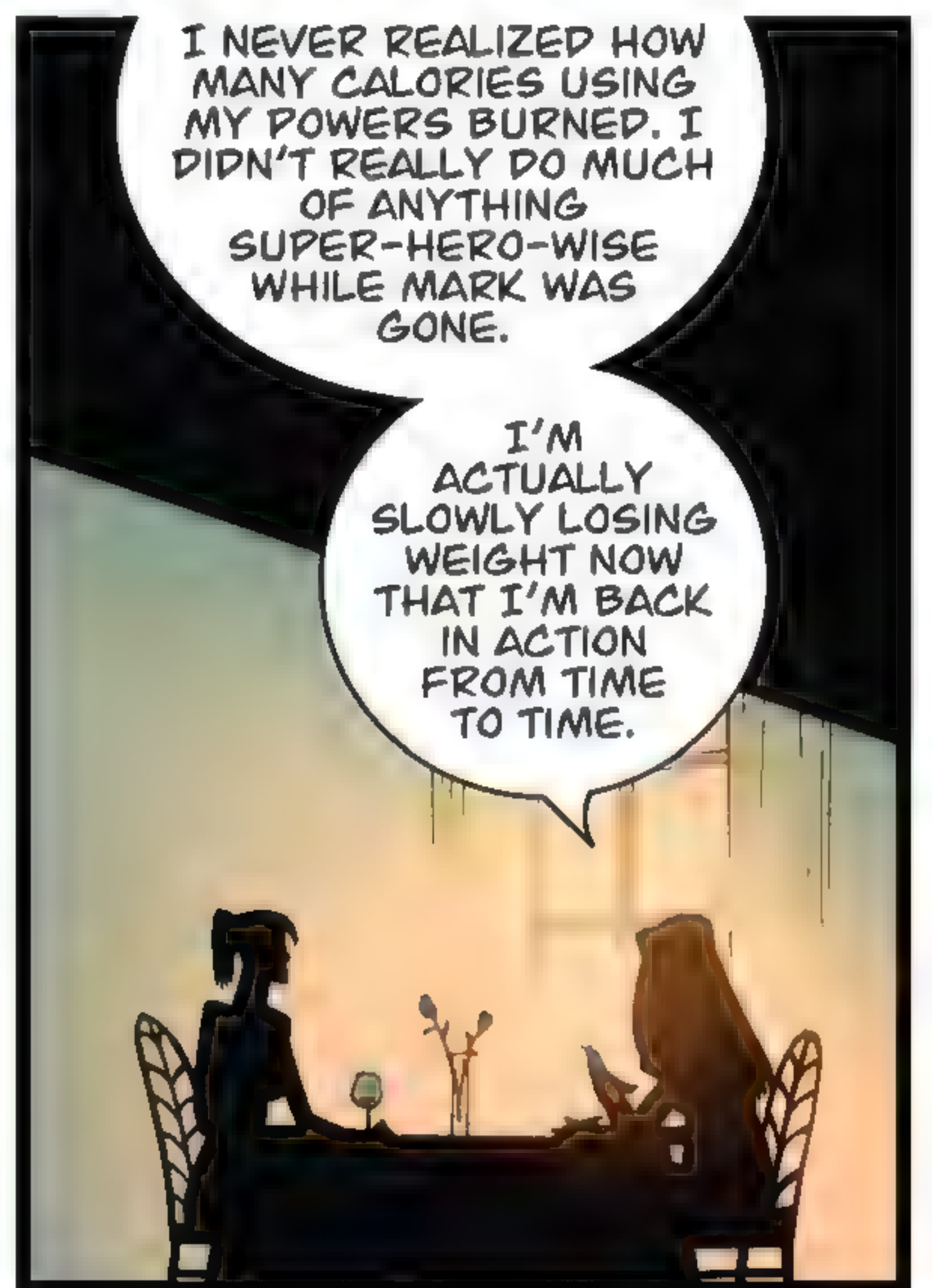
MY, GOD--NO. I'M EATING A SALAD BECAUSE I... LIKE SALAD.

AND I DIDN'T GAIN THE WEIGHT FROM OVER-EATING. IT WAS BECAUSE I JUST STOPPED... DOING... ANYTHING WHILE MARK WAS GONE.

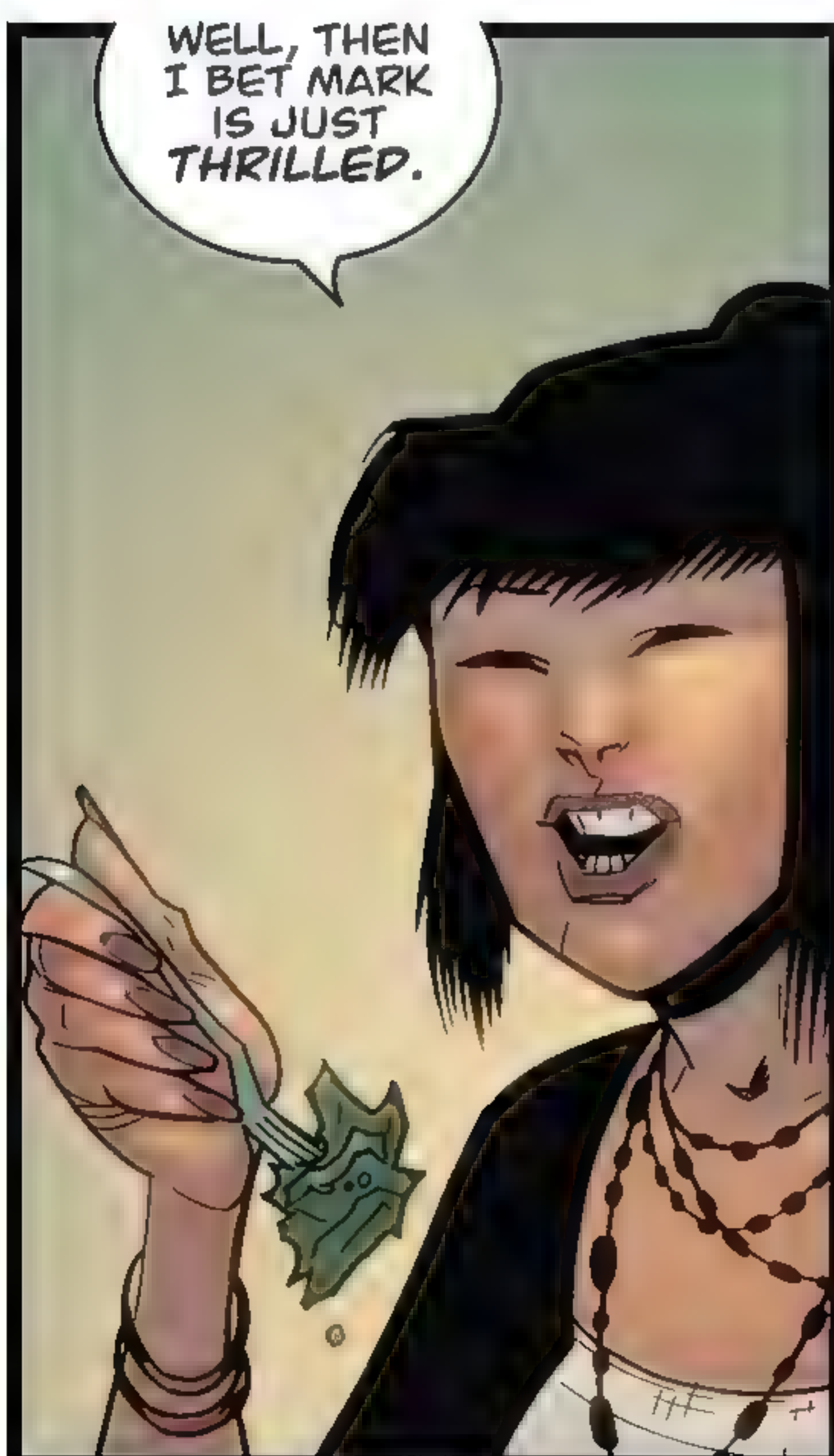


I NEVER REALIZED HOW MANY CALORIES USING MY POWERS BURNED. I DIDN'T REALLY DO MUCH OF ANYTHING SUPER-HERO-WISE WHILE MARK WAS GONE.

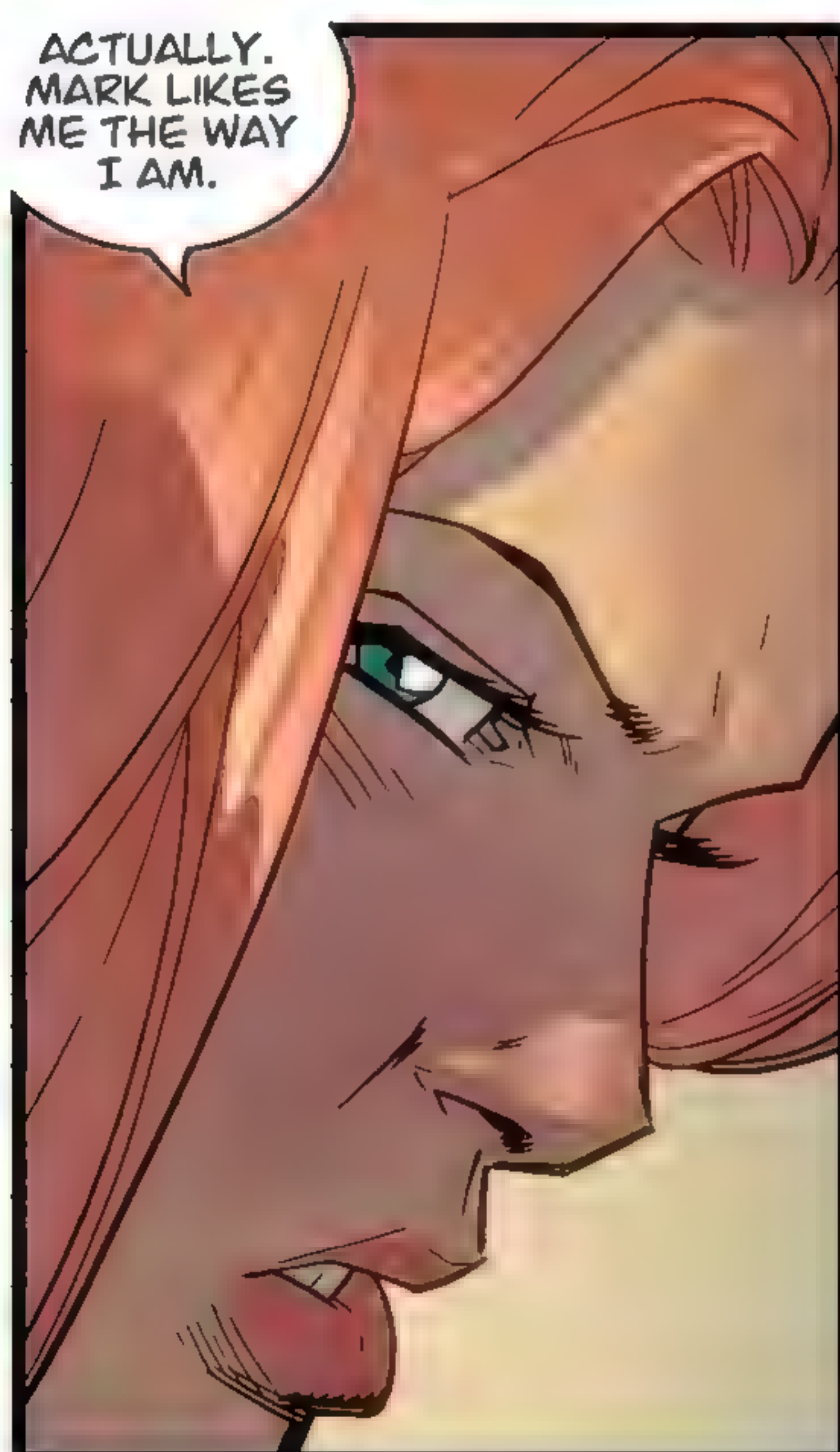
I'M ACTUALLY SLOWLY LOSING WEIGHT NOW THAT I'M BACK IN ACTION FROM TIME TO TIME.



WELL, THEN I BET MARK IS JUST THRILLED.



ACTUALLY. MARK LIKES ME THE WAY I AM.

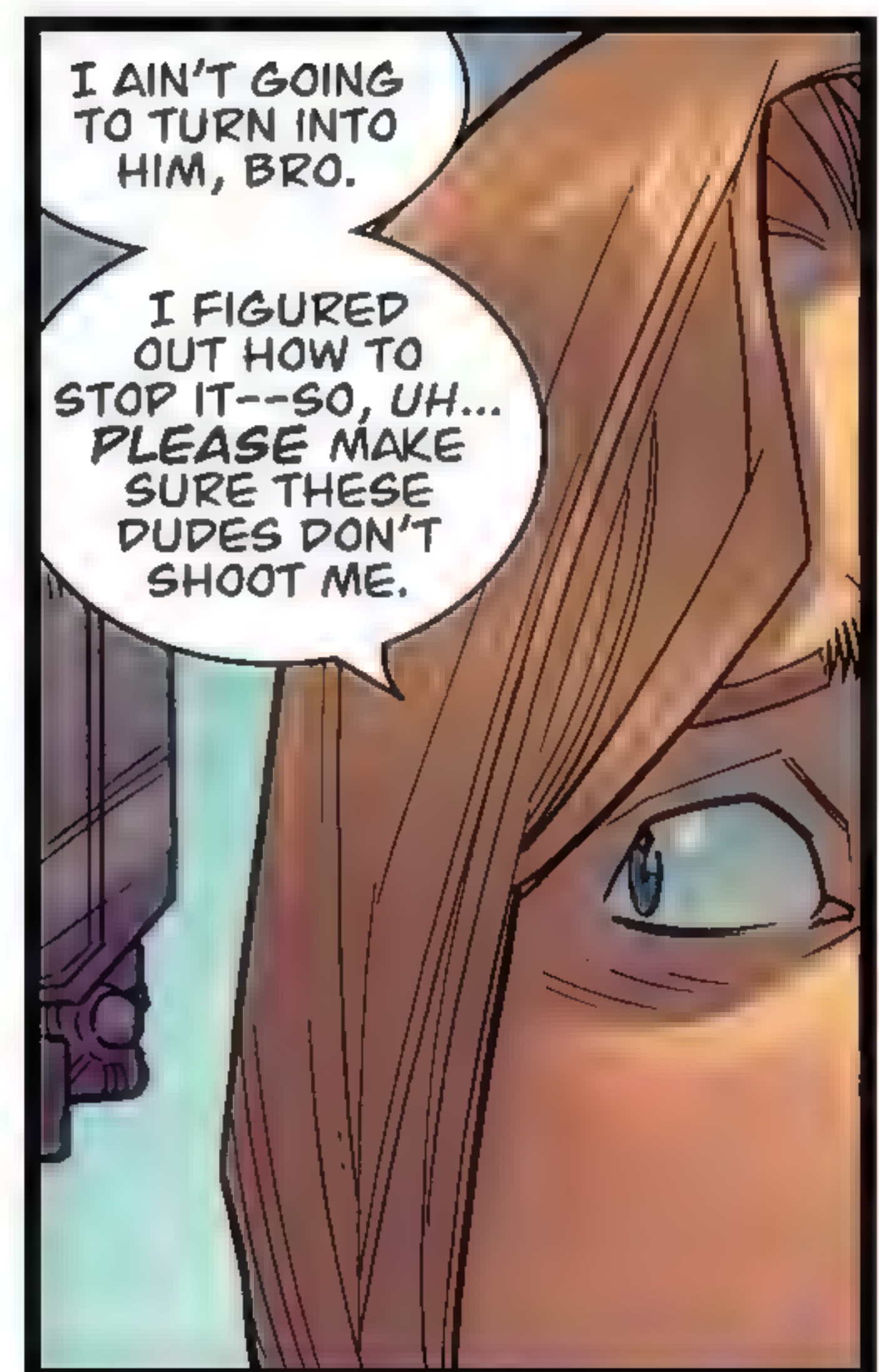
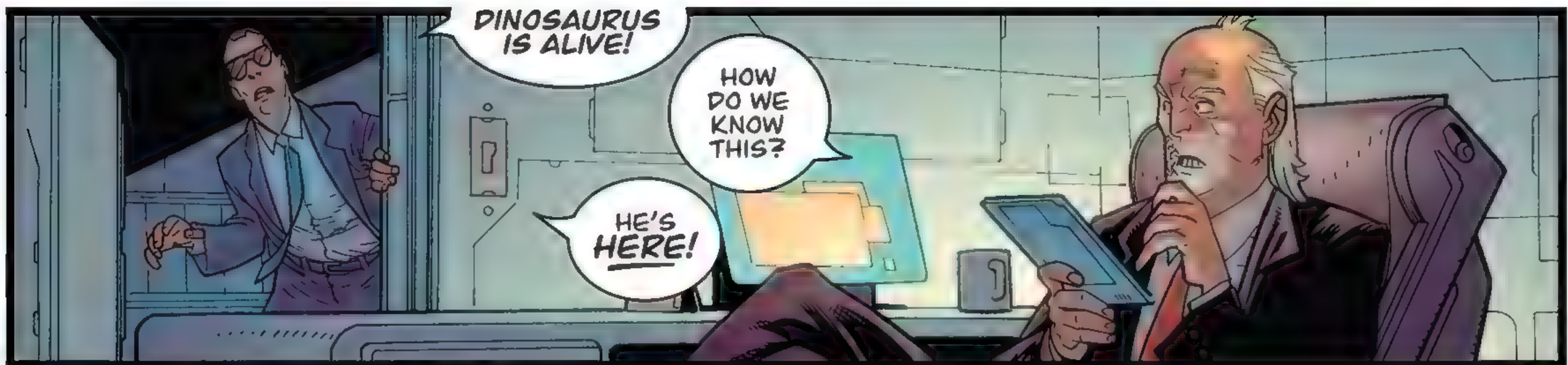
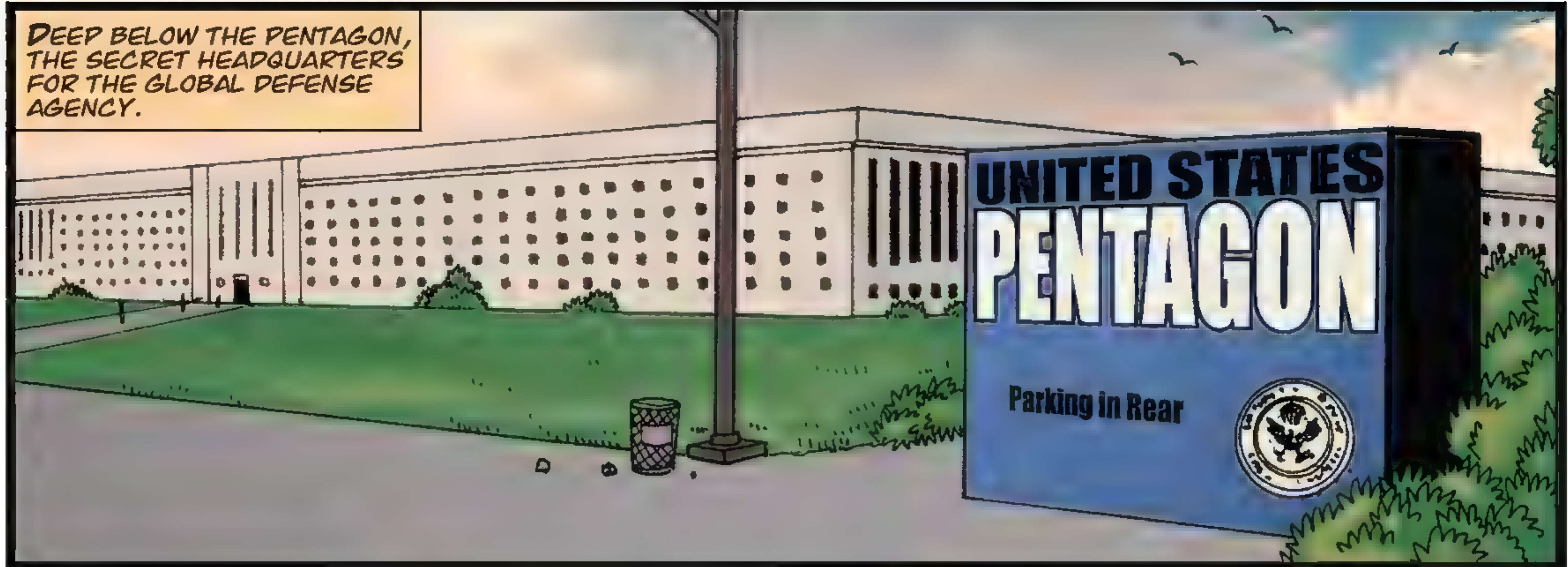


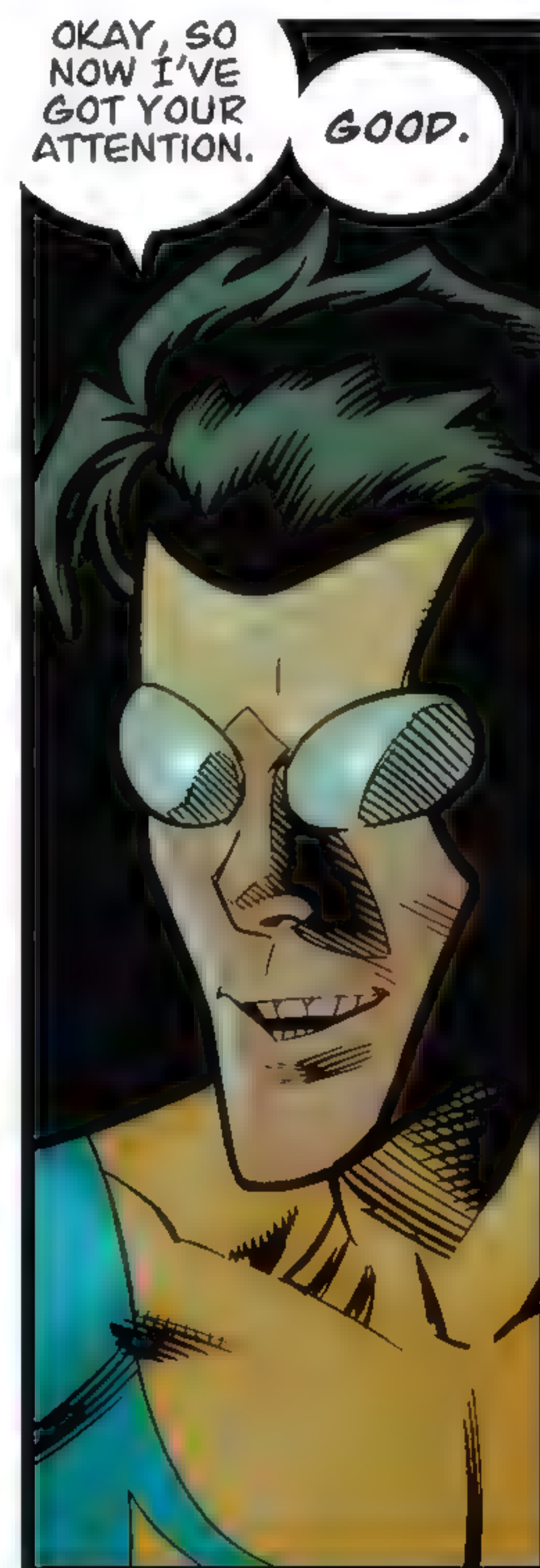
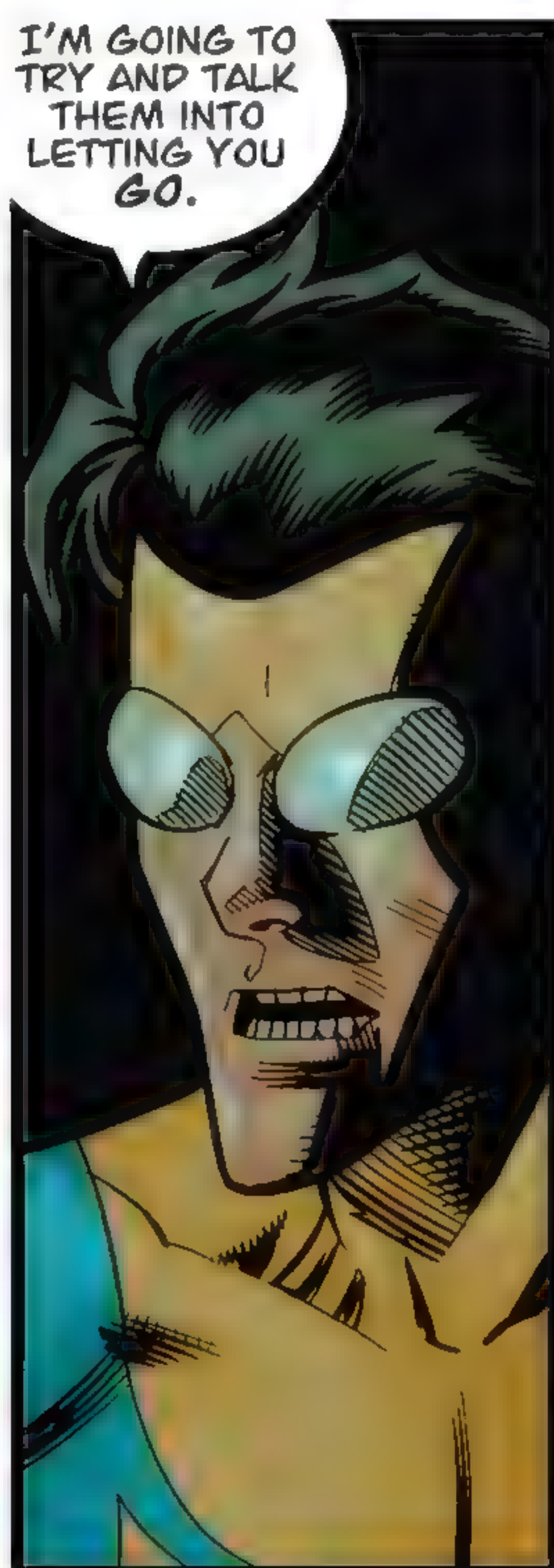
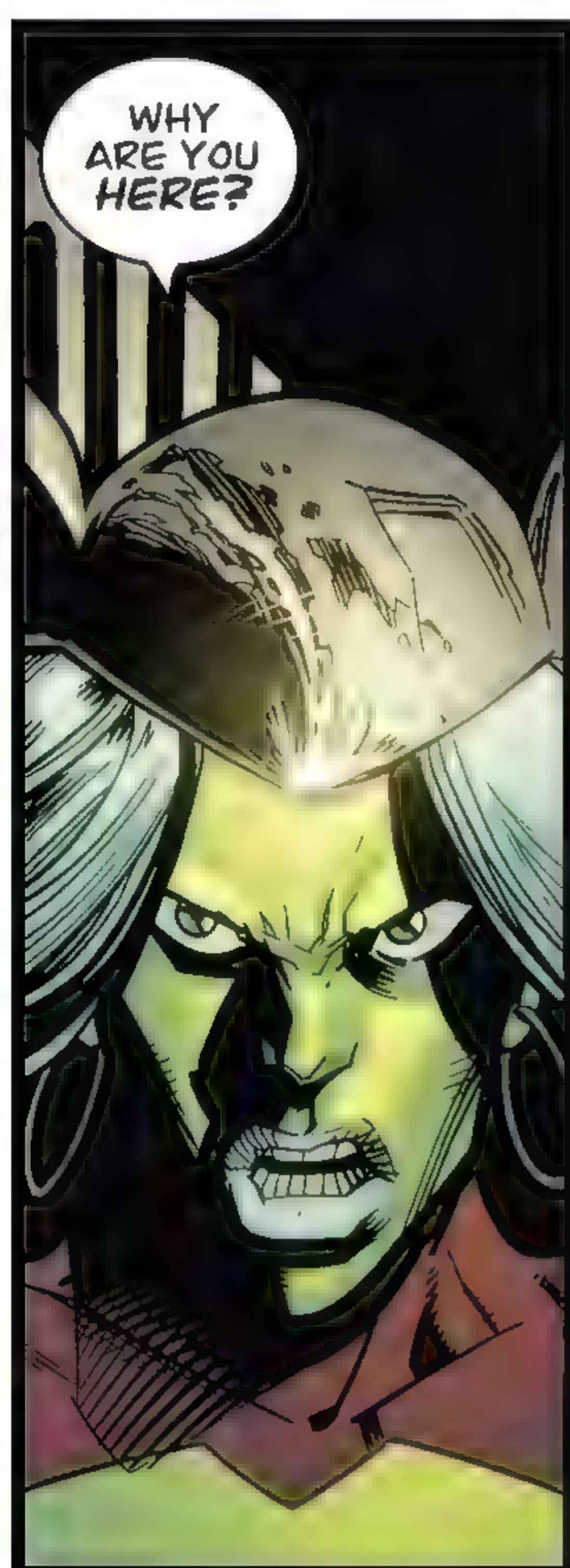
HE DOES?

REALLY?

WEIRD.









OKAY, THE BOTTOM LINE IS THIS, I GET IT--YOUR WORLD IS IN DANGER, IT NEEDS POWER--YOU'VE GOT PEOPLE DYING. YOU'RE DESPERATE.

BUT YOU'RE HERE TO **HELP** PEOPLE, **YOUR** PEOPLE, BUT STILL-- IT COUNTS. WHAT I'M SAYING IS, YOU'RE NOT EVIL.

YOU'RE DESPERATE.



YOU JUST WANT TO SAVE YOUR PLANET... IF YOU COULD DO THAT WITHOUT HURTING ANYONE... YOU'D DO IT, RIGHT?



...

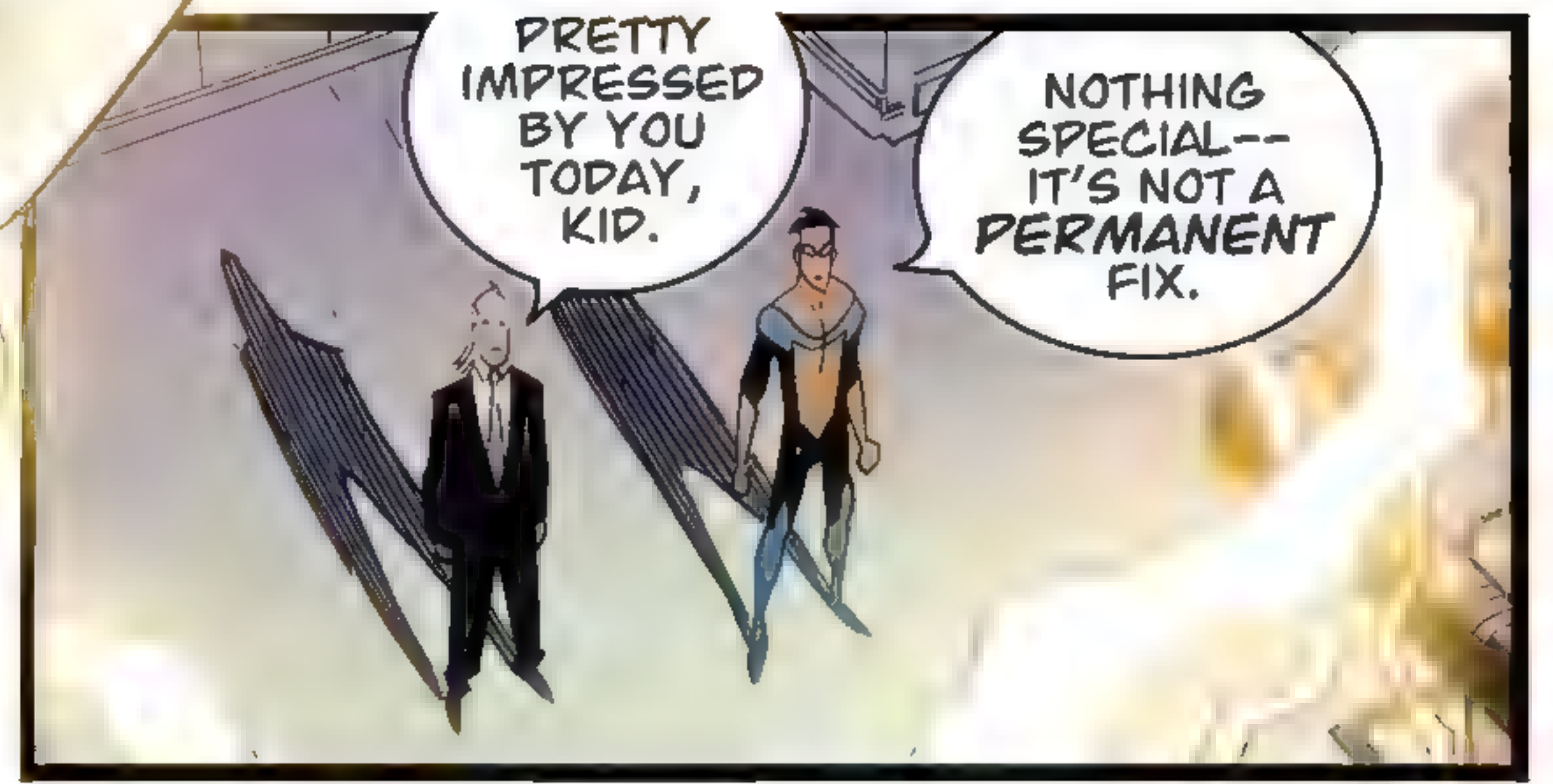


LET ME BE **CLEAR**. IF I COULD GET YOU SET FREE, AND ALSO SOMEHOW HELP YOU-- SO THAT YOU COULD GO BACK TO YOUR HOME WORLD...

WOULD YOU **COOPERATE** WITH ME, WITHOUT FIGHTING ME OR TRYING TO KILL ME... OR ANYONE ON THIS PLANET?

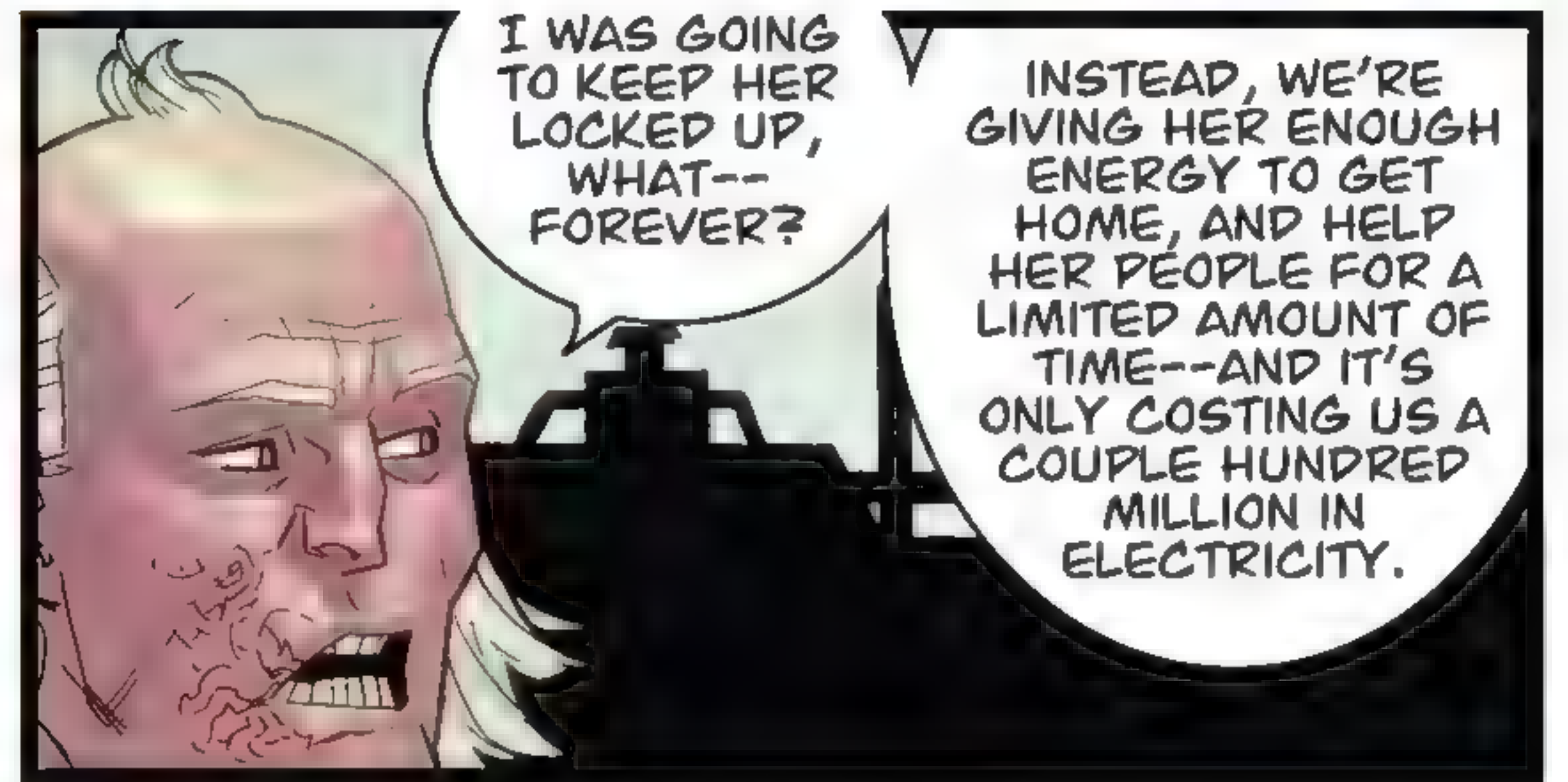


YES.



PRETTY IMPRESSED BY YOU TODAY, KID.

NOTHING SPECIAL-- IT'S NOT A PERMANENT FIX.



I WAS GOING TO KEEP HER LOCKED UP, WHAT-- FOREVER?

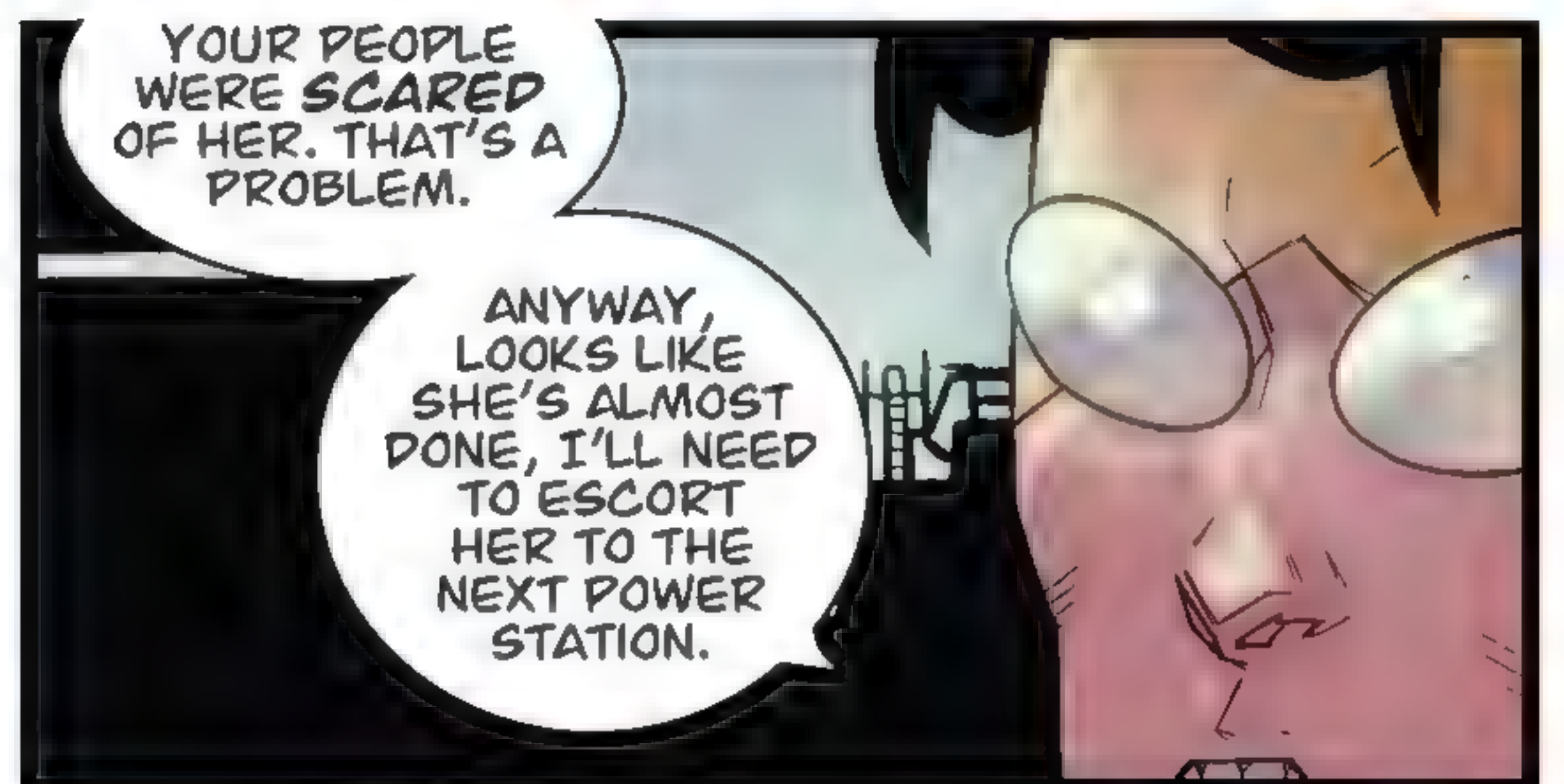
INSTEAD, WE'RE GIVING HER ENOUGH ENERGY TO GET HOME, AND HELP HER PEOPLE FOR A LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME--AND IT'S ONLY COSTING US A COUPLE HUNDRED MILLION IN ELECTRICITY.



IT'S A SIMPLE PLAN. ROLLING BLACKOUTS ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN TEN MINUTE INTERVALS, FEED HER THE JUICE INSTEAD.

DOESN'T HURT ANYONE-- JUST HELPS.

WELL, WE DIDN'T THINK OF IT. YOU DID.



YOUR PEOPLE WERE SCARED OF HER. THAT'S A PROBLEM.

ANYWAY, LOOKS LIKE SHE'S ALMOST DONE, I'LL NEED TO ESCORT HER TO THE NEXT POWER STATION.



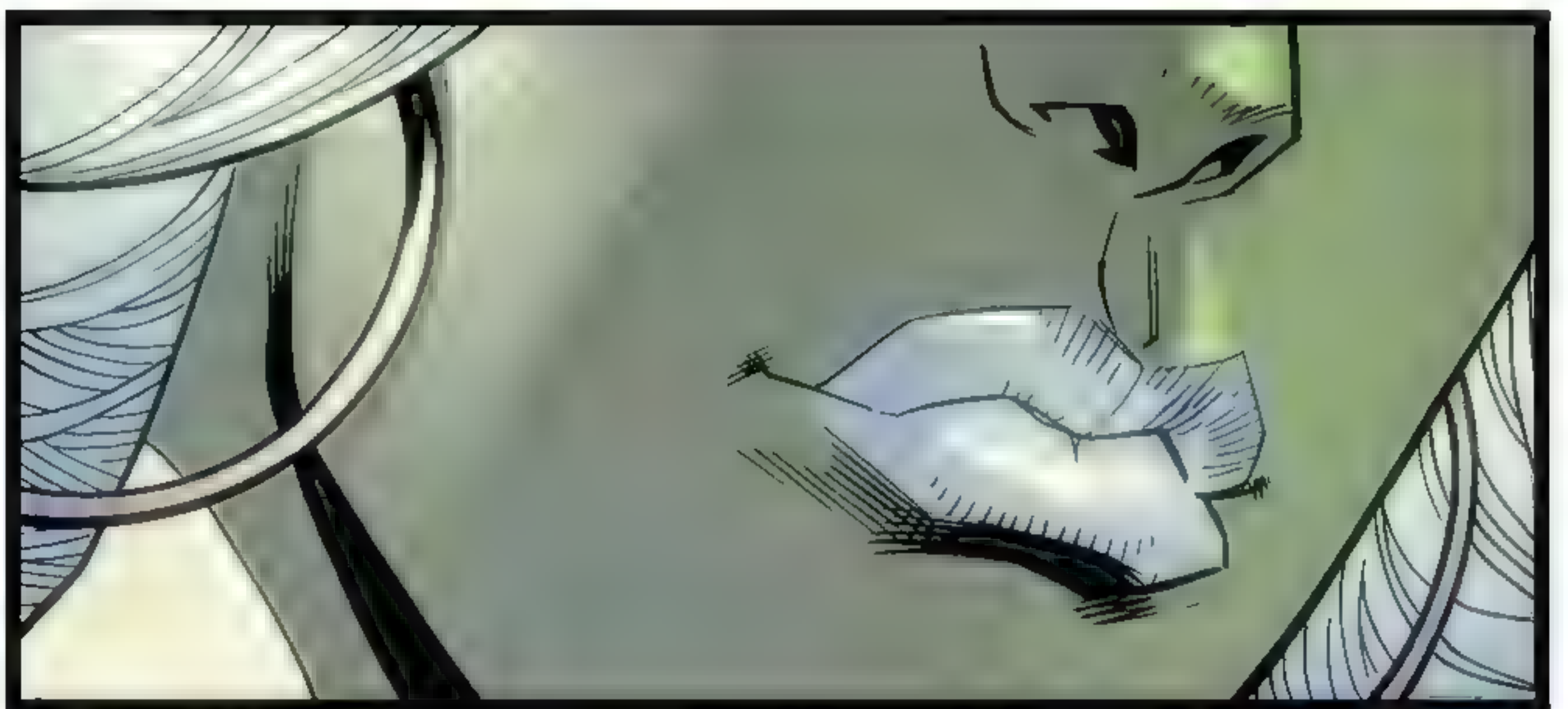
SURE, LISTEN. COME BY THE PENTAGON AFTER YOU'RE DONE WITH HER... I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU.

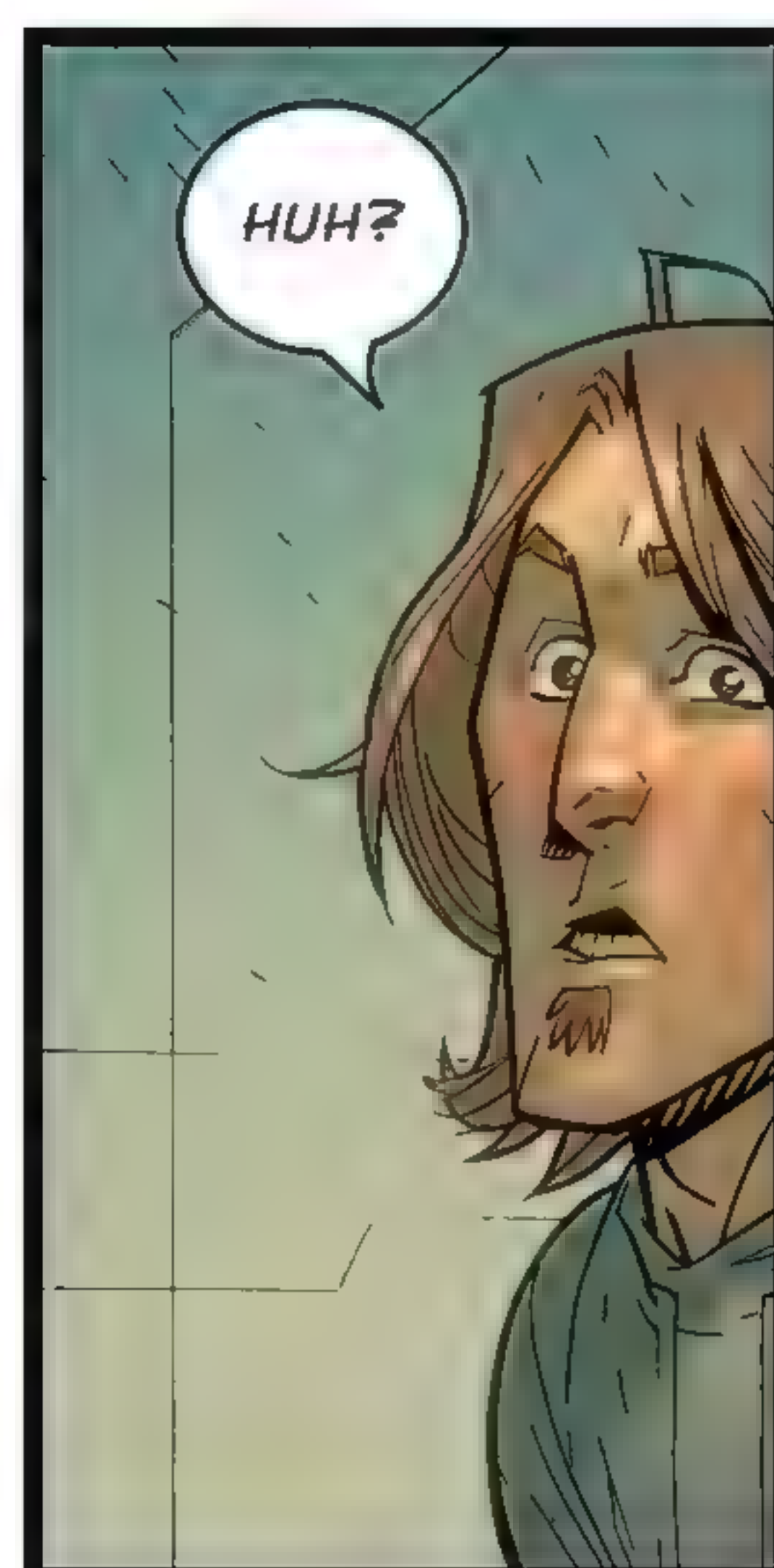
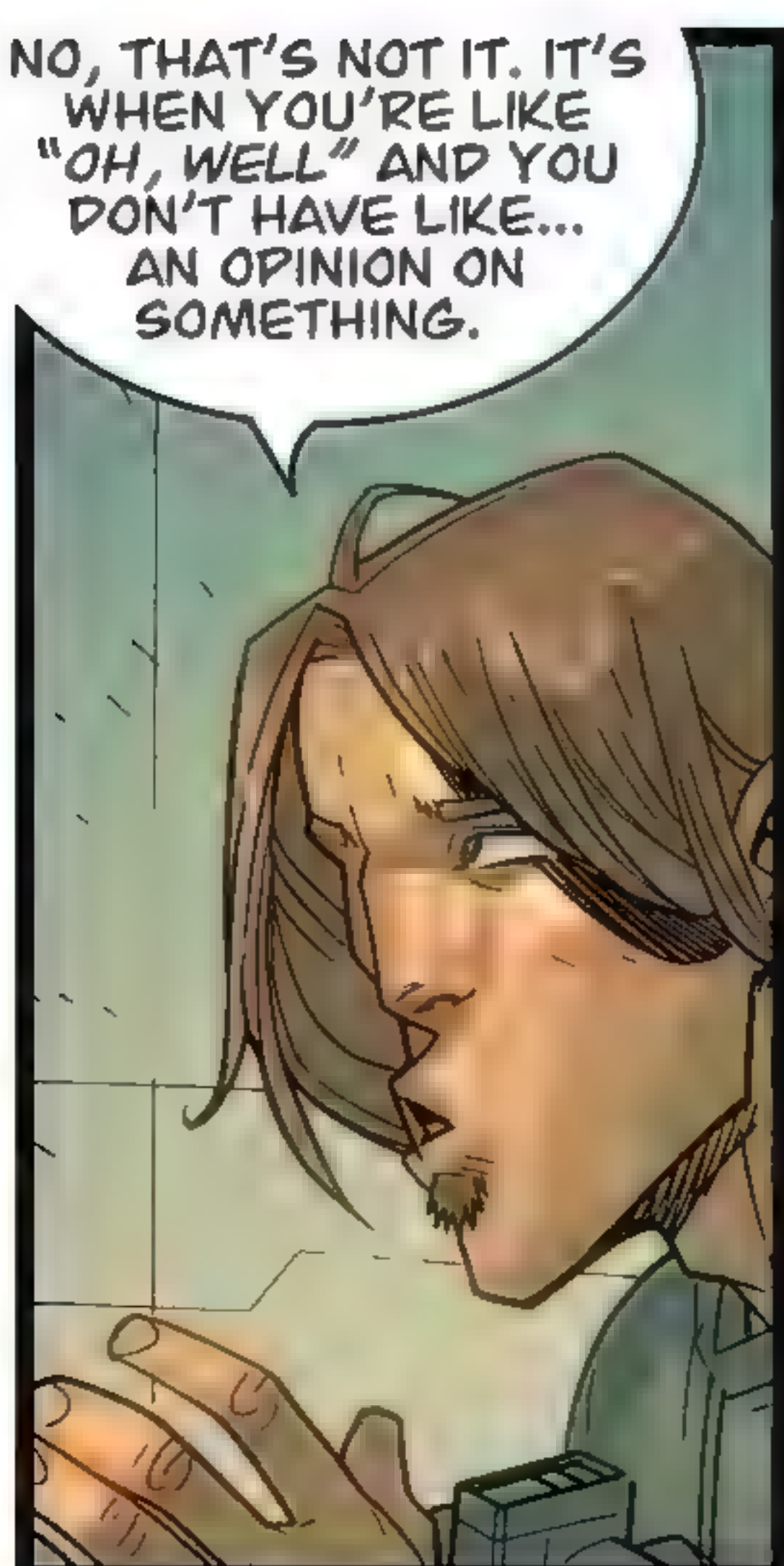
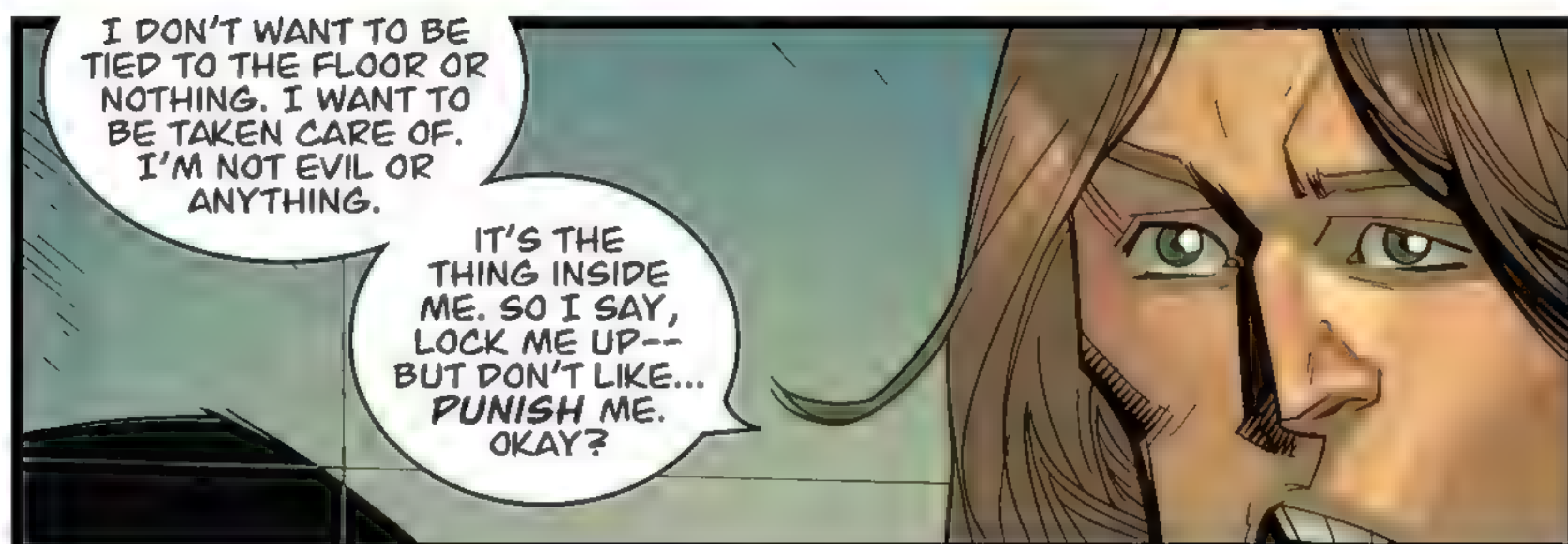
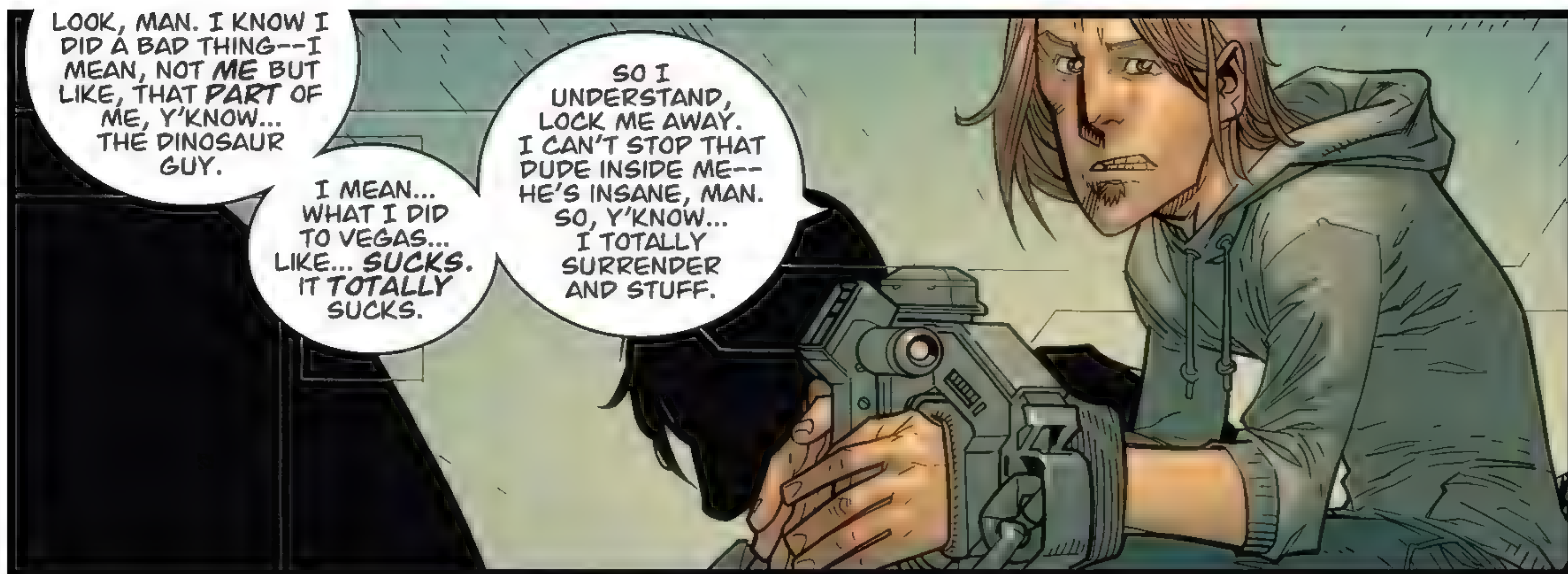
...

NOTHING SERIOUS.



OH, UH... SURE. WILL DO.





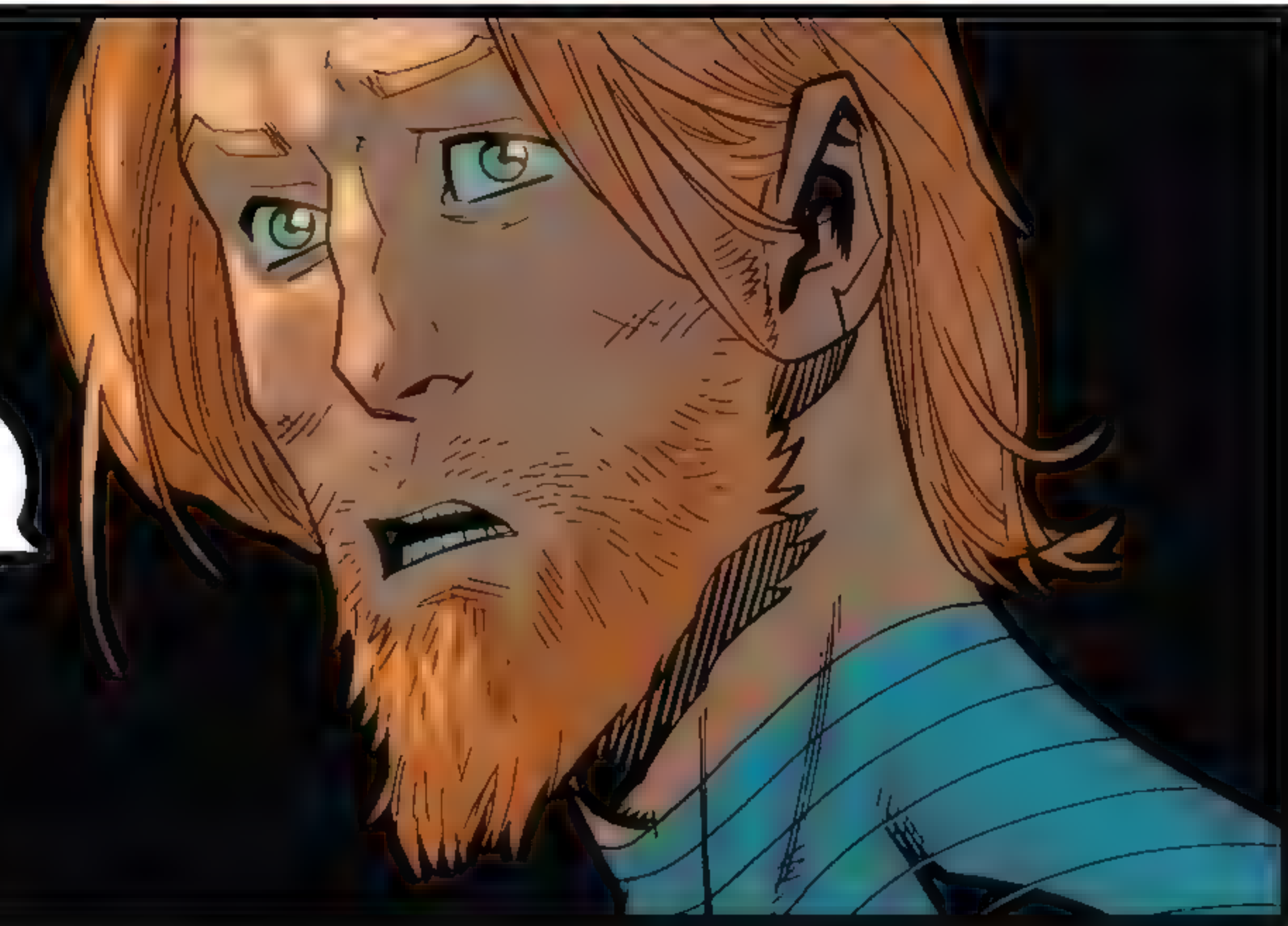
THE GUARDIANS OF THE
GLOBE CENTRAL BASE, UTAH.

I ACCEPTED, OF COURSE.
IT REALLY IS A GOOD IDEA.
IT'S DEFINITELY HOW I'D
BE MOST USEFUL. IT'S
REALLY A GLORIFIED
DISPATCHER, BUT MY
DRONES COULD BE
ASSISTING IN
BATTLE AS
WELL.

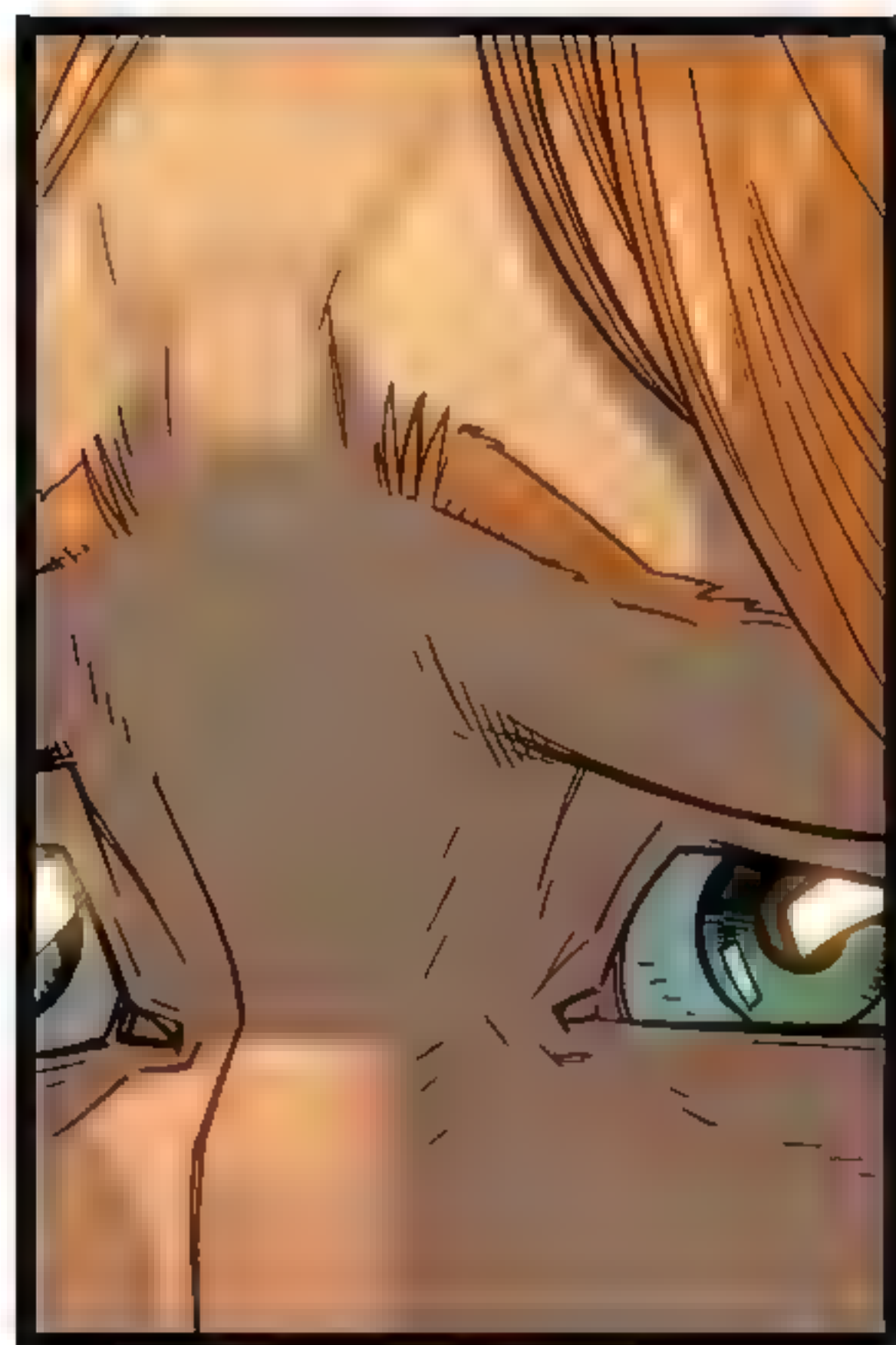
I THINK IT
WILL GIVE ME
PURPOSE.

SOMETHING
I REALLY MISSED
WHEN WE WERE
RULING
THE FLAXAN
EMPIRE.

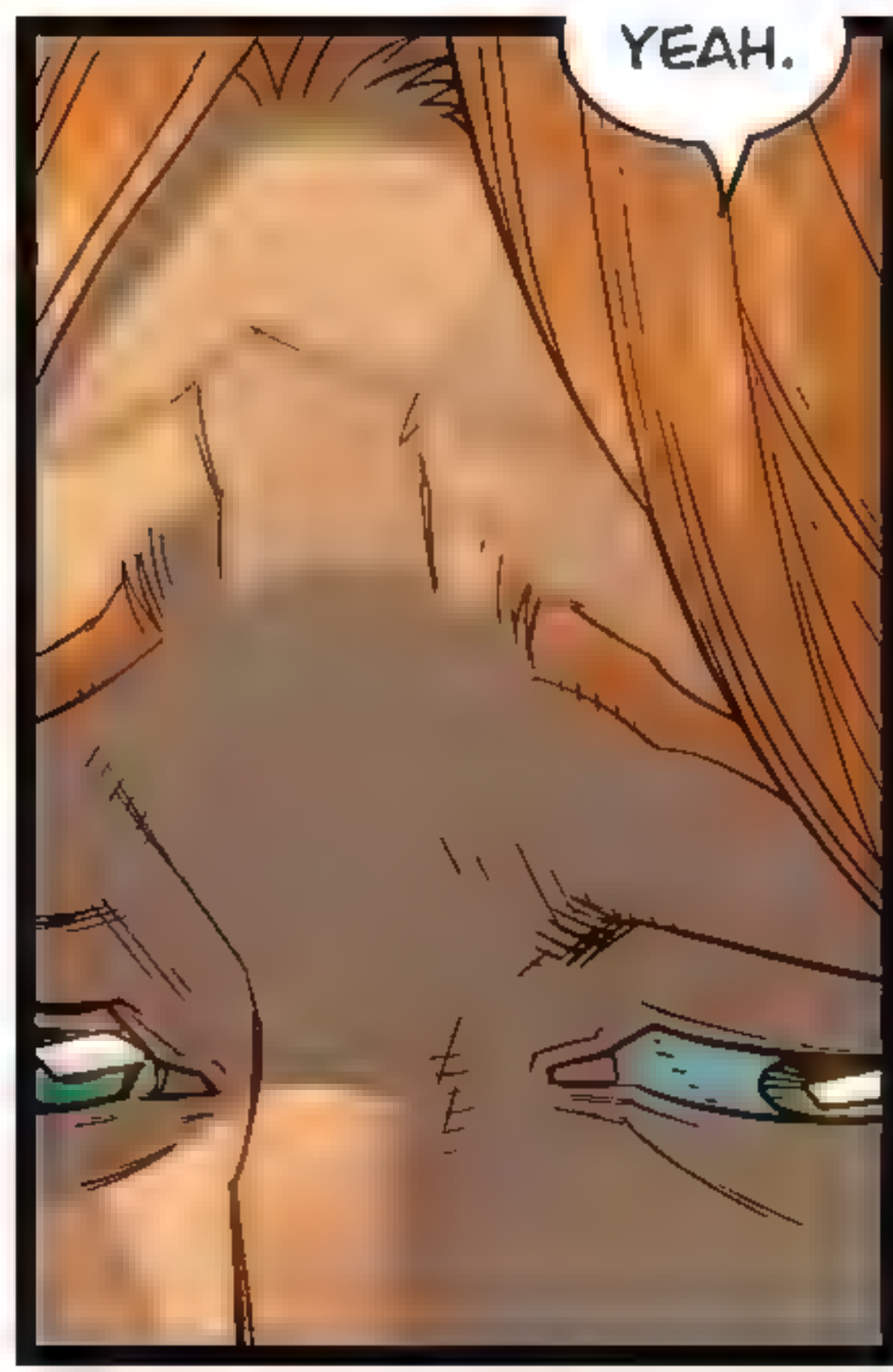
ARE YOU...
ADJUSTING
WELL?

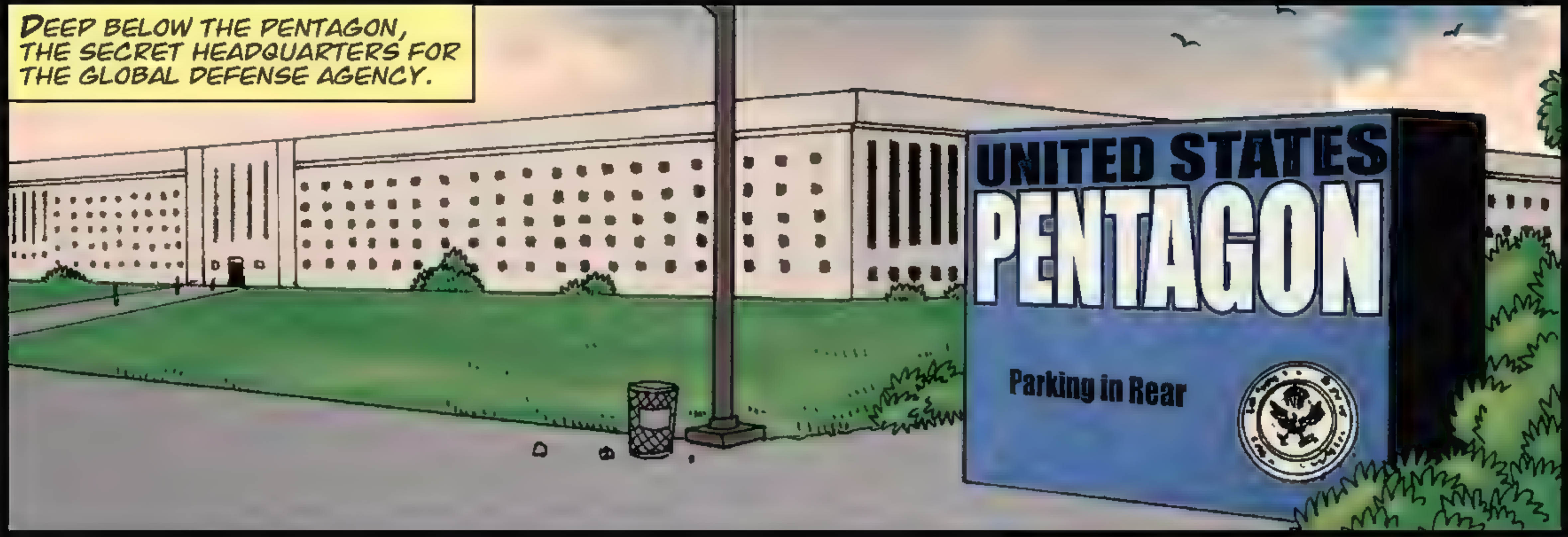


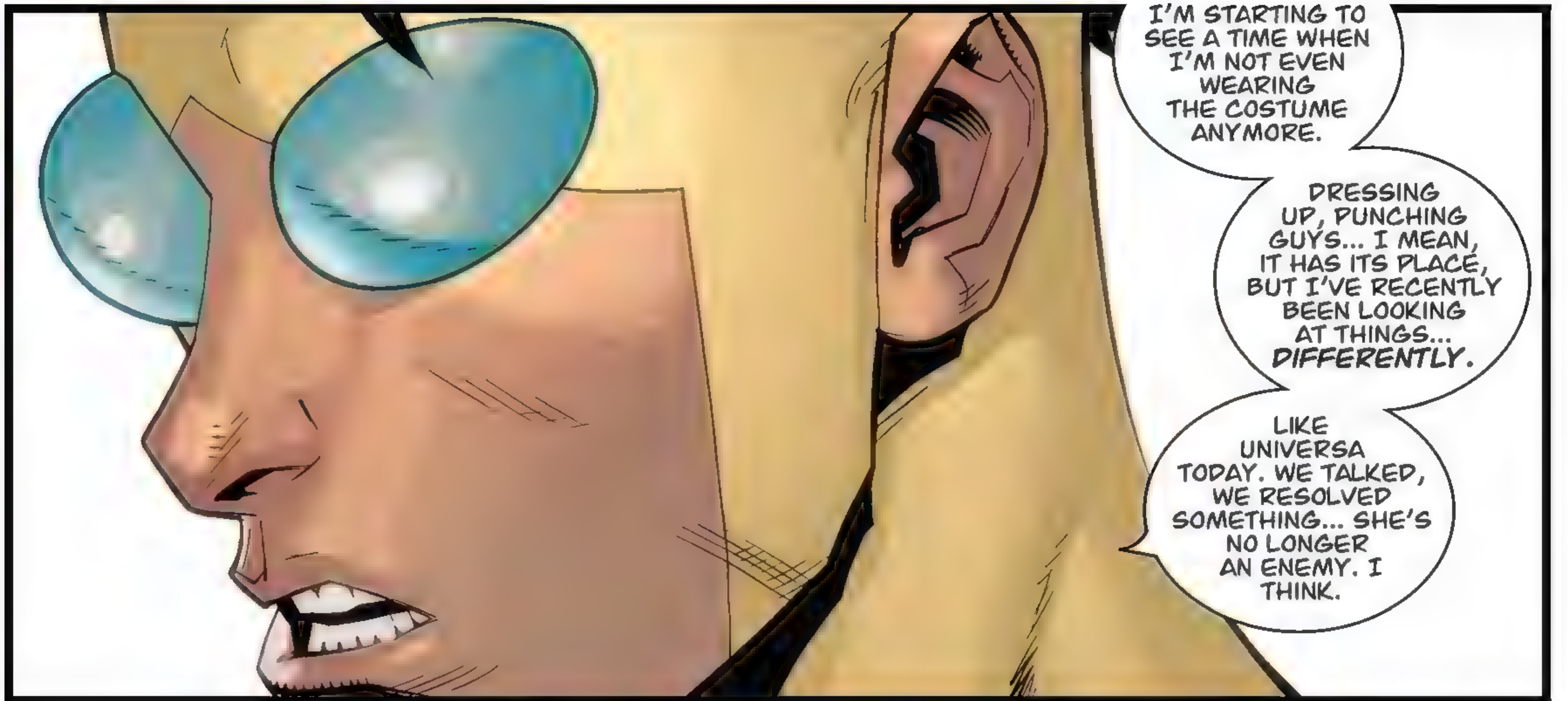
EVERYTHING
IS SO...
DIFFERENT
NOW...



YEAH.







I'M STARTING TO SEE A TIME WHEN I'M NOT EVEN WEARING THE COSTUME ANYMORE.

DRESSING UP, PUNCHING GUYS... I MEAN, IT HAS ITS PLACE, BUT I'VE RECENTLY BEEN LOOKING AT THINGS... DIFFERENTLY.

LIKE UNIVERSA TODAY. WE TALKED, WE RESOLVED SOMETHING... SHE'S NO LONGER AN ENEMY. I THINK.



THAT SEEMS SO MUCH SMARTER THAN... FIGHTING.

MAYBE IF I'D TRIED A DIFFERENT APPROACH WITH DINOSAURUS...



THAT THING IS A MANIAC. NOTHING WOULD GET THROUGH TO HIM.



HOW CAN YOU BE SO CERTAIN? EVERYONE WANTS SOMETHING... AND THESE GUYS ARE JUST TRYING TO GET IT.

I DON'T AGREE WITH HIS METHODS, BUT FROM WHAT HE SAYS, DINOSAURUS THINKS HE'S ACTUALLY HELPING HUMANITY.

I THINK THERE MIGHT BE SOMETHING TO THAT...



THAT'S AN ARGUMENT FOR ANOTHER TIME, THEN.

SO, TO WRAP UP... I CAN COUNT ON YOU IF I NEED YOU?



OF COURSE... YES.



GOOD. NOW THAT WE'RE ON SPEAKING TERMS AGAIN, I FIGURE IT'S BEST TO JUST TELL YOU THINGS UP FRONT THAT I FEEL MIGHT UPSET YOU.

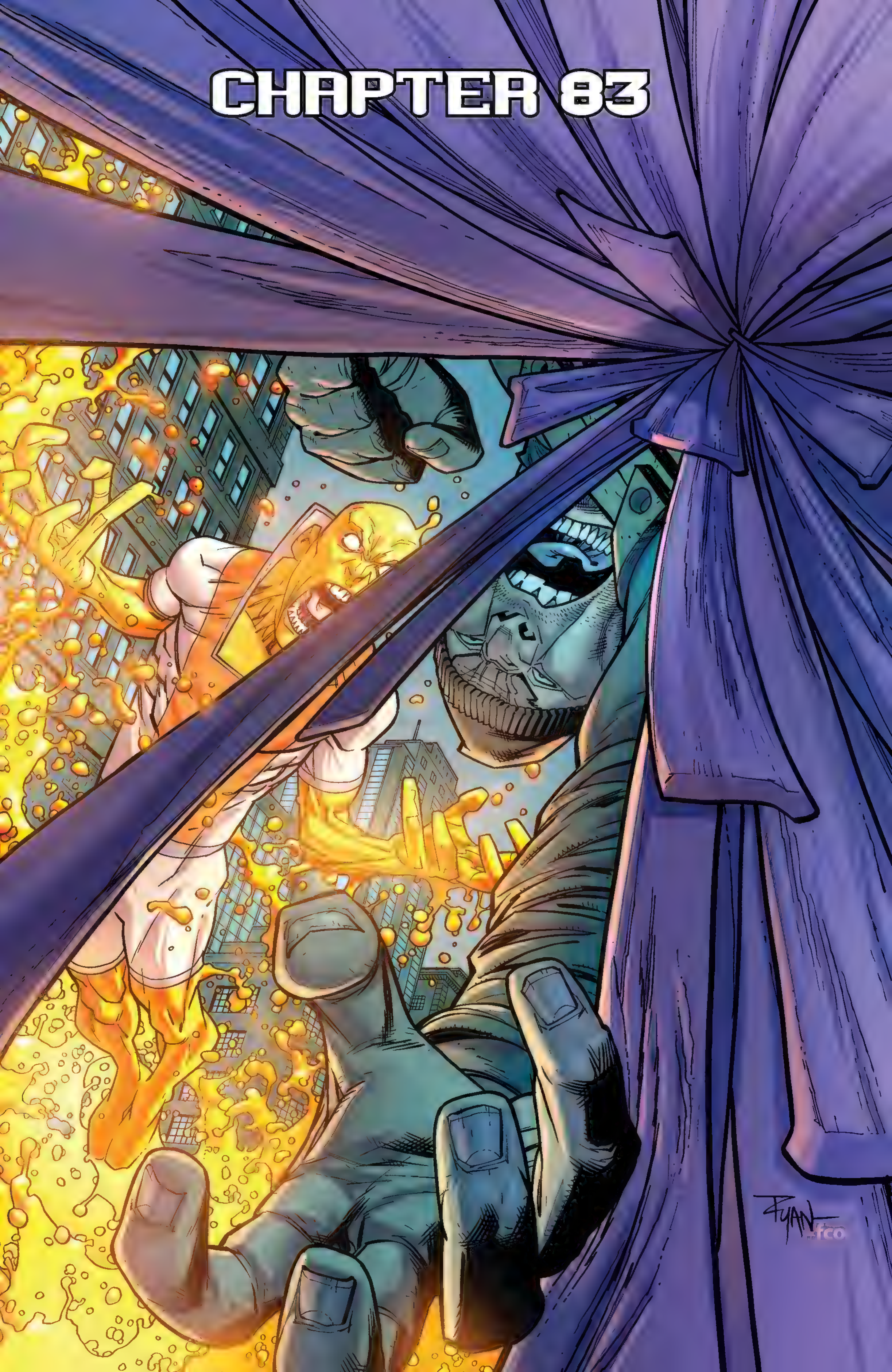
DON'T BE ALARMED, BUT...



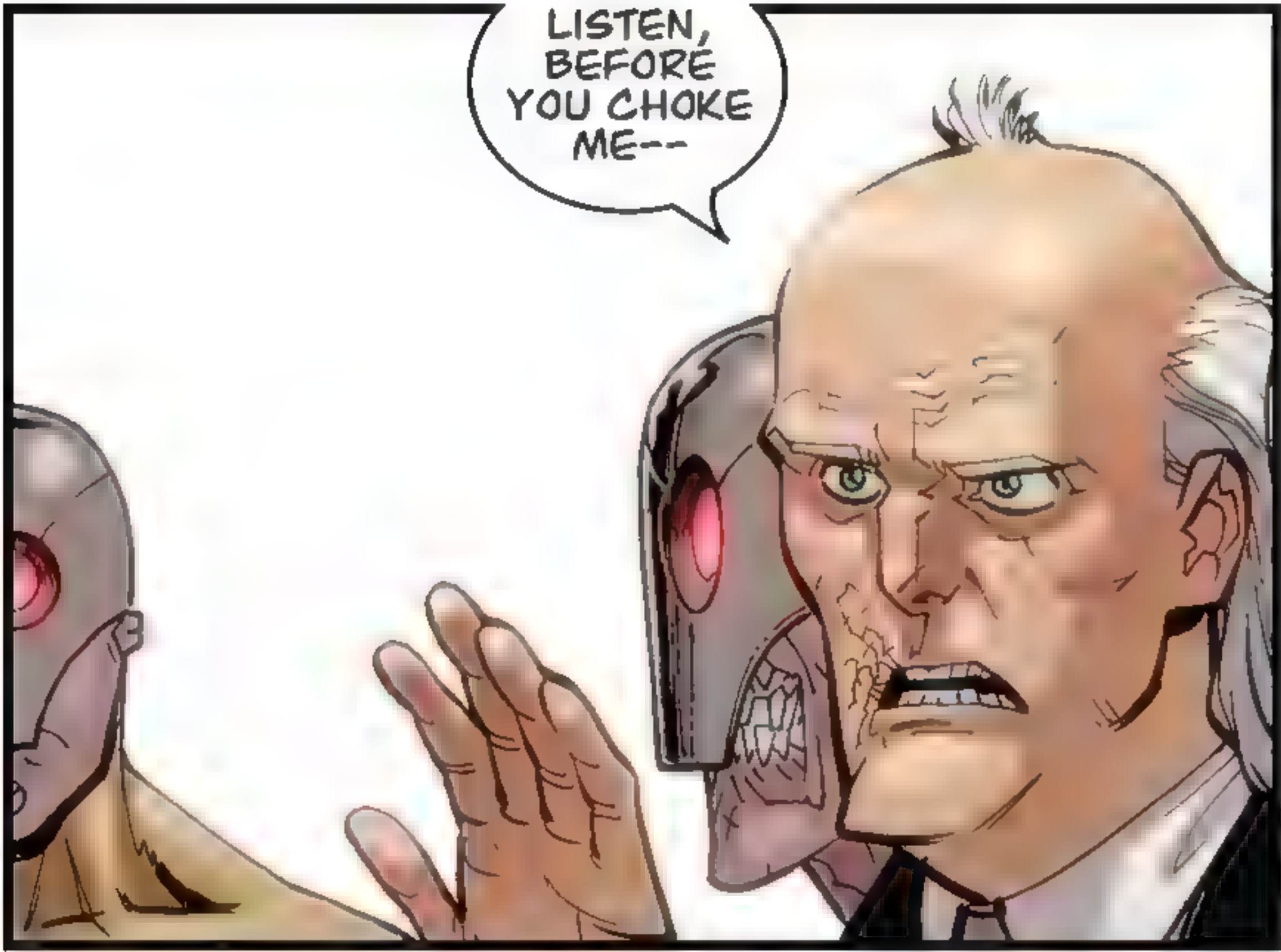
THERE
ARE THINGS
I'VE BEEN
KEEPING
FROM
YOU...

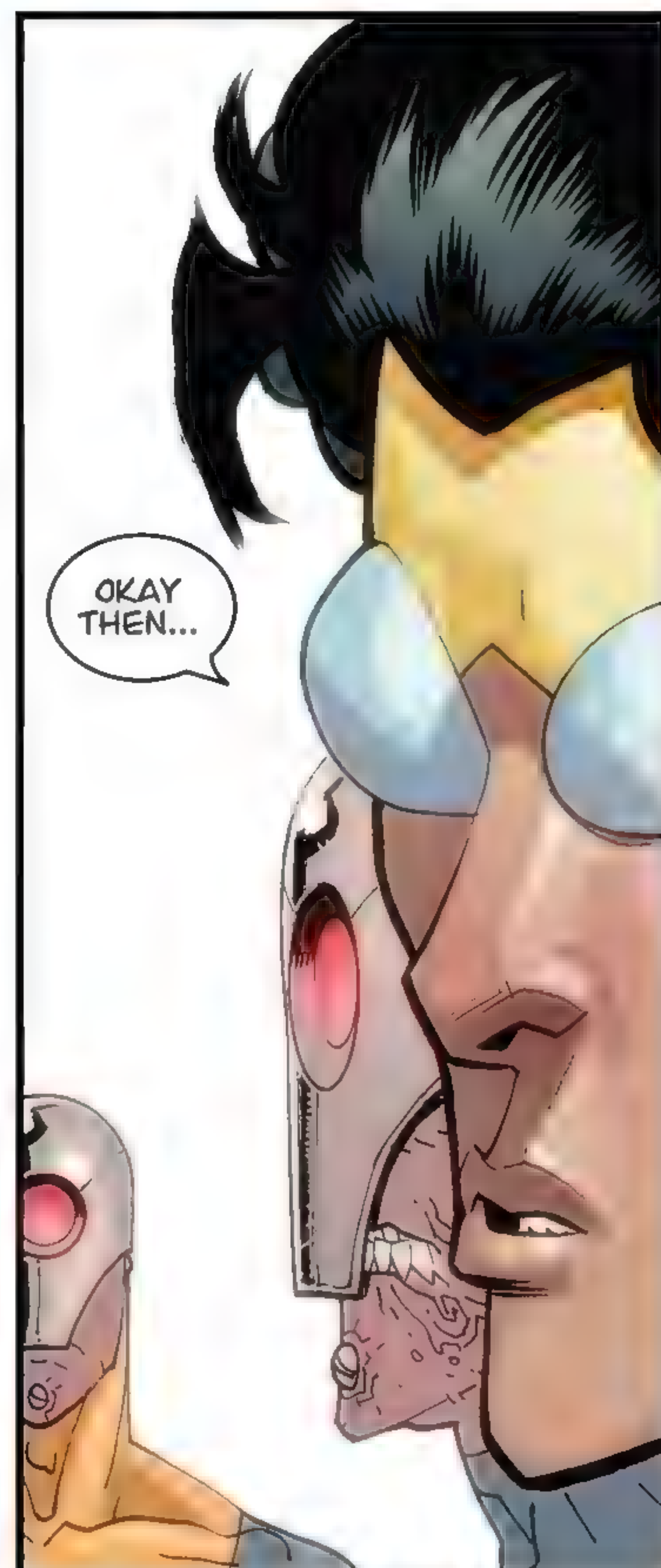
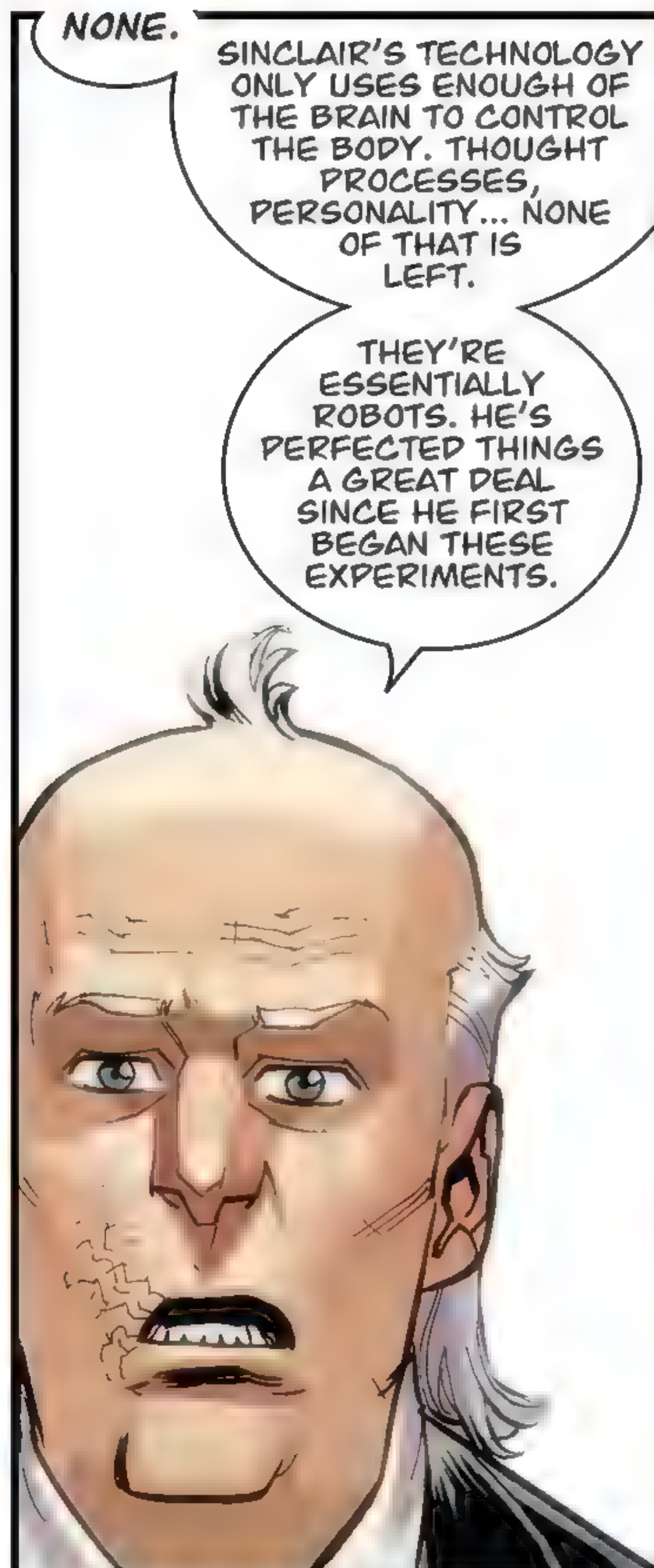
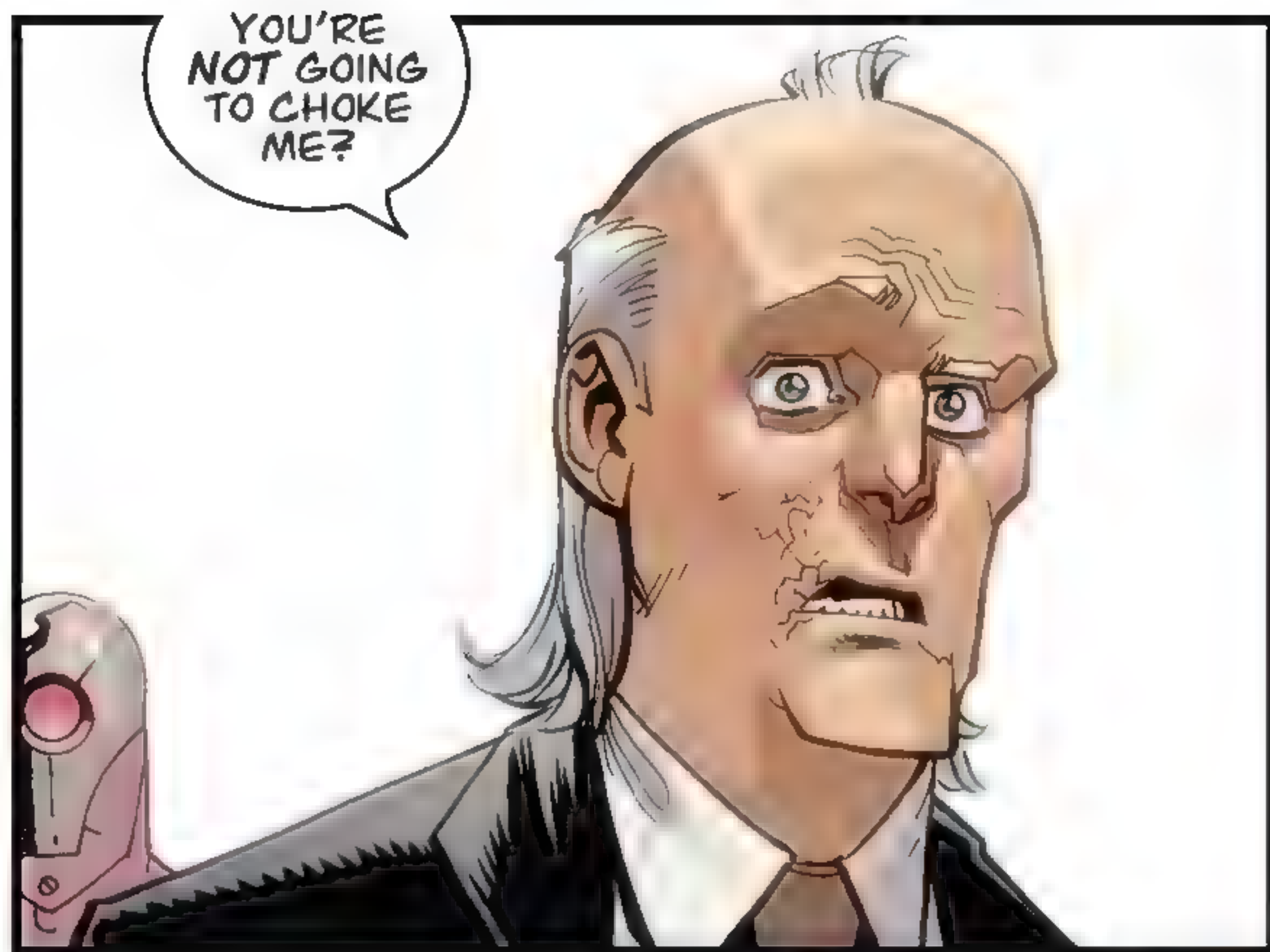


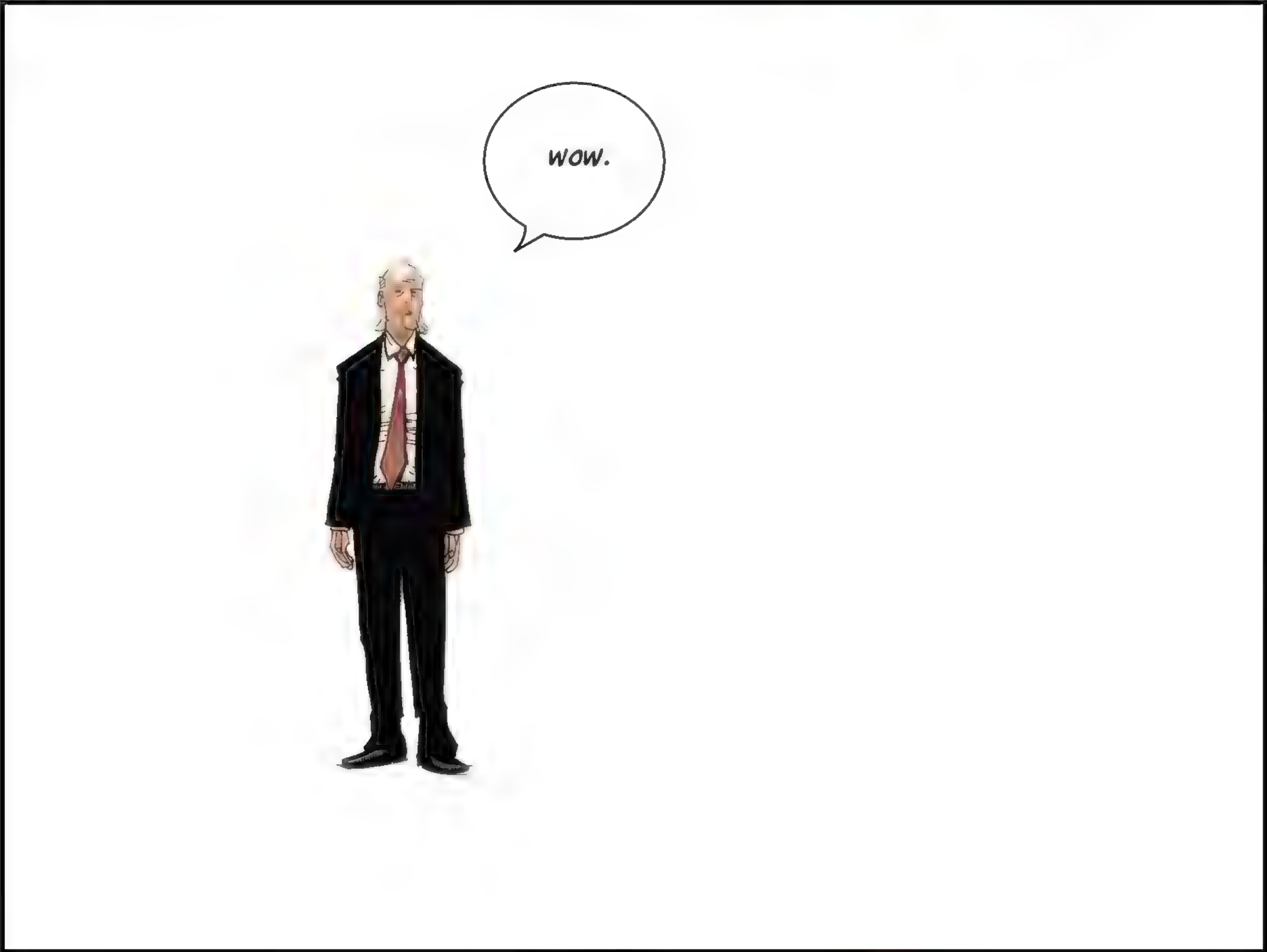
CHAPTER 83



FYAN
fco







THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF CRIMINAL MASTERMIND, TITAN.

WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING, BOSS.

WE'VE TRIED TO GO LEGIT... THAT DIDN'T WORK, WE JUST COULDN'T MAKE ENDS MEET.

WE TRIED TO GO BACK TO CRIME ON OUR OWN--WE COULDN'T HACK IT.

WORKING FOR MACHINE HEAD WAS NO GREAT SHAKES... BUT YOU WERE ONE OF US--A THUG, YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE...

WORKING FOR YOU, IT'S BEEN EASIER. AND WE KNOW WE HAVEN'T BEEN THE MOST USEFUL PARTS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION...

IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME TO INTERRUPT YOUR RAMBLE...

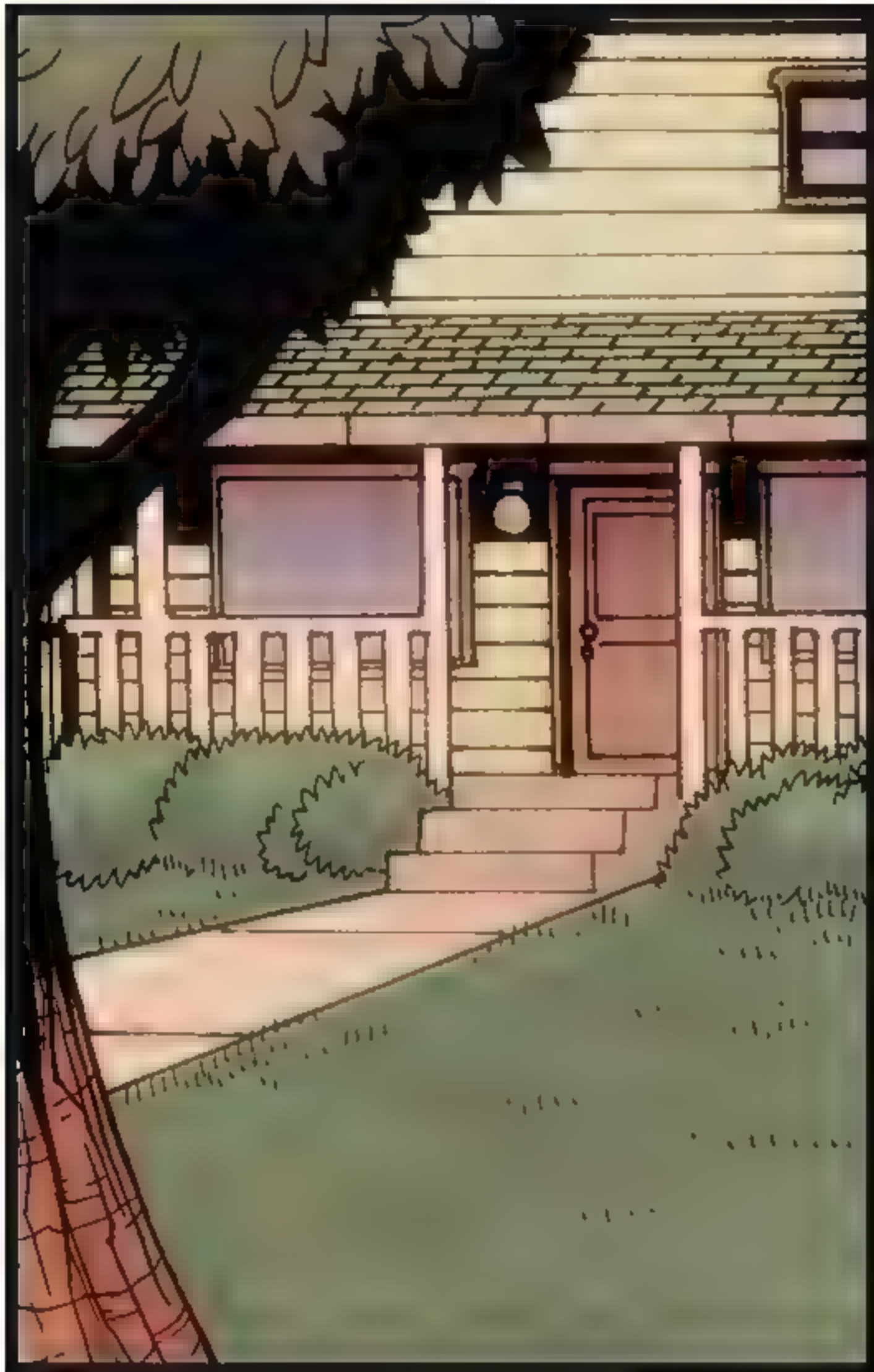
YOU WISH TO PROVE YOUR WORTH. UNDERSTANDABLE. ADMIRABLE. THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT I'M STILL TRYING TO REBUILD MY ORGANIZATION IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT DEBACLE WITH THE ORDER.*

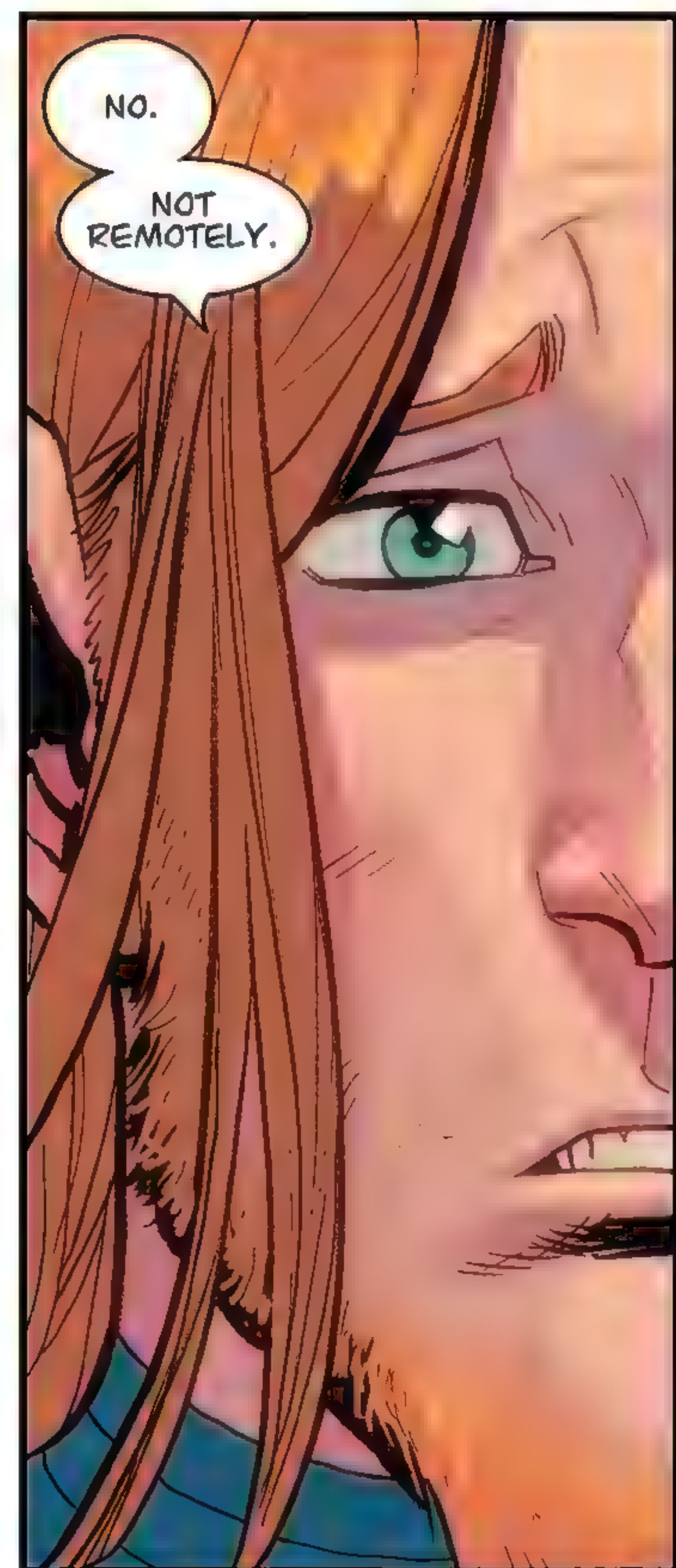
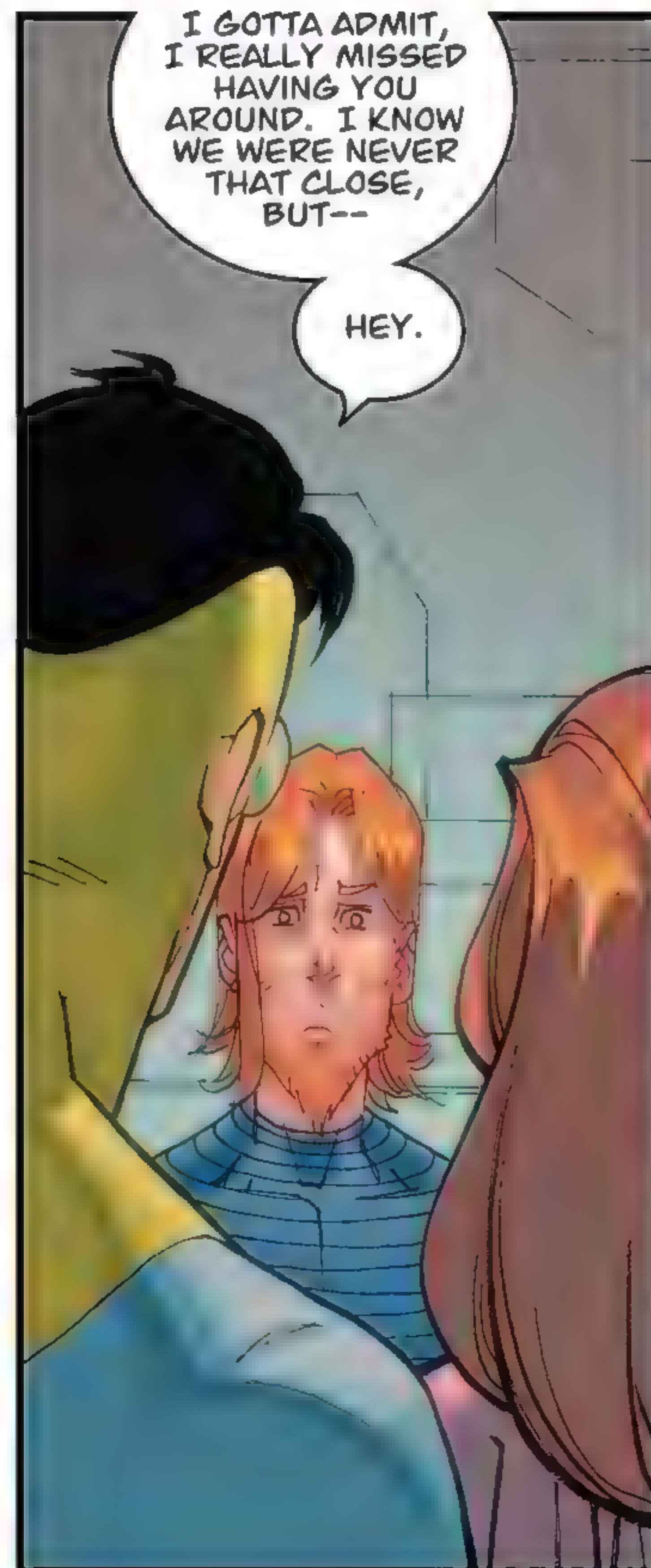
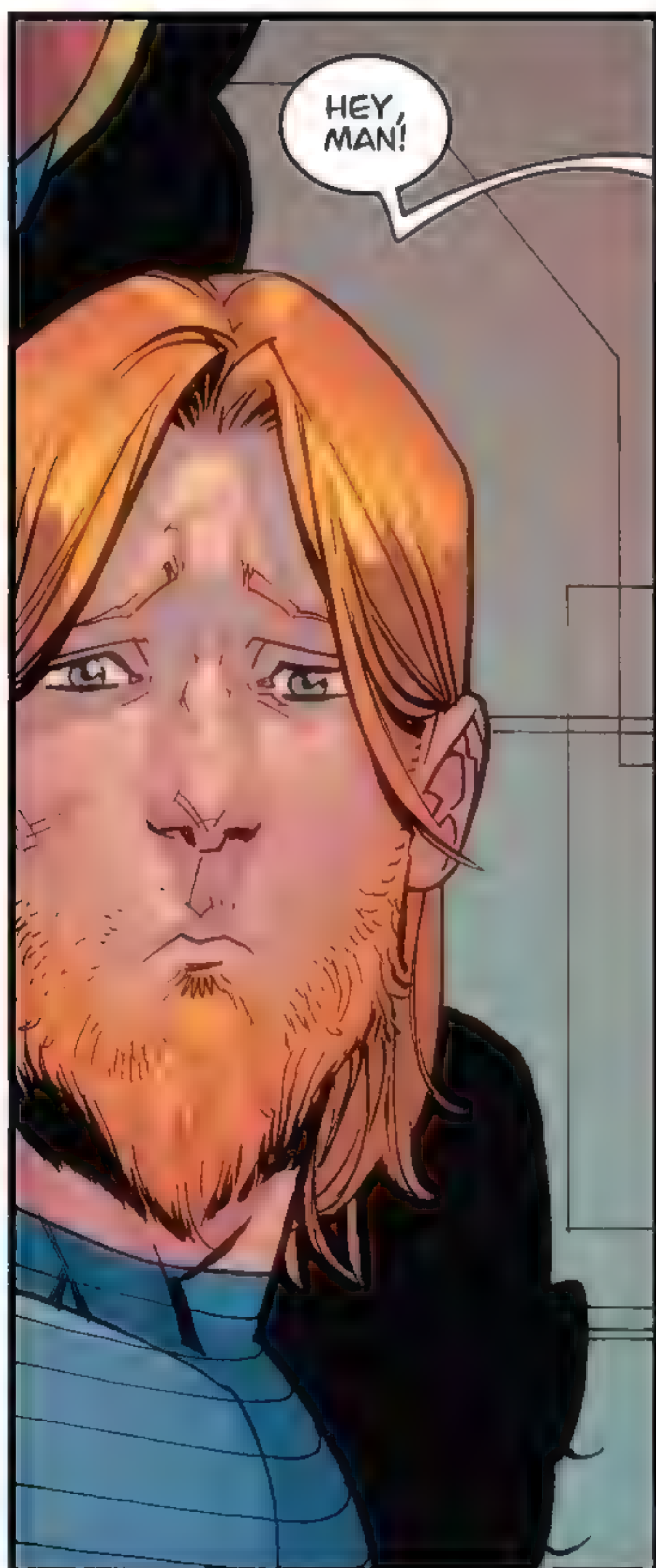
IT'S BROUGHT DOWN A LOT OF HEAT ON ME AND THIS ORGANIZATION.

*SEE GUARDING THE GLOBE, VOLUME I.

SO WHAT I'M SAYING IS, THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU COULD PROVE VERY VALUABLE TO ME.

WERE YOU WILLING TO TAKE THINGS TO THE NEXT LEVEL... IN FACT, I THINK I KNOW JUST THE TASK WITH WHICH TO PROVE YOURSELVES.





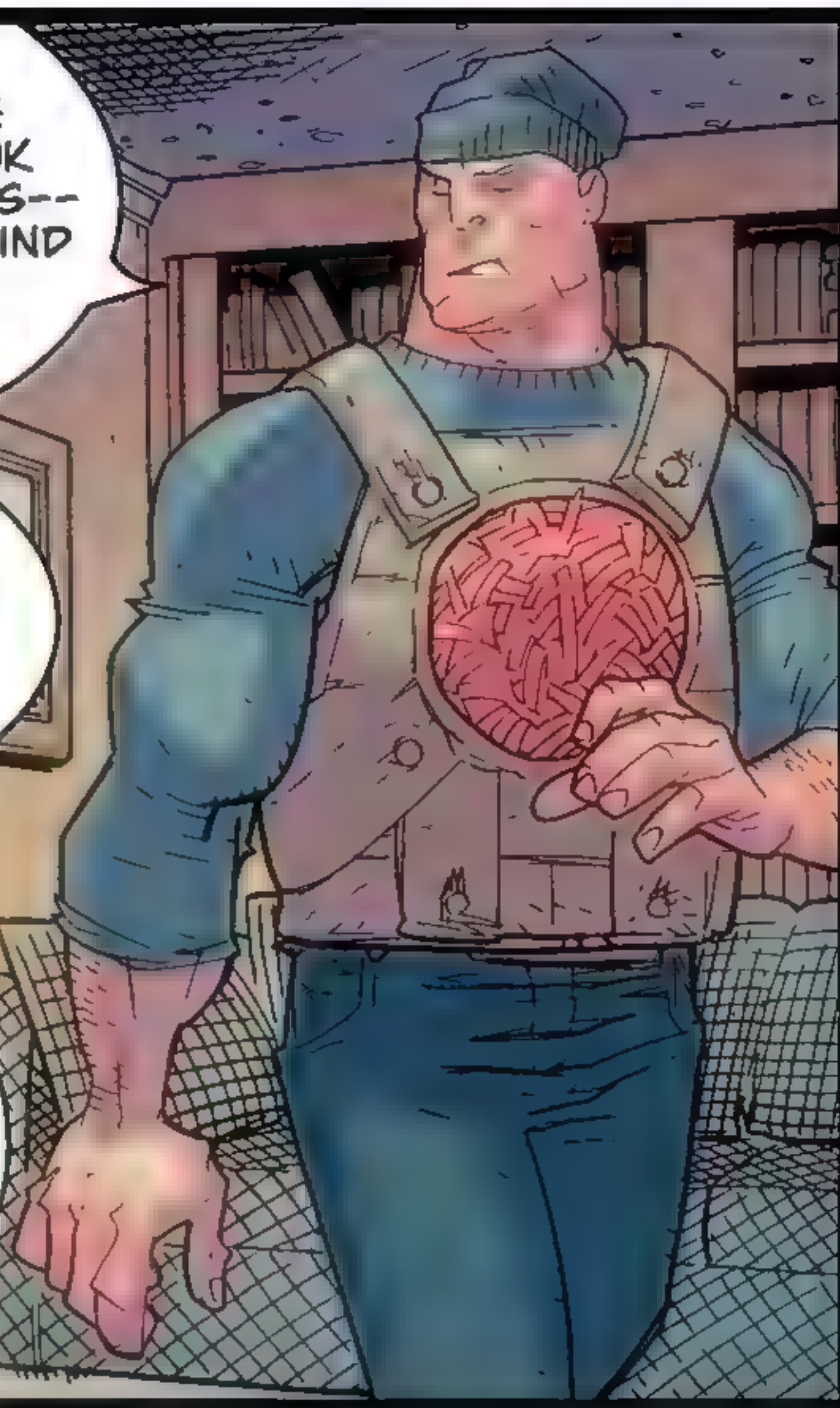


I'M GOING TO GO STAKE
OUT THEIR PLACE--IT'S
LIKE A **FORTRESS**. FOR
THE RECORD, I'M NOT
COMFORTABLE WITH THIS,
TITAN REALLY IS ASKING
FOR THE MOON...
WHY WOULD HE
SEND JUST **US**?

TO AVOID
RETALIATION. HE
WANTS US TO LOOK
LIKE ROGUE AGENTS--
LIKE HE'S NOT BEHIND
IT. HE DOESN'T
THINK WE'LL
PULL IT OFF.

BUT WE **WILL**...
I'D COME WITH YOU,
BUT I REALLY NEED
TO SEPARATE--
I'VE BEEN BONDED
TOO LONG.

I GET
IT, MAN.
AT LEAST...
CLEAN UP
A LITTLE OR
SOMETHING
WHILE I'M
OUT.



HE'S
GONE. YEAH.
HE KNOWS
YOU'RE ALIVE,
THOUGH. WE
DON'T KEEP
SECRETS
FROM EACH
OTHER.

I DON'T
KNOW WHY
YOU WON'T
TALK TO
ME IN FRONT OF
HIM--I KNOW
YOU DON'T
LIKE HIM, BUT
IT'S NOT LIKE
HE'S GOING
TO **HEAR**
YOU.

I KNOW... BUT THAT'S
NOT WHAT I WANT. I
KNOW A PERMANENT
BOND WOULD MAKE
ME STRONGER--
MAYBE EVEN HELP
US PULL THIS OFF,
BUT YOU'VE SAID
IT WOULD...
TRANSFORM
ME.

I TRUST
YOU... WE'VE
BEEN
TOGETHER FOR
YEARS... BUT I
JUST DON'T
LIKE THE
SOUND OF
THAT.



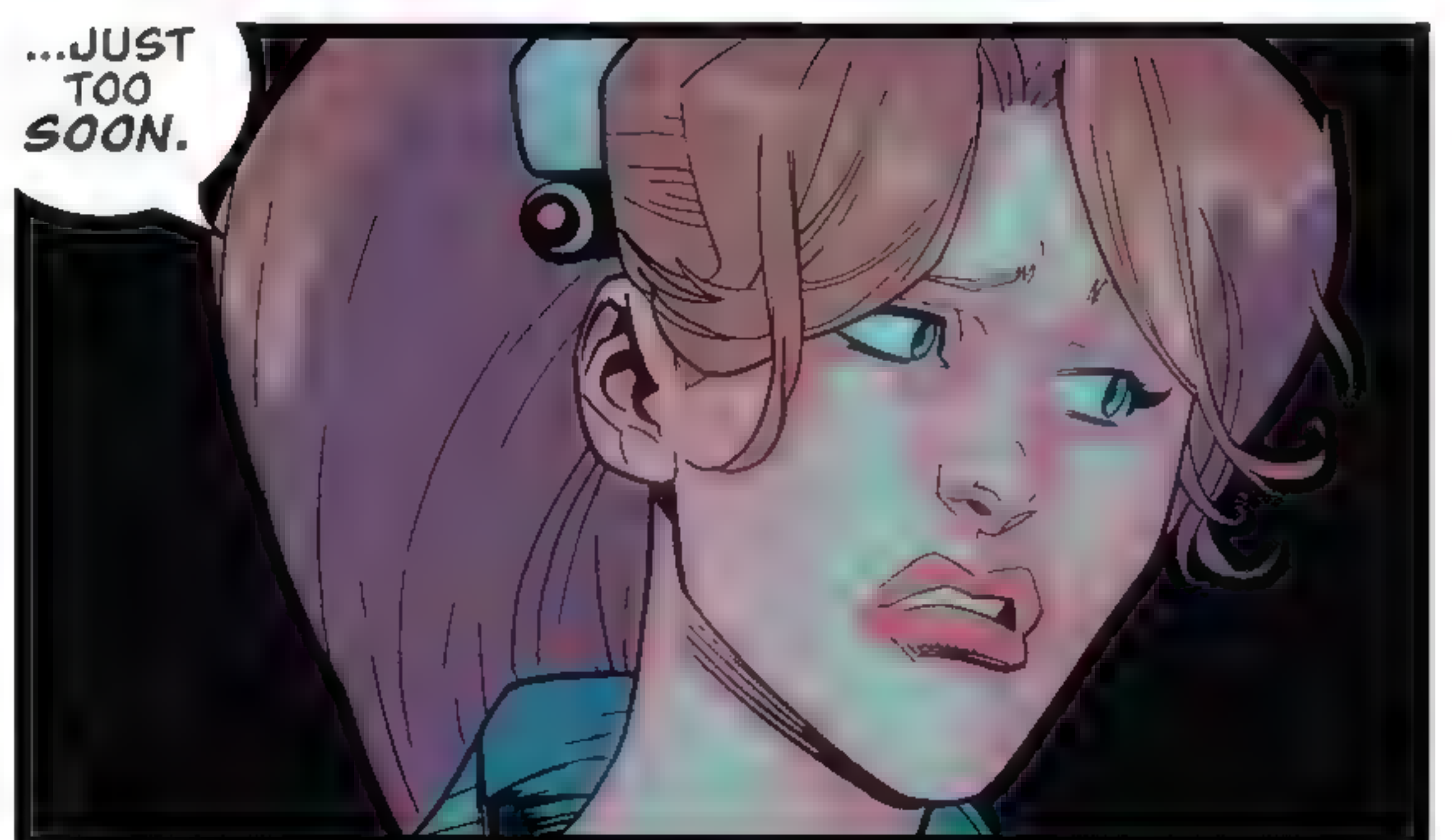
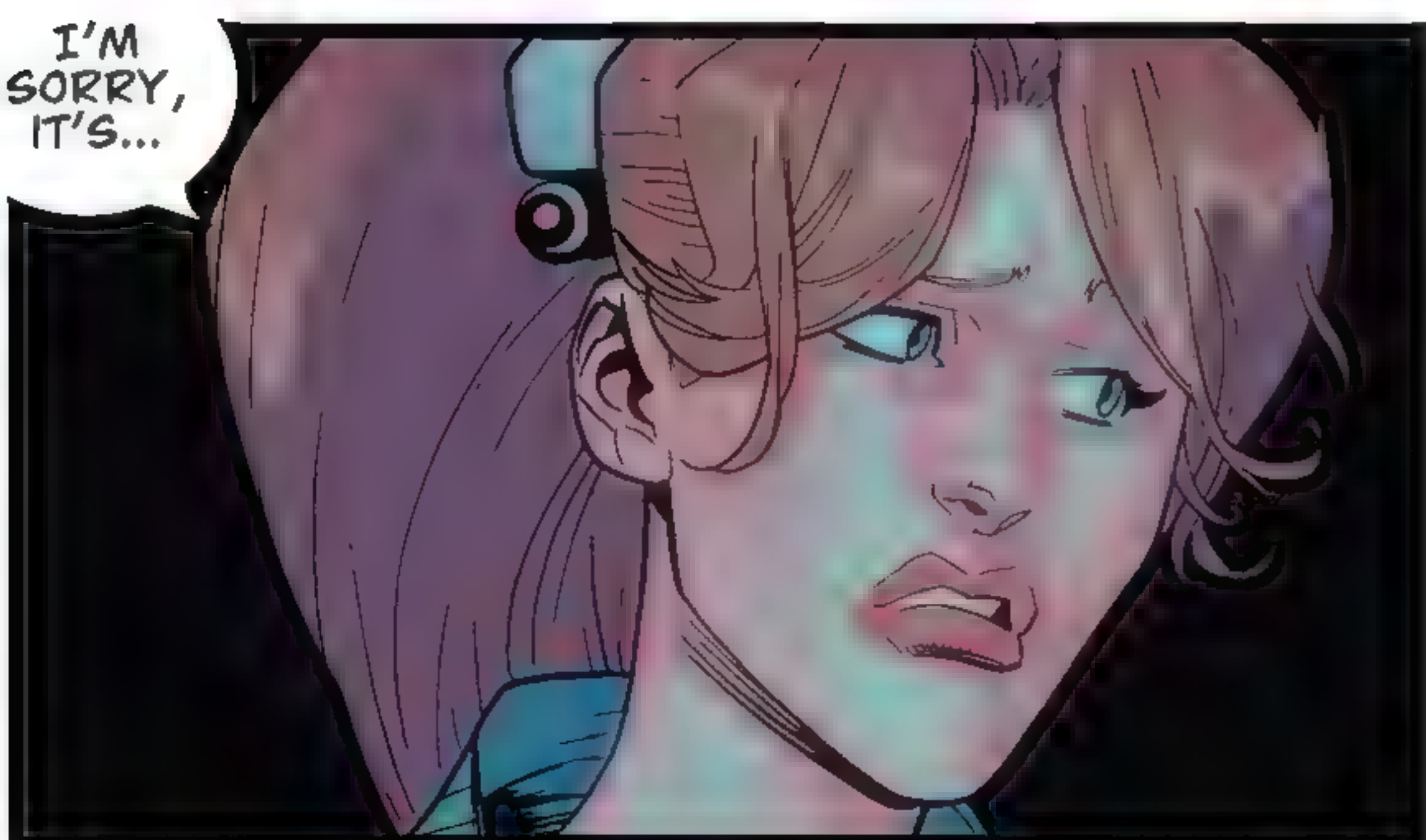
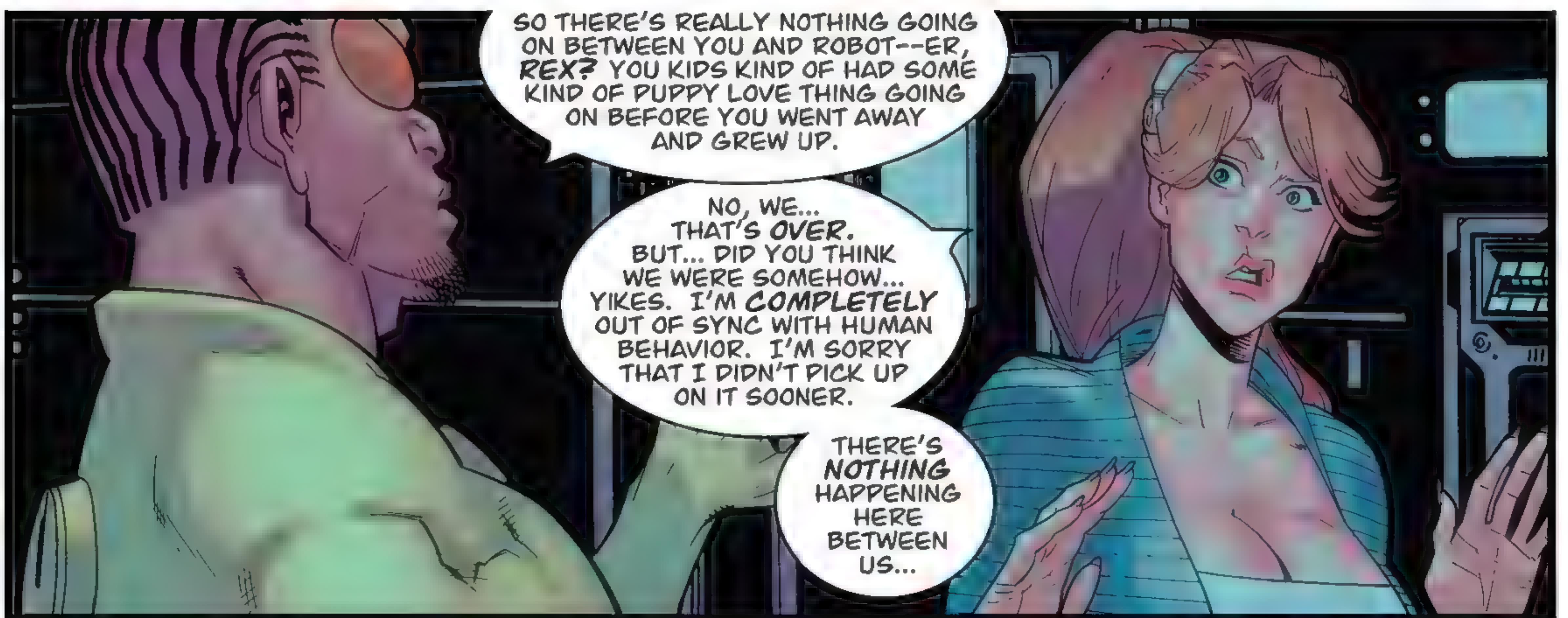
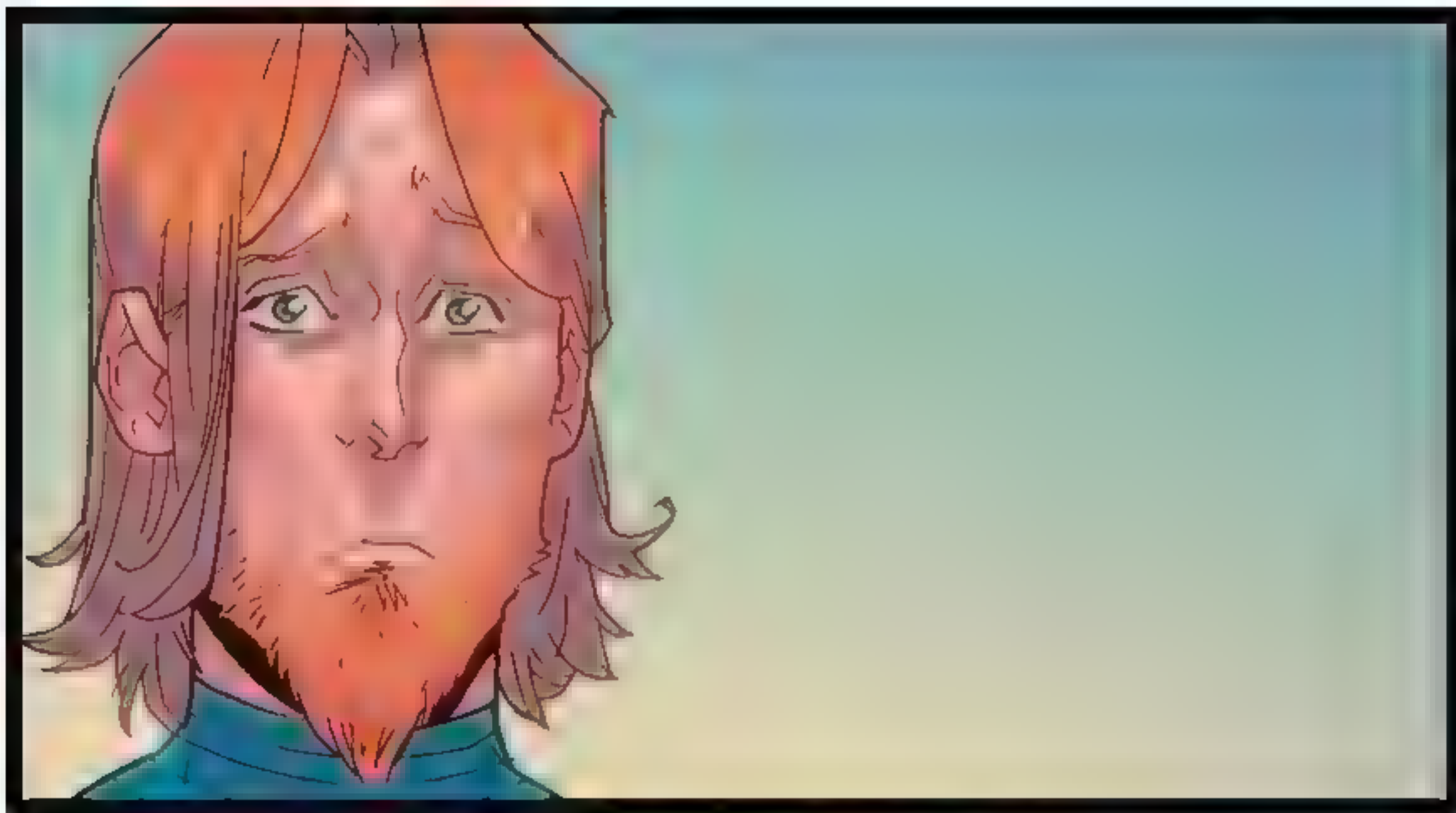
NO, OKAY?
I'VE MADE
UP MY
MIND.

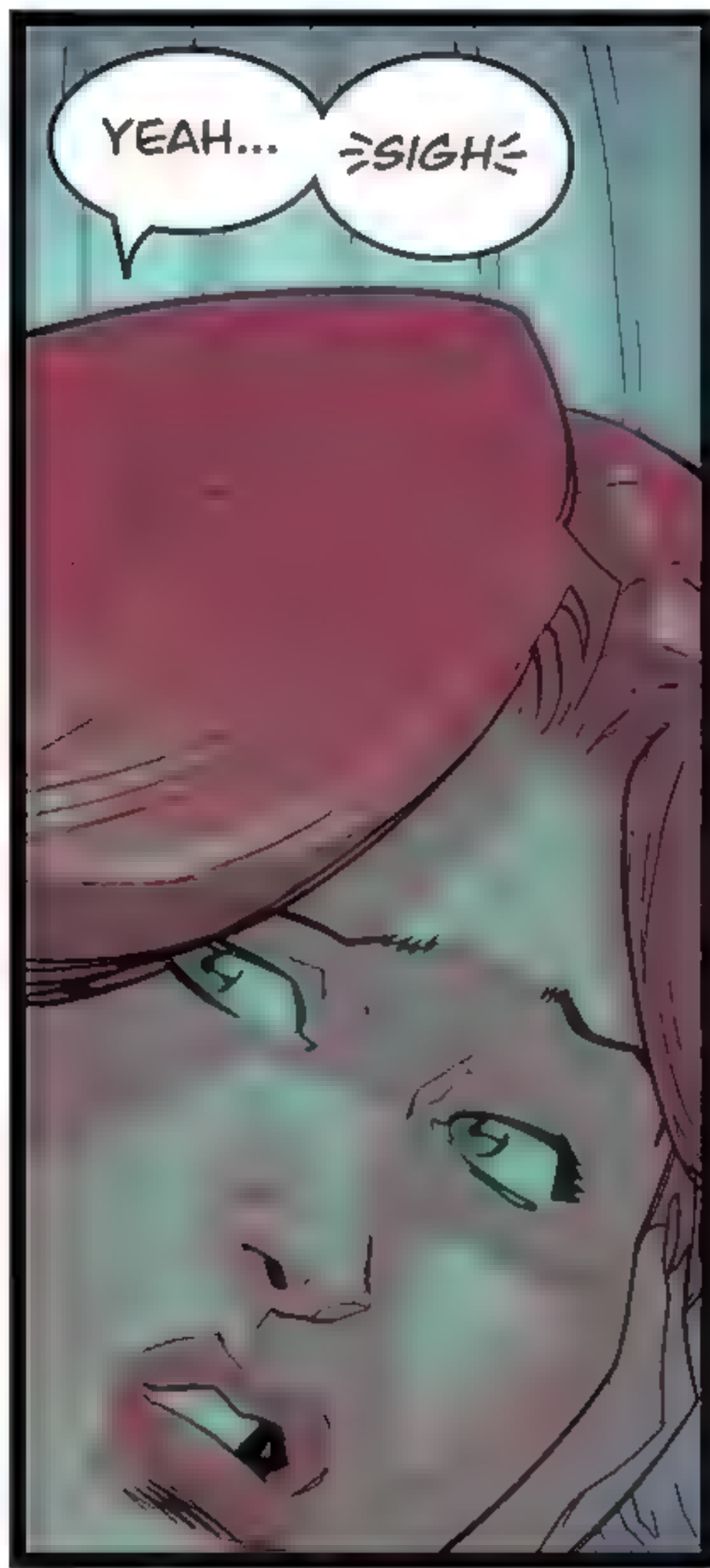
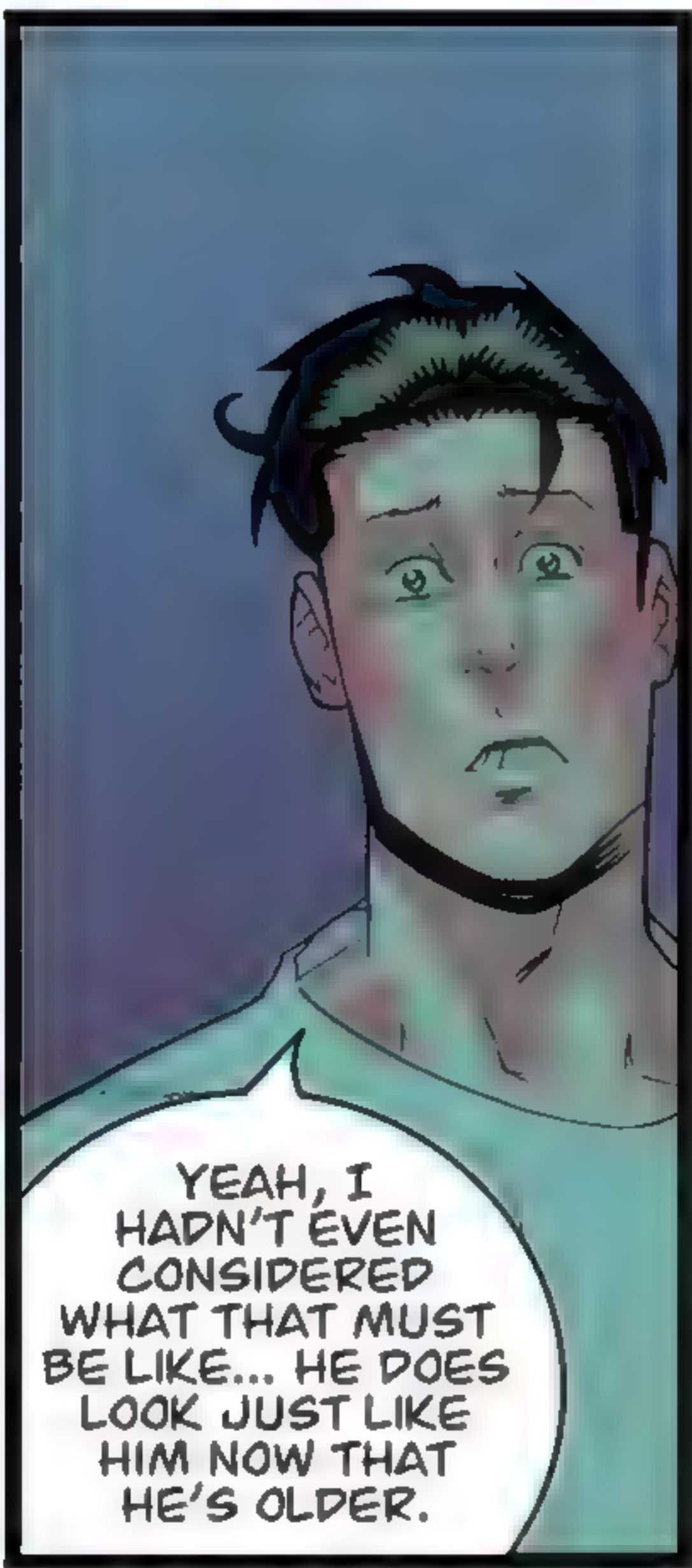
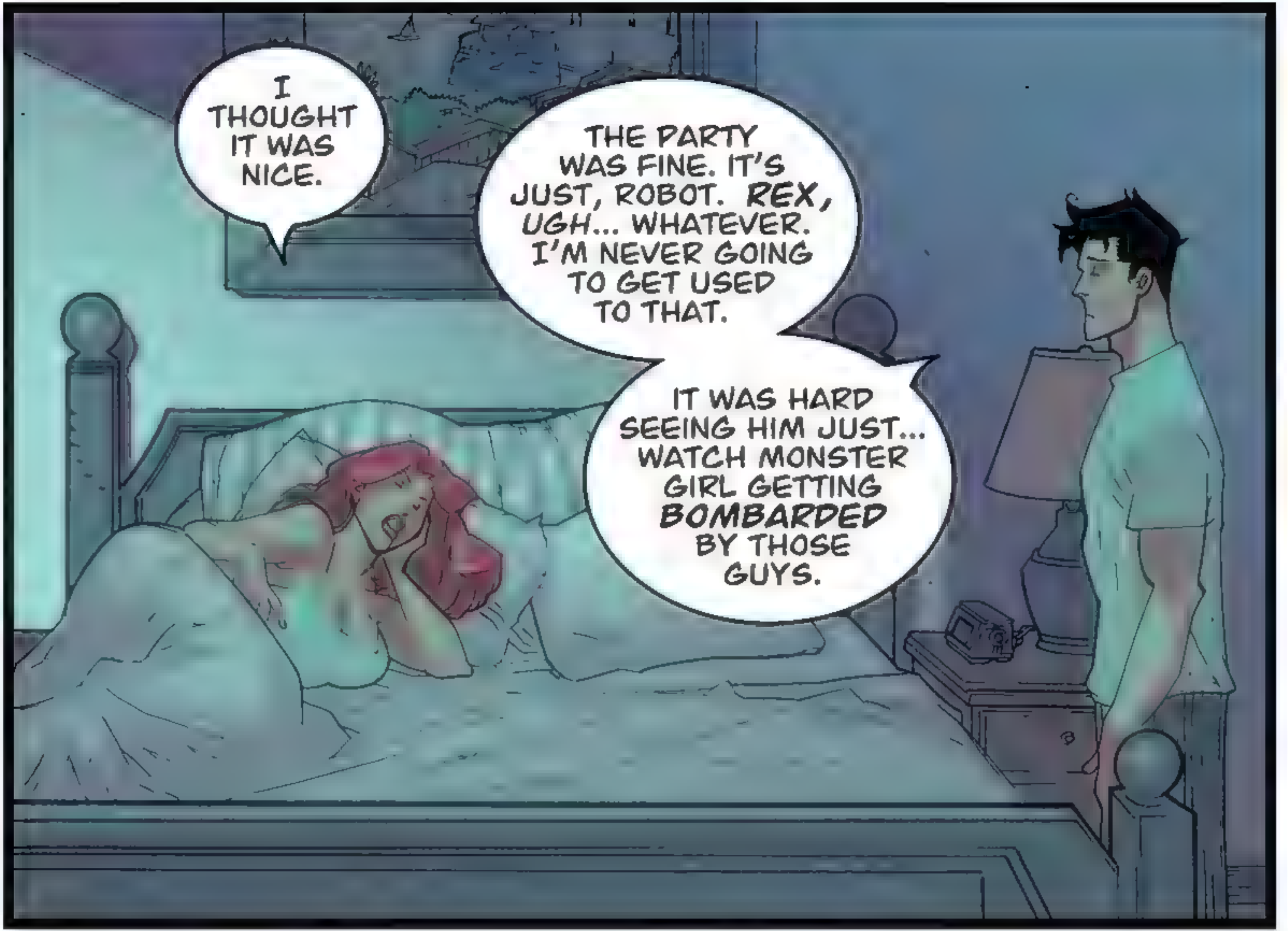
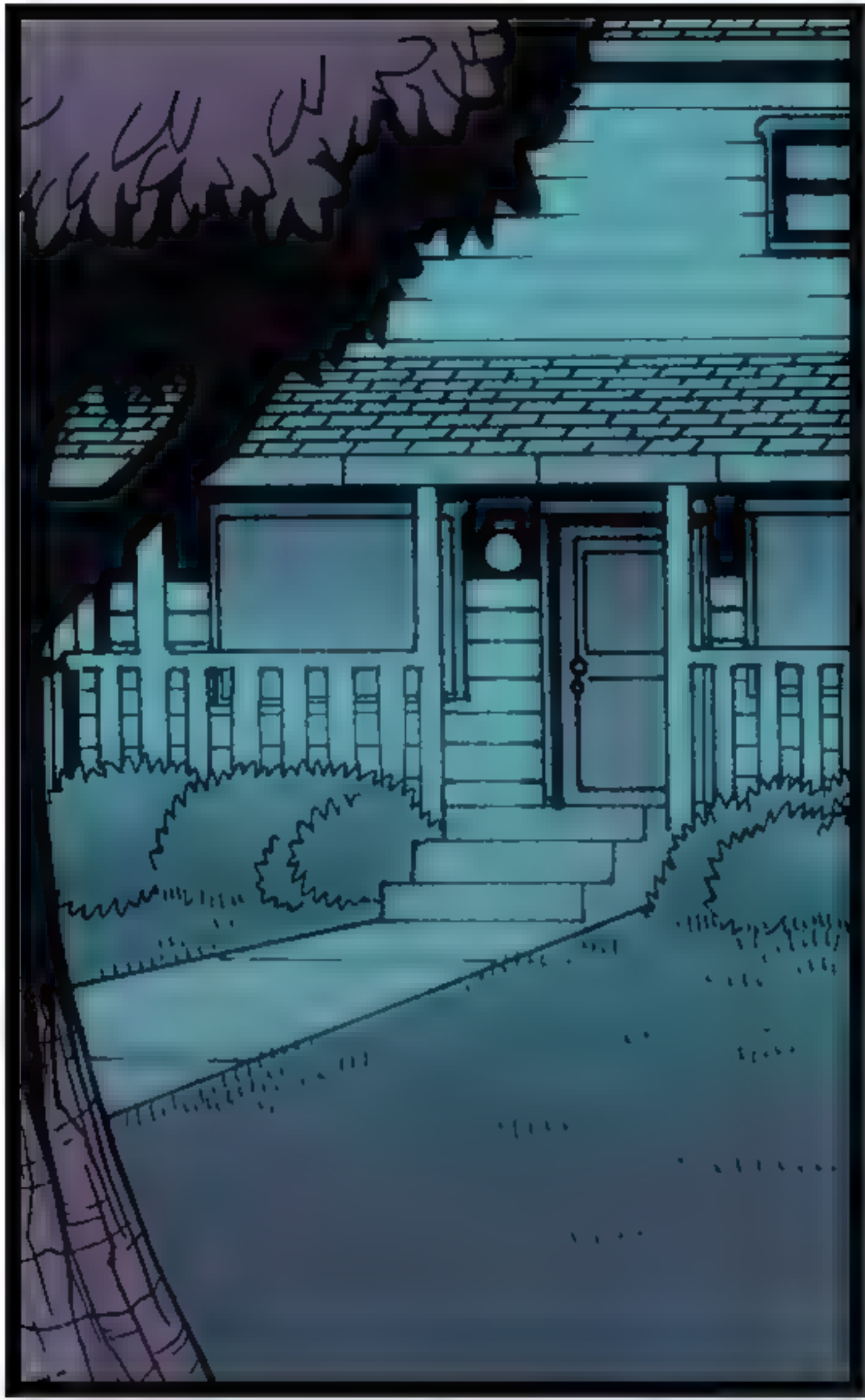
PLEASE...
DON'T
BRING IT UP
AGAIN.



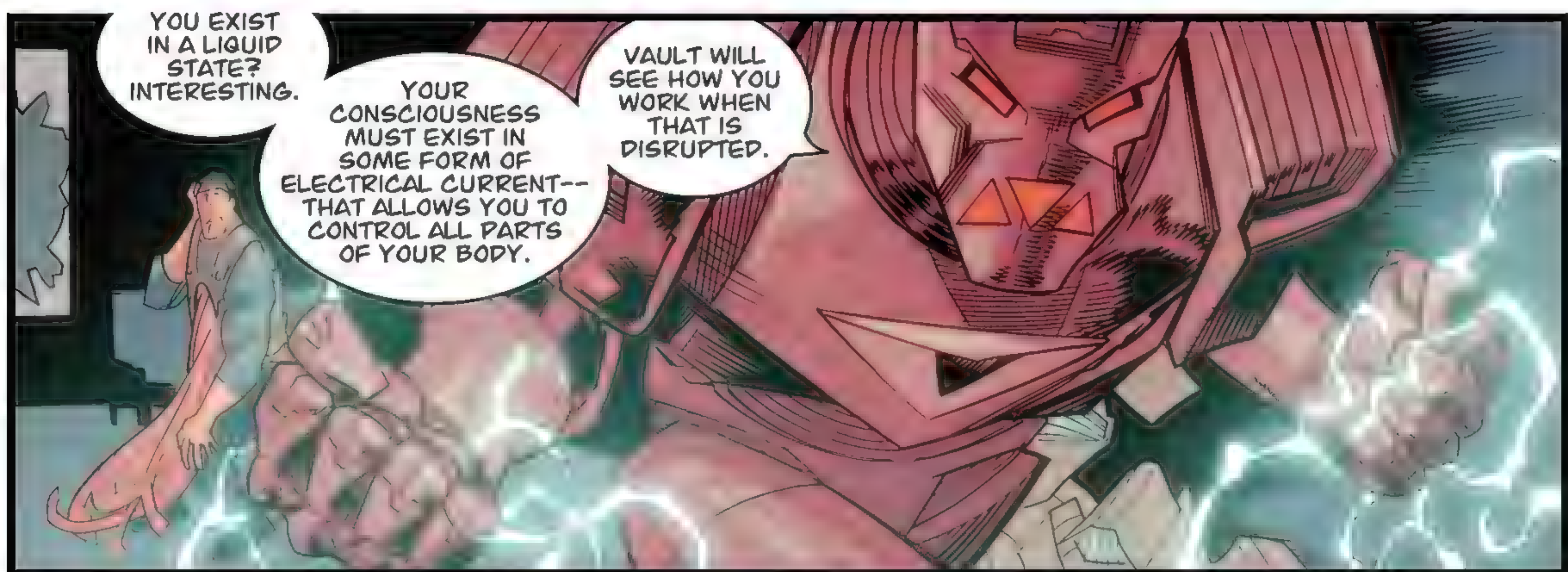
OH,
CALM
DOWN.

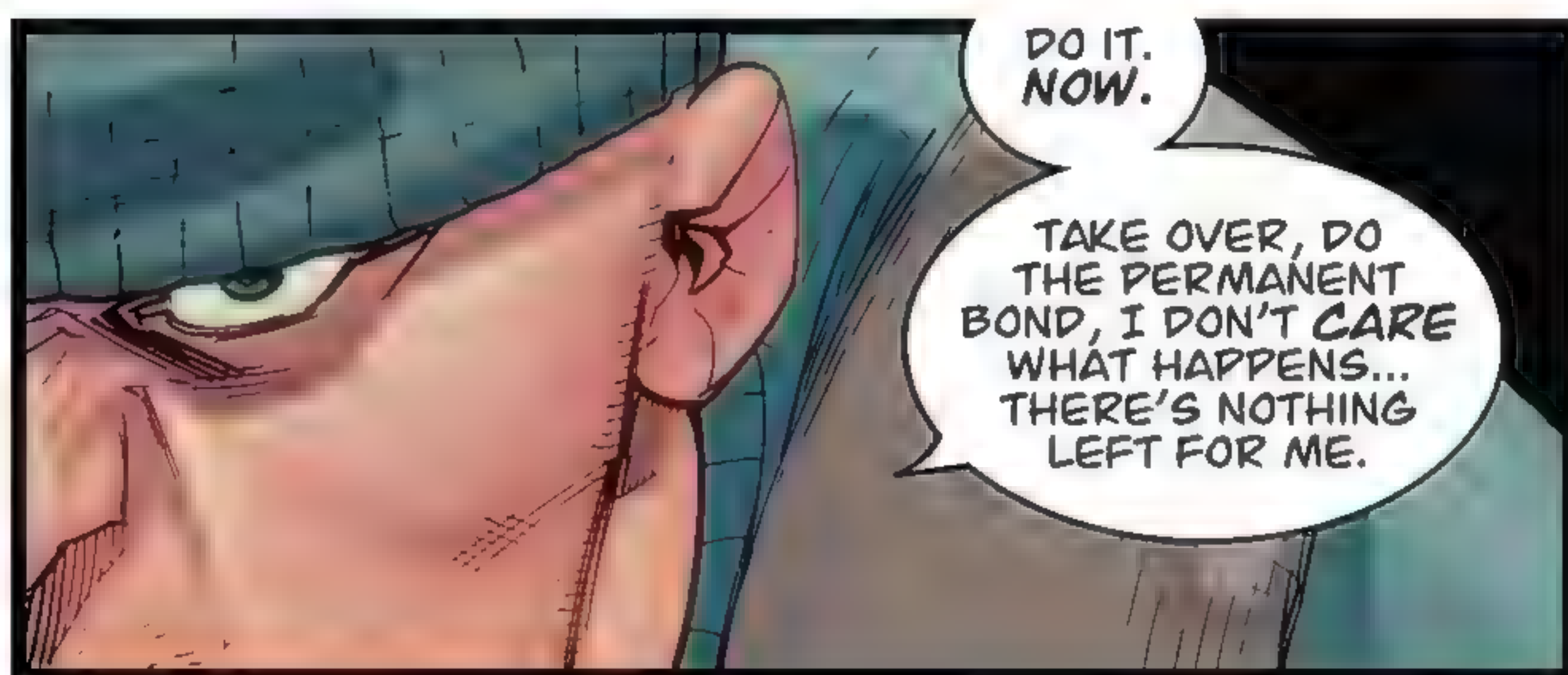
IT'S OKAY--
IT'LL JUST BE
FOR A LITTLE
WHILE.











WAIT--
WHAT IS
THIS?!
HELLO?!

WHERE
AM I?
ARE YOU
HERE?

DID WE
BOND? DID
YOU TAKE
OVER?
DID...

DID
I DIE,
TOO?

JAMES...
HOW COULD
I LET--

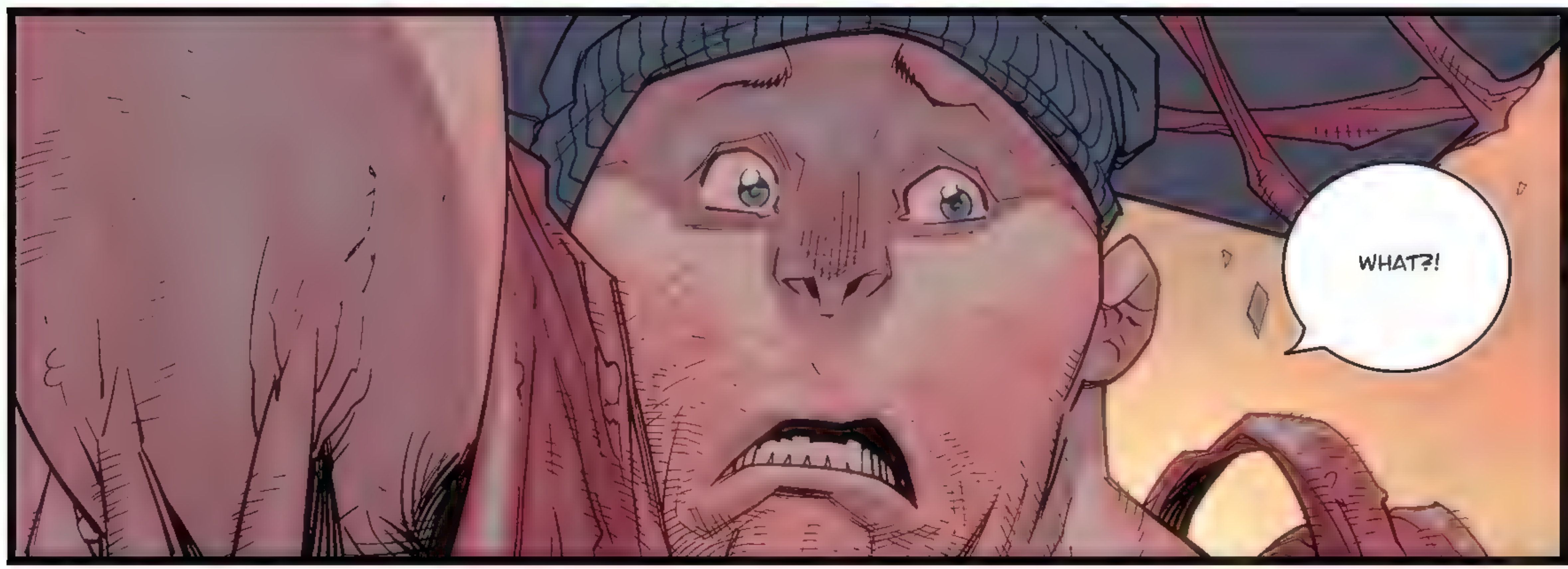
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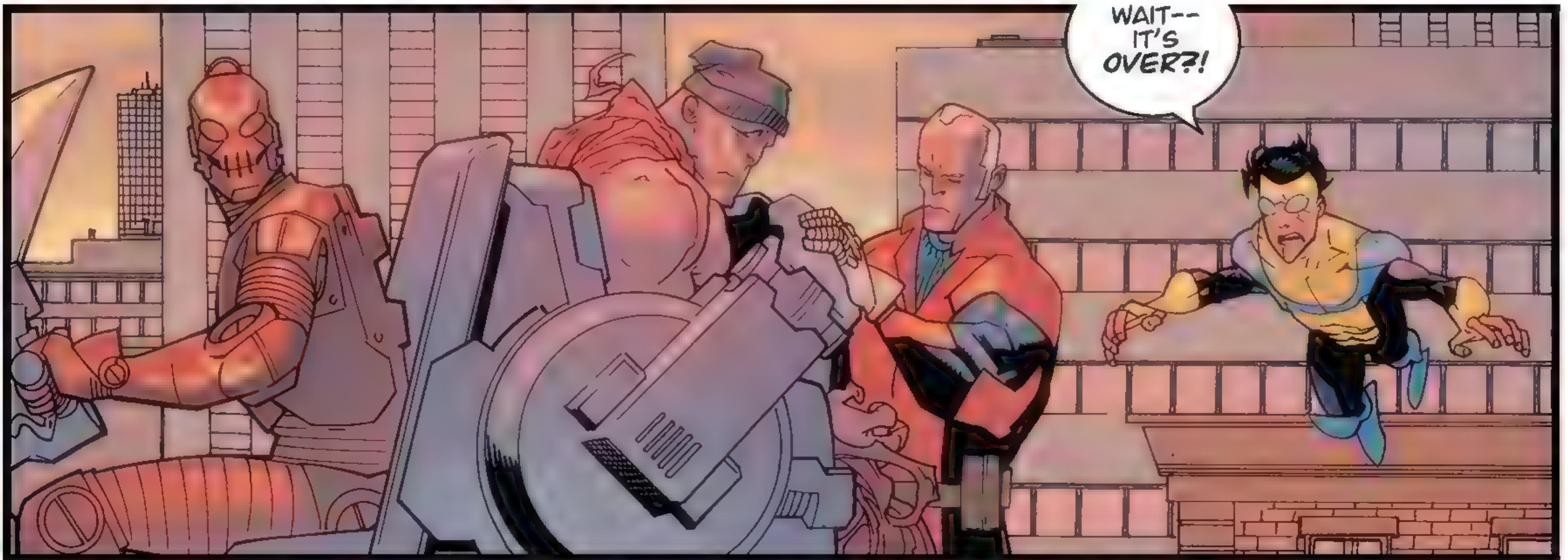
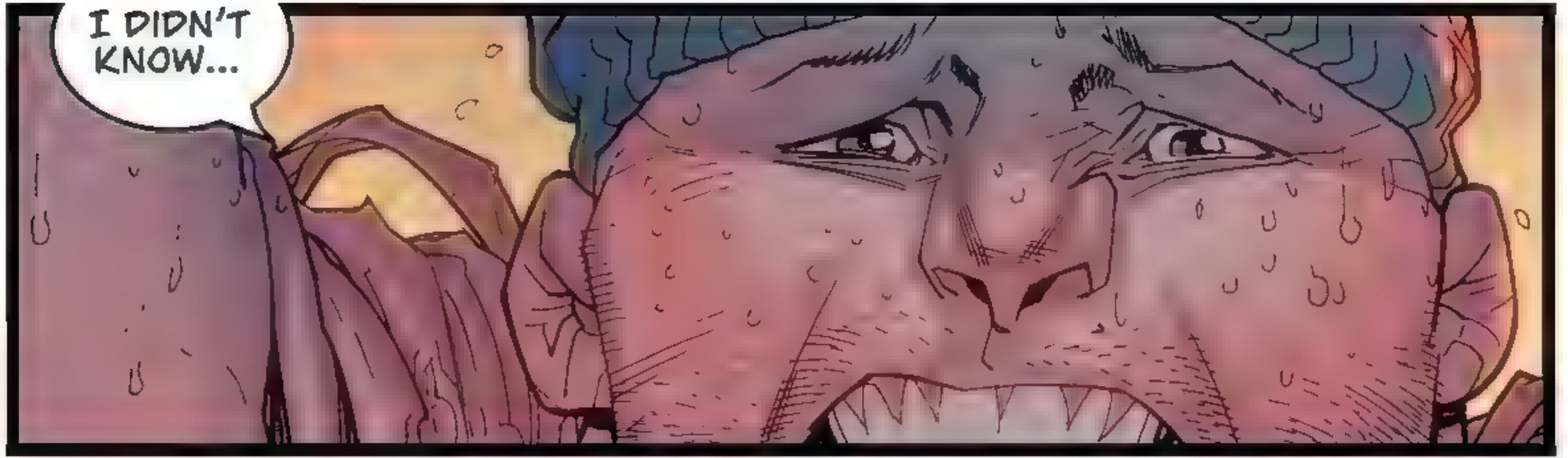
IF YOU
CAN HEAR
ME--I DON'T
WANT THIS! I
TAKE IT BACK! I
DON'T WANT
YOU TO TAKE
OVER.

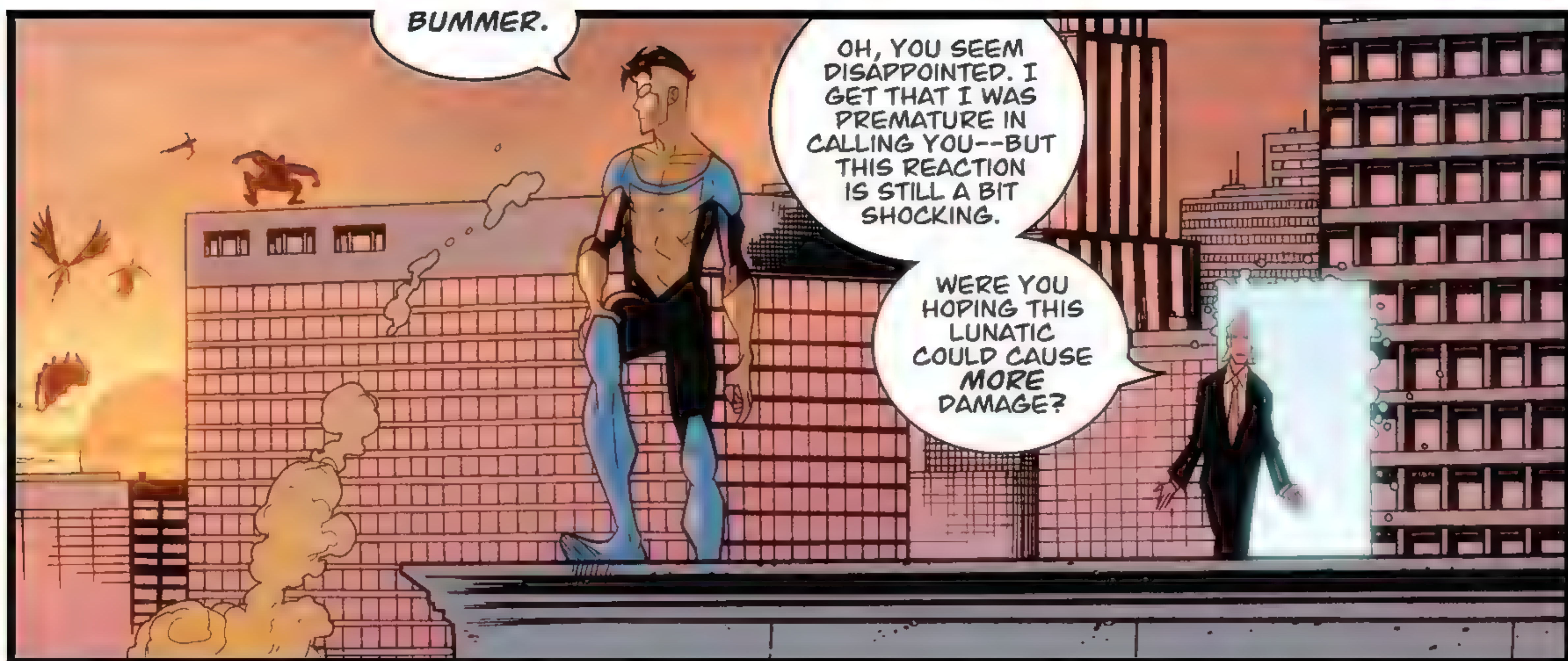
HELLO?!
I'M
SERIOUS!!

IF YOU'RE
OUT THERE--
IF YOU CAN HEAR
ME! I WANT MY
BODY BACK! I
DEMAND YOU
GIVE IT TO
ME!

I
WANT--!!



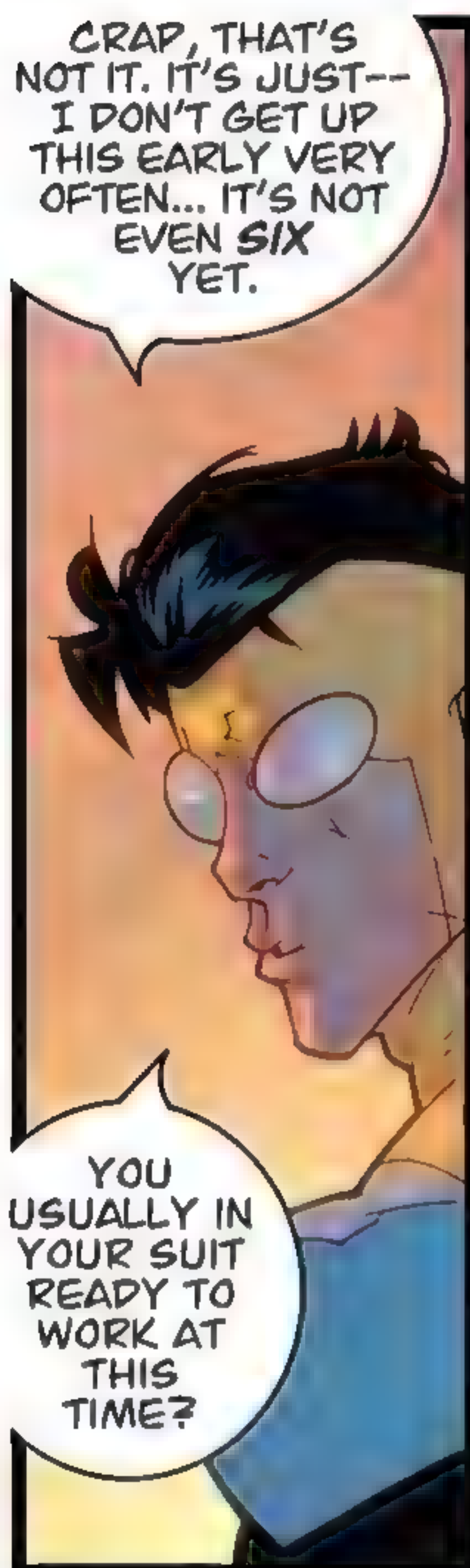




BUMMER.

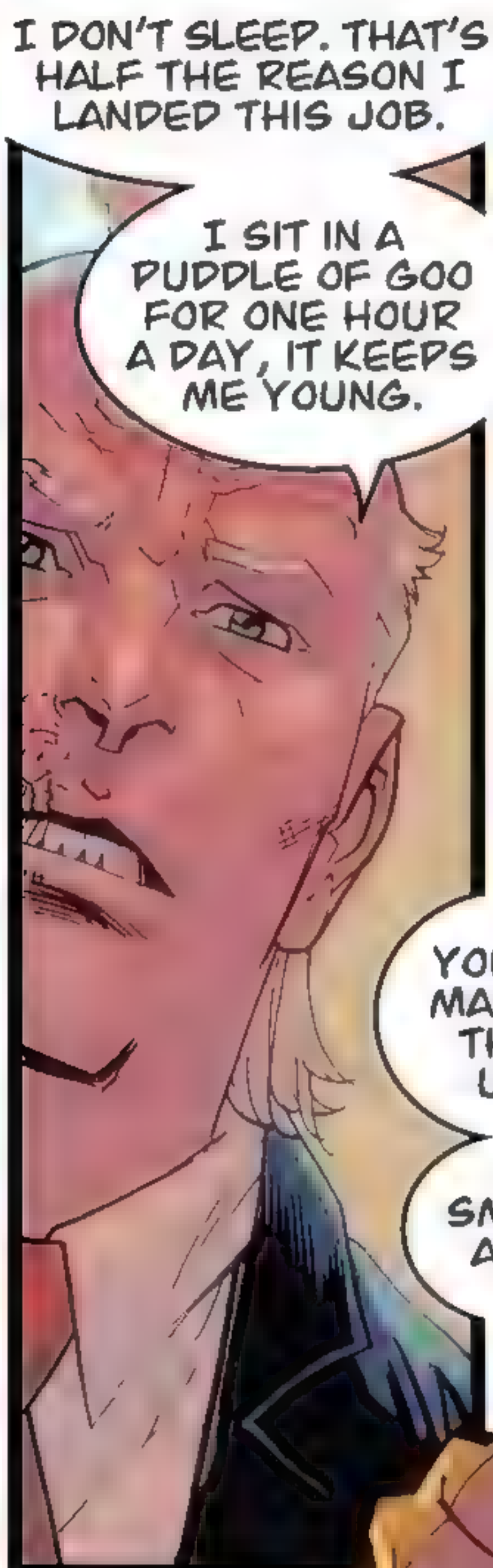
OH, YOU SEEM DISAPPOINTED. I GET THAT I WAS PREMATURE IN CALLING YOU--BUT THIS REACTION IS STILL A BIT SHOCKING.

WERE YOU HOPING THIS LUNATIC COULD CAUSE MORE DAMAGE?



CRAP, THAT'S NOT IT. IT'S JUST-- I DON'T GET UP THIS EARLY VERY OFTEN... IT'S NOT EVEN SIX YET.

YOU USUALLY IN YOUR SUIT READY TO WORK AT THIS TIME?

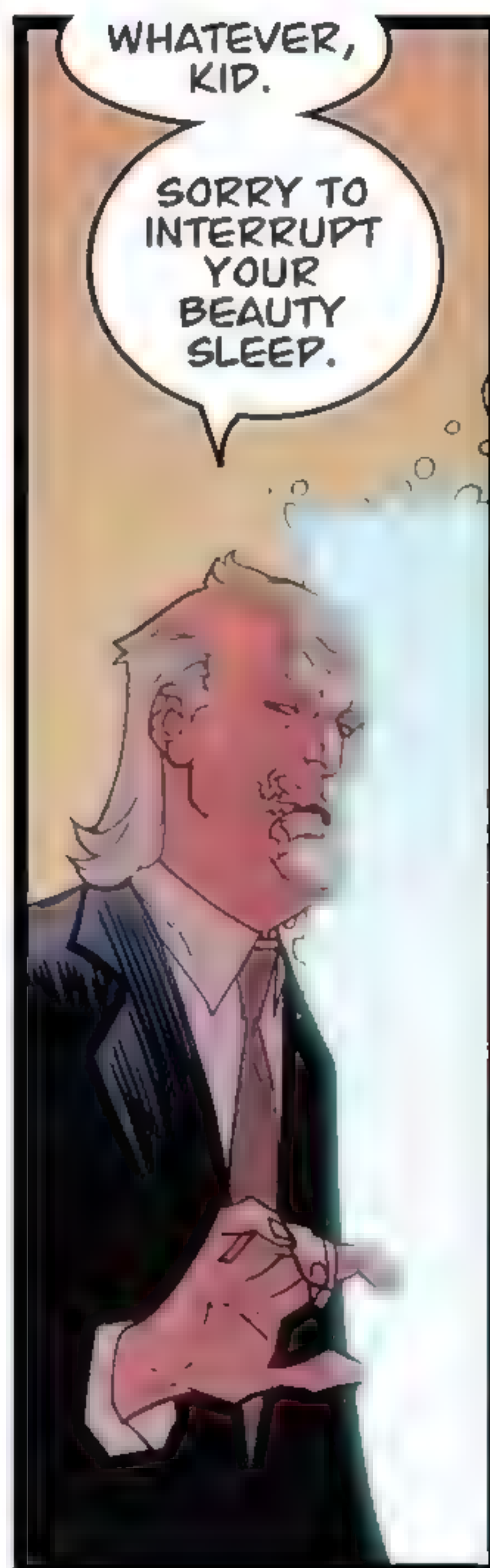
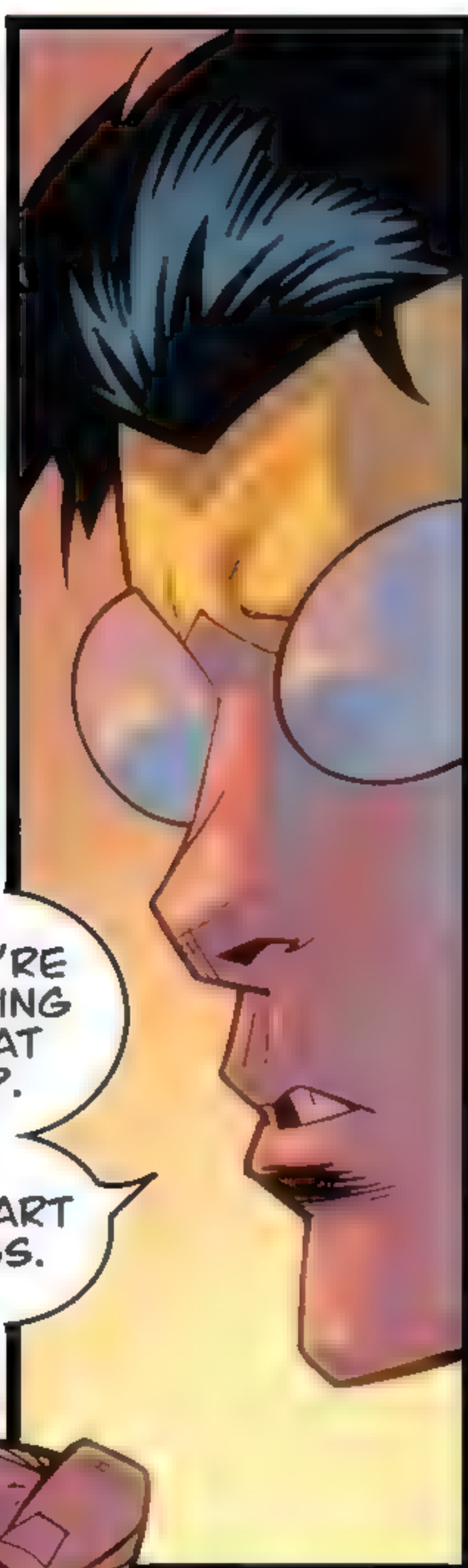


I DON'T SLEEP. THAT'S HALF THE REASON I LANDED THIS JOB.

I SIT IN A PUDDLE OF GOO FOR ONE HOUR A DAY, IT KEEPS ME YOUNG.

YOU'RE MAKING THAT UP.

SMART ASS.



WHATEVER, KID.

SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR BEAUTY SLEEP.

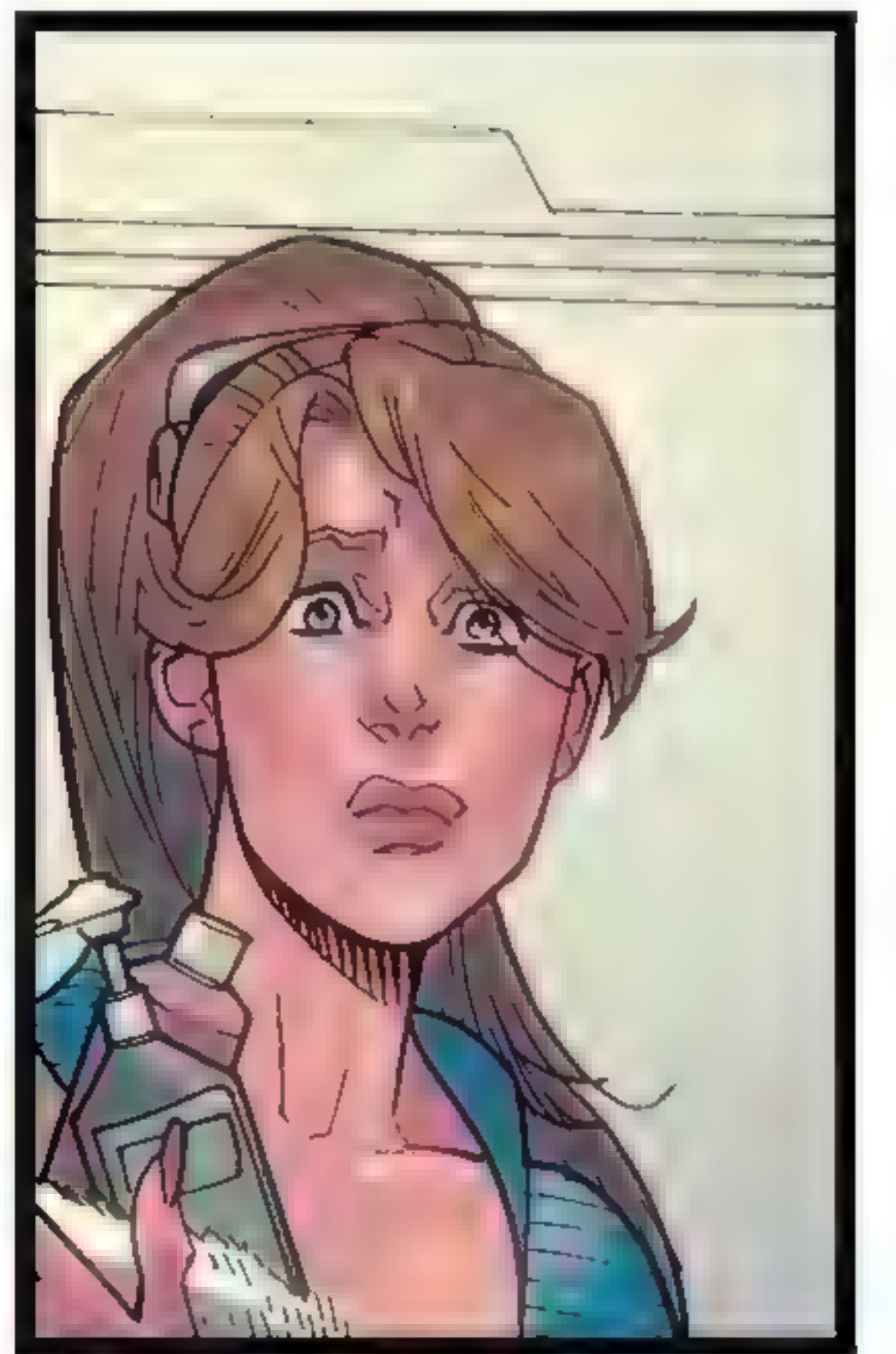
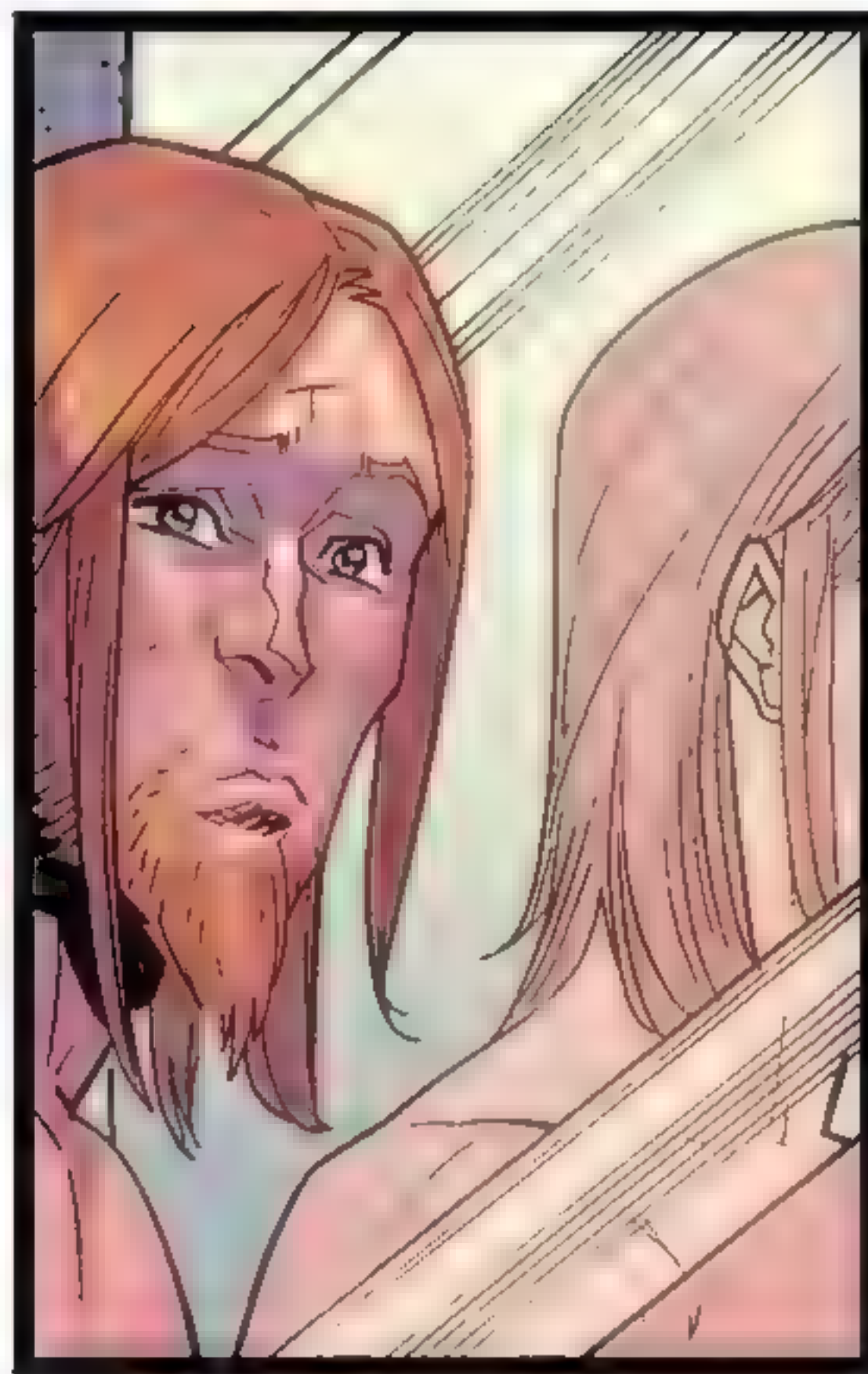
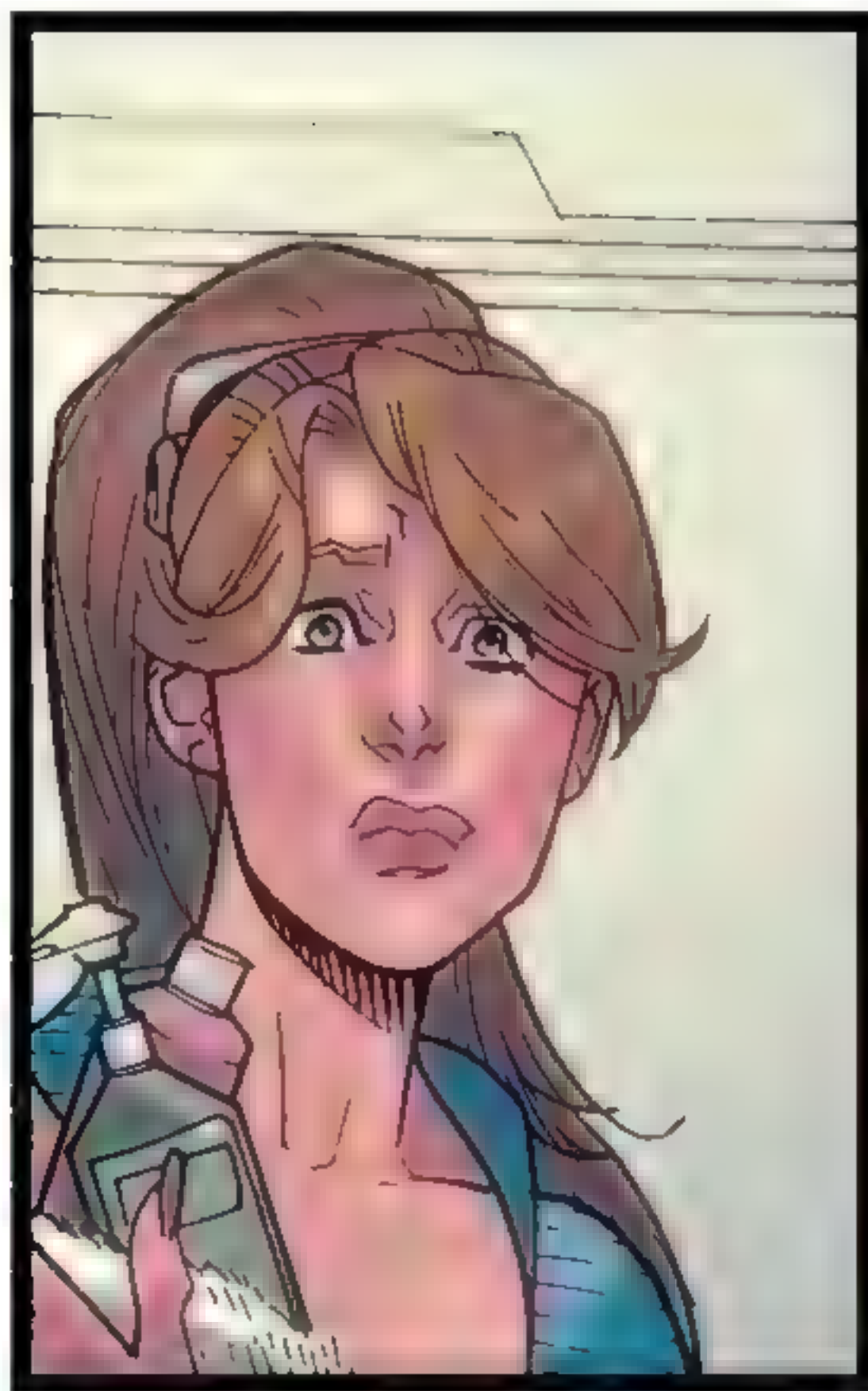
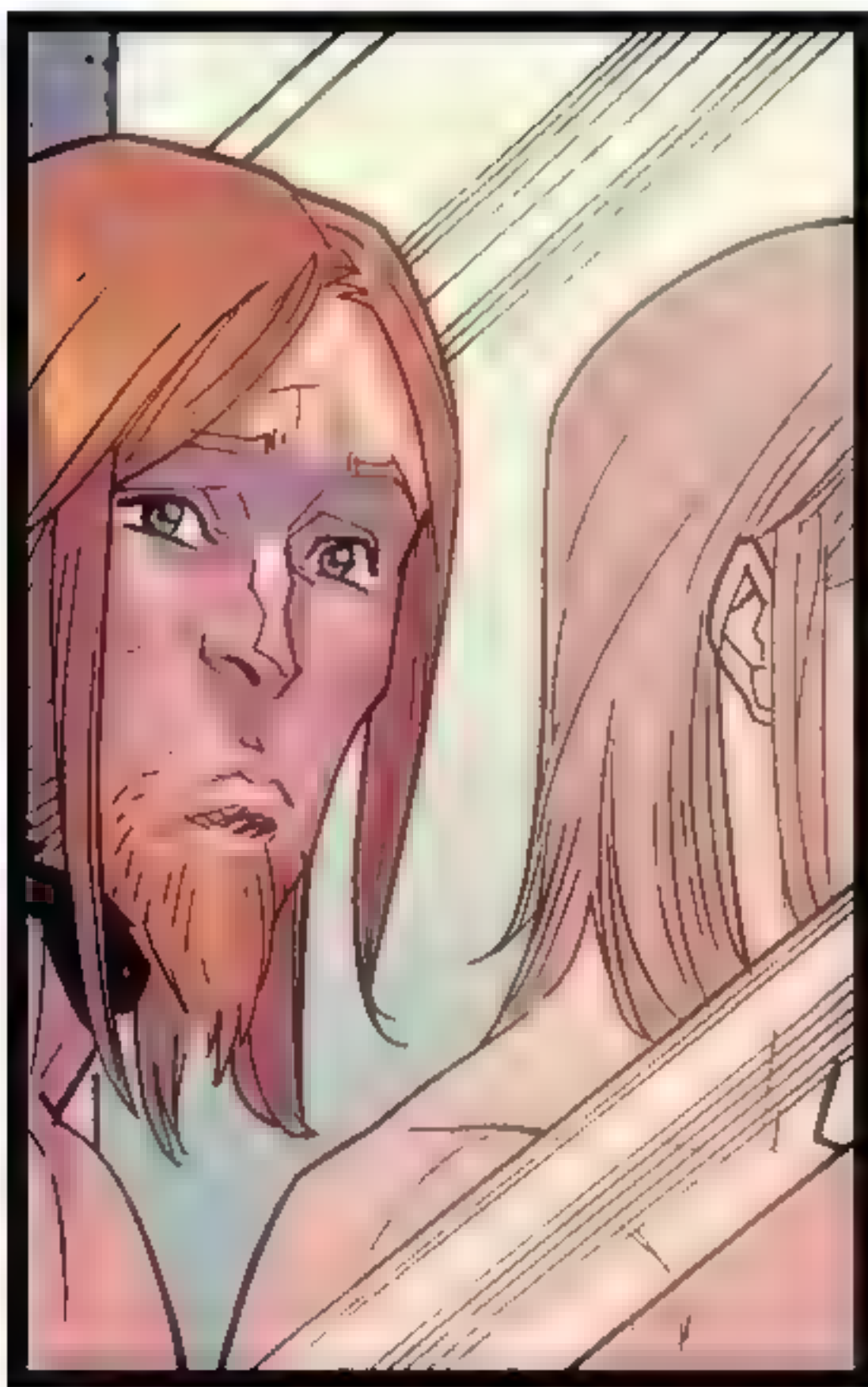
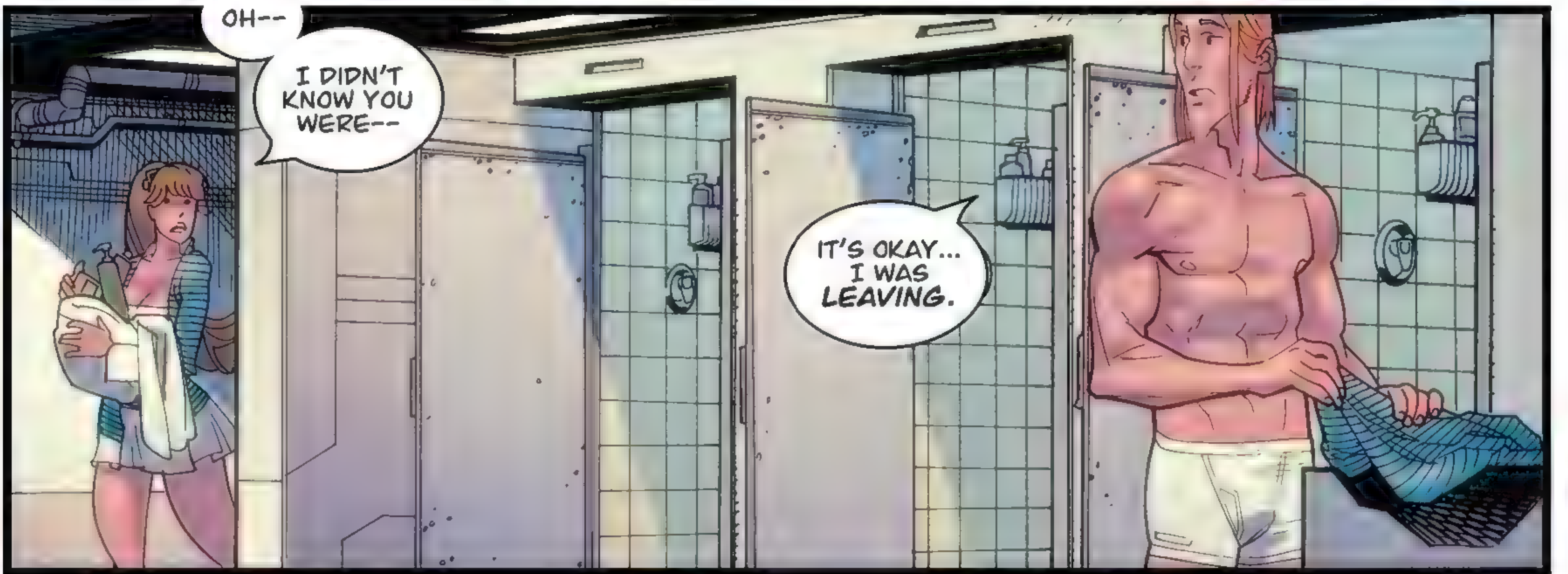
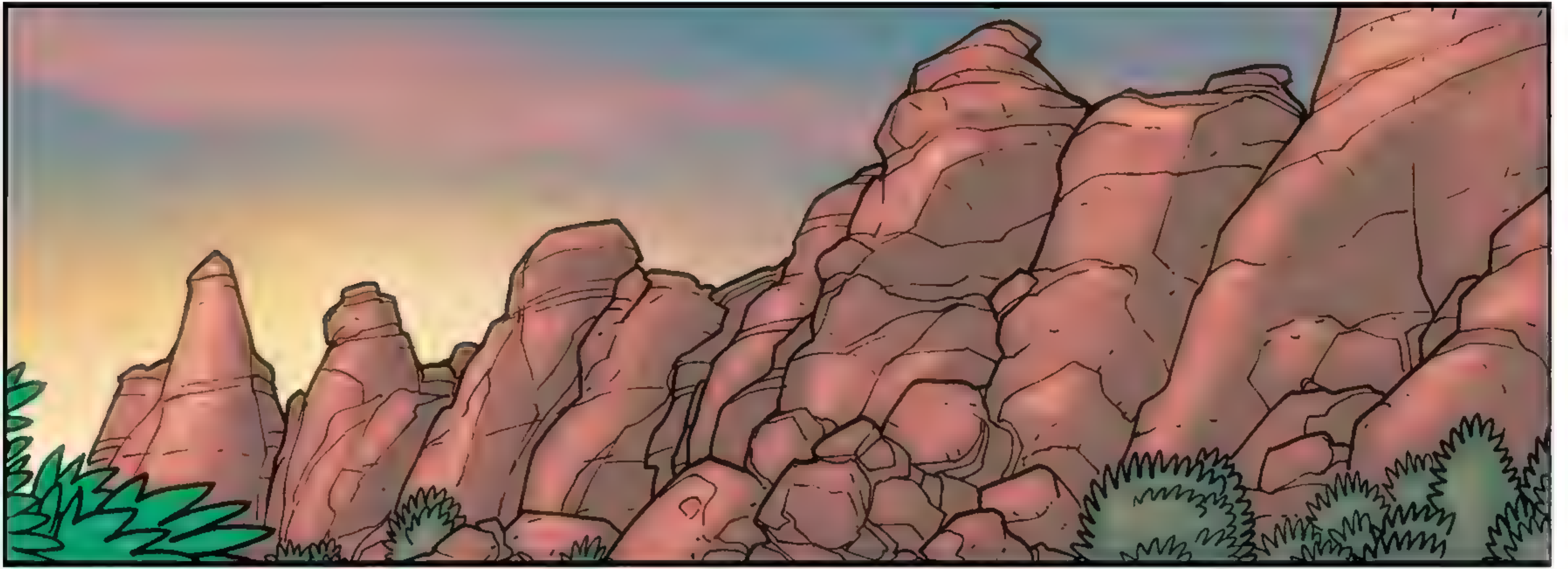


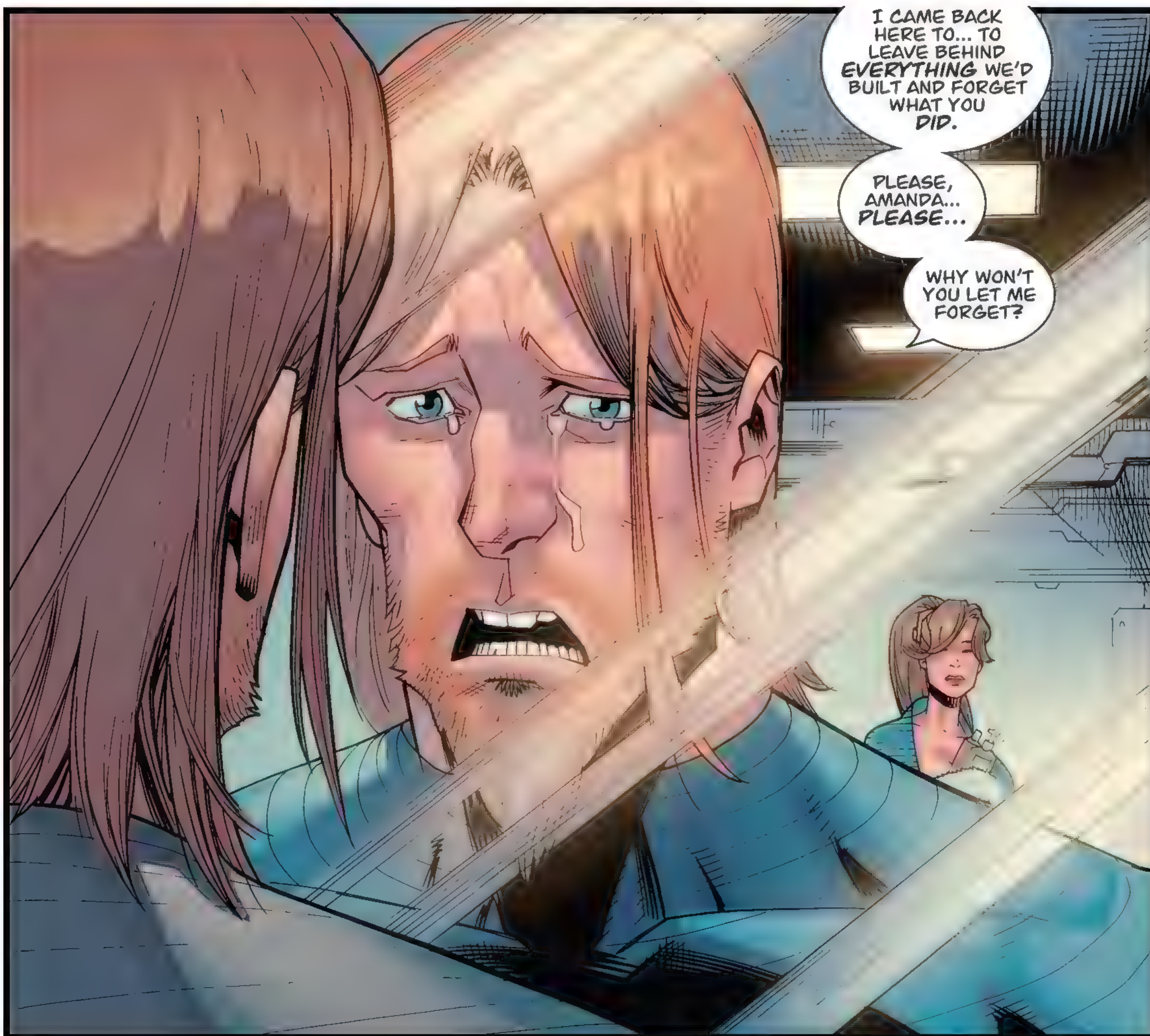
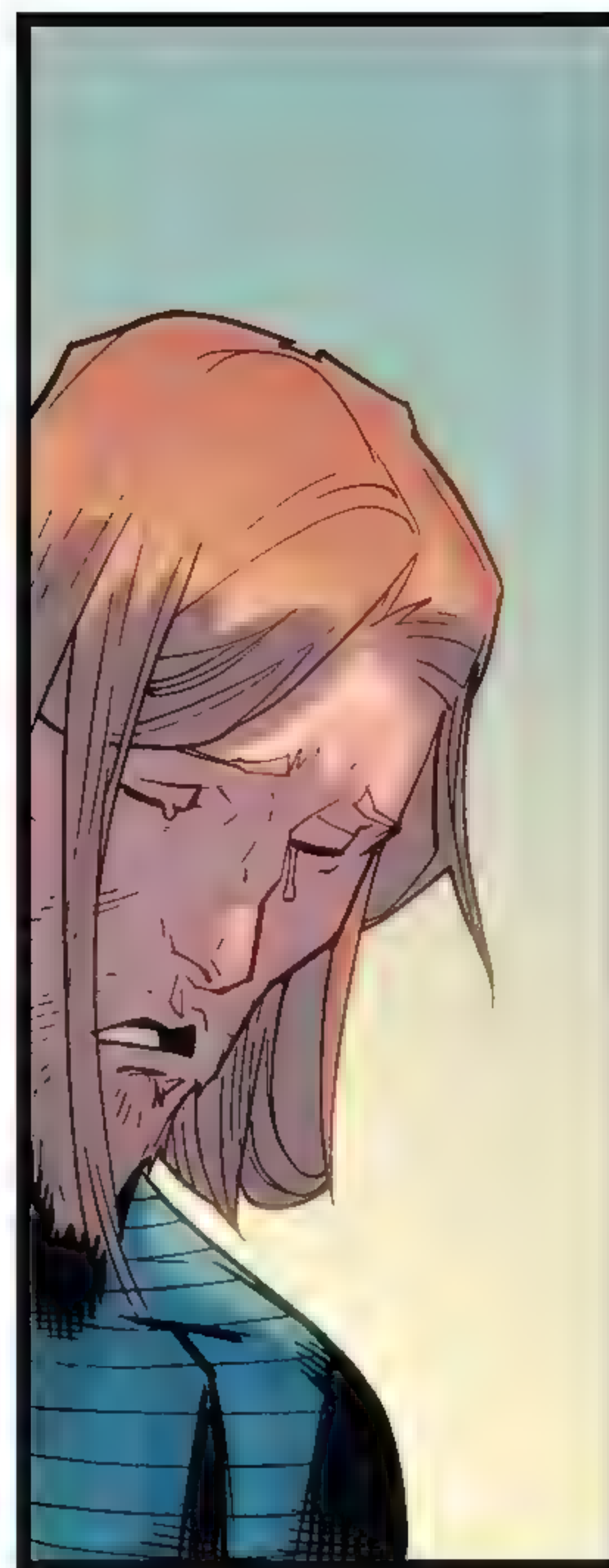
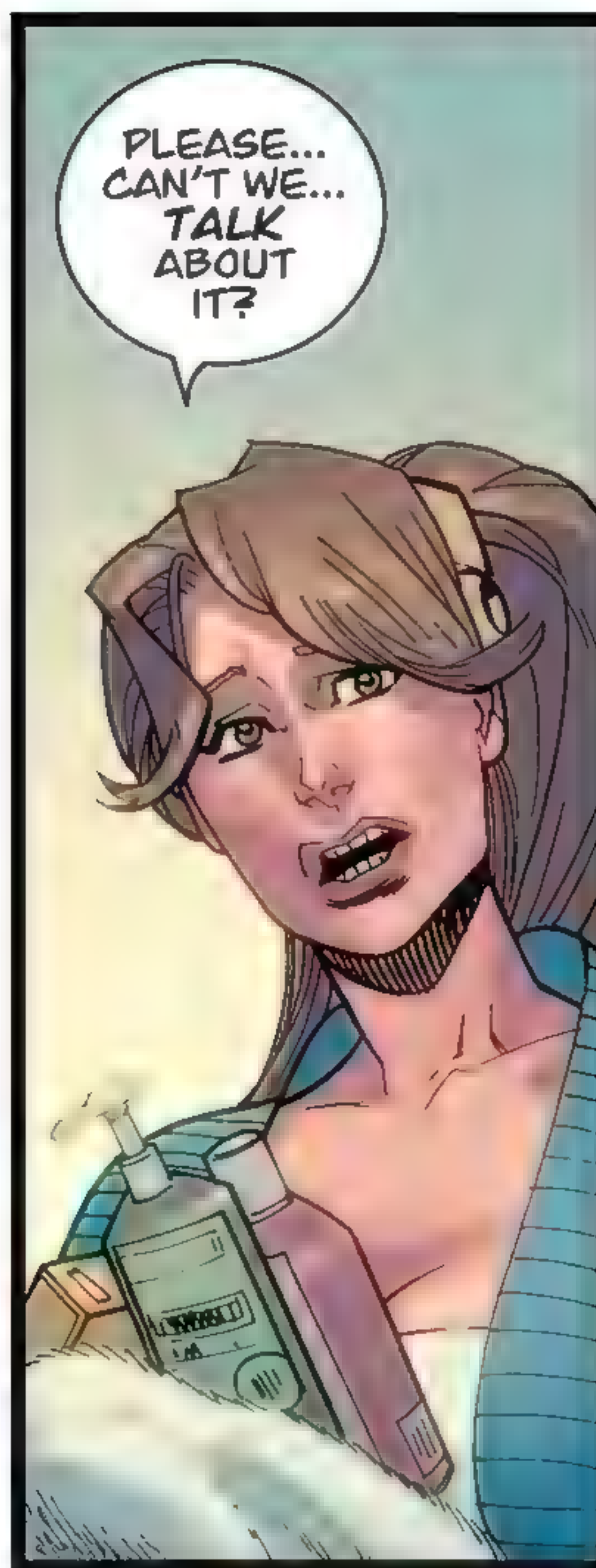
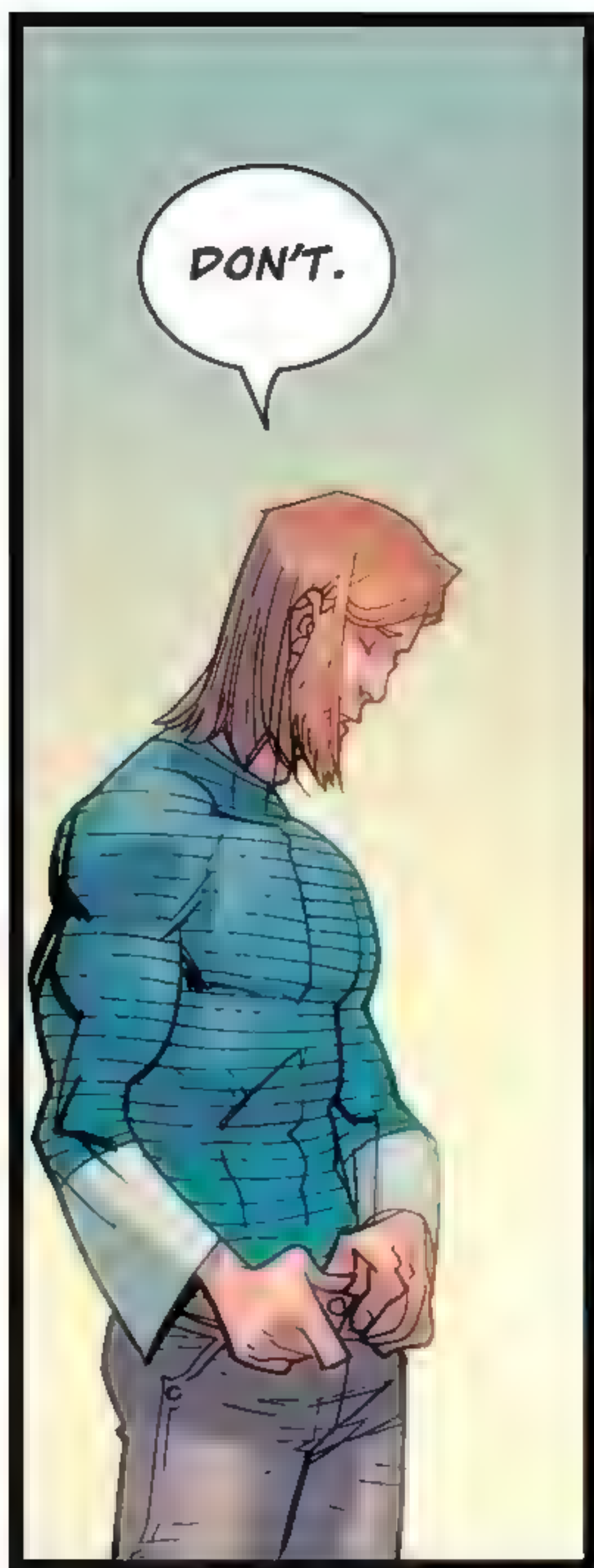
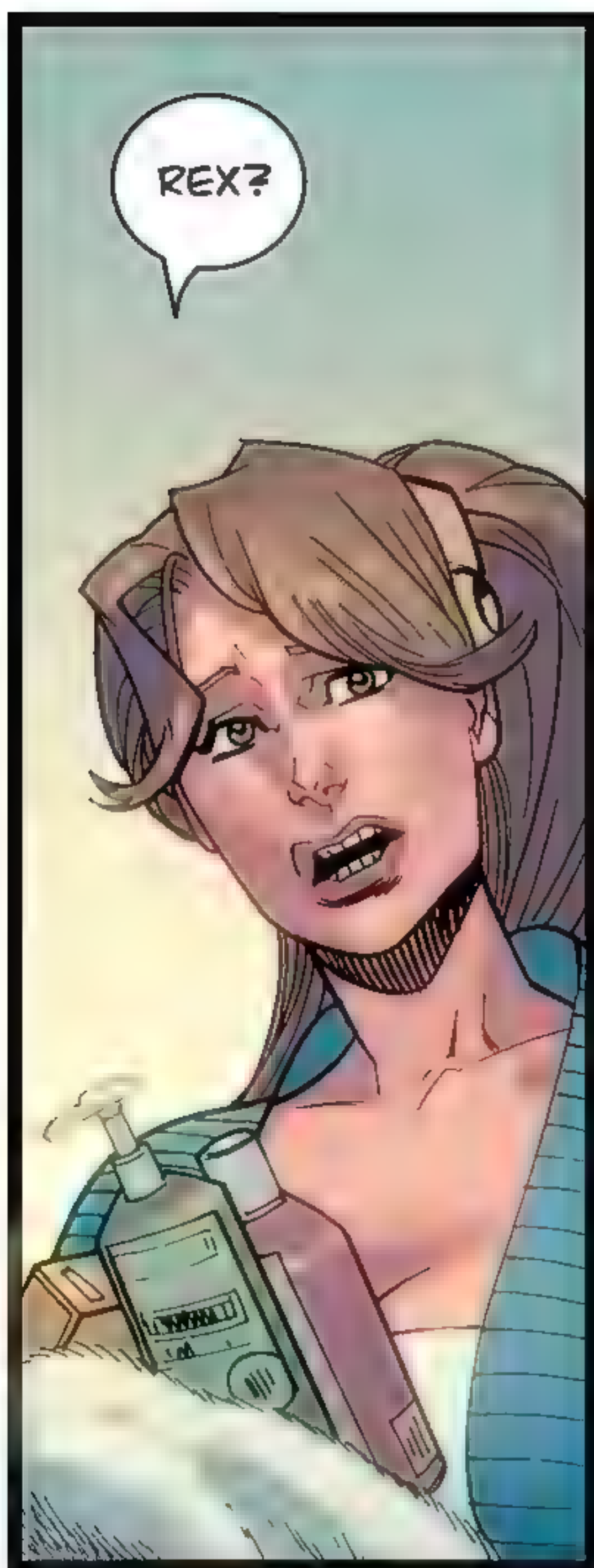
IT'S OKAY.

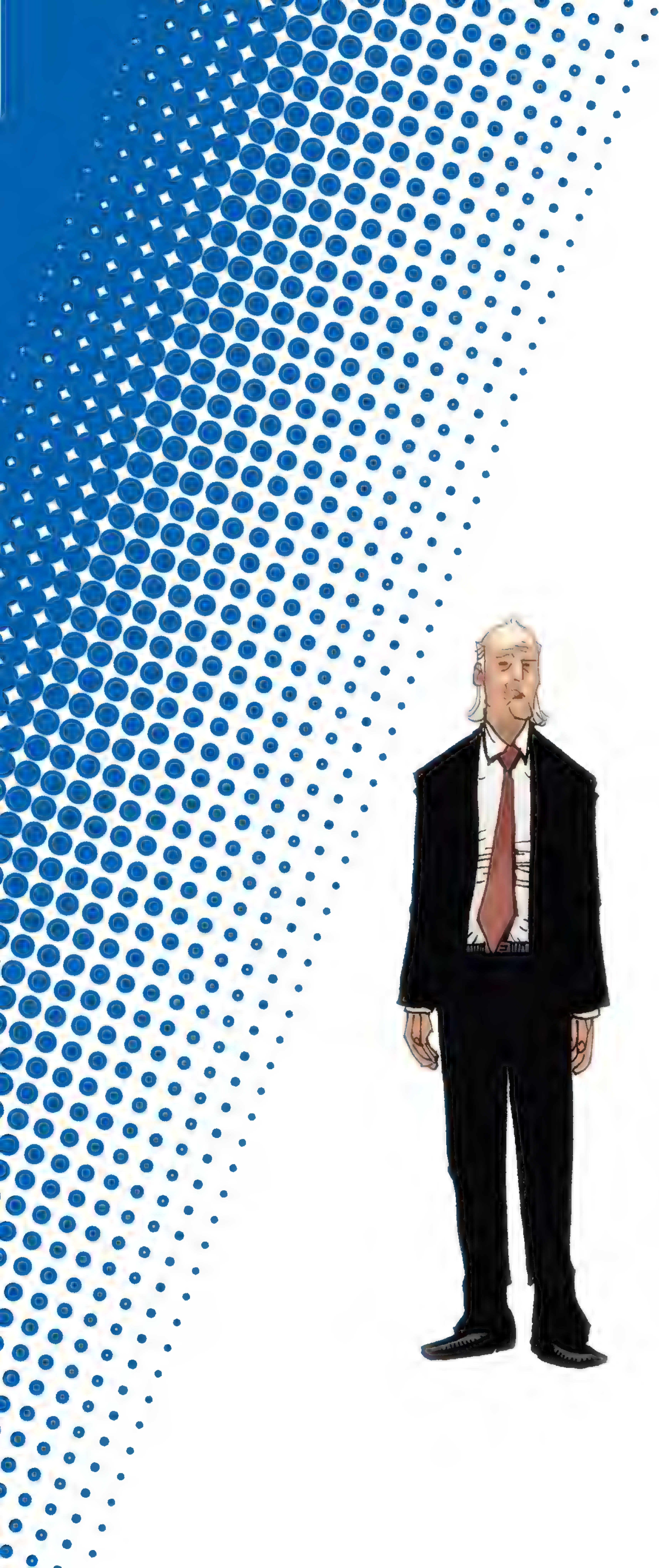
TURNS OUT, I WASN'T NEEDED. THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE HAD THIS ONE HANDLED...



GOOD TO KNOW...



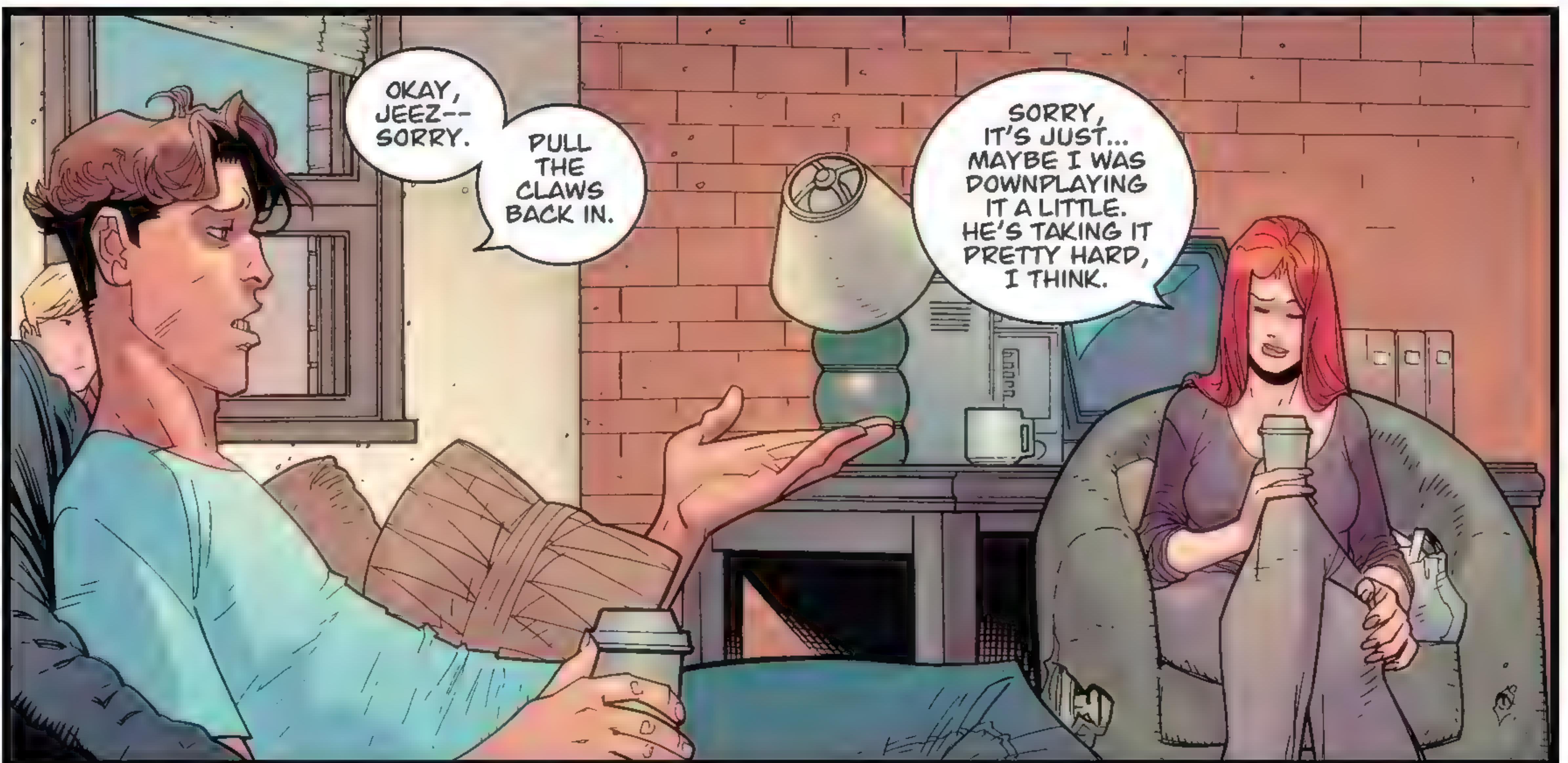
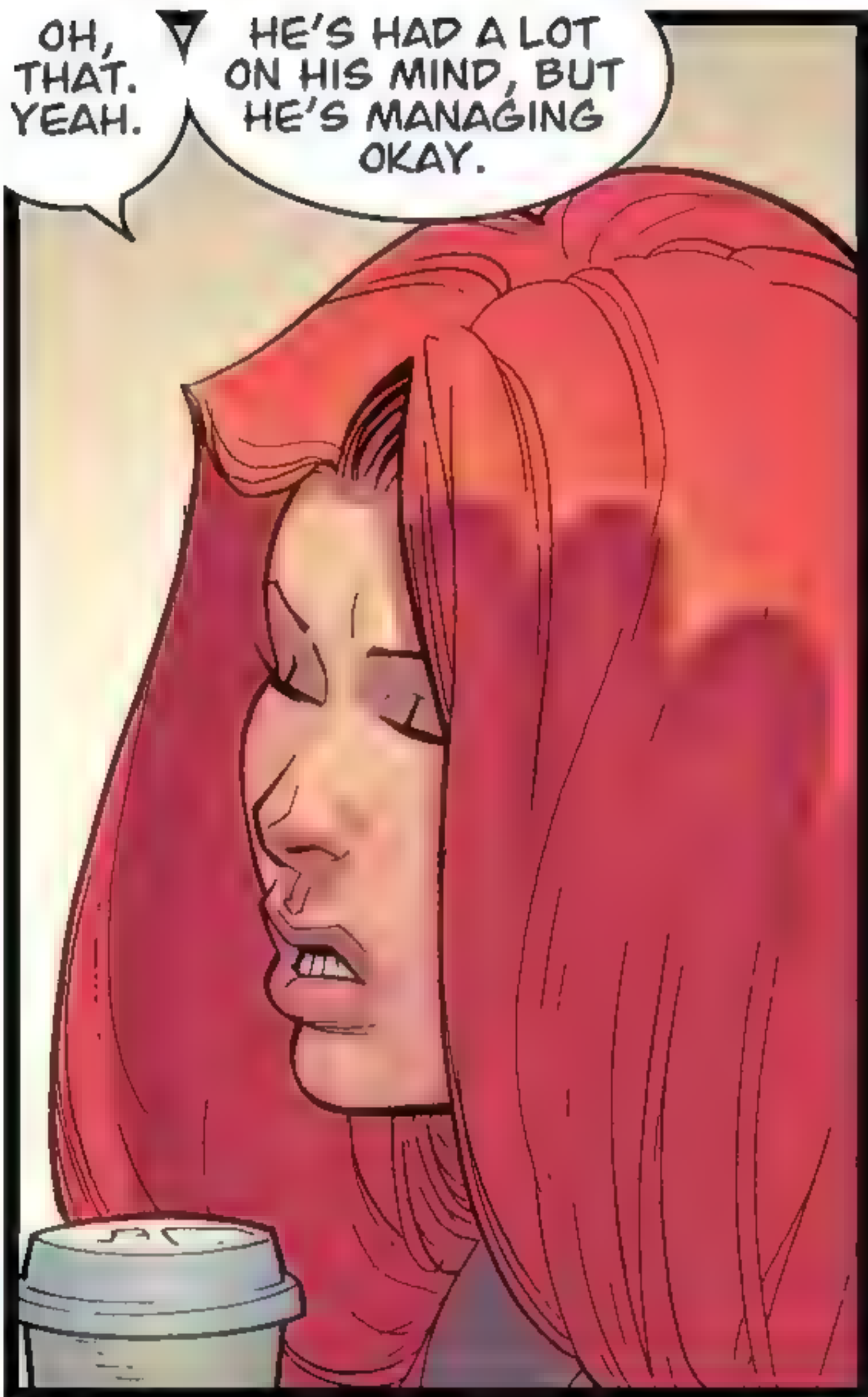




CHAPTER 84



FUAN-11





WHY DID YOU CALL ME HERE?

I KNOW THIS HAS BEEN GRATING ON YOU, THE DESTRUCTION OF LAS VEGAS... SO I THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP FOR YOU TO SEE THAT **SOME** GOOD HAS COME FROM THIS.

ARE THOSE... SOLAR PANELS?

YES. THERE AREN'T ENOUGH RESOURCES TO REBUILD-- WE'RE INCAPABLE OF STARTING THIS CITY OVER FROM SCRATCH.

ALSO, SOME PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT FEEL IT WOULD BE DISRESPECTFUL.

SO YOU'RE GOING TO FOLLOW THAT MANIAC'S PLAN AND COVER THE AREA WITH SOLAR PANELS?

YEAH, IT'S AMAZING! YOU CAN THANK THIS GUY HERE FOR MAKING IT ALL WORK.

OH, I BARELY DID ANYTHING.

ARE YOU KIDDING? THIS GUY HERE BASICALLY INVENTED A DOUBLE-SIDED SOLAR PANEL THAT CAN UTILIZE THE MIRRORED SURFACE OF THE TERRAIN HERE.

HIS SOLAR PANELS ABSORB NEARY **TWICE** AS MUCH SOLAR ENERGY AS STANDARD PANELS.

WHAT A GREAT FIND CHRIS HAS TURNED OUT TO BE. GOOD JOB THERE, INVINCIBLE.

WITH THE WORK HE AND SINCLAIR ARE DOING, THIS SOLAR PANEL ARRAY WILL PROVIDE CHEAP, CLEAN ENERGY FOR NEARLY **HALF** OF THE CITIZENS IN THIS COUNTRY.

AND ITS CONSTRUCTION IS A PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT THAT IS EMPLOYING **THOUSANDS**.

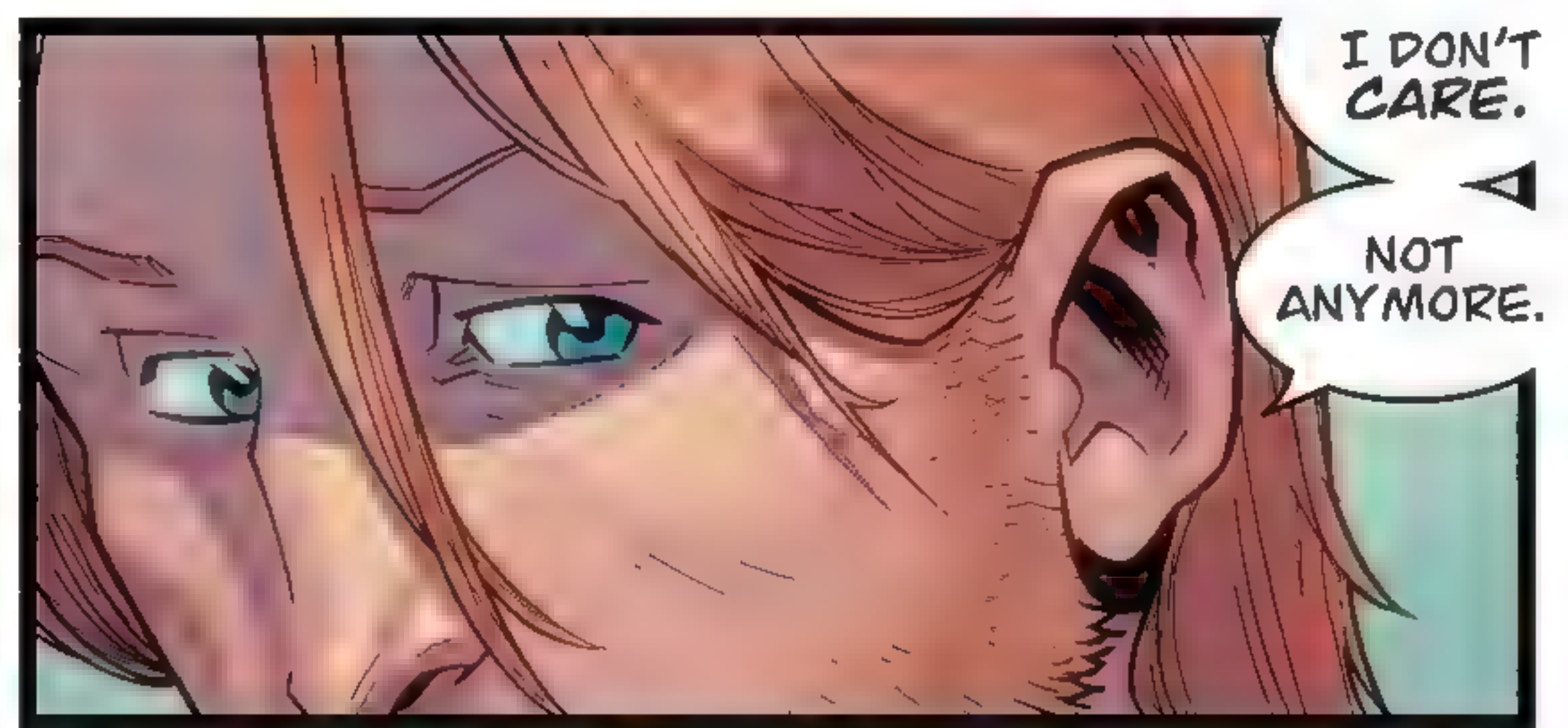
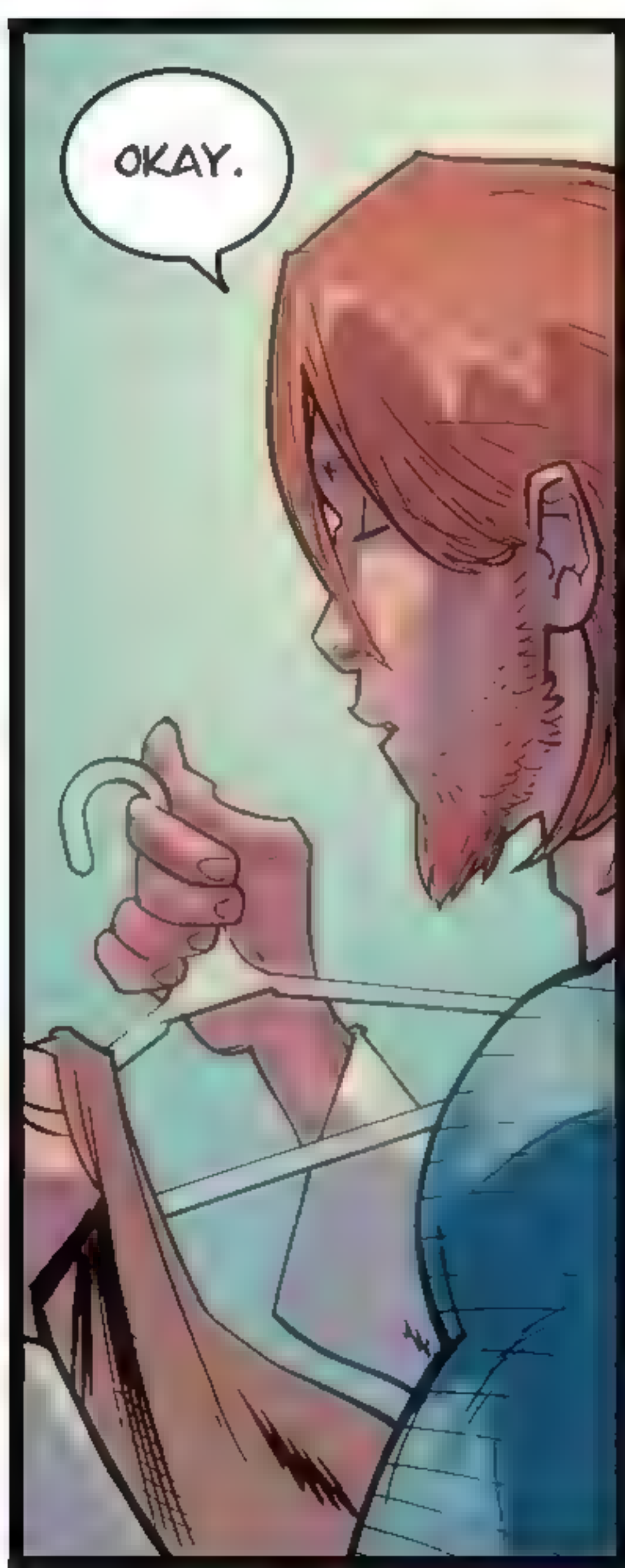
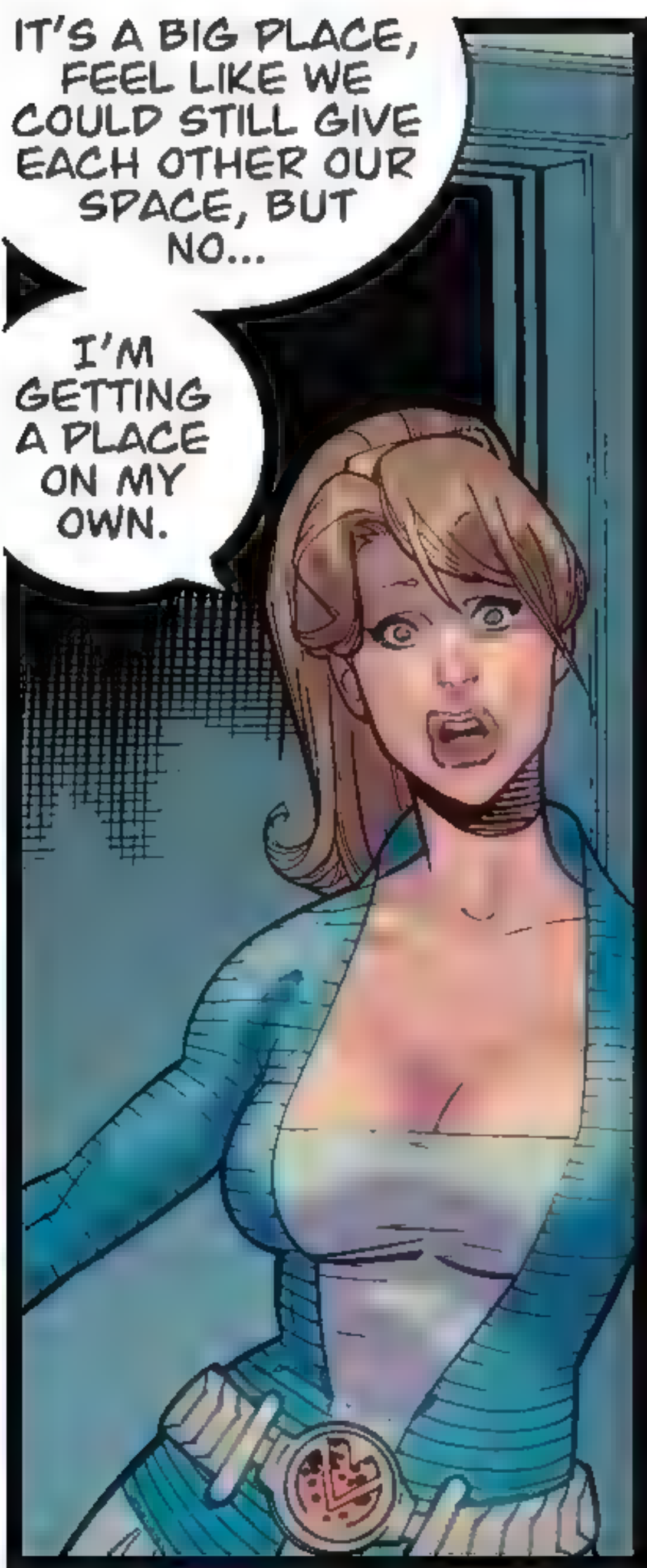
WHOA...

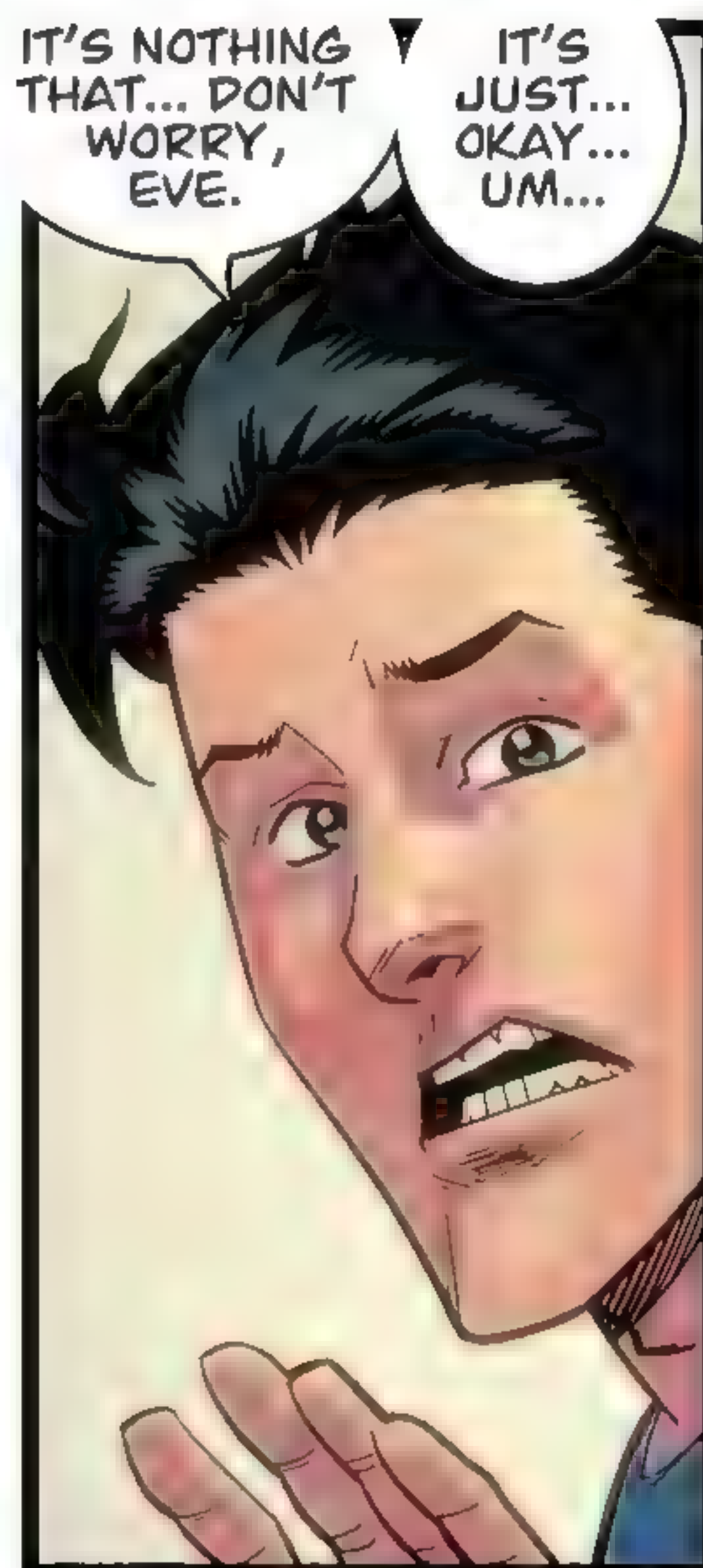
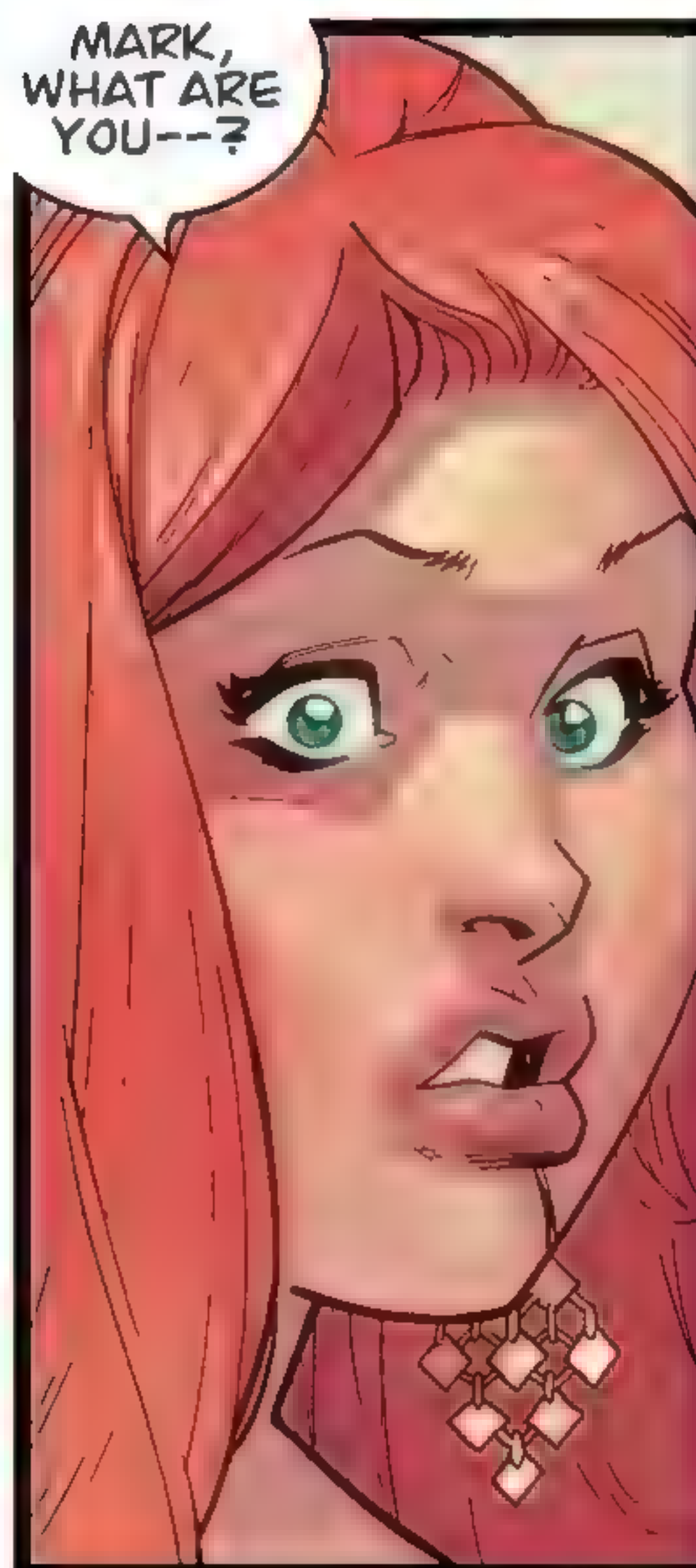
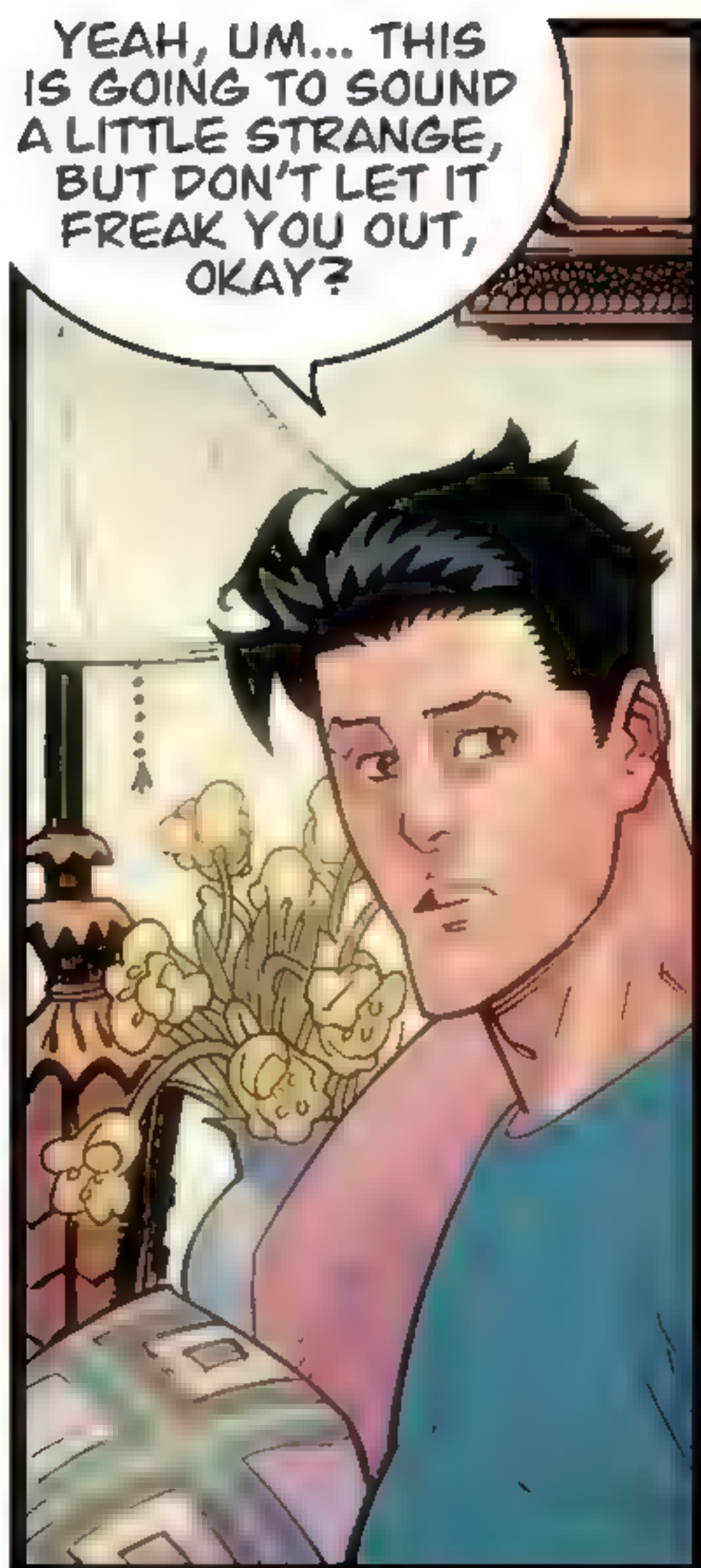
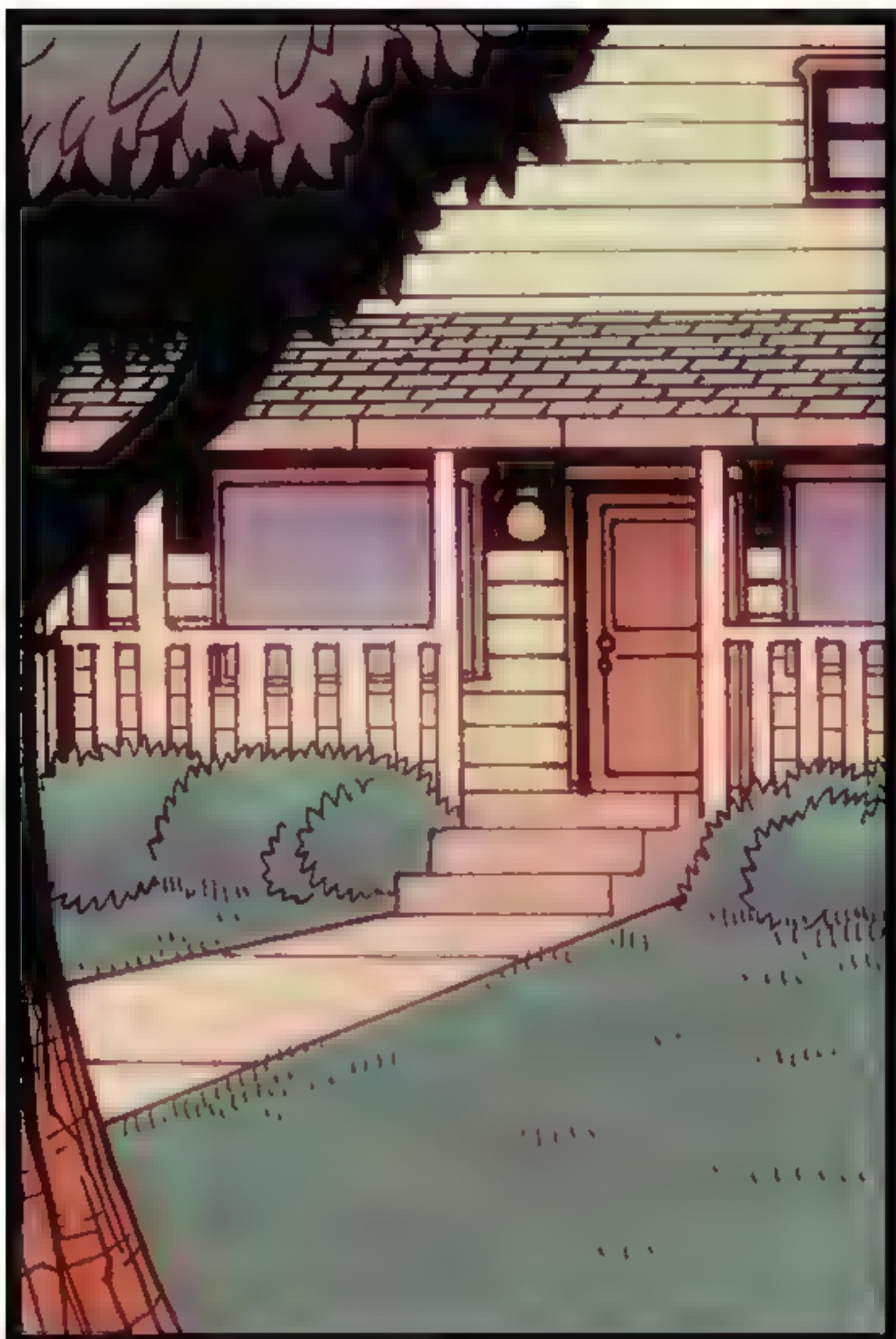


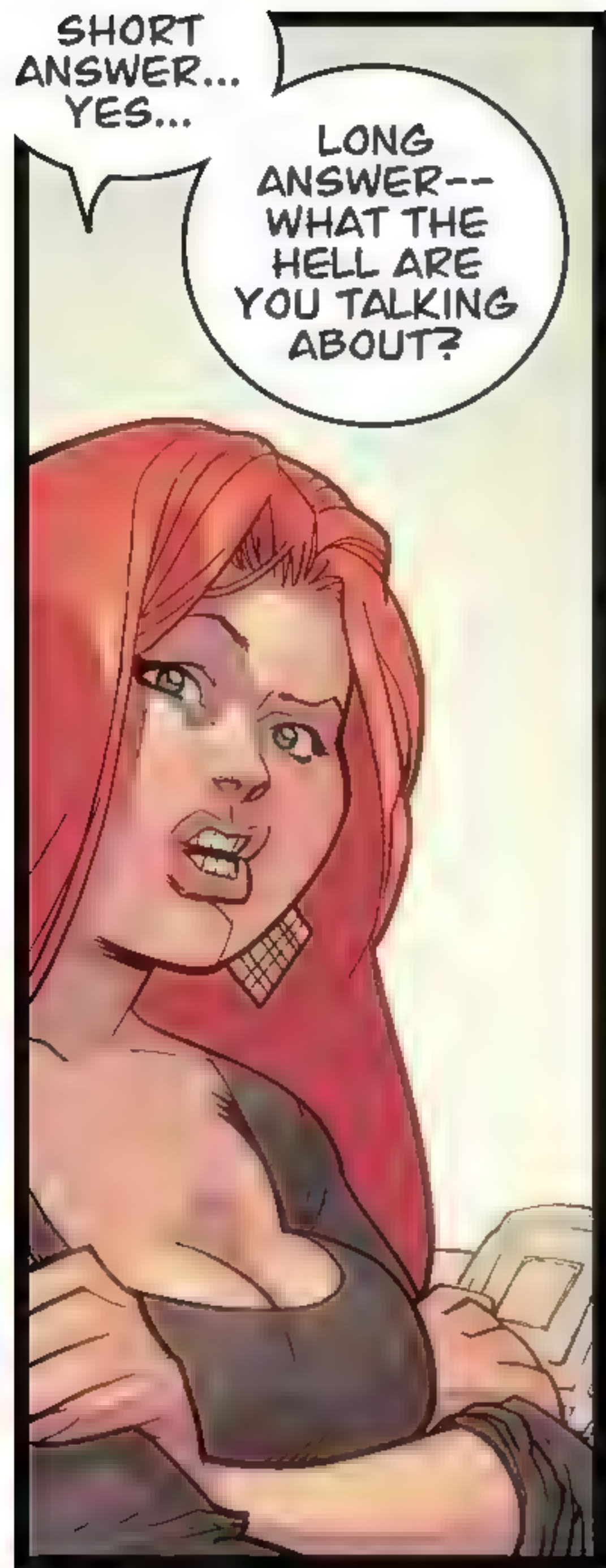
...DINOSAURUS
WAS RIGHT.

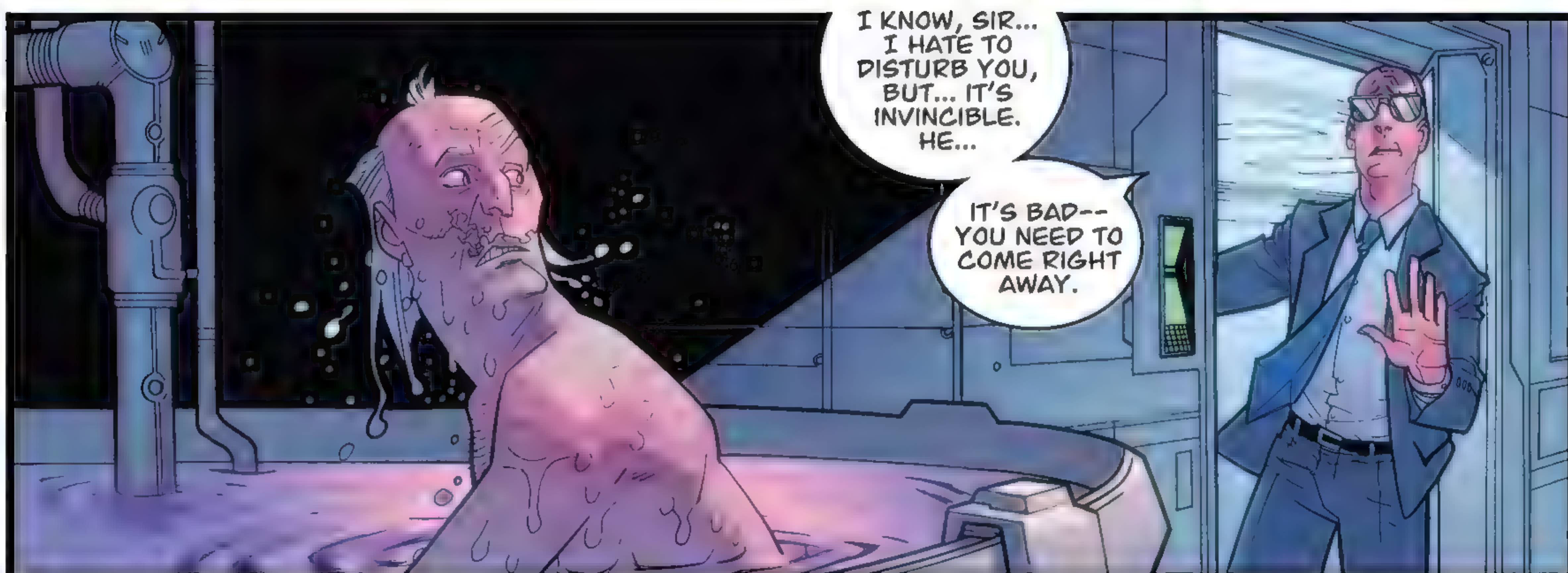
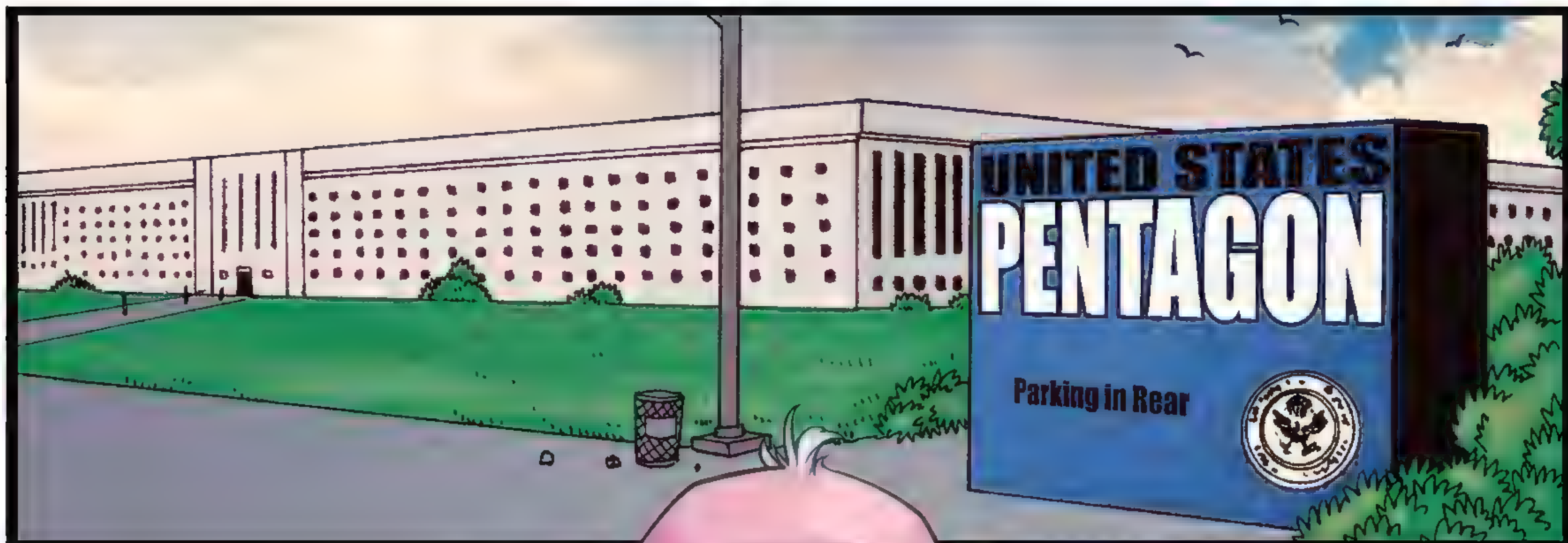
WHAT
WAS
THAT?

NOTHING...



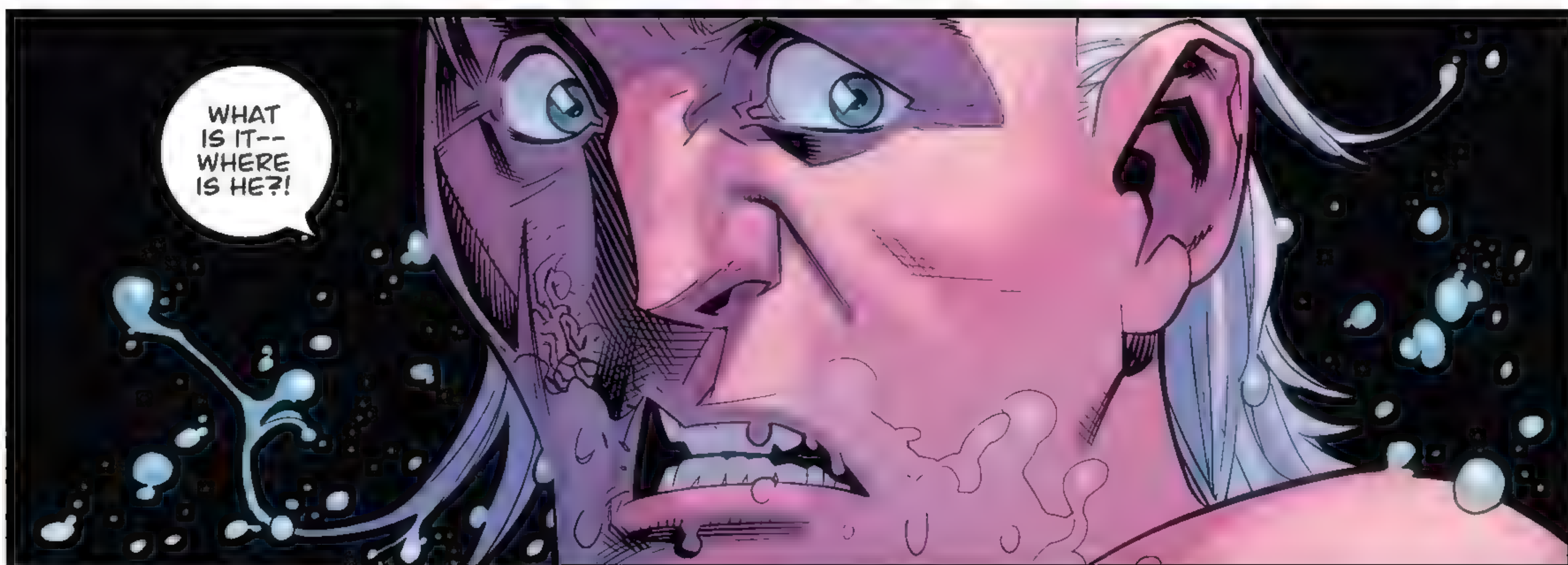







I KNOW, SIR...
I HATE TO
DISTURB YOU,
BUT... IT'S
INVINCIBLE.
HE...

IT'S BAD--
YOU NEED TO
COME RIGHT
AWAY.



WHAT
IS IT--
WHERE
IS HE?!



UM...
ARE YOU,
LIKE---
HERE
TO KILL
ME?

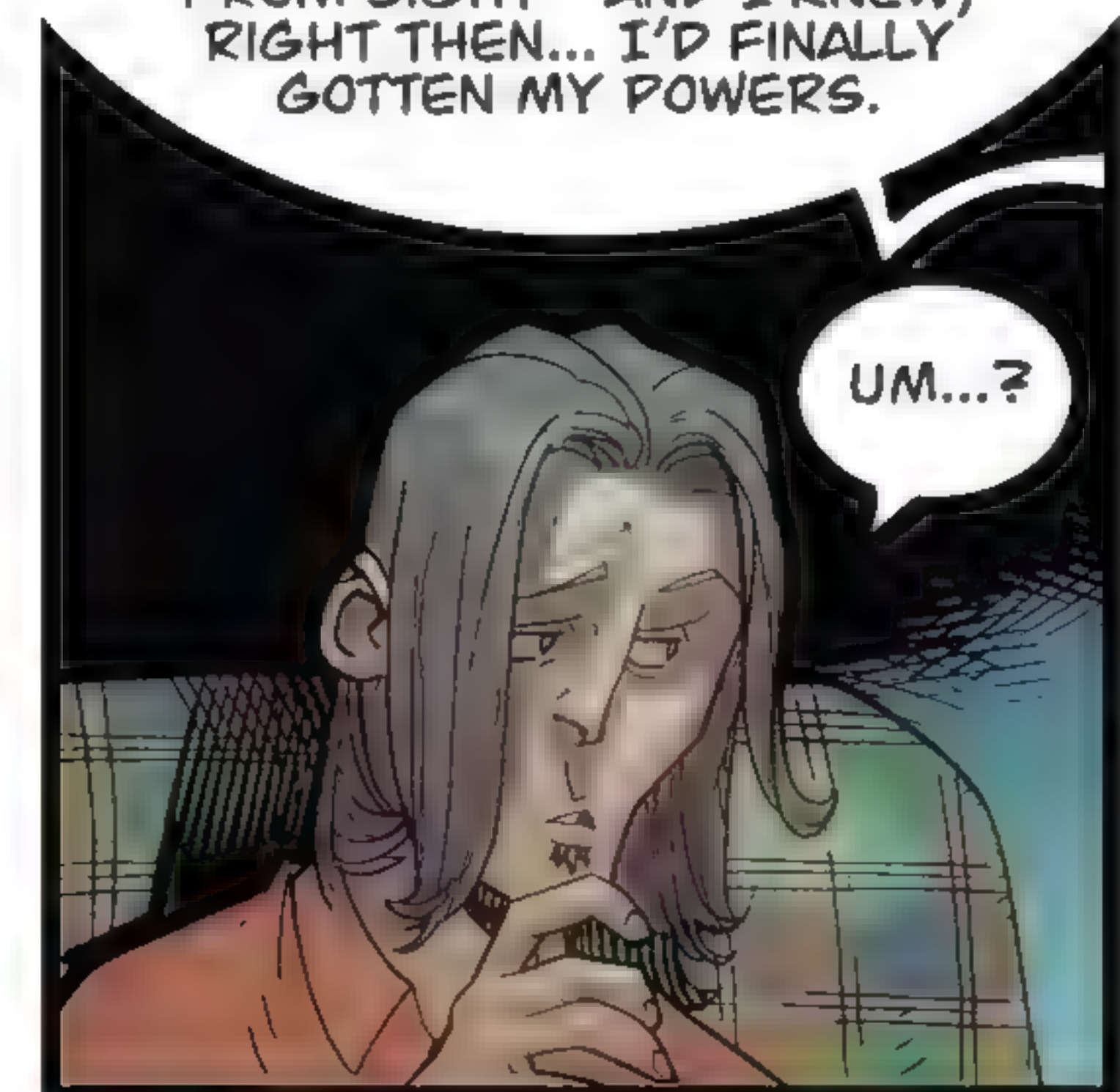
NO, I'M...
HERE
TO **SAVE**
YOU.



WHEN I WAS LIKE... EIGHT YEARS OLD, MY DAD SAT ME DOWN... FOR Y'KNOW, THE TALK. THE TALK WHERE HE EXPLAINS THAT HE'S A SUPERHERO AND THAT SOME DAY YOU'RE GOING TO INHERIT HIS POWERS. SO, FROM THAT POINT ON, I WAS JUST SORT OF COUNTING THE DAYS UNTIL MY POWERS KICKED IN... I WAS EXCITED AT FIRST, BUT AFTER A WHILE, I JUST STOPPED THINKING ABOUT IT. I KIND OF GAVE UP.

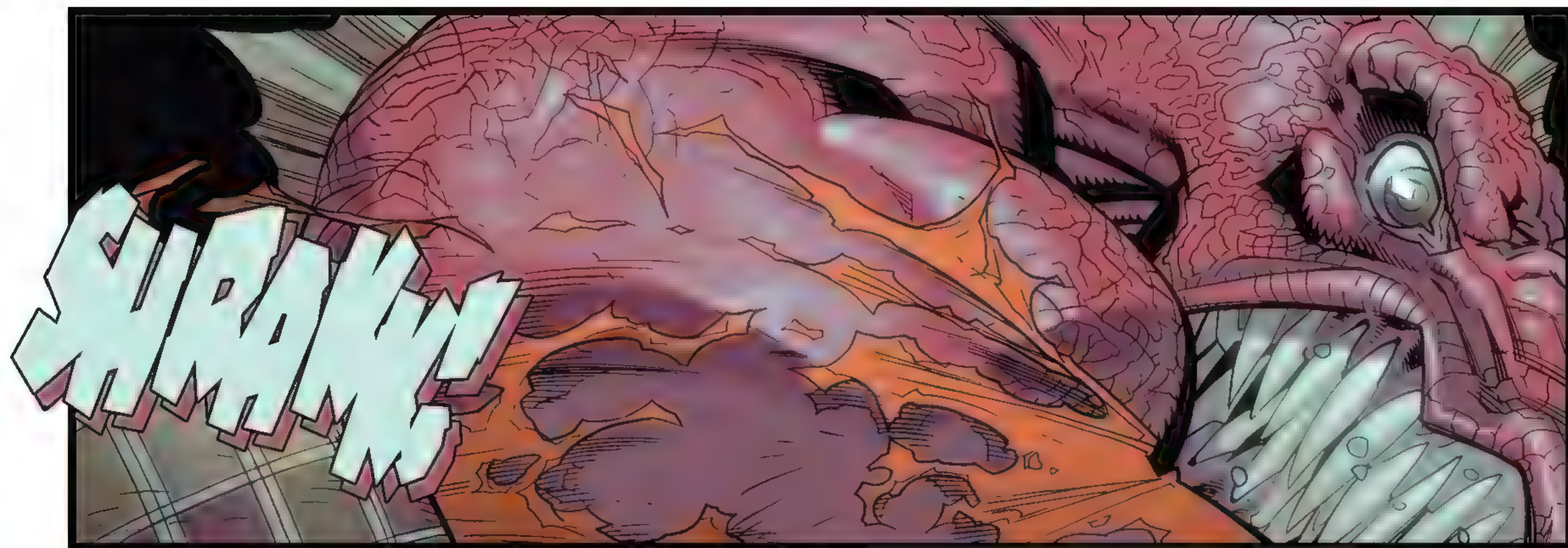


BY THE TIME I WAS SEVENTEEN I HAD A PART TIME JOB AT BURGER MART, WHICH WAS JUST AS BAD AS YOU'D IMAGINE. I'D LONG SINCE GIVEN UP ON GETTING POWERS. BUT ONE DAY, AFTER WORK, I WAS TAKING THE TRASH OUT--DRAGGING TWO BIG BAGS. LIKE EVERY DAY I'D DONE IT BEFORE, I USED ALL MY MIGHT--IN THE HOPES THAT THE BAG WOULD MAKE IT UP INTO THE DUMPSTER. AFTER I THREW IT, IT SOARED HIGH INTO THE AIR, DISAPPEARING FROM SIGHT--AND I KNEW, RIGHT THEN... I'D FINALLY GOTTEN MY POWERS.



LATER THAT NIGHT, I WAS ON MY ROOF. YOU SEE, ASIDE FROM THE SUPER-STRENGTH THAT ALLOWED ME TO SLING THAT TRASH BAG TO SPACE MY FATHER ALSO POSSESSED THE ABILITY TO FLY. SO I THOUGHT, JUMPING OFF THE ROOF WOULD REALLY BE A GOOD WAY TO FORCE MYSELF TO NATURALLY LEARN THAT ABILITY. I WAS ONLY ONE STORY UP, SO THE FALL WOULDN'T HURT ME TOO BAD. I WAS PLAYING IT SAFE, STILL--WHEN I NOTICED I WAS ACTUALLY HOVERING NEXT TO MY ROOF AFTER JUMPING OFF, I WAS TOTALLY RELIEVED.





THEY ACTUALLY
HAD ME CONTAINED,
THERE WAS LITTLE
HOPE OF ME
ESCAPING MY
FRAIL, PATHETIC,
ALTERED
FORM.

YOU'RE SMART
ENOUGH TO KNOW
THAT. YOU'RE
SMART ENOUGH TO NOT
TO DO THIS SIMPLY
TO PICK A FIGHT
WITH ME...

...SO AS
UNBELIEVABLE
AS IT MAY SOUND,
THE MOST LOGICAL
EXPLANATION IS
THAT YOU'VE COME
AROUND TO MY WAY
OF THINKING AND
ARE HERE TO
HELP ME...

BUT
THAT'S
INSANE...
RIGHT?

WELL...



I HAVE TO ADMIT, YOUR METHODS ARE INEXCUSABLE... TO THE POINT THAT IT'S... **HARD** TO JUST STAND HERE AND TALK TO YOU.

YOU'VE KILLED SO MANY PEOPLE, DESTROYED HOMES... AN ENTIRE CITY...



ALL WORTHY SACRIFICES FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

AS I RECALL, WHEN YOUR FATHER ATTEMPTED TO TAKE OVER THIS PLANET, YOU FOUGHT HIM-- AND IN THE PROCESS SOME LIVES WERE LOST.

WHAT I DID WAS NO DIFFERENT.



IT WASN'T REMOTELY-- NO, THIS ISN'T THE TIME FOR THIS. WHAT I'M GETTING AT-- WHAT I'M HERE FOR...

I'VE BEEN DOING THIS, BEING INVINCIBLE FOR A WHILE NOW, AND I HAVE THESE POWERS AND I DO WHAT I DO... TO USE THEM TO HELP PEOPLE.

I LOOK BACK AFTER ALL THIS TIME AND I THINK... WELL, I DON'T KNOW THAT I AM, Y'KNOW... HELPING PEOPLE-- MAKING THE WORLD **BETTER**... AND I FEEL LIKE THAT'S WHAT I SHOULD BE DOING.

I'M MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO AT BEST, PUTTING OUT FIRES...



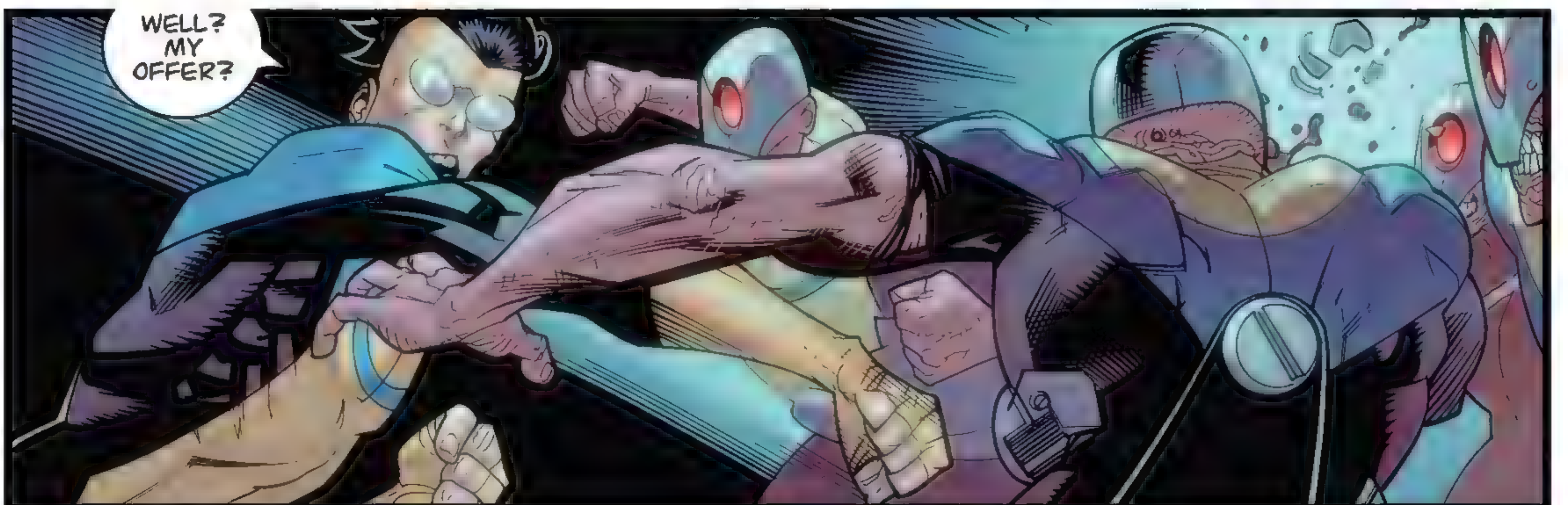
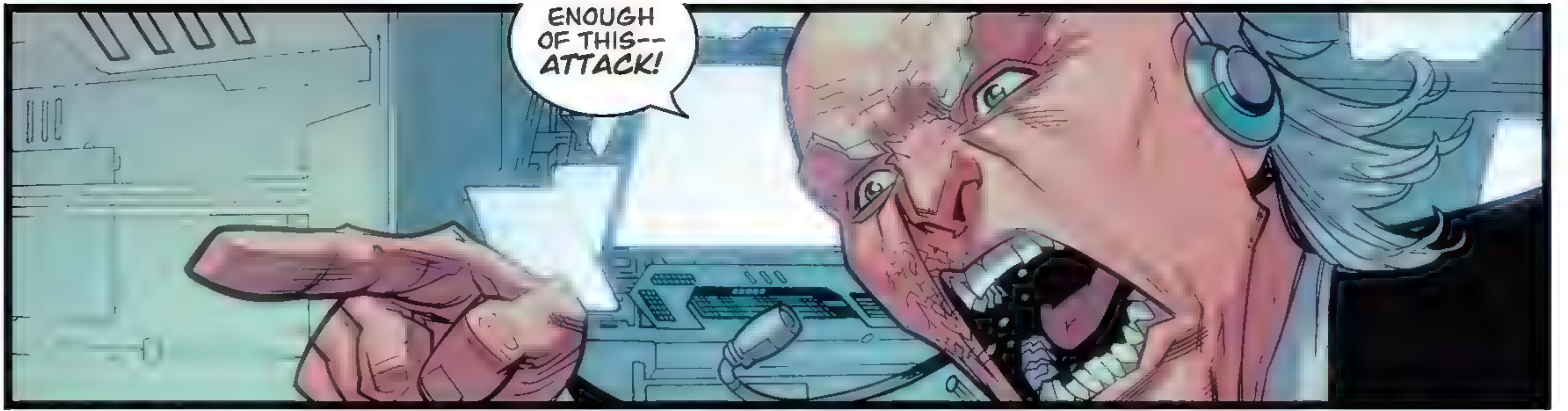
MY SOLAR PANEL ARRAY IS BEING BUILT, ISN'T IT? CHEAP ENERGY FOR THE MASSES... A BETTER LIFE FOR SOME. SMALL... BUT A DIFFERENCE.

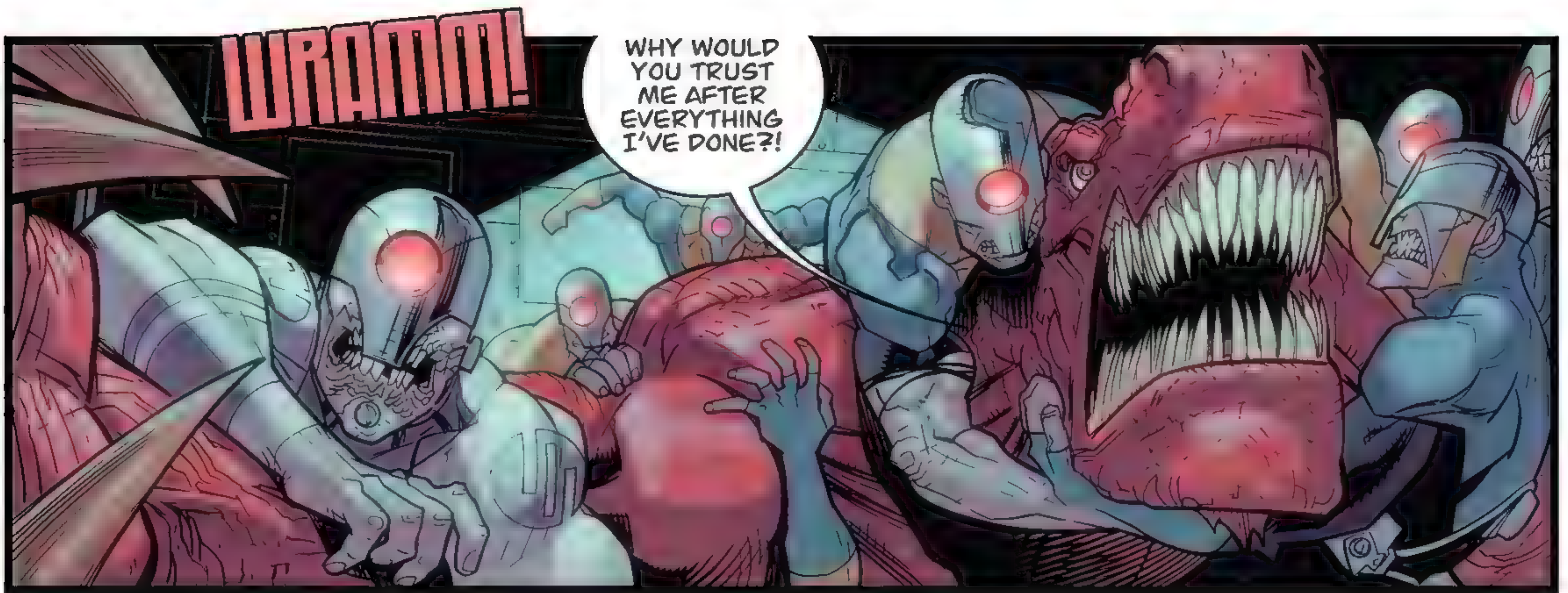
MUCH BETTER THAN SAVING A BRIDGE OR PUNCHING A BANK ROBBER, RIGHT?



YES, BUT YOUR METHODS... I THINK, IF WE WERE TO WORK TOGETHER, WE COULD DO THINGS THAT ACTUALLY **MATTERED**. WE COULD SAVE THE WORLD-- WITHOUT KILLING ANYONE.

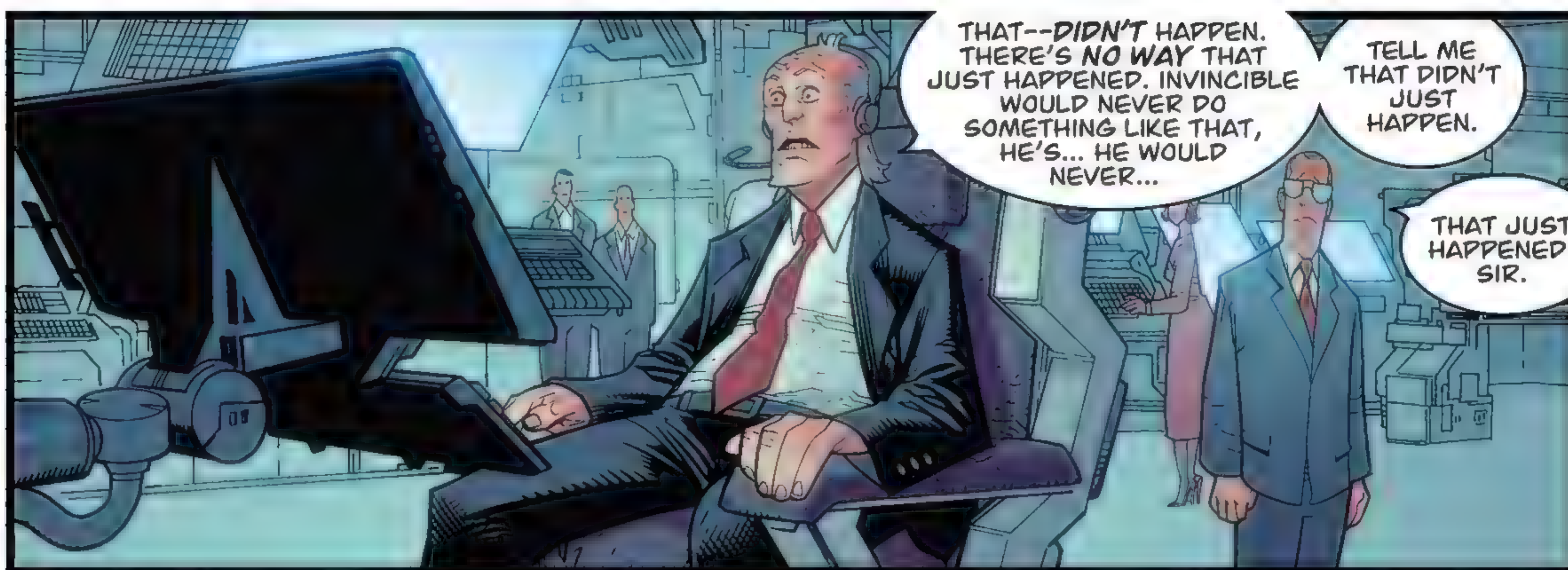
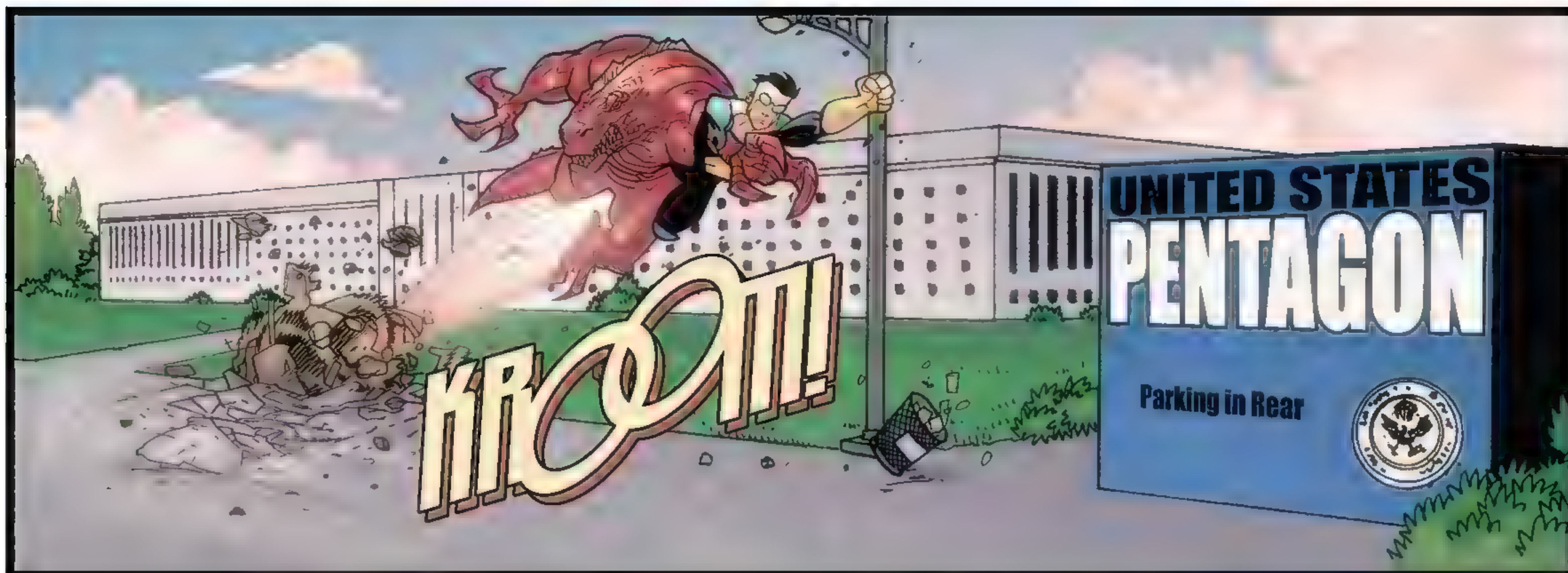
IF YOU'D BE WILLING TO LET ME HELP YOU-- SO THAT NO ONE HAD TO DIE... I'LL HELP YOU ESCAPE, AND I'LL HELP YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

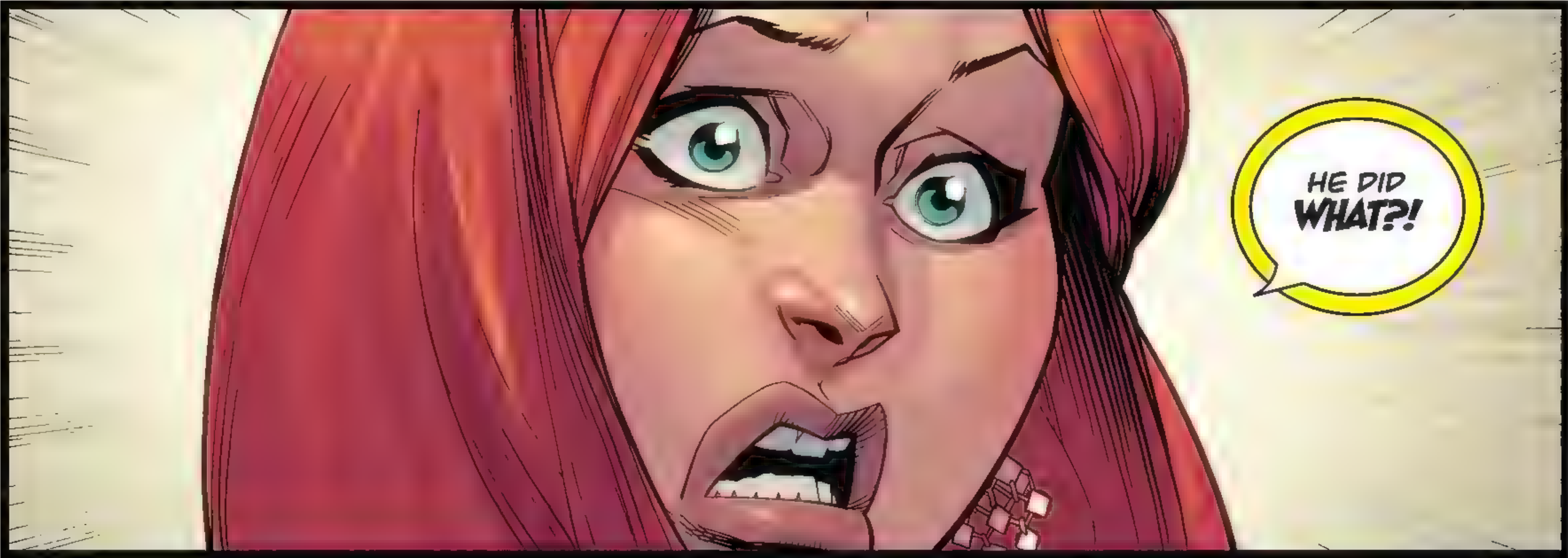
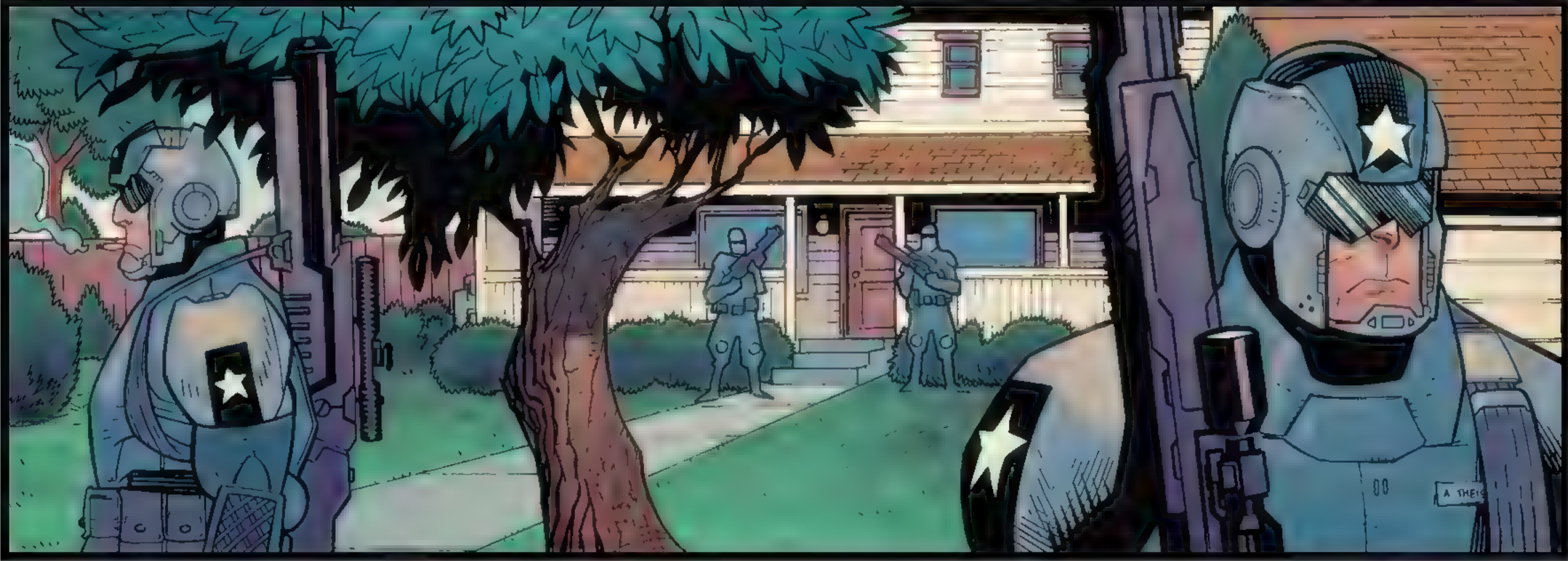
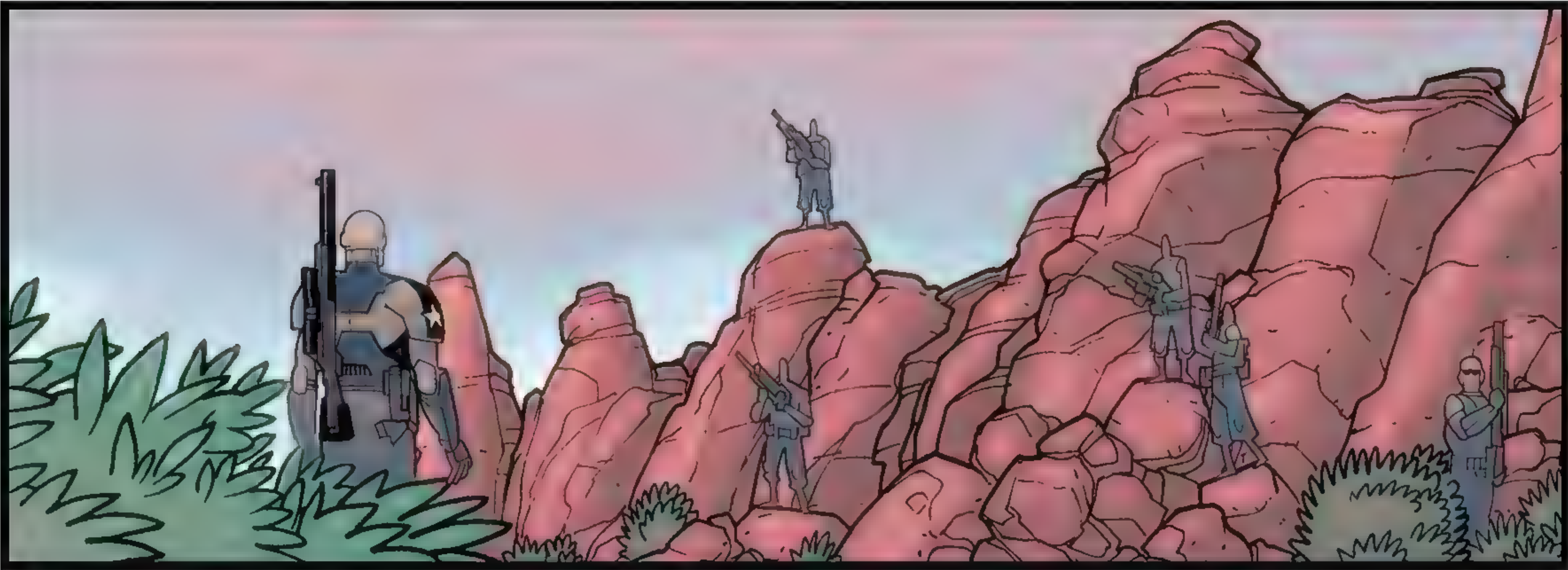


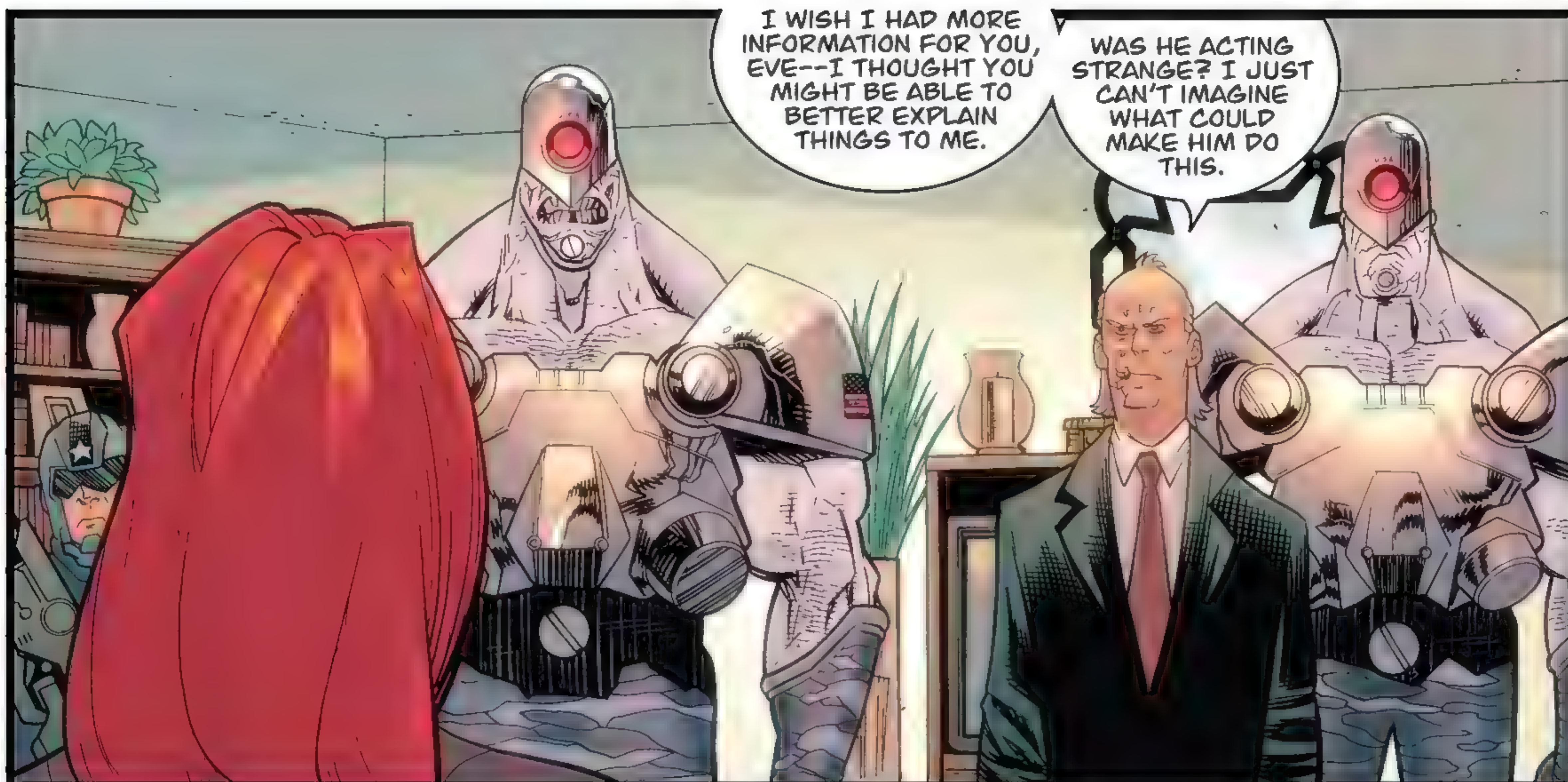


THIS WAY.









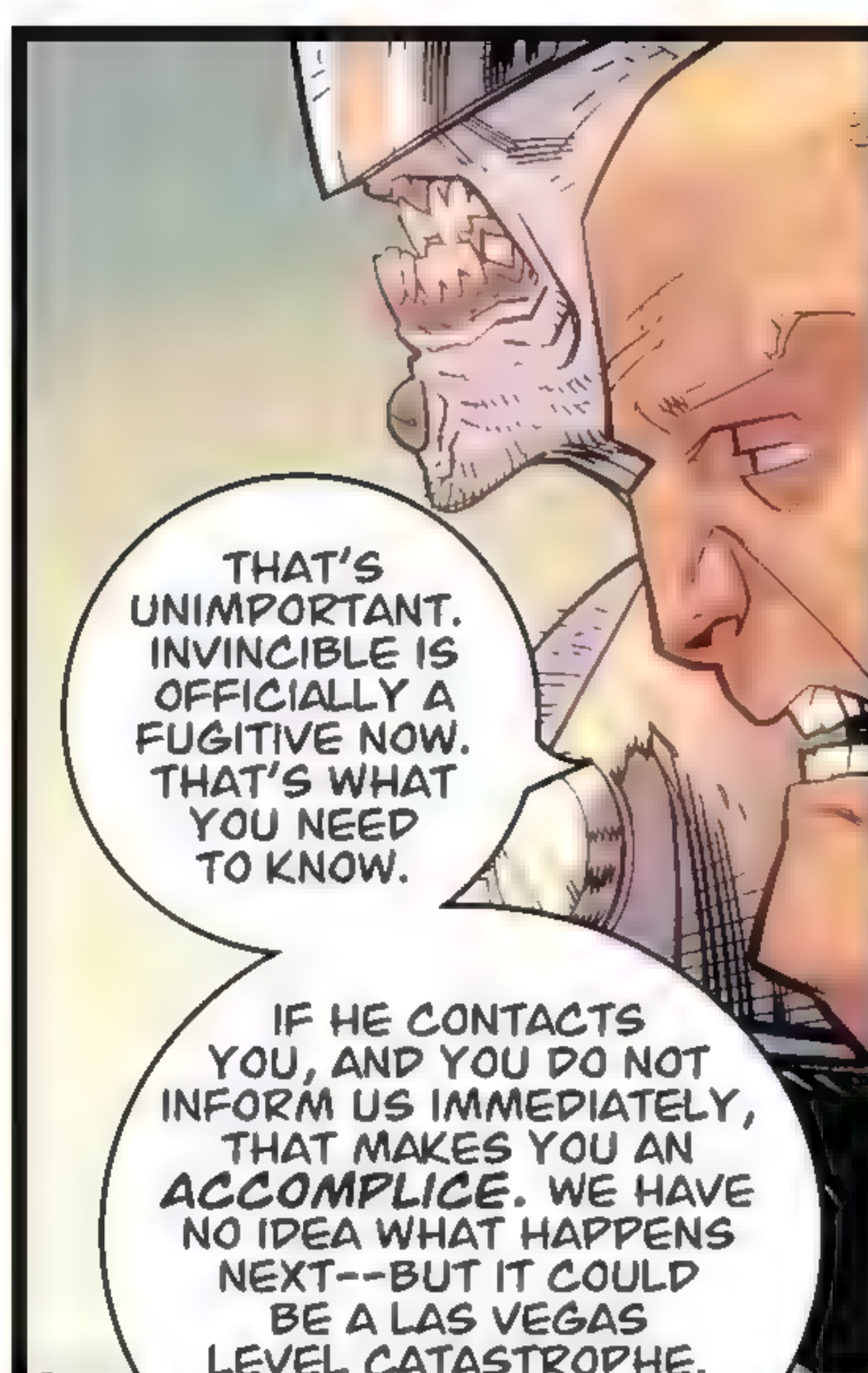
I WISH I HAD MORE INFORMATION FOR YOU, EVE--I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO BETTER EXPLAIN THINGS TO ME.

WAS HE ACTING STRANGE? I JUST CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT COULD MAKE HIM DO THIS.



NO, NOT AT ALL-- HE... TOLD ME HE MIGHT BE DOING SOMETHING CRAZY, BUT ALSO THAT HE **KNEW** IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO...

I THINK I GAVE HIM **PERMISSION** TO DO THIS... THAT'S WHY HE WAS TELLING ME.



THAT'S UNIMPORTANT. INVINCIBLE IS OFFICIALLY A FUGITIVE NOW. THAT'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

IF HE CONTACTS YOU, AND YOU DO NOT INFORM US IMMEDIATELY, THAT MAKES YOU AN **ACCOMPLICE**. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENS NEXT--BUT IT COULD BE A LAS VEGAS LEVEL CATASTROPHE.



YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. MARK WOULD NEVER ALLOW SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO HAPPEN.

YOU DON'T REALLY THINK HE'S CAPABLE OF THAT, DO YOU?

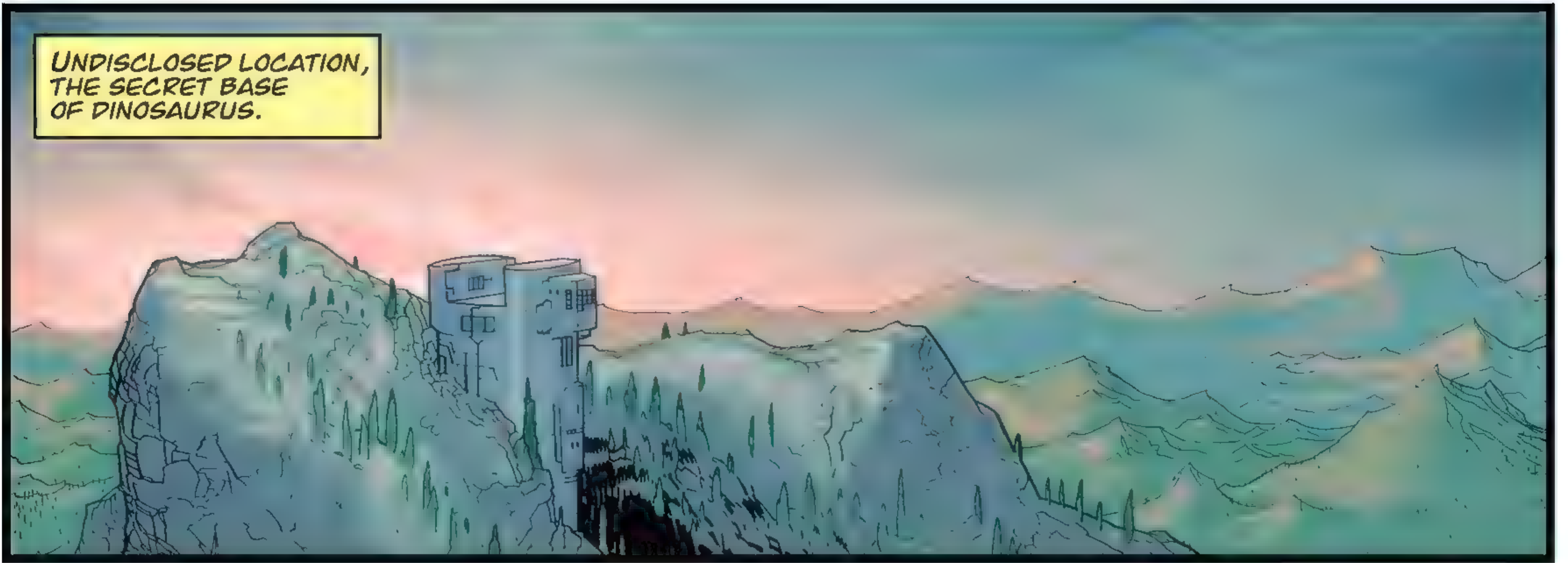


I HAVE **NO IDEA** WHAT HE'S CAPABLE OF AT THIS POINT.

WE NEED TO COME TO THE REALIZATION THAT HE MAY HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR HIS FATHER THIS WHOLE TIME...

...THIS COULD MEAN THE **END** FOR US ALL.

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION,
THE SECRET BASE
OF DINOSAURUS.



READY
TO GET
STARTED?

YEAH.

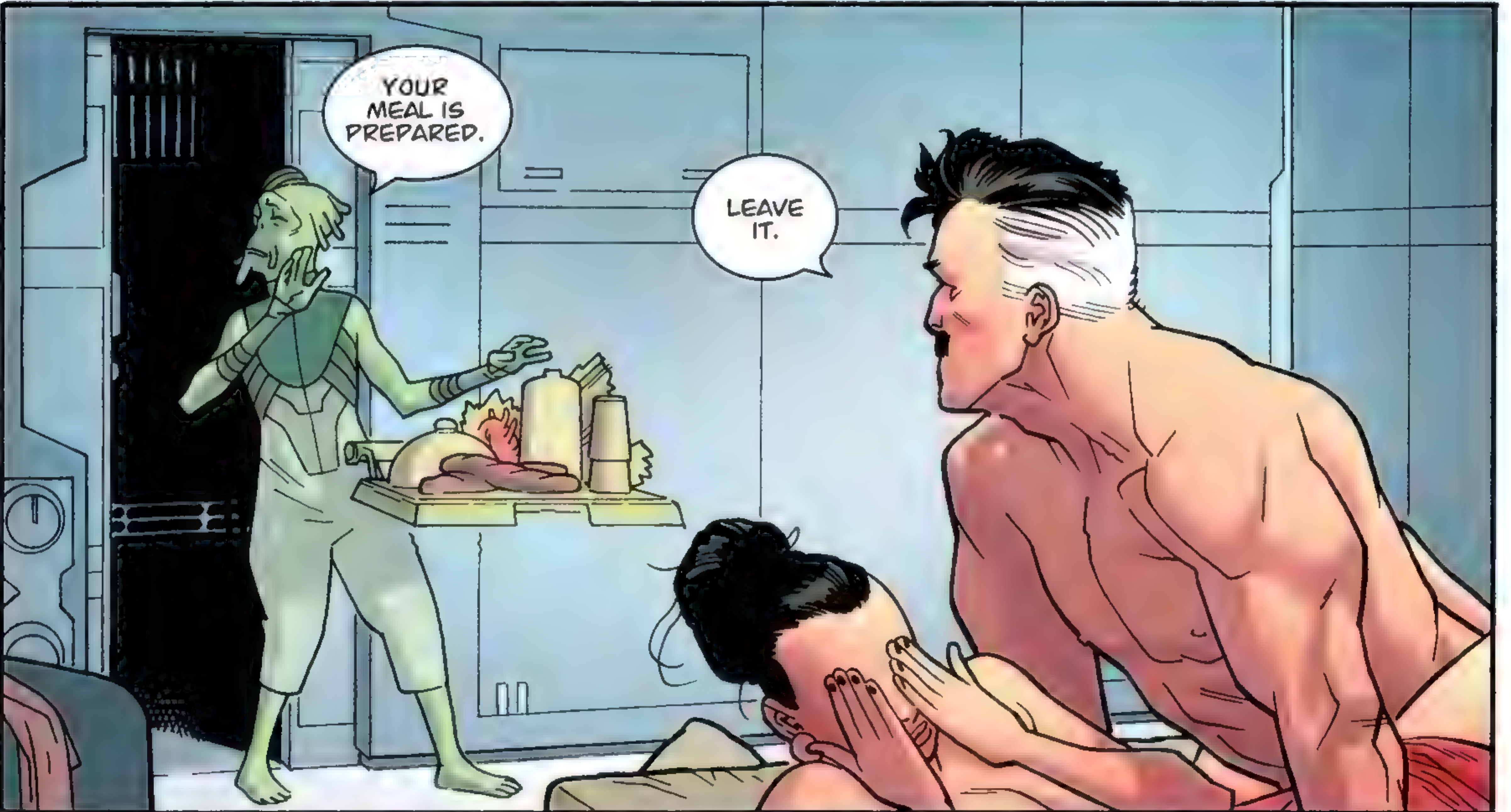
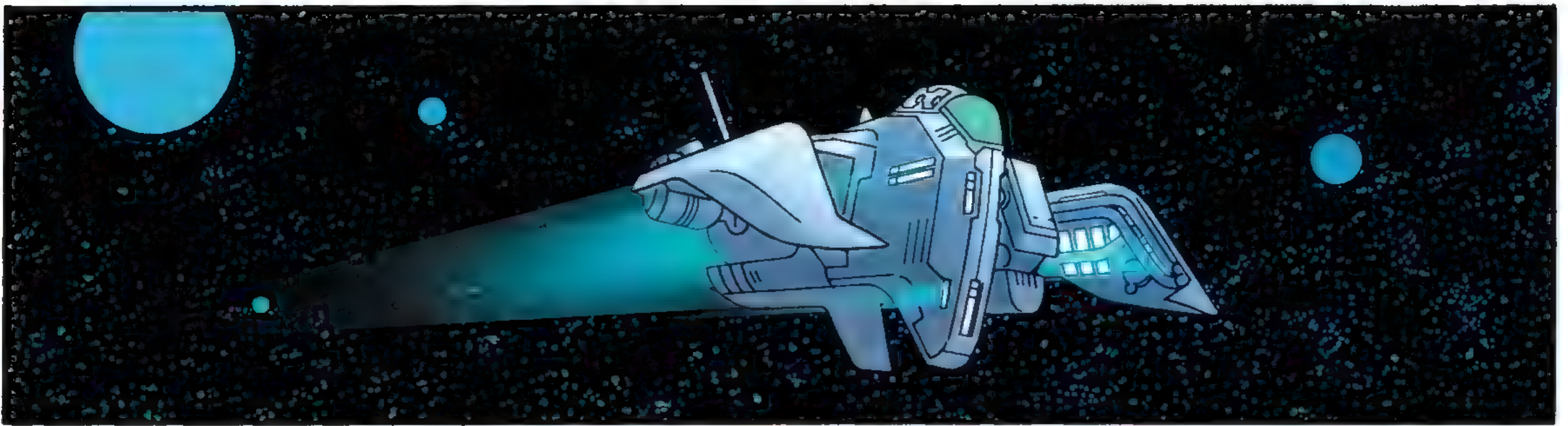
LET'S
SAVE THE
WORLD.

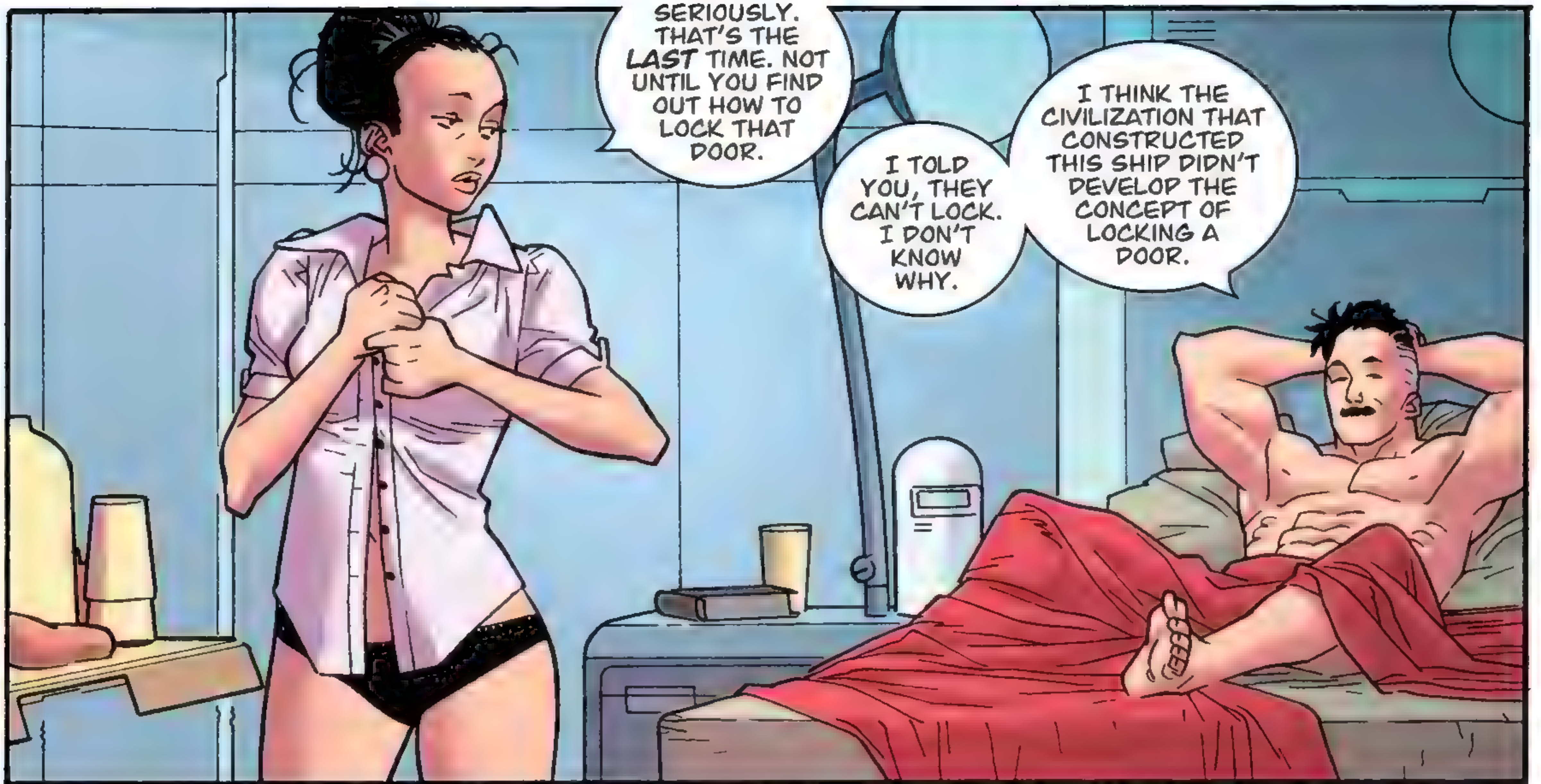




CHAPTER 85







SERIOUSLY. THAT'S THE LAST TIME. NOT UNTIL YOU FIND OUT HOW TO LOCK THAT DOOR.

I TOLD YOU, THEY CAN'T LOCK. I DON'T KNOW WHY.

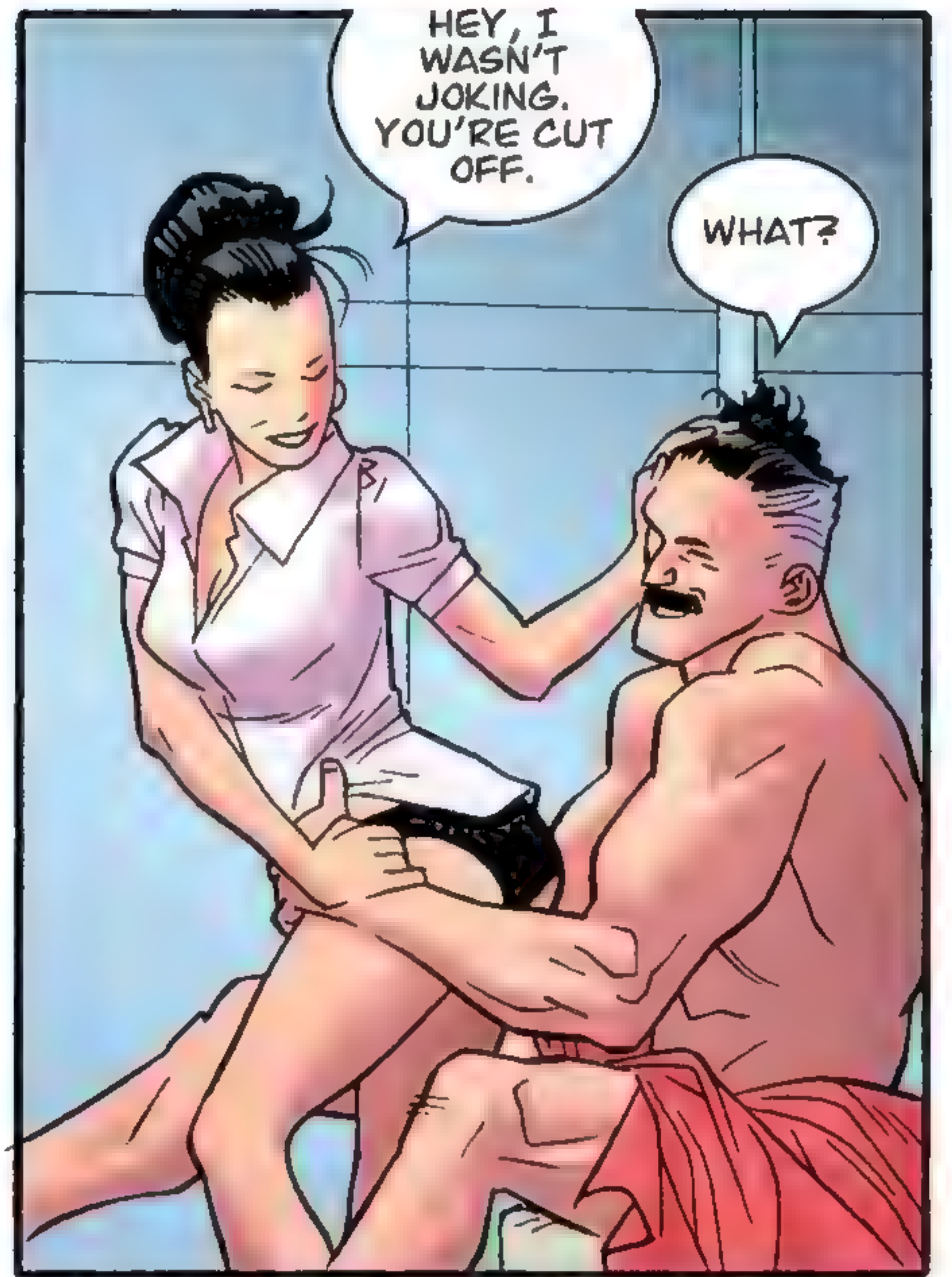
I THINK THE CIVILIZATION THAT CONSTRUCTED THIS SHIP DIDN'T DEVELOP THE CONCEPT OF LOCKING A DOOR.



DID THE CIVILIZATION DIE OFF BECAUSE NO ONE WAS MAKING BABIES?

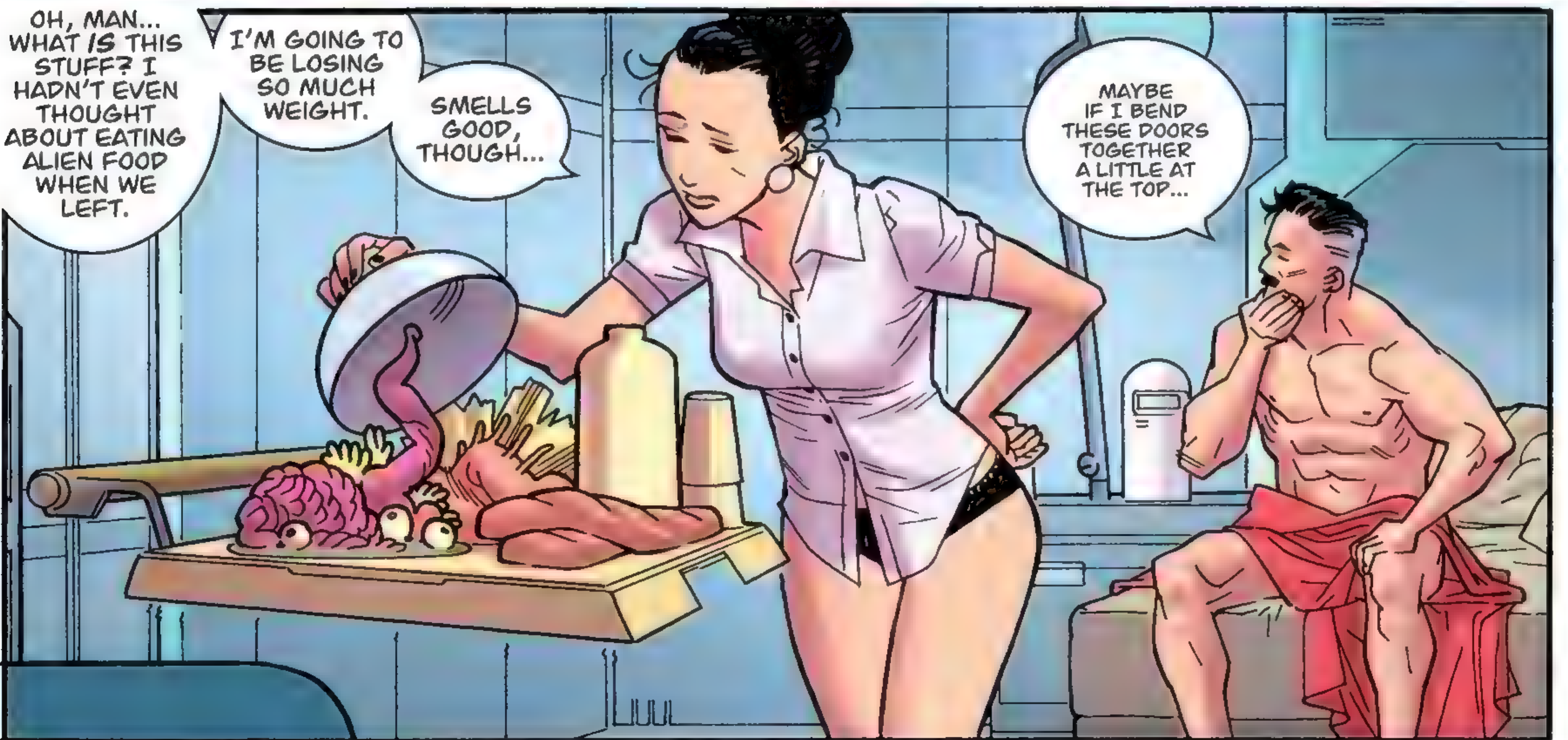


MAYBE THEY WERE STUCK IN SPACE SHIPS FOR DAYS ON END WITH NOTHING ELSE TO DO SO THEY DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN WHO SAW?



HEY, I WASN'T JOKING. YOU'RE CUT OFF.

WHAT?



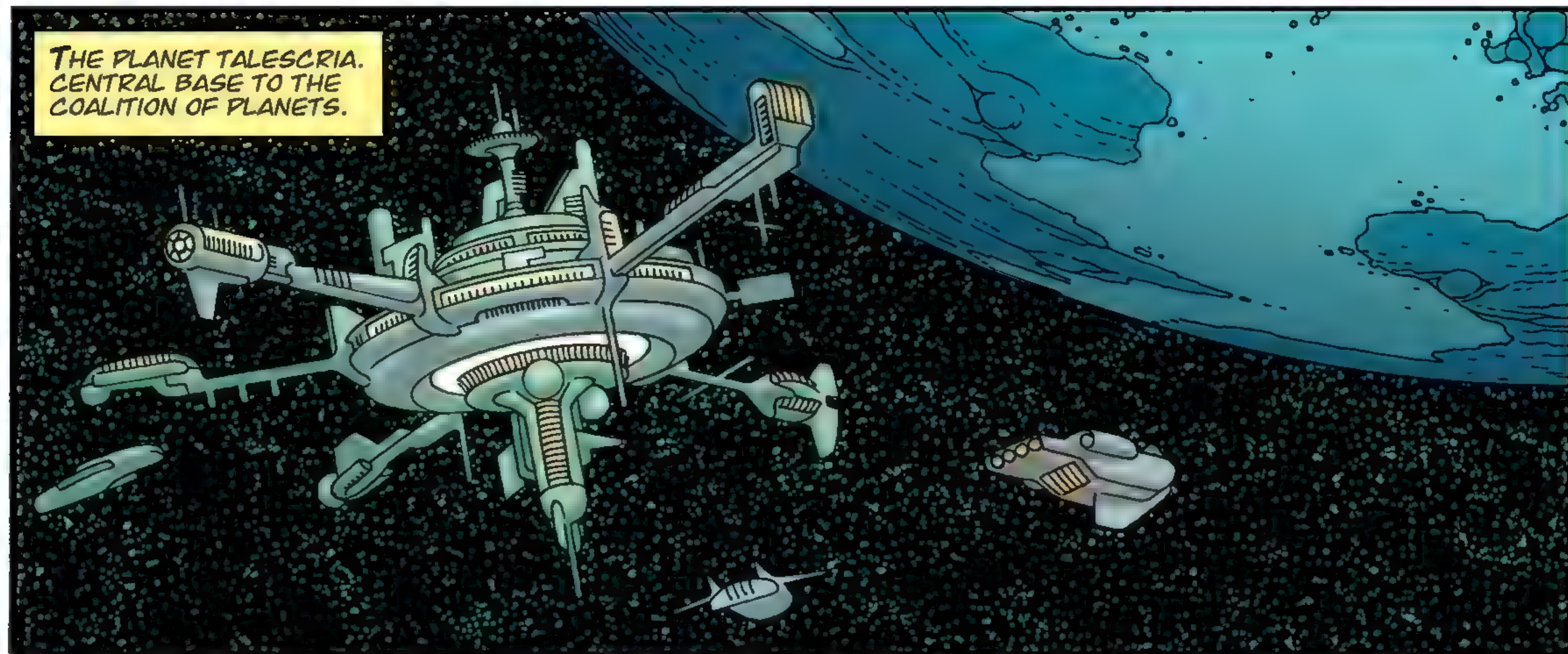
OH, MAN... WHAT IS THIS STUFF? I HADN'T EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT EATING ALIEN FOOD WHEN WE LEFT.

I'M GOING TO BE LOSING SO MUCH WEIGHT.

SMELLS GOOD, THOUGH...

MAYBE IF I BEND THESE DOORS TOGETHER A LITTLE AT THE TOP...

THE PLANET TALESRIA.
CENTRAL BASE TO THE
COALITION OF PLANETS.



SERIOUSLY, HE HAS
TO GO. EVER SINCE
HE WALKED IN ON US
YOU JUST HAVEN'T
BEEN THE SAME.

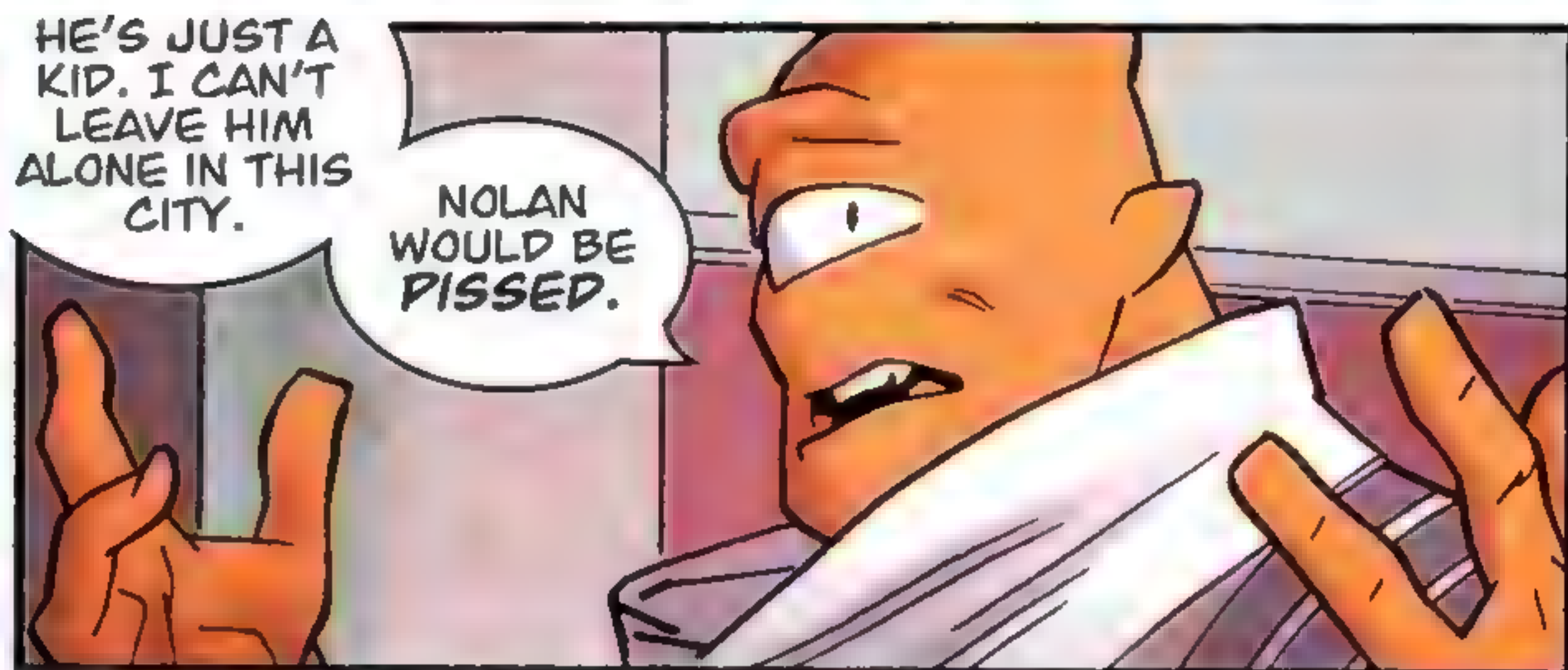
YOU'VE BEEN
HOLDING BACK
ON ME--ADMIT IT.
WHO CARES WHAT
HE SAW? HE
KNOWS WHAT
PEOPLE DO!

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
WHY HE CAN'T
JUST STAY AT
NOLAN'S PLACE
UNTIL HE
GETS
BACK!



HE'S JUST A
KID. I CAN'T
LEAVE HIM
ALONE IN THIS
CITY.

NOLAN
WOULD BE
PISSSED.



STILL A KID?! I CAN'T
STAND THESE ALIEN
RACES THAT SPEND A
QUARTER OF THEIR
LIFESPAN AS
"KIDS!"

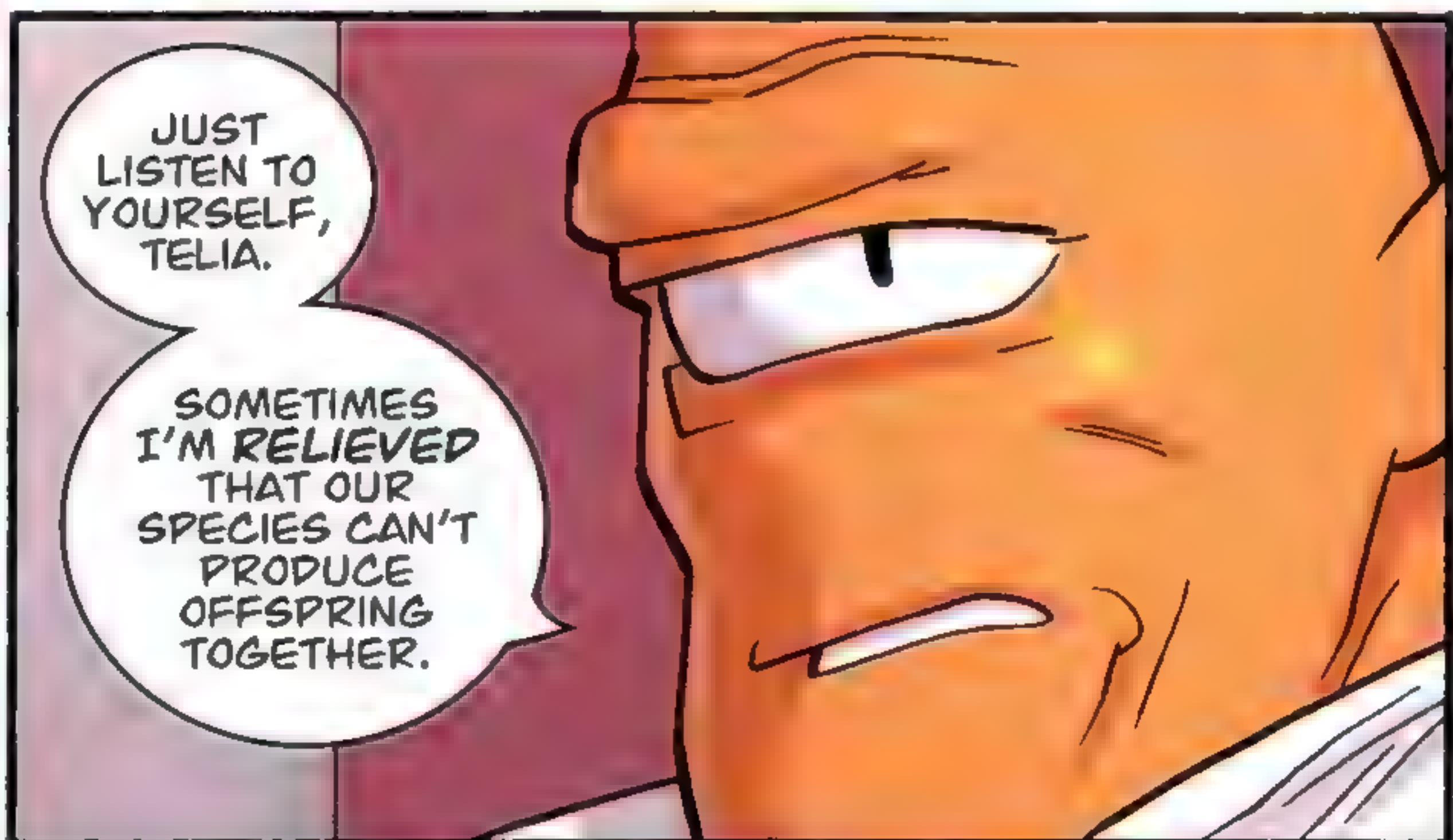
I HAVEN'T
SEEN MY
PARENTS
SINCE I WAS
THREE.

THE BOY
NEEDS HIS
HAND HELD SO
I HAVE TO
SUFFER?



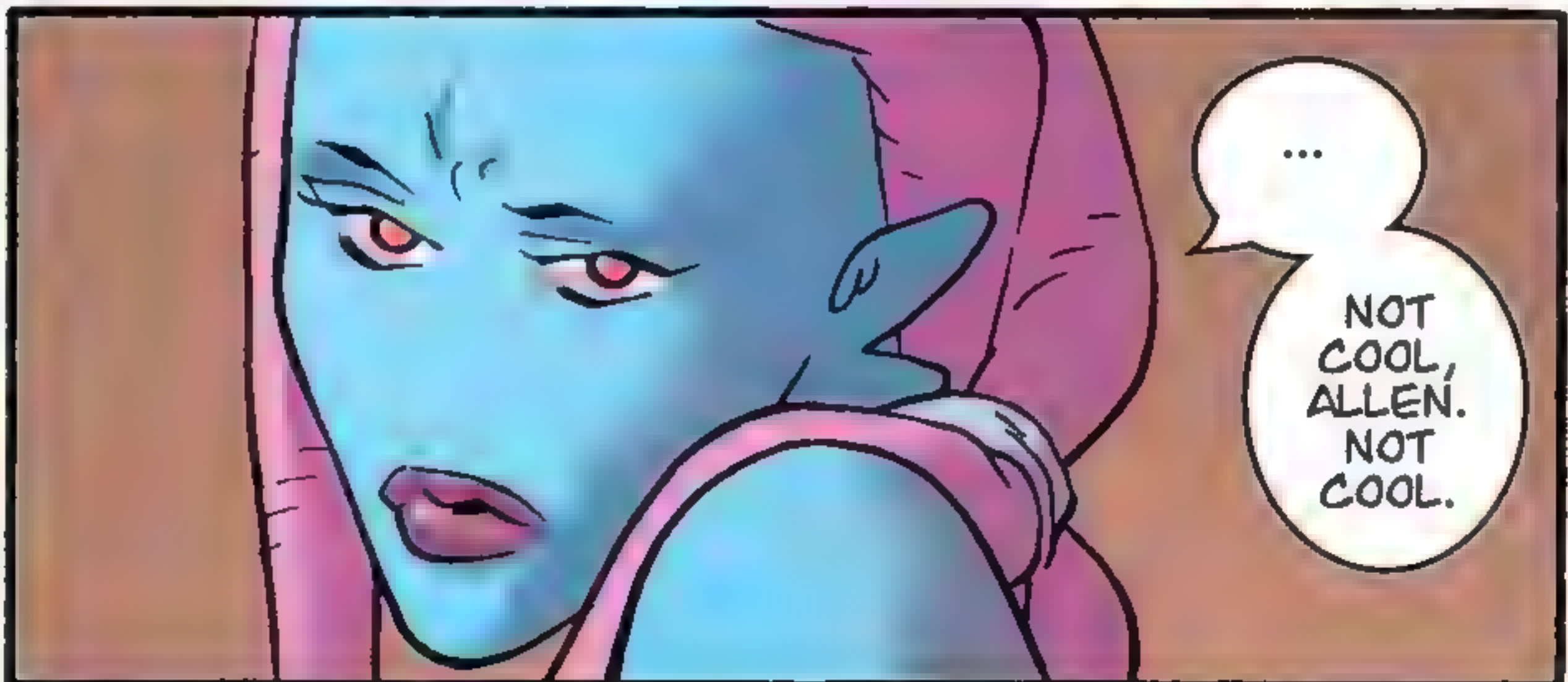
JUST
LISTEN TO
YOURSELF,
TELIA.

SOMETIMES
I'M RELIEVED
THAT OUR
SPECIES CAN'T
PRODUCE
OFFSPRING
TOGETHER.



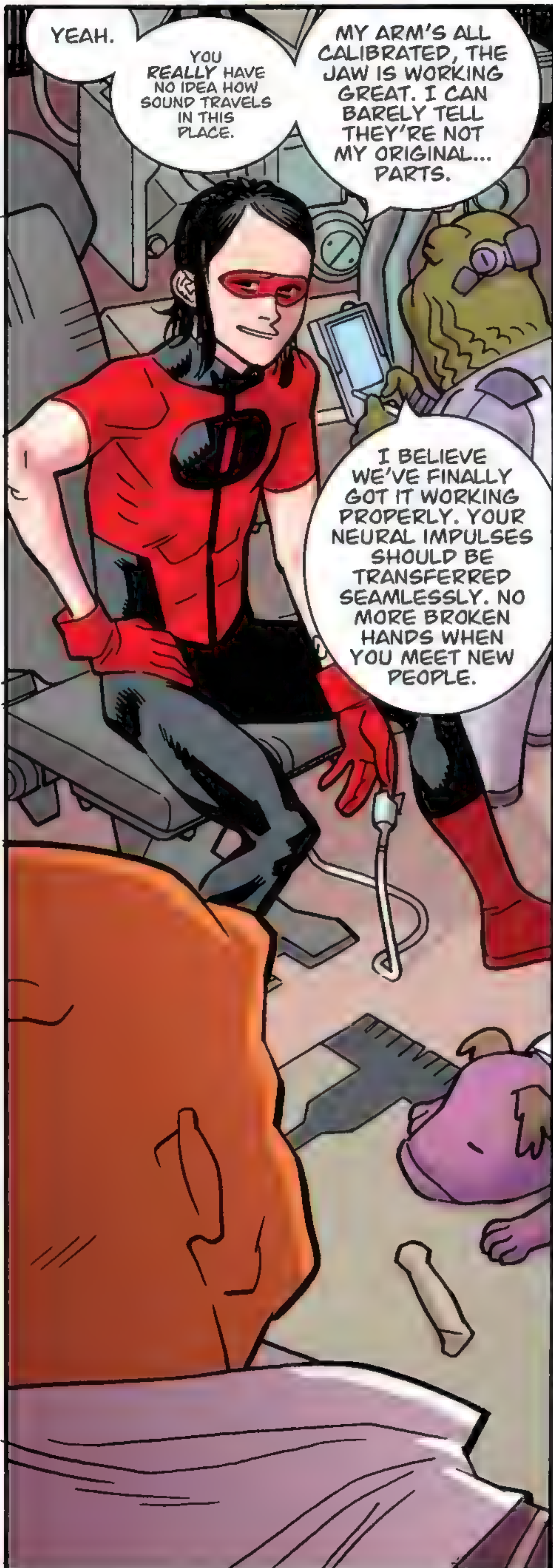
...

NOT
COOL,
ALLEN.
NOT
COOL.





OLIVER, HEY--
EVERYTHING
GOING OKAY
IN HERE?



YEAH.

YOU
REALLY HAVE
NO IDEA HOW
SOUND TRAVELS
IN THIS
PLACE.

MY ARM'S ALL
CALIBRATED, THE
JAW IS WORKING
GREAT. I CAN
BARELY TELL
THEY'RE NOT
MY ORIGINAL...
PARTS.

I BELIEVE
WE'VE FINALLY
GOT IT WORKING
PROPERLY. YOUR
NEURAL IMPULSES
SHOULD BE
TRANSFERRED
SEAMLESSLY. NO
MORE BROKEN
HANDS WHEN
YOU MEET NEW
PEOPLE.



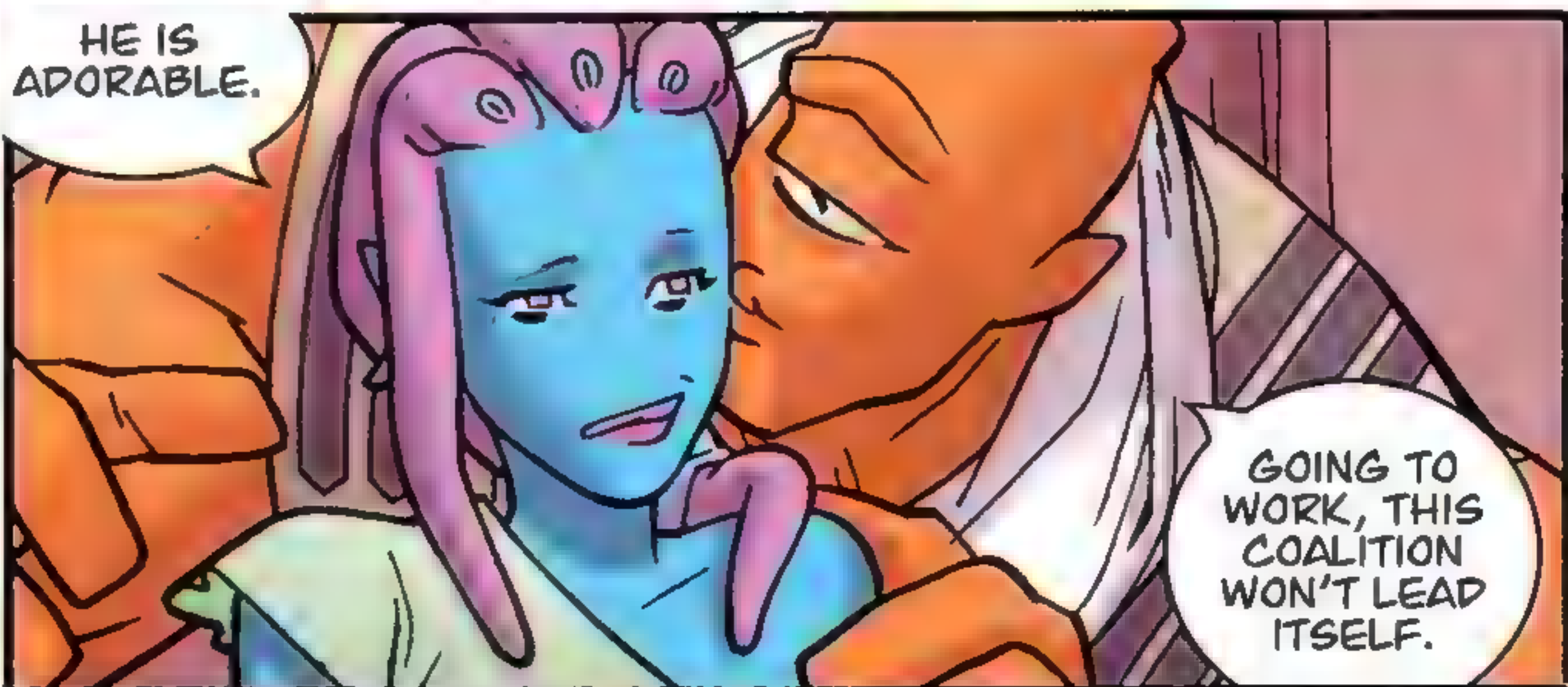
PLEASE DO
APOLOGIZE
AGAIN TO THE
AMBASSADOR
FOR ME.

THERE'S
REALLY NO
NEED, HE'S
GOT SEVEN
HANDS.



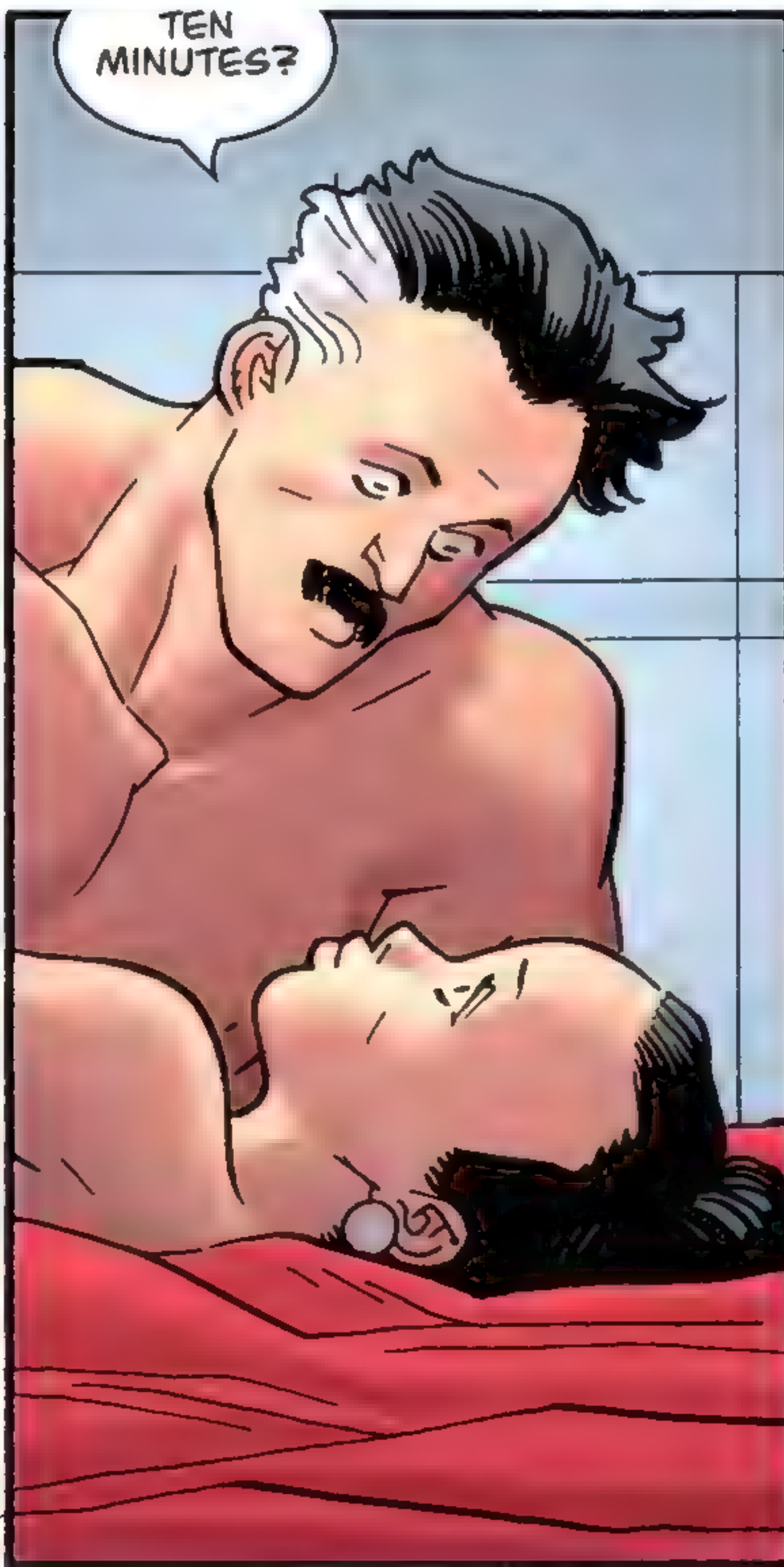
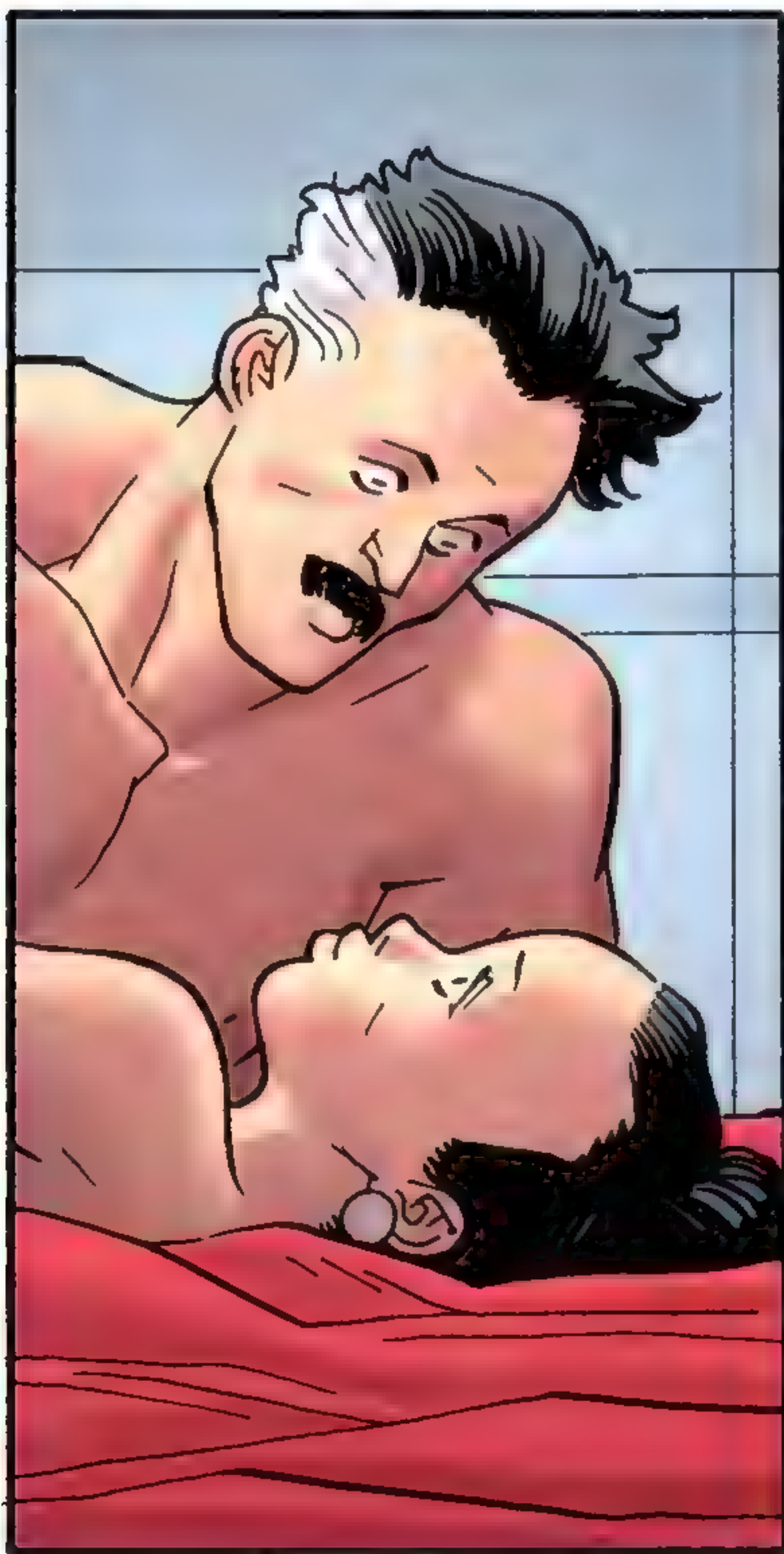
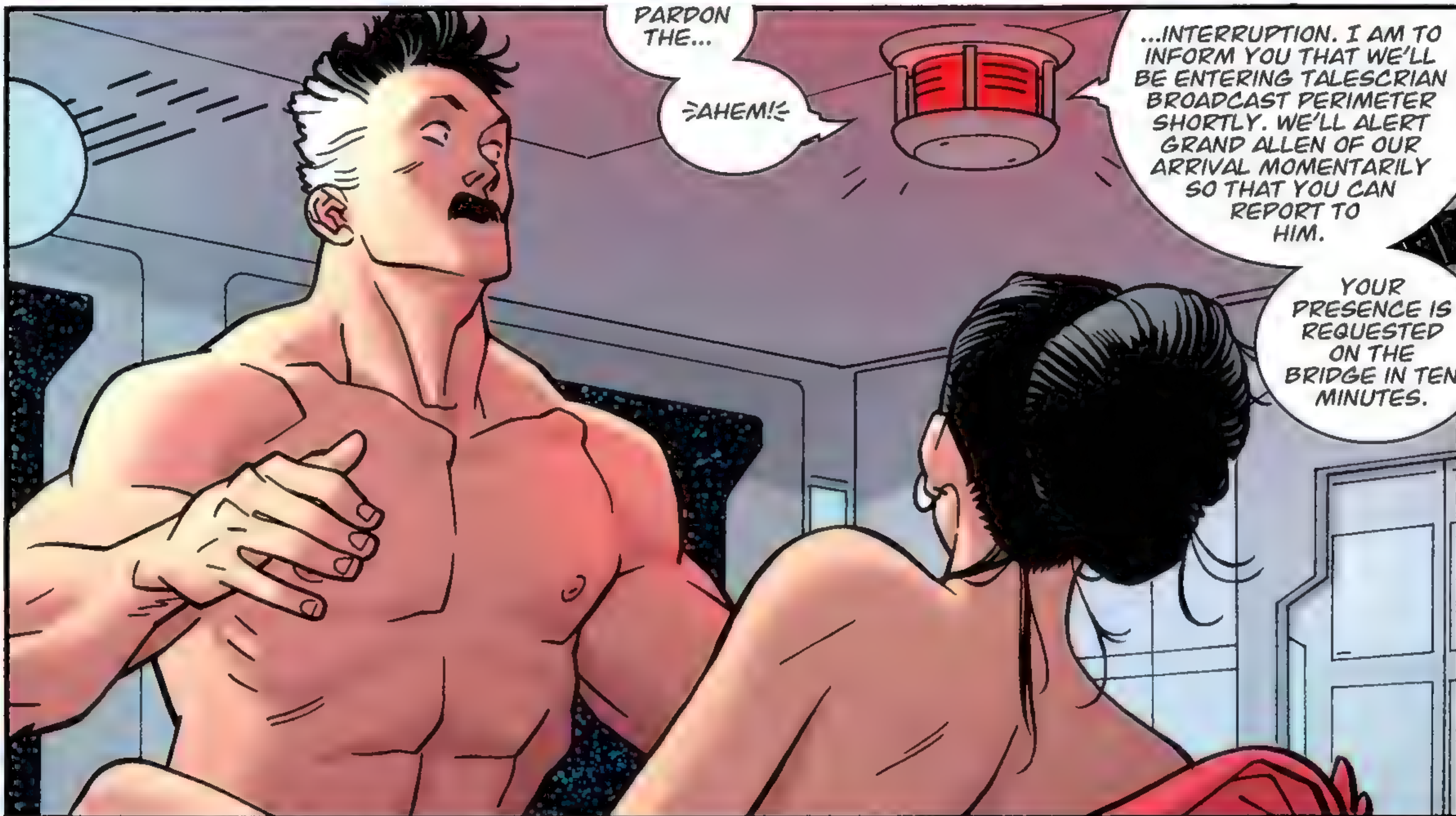
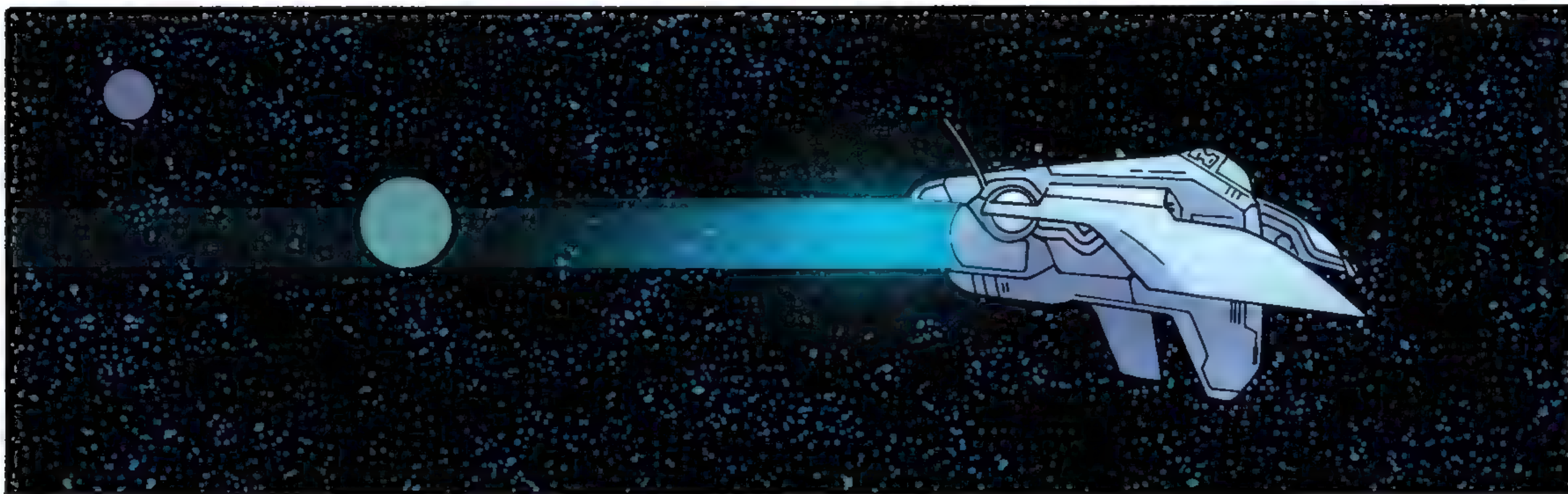
SO WHAT
ARE YOU
GOING TO DO
TODAY?

YOU
KIDDING?
I'M GOING
OUT ON
A TEST
RUN.



HE IS
ADORABLE.

GOING TO
WORK, THIS
COALITION
WON'T LEAD
ITSELF.





I EXPECT
PROGRESS!

SOMETHING
MUST BE
DONE!

I'M DOING
EVERYTHING
I CAN,
AMBASSADOR.

I HAVE
PATROL TEAMS
CRISSCROSSING
THE GALAXY,
LOOKING FOR ANY
SIGN OF THE
VILTRUMITES.

ON A HUNCH,
ONE TEAM WENT
TO A DISTANT PLANET
CALLED EARTH. THE
VILTRUMITES HAVE A
SPECIAL INTEREST IN
THAT PLANET... THEY
MAY HAVE GONE THERE,
BUT I HAVEN'T
HEARD BACK FROM
THAT TEAM.



YOU HAVEN'T
HEARD FROM
THEM? HOW DO
YOU KNOW THEY
HAVEN'T FOUND THE
VILTRUMITES AND
BEEN KILLED BY
THEM, HOW LONG
HAVE THEY
BEEN AWAY?



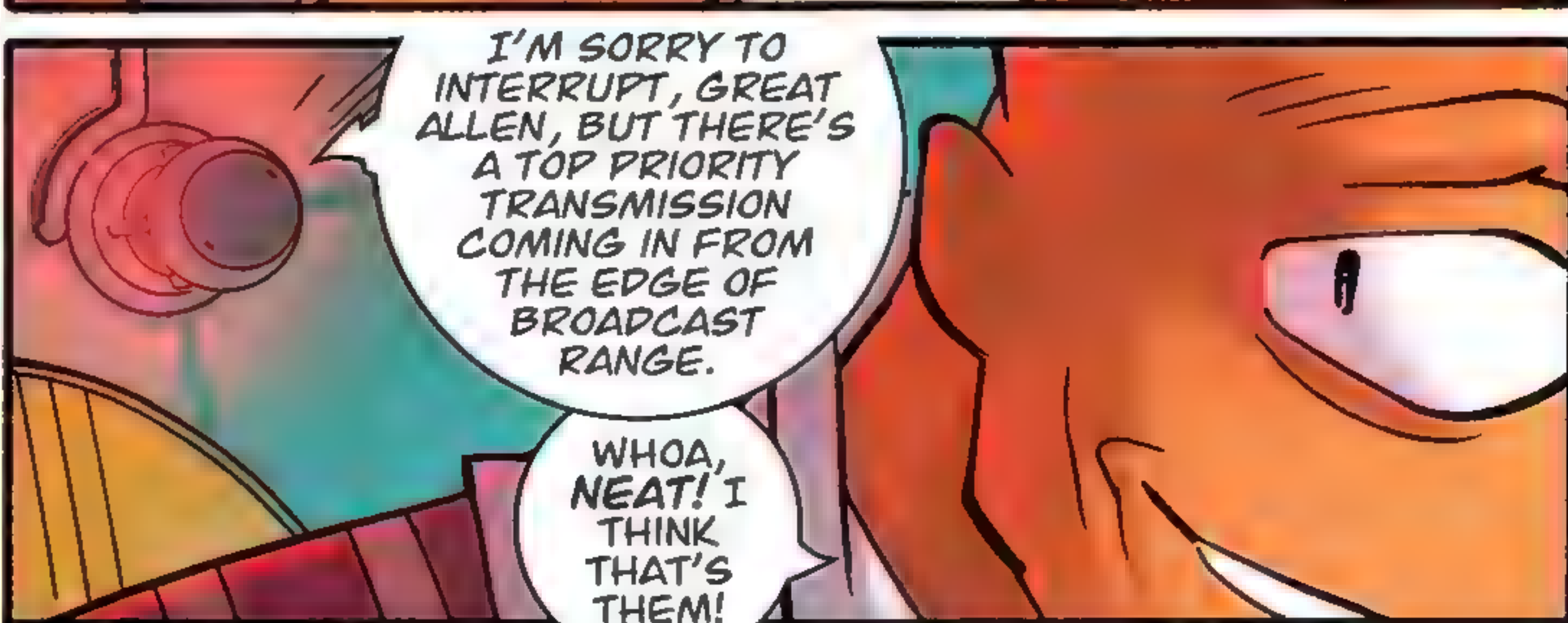
THE PLANET IS SO DISTANT
WE CAN'T SEND OR RECEIVE
TRANSMISSIONS. IF OUR
CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT,
AND THEY TRAVELED THERE
AND CAME STRAIGHT BACK...
THEY WOULD HAVE
RETURNED A FEW
DAYS AGO.

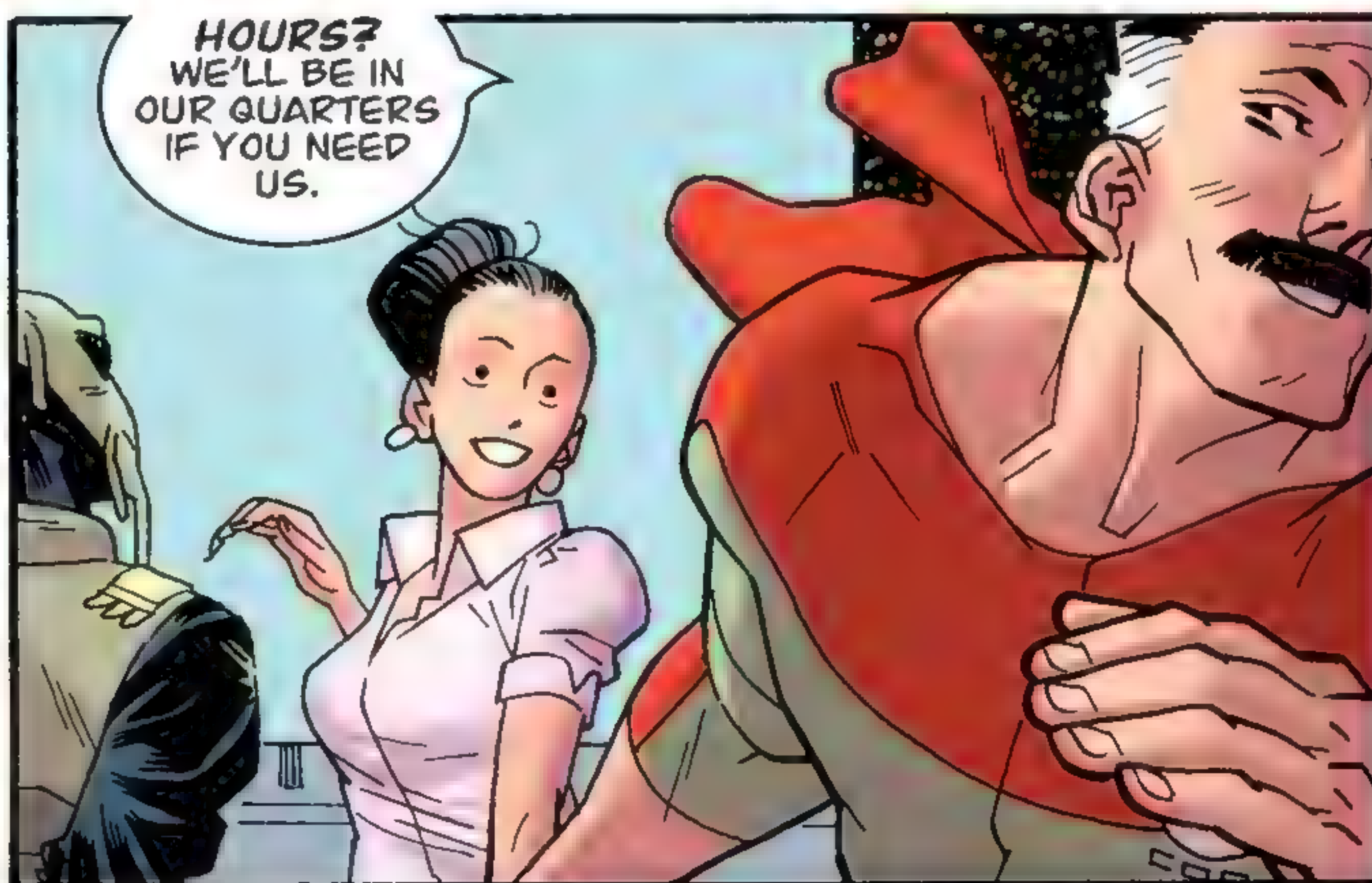
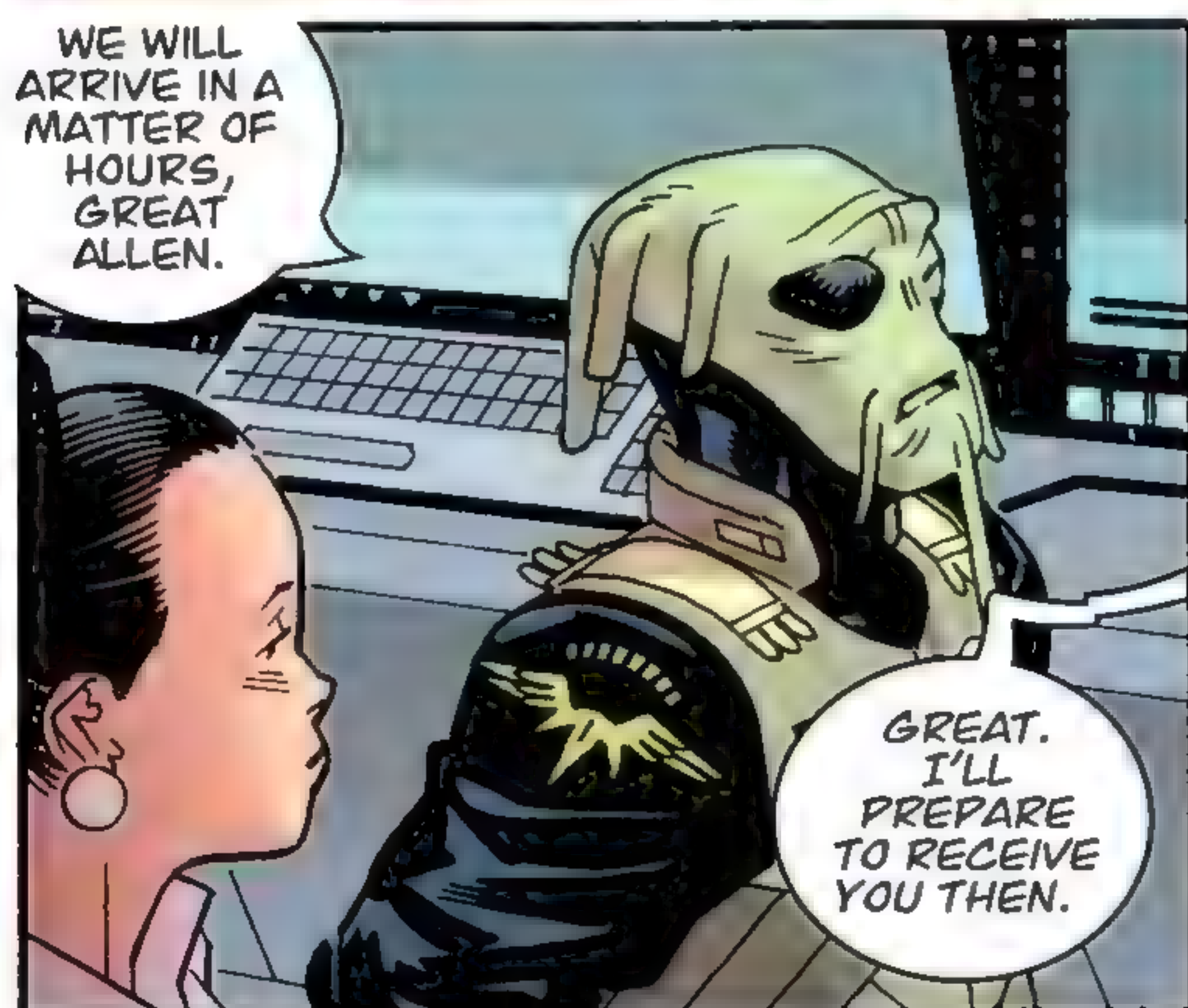
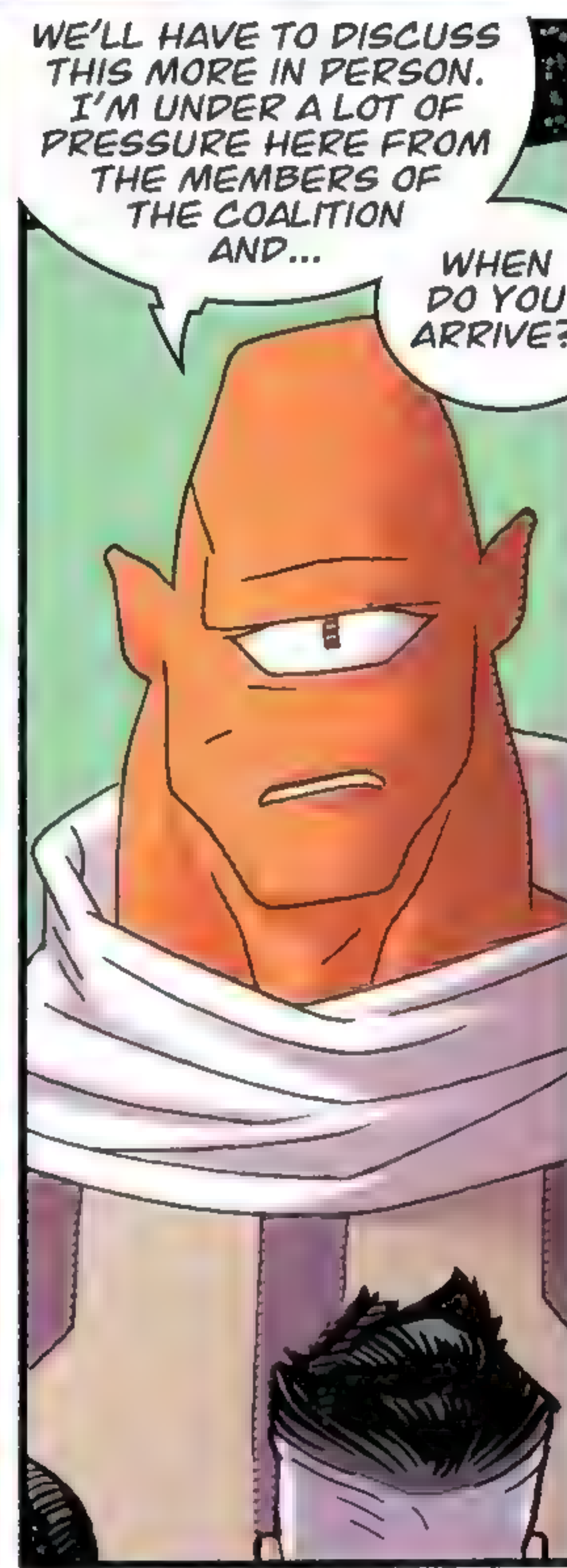
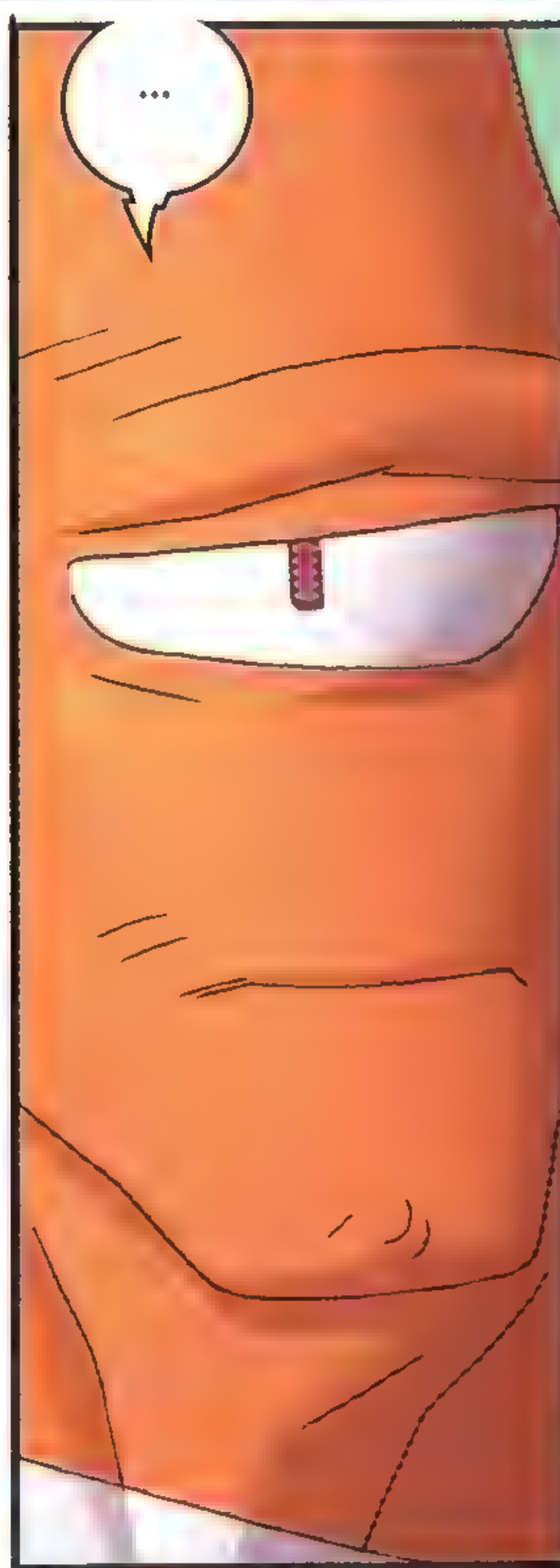
IF WE
DON'T HEAR
FROM THEM
SOON, I'LL
SEND--

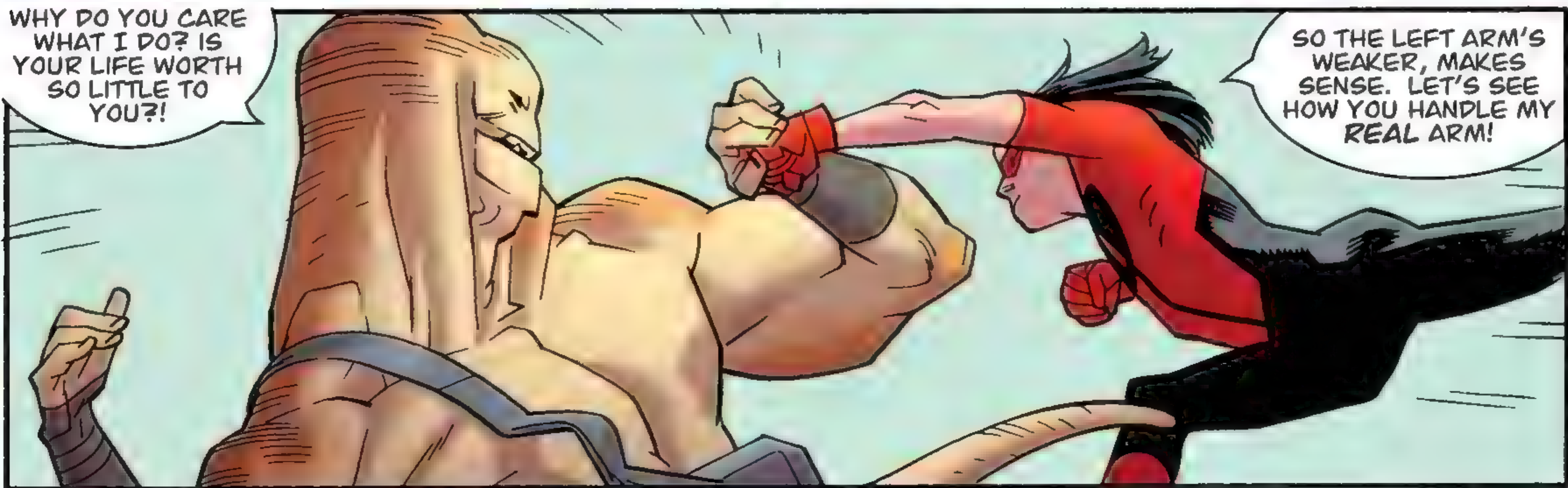


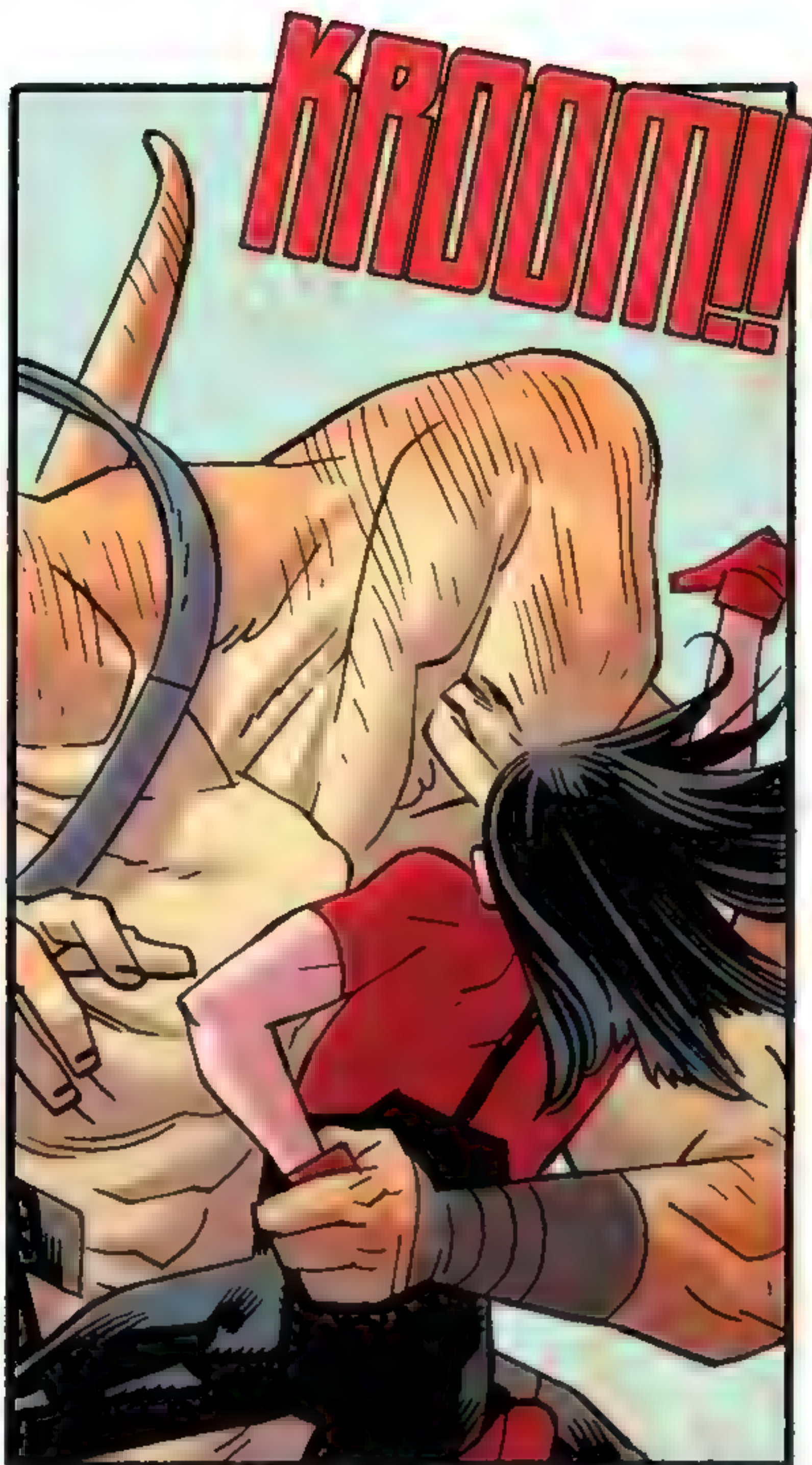
I'M SORRY TO
INTERRUPT, GREAT
ALLEN, BUT THERE'S
A TOP PRIORITY
TRANSMISSION
COMING IN FROM
THE EDGE OF
BROADCAST
RANGE.

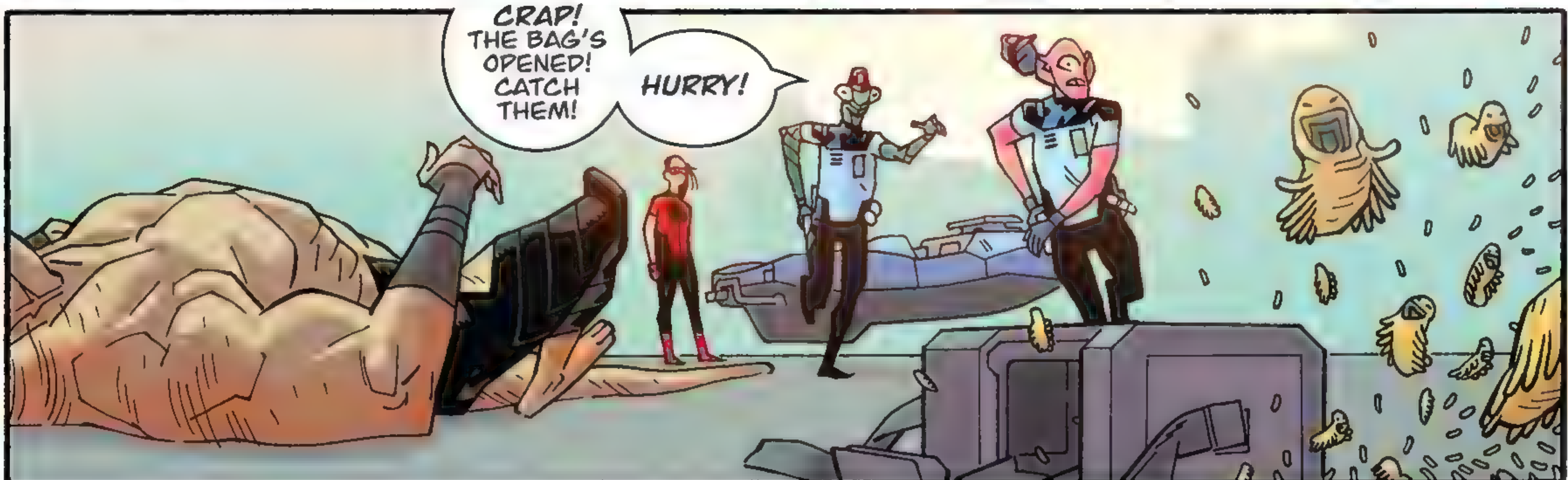
WHOA,
NEAT! I
THINK
THAT'S
THEM!

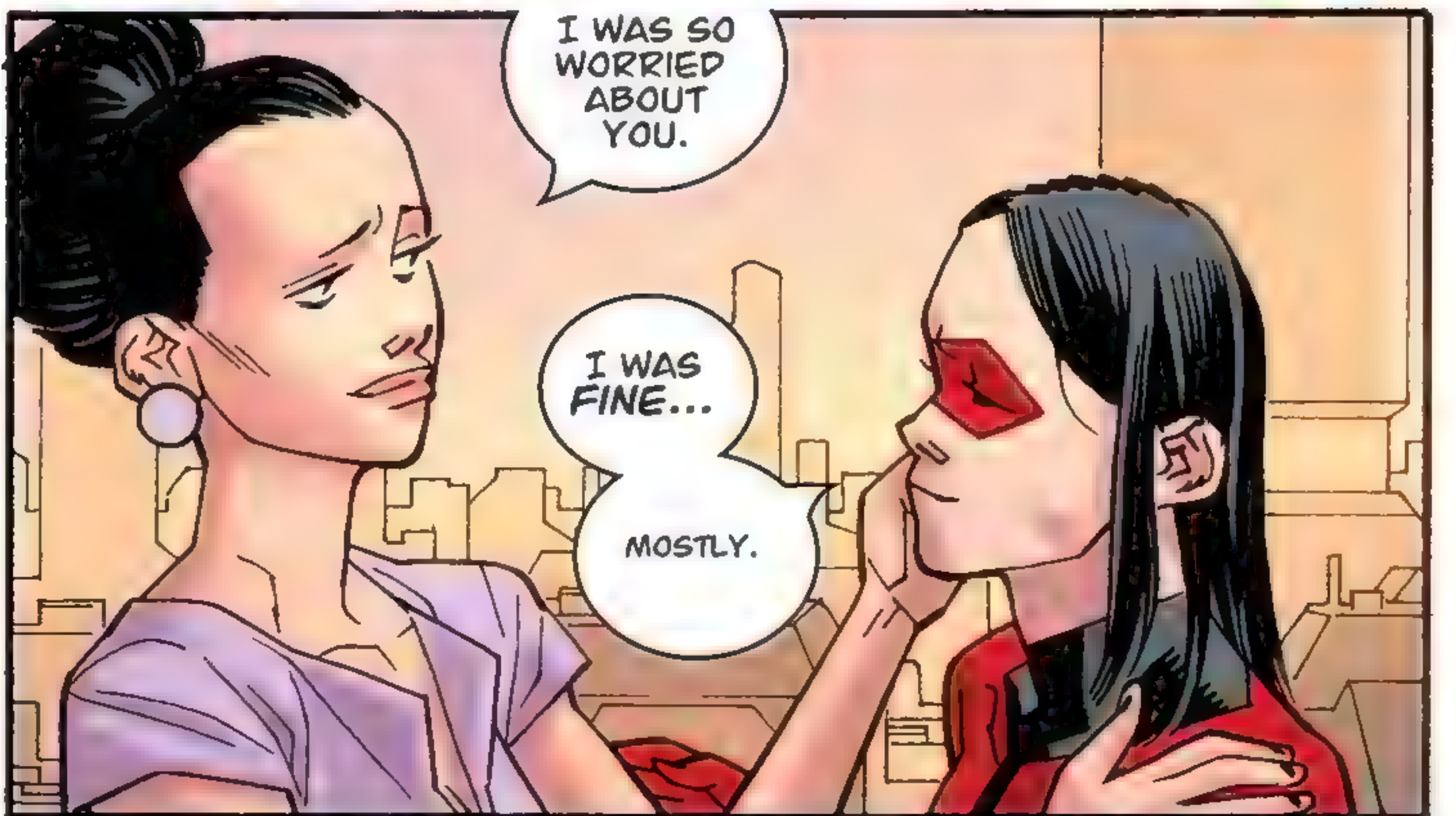
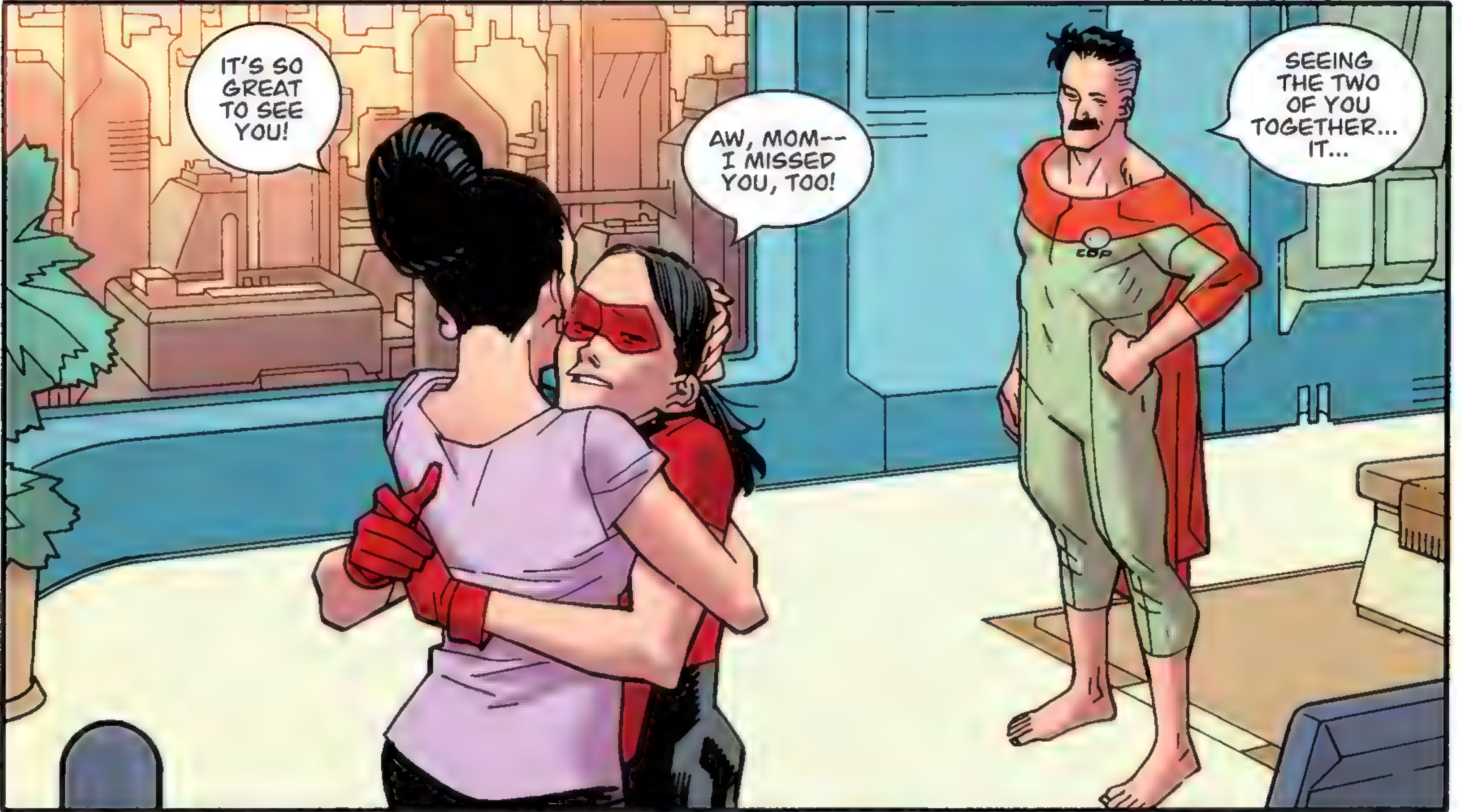














DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA THE POSITION YOU'VE PUT ME IN?

I KNOW IT SEEMS LIKE A BAD IDEA, BUT HEAR ME OUT--

BAD IDEA?! IT'S A HORRIBLE IDEA! WE HAD THE VILTRUMITES ON THE RUN-- THEIR RANKS DEPLETED!

YOU PROPOSE WE LEAVE THEM ALONE--ON EARTH, WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY A BREEDING CAMP!

I SHARE YOUR CONCERN, BUT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT YEARS--DECADES OF LIVING WITH HUMANS IN ORDER TO ADD TO THEIR RANKS.

LOOK WHAT THAT DID FOR ME. I'M CONFIDENT IT COULD TRANSFORM MY PEOPLE... IT COULD BRING THE PEACE WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING FOR.

FORGIVE ME IF I DON'T SHARE YOUR OPTIMISTIC IMPRESSION OF YOUR PEOPLE.



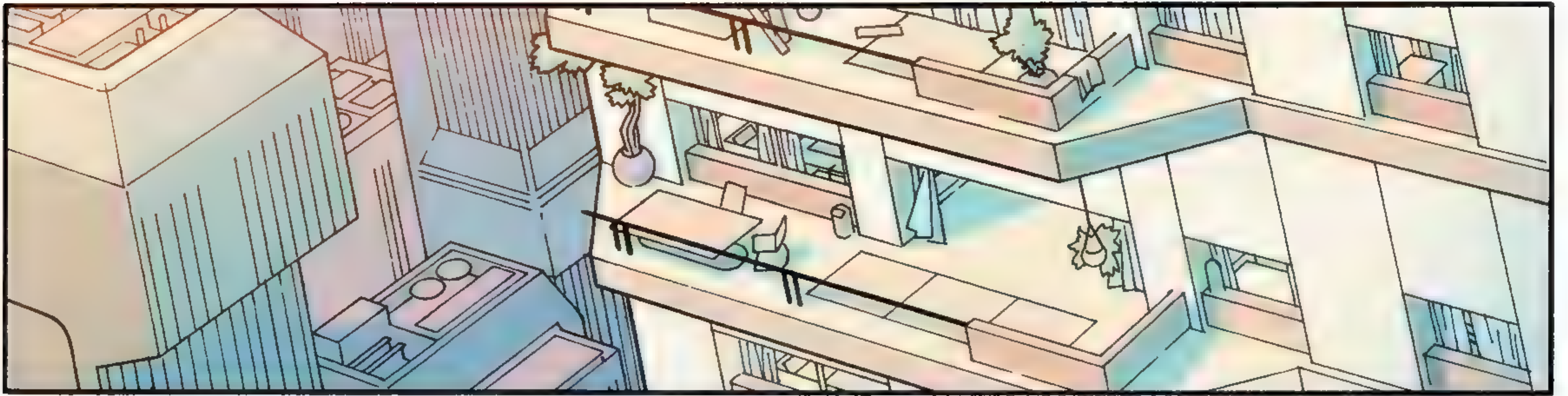
I'VE GOT COUNTLESS PLANETARY SYSTEMS TO REPORT TO, THEY RELY ON ME FOR THEIR PROTECTION.

I DON'T KNOW THAT I CAN JUST...

I'VE GOT A LOT TO CONSIDER. PLEASE...

...LEAVE ME.





IT WAS UNSETTLING TO SEE HIM THAT WAY--LIKE TALKING TO SOMEONE I DIDN'T KNOW.

ALLEN AND I HAVE A BOND... THIS SITUATION ON EARTH... IT HAS ME CONCERNED.

AS IT SHOULD. JUST BECAUSE THEY SAY THEY'RE NOT GOING TO CAUSE ANY TROUBLE, DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD BELIEVE THEM.

YOUR PEOPLE ARE VERY GOOD LIARS.

OKAY, I DESERVE THAT.

THIS PLACE IS TOTALLY GREAT. I WISH ALLEN HAD JUST LET ME STAY HERE WHILE YOU WERE GONE.

AND I'M GLAD HE KEPT YOU OUT OF TROUBLE.

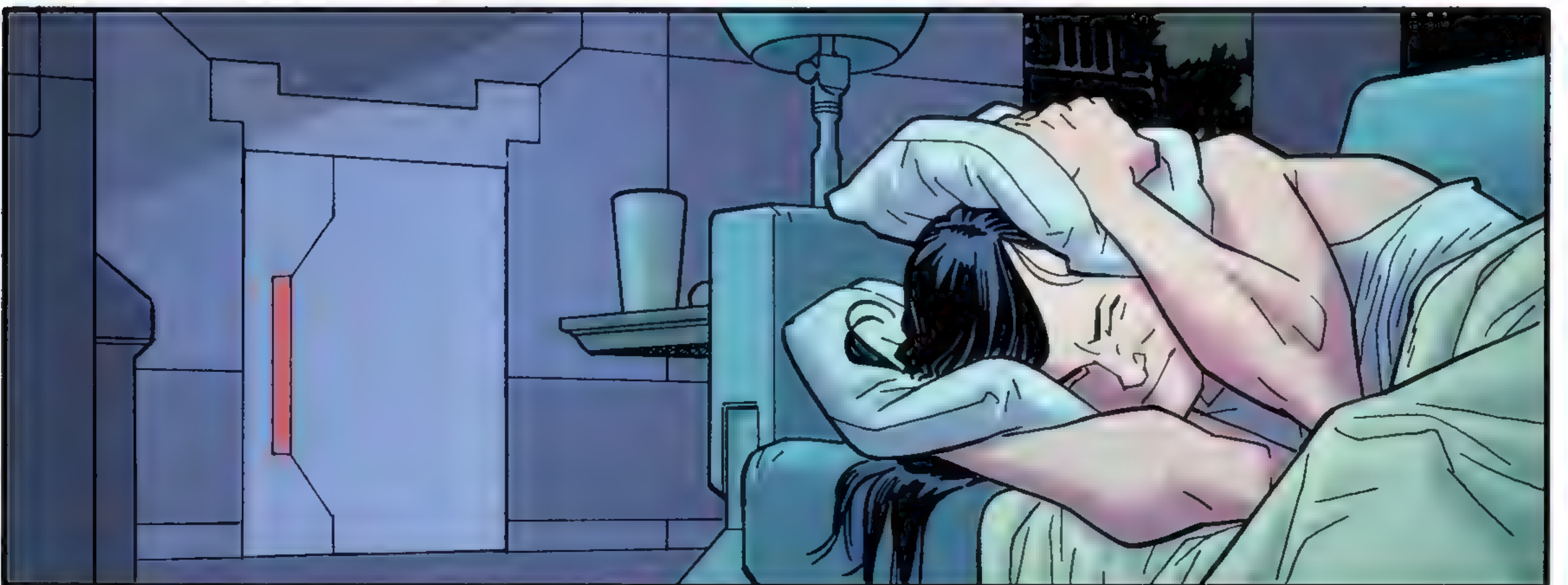
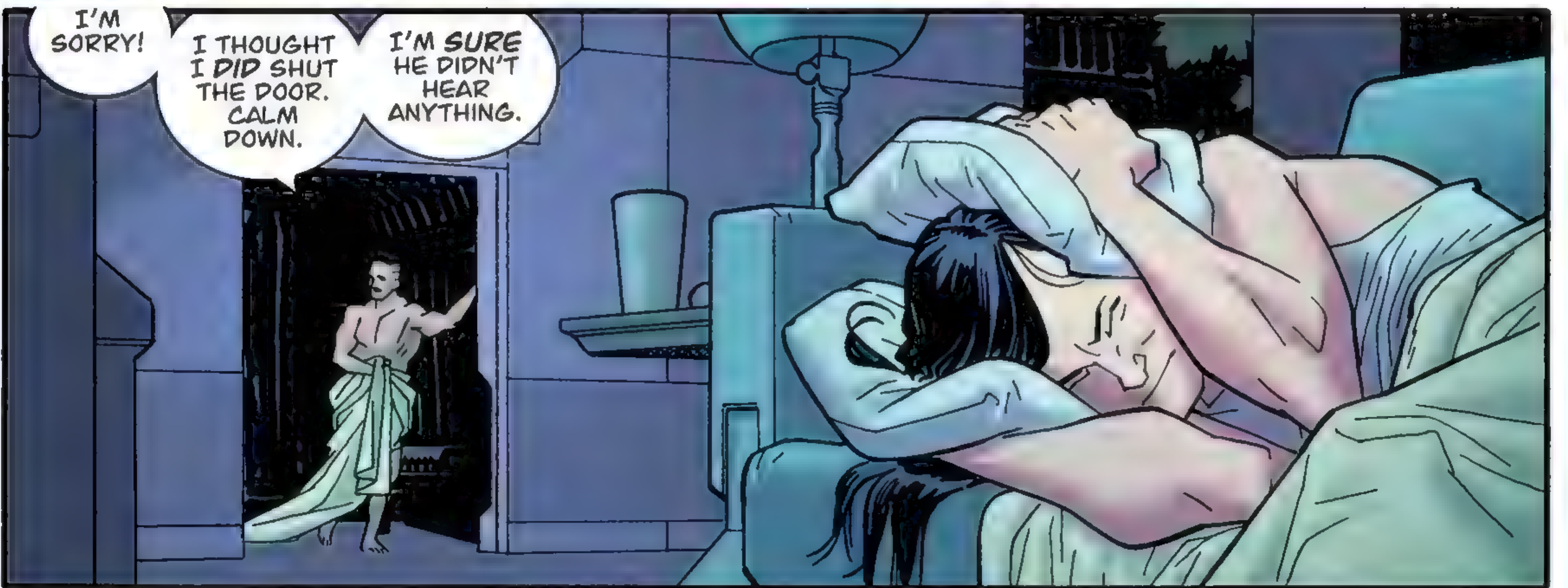
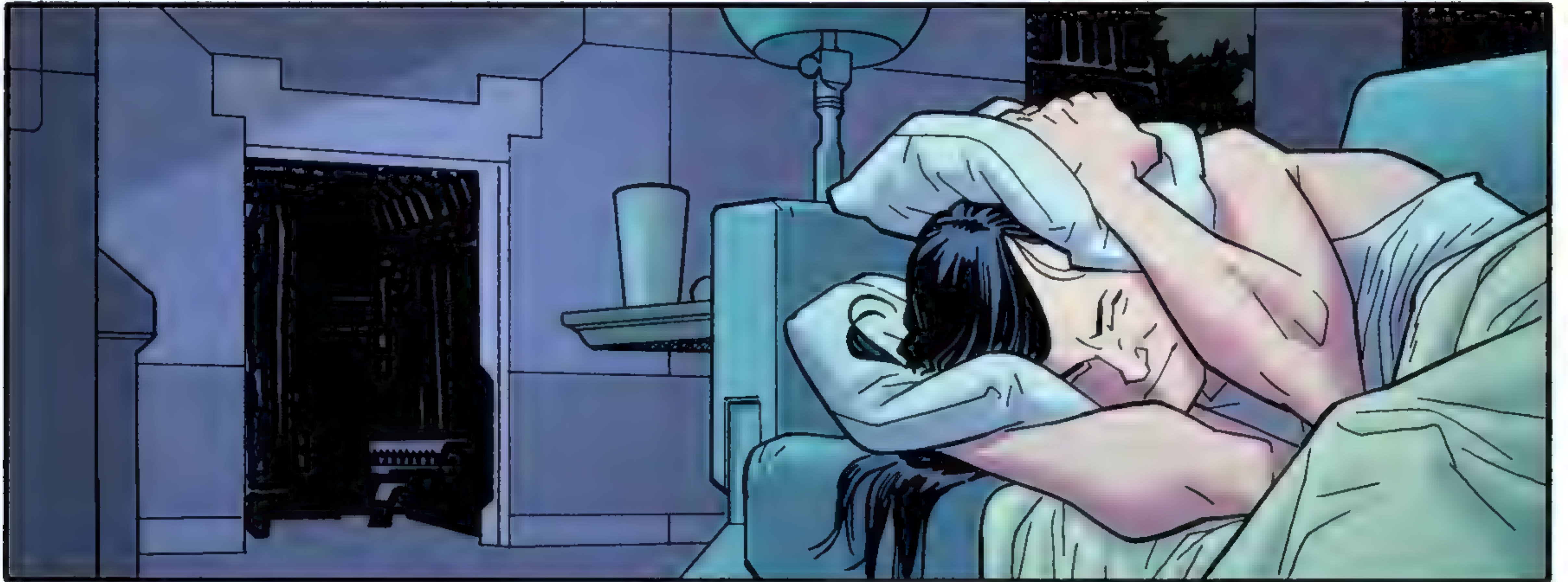
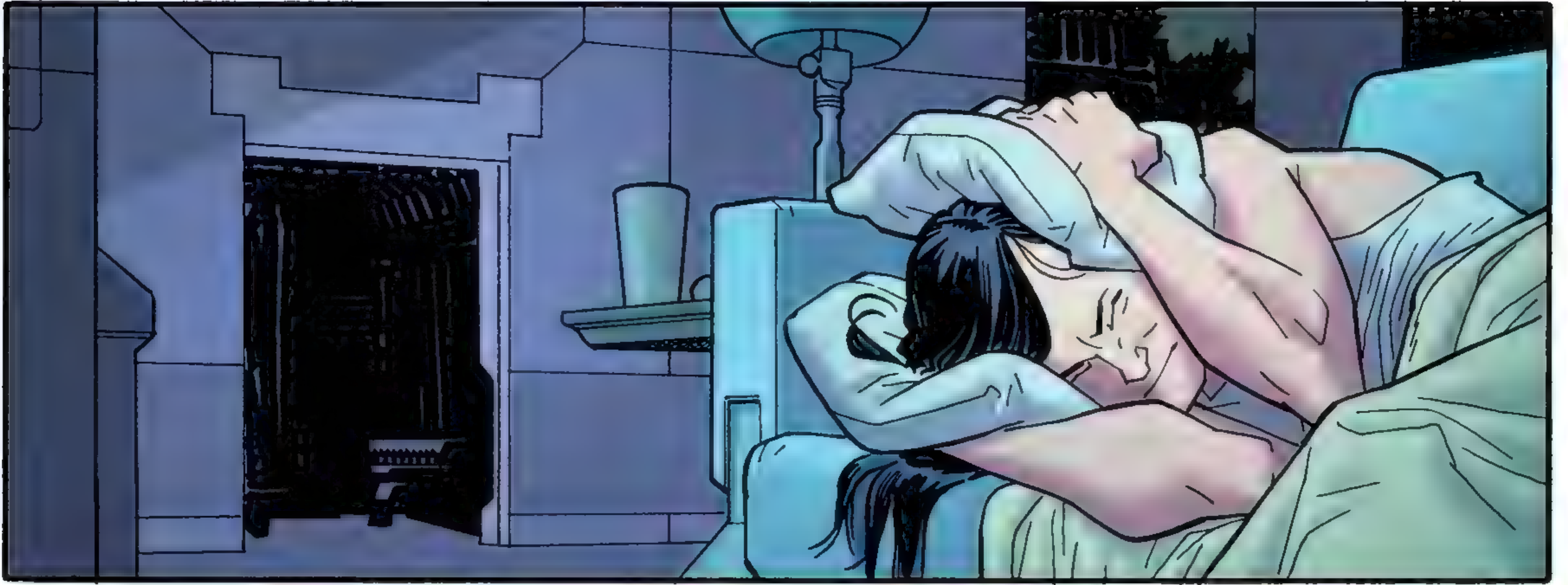
I'LL NEED TO BUY A BED FOR YOUR ROOM TOMORROW-- BUT FOR TONIGHT, YOU CAN JUST SLEEP ON THE COUCH.

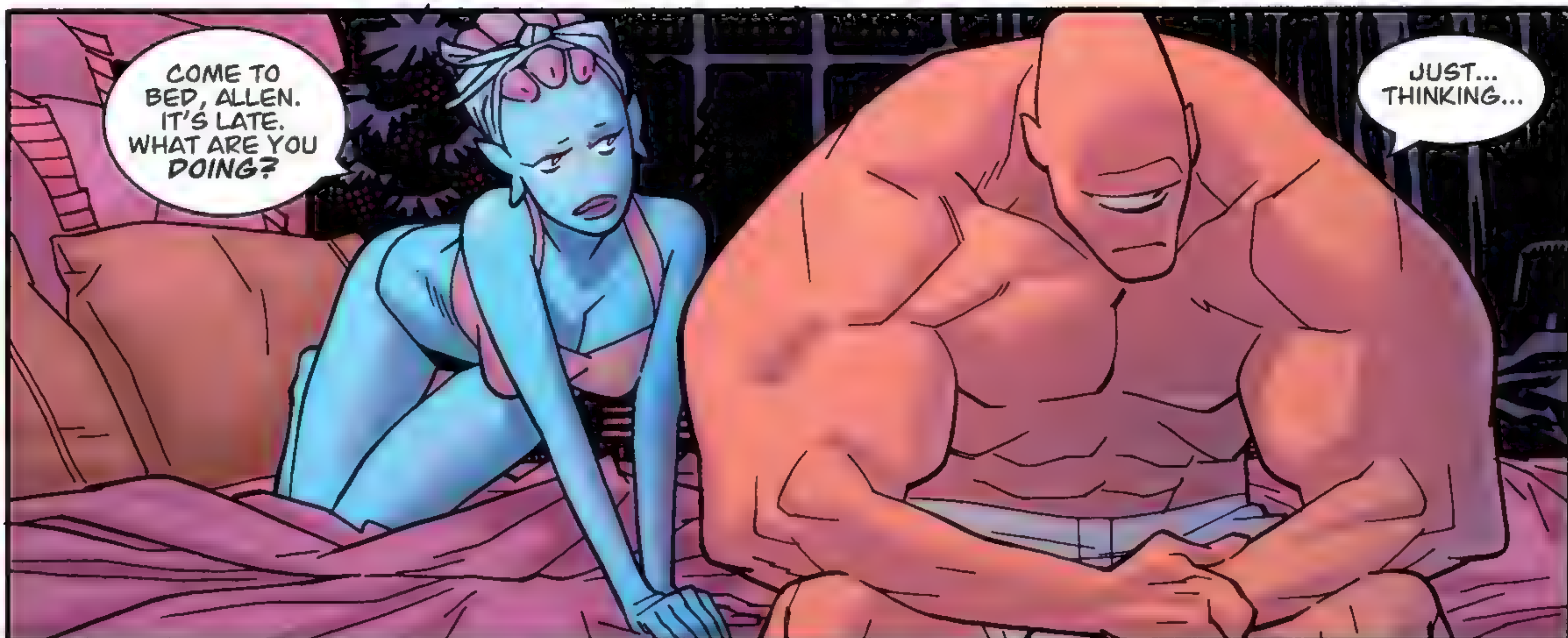
NO WORRIES.

ANYTHING WILL BE BETTER THAN STAYING WITH ALLEN AND TELIA. I HEARD EVERYTHING AT THAT PLACE...

AND I MEAN... UGH... EVERYTHING.

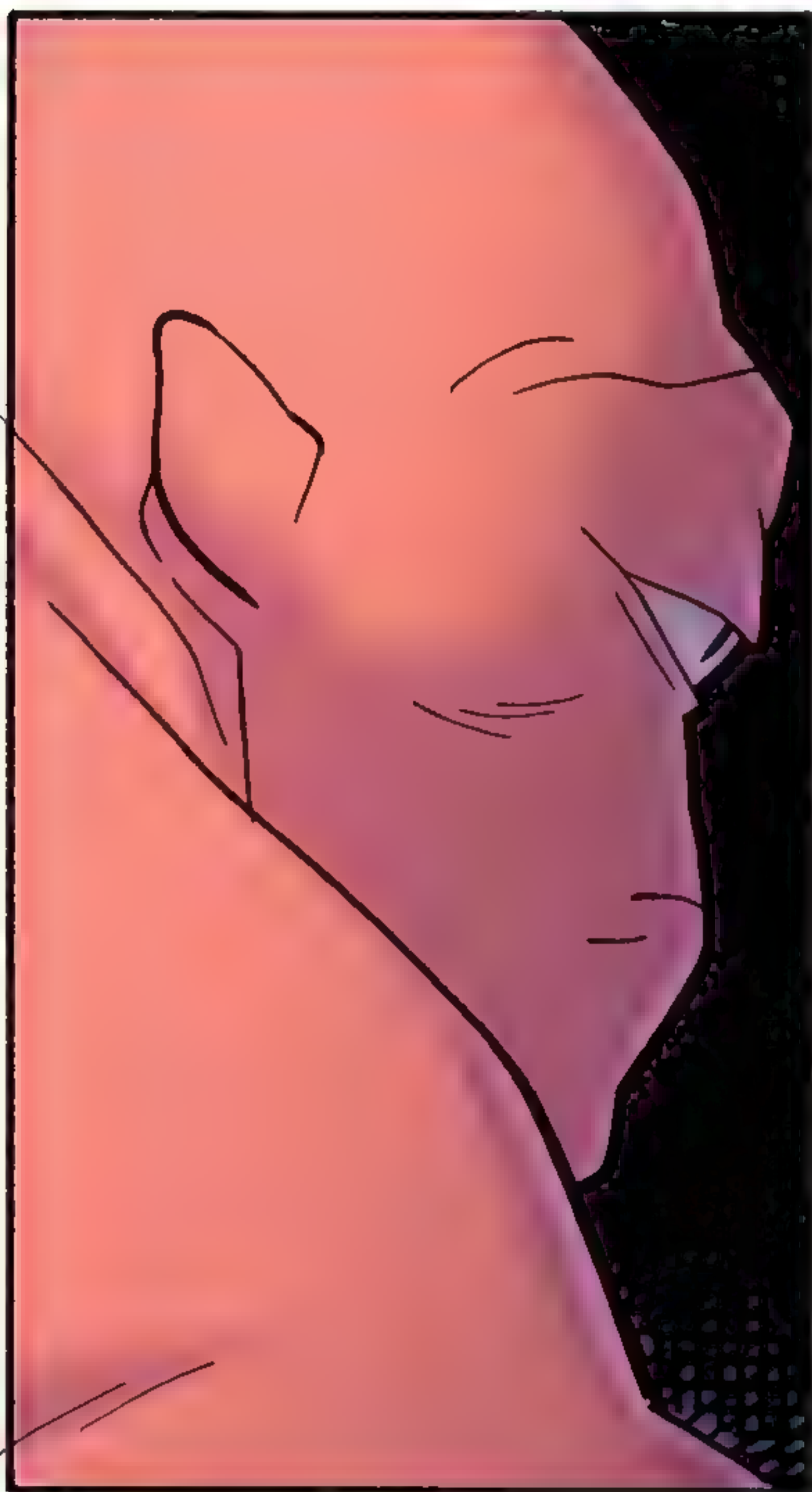
WELL, YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT HERE...





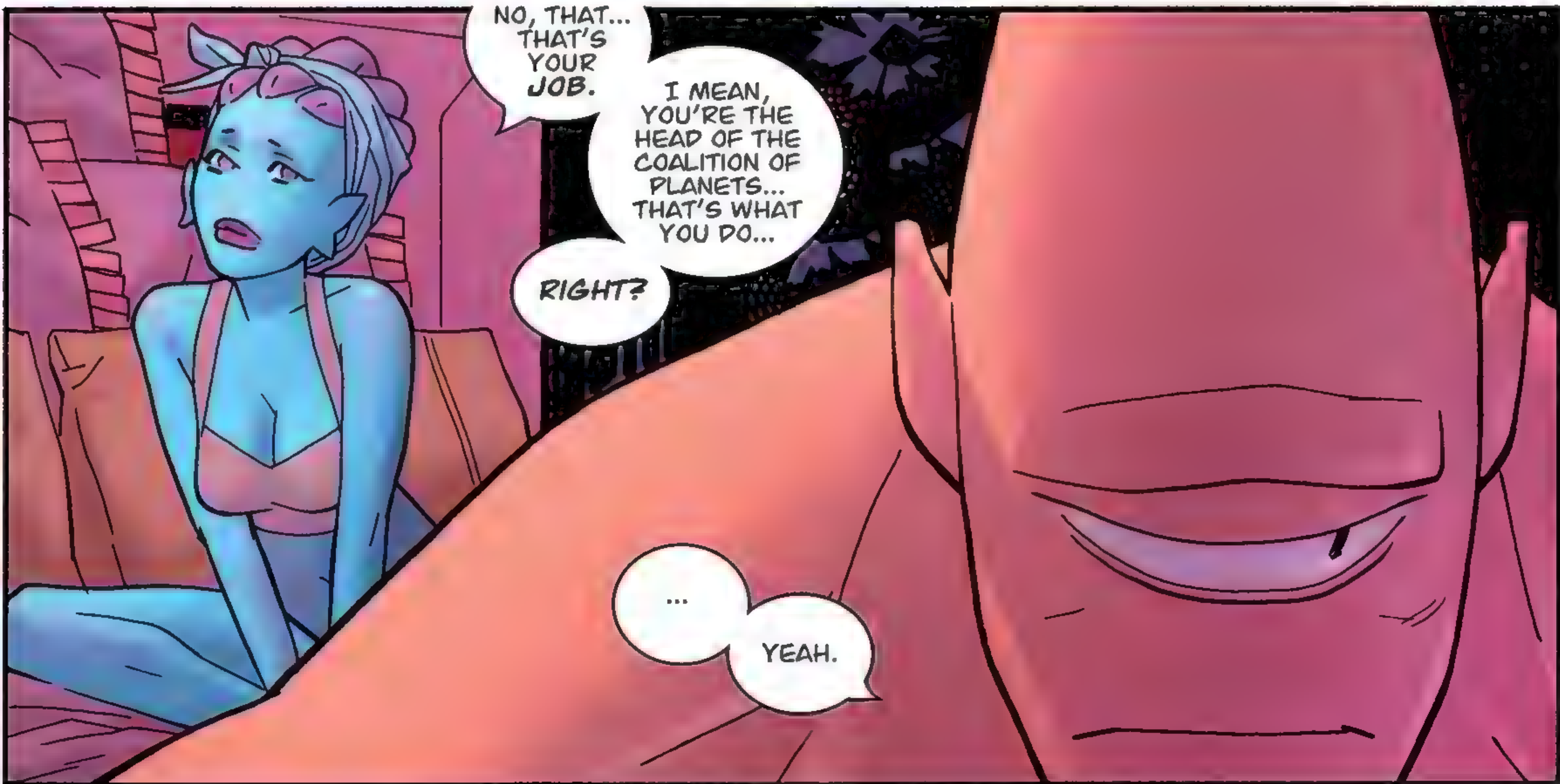
COME TO
BED, ALLEN.
IT'S LATE.
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?

JUST...
THINKING...



TELIA, I... I HAVE
TO DO SOMETHING
HORRIBLE...
FOR THE SAKE OF
THE UNIVERSE.

DOES
THAT MAKE
ME A BAD
PERSON?



NO, THAT...
THAT'S
YOUR
JOB.

I MEAN,
YOU'RE THE
HEAD OF THE
COALITION OF
PLANETS...
THAT'S WHAT
YOU DO...

RIGHT?

...

YEAH.



SLEEP WELL?

YEAH.

ALLEN AND TELIA TAKE CARE OF YOU WHILE I WAS AWAY?

OOH, SORE SUBJECT. YOU'RE NO LONGER A CHILD. DULY NOTED.

DO YOU LIKE IT HERE?

SO, ARE WE GOING TO STAY HERE?

ON MY MOTHER'S PLANET--I'D BE AN ELDER, HELL--I'D BE **MONARCH** BY NOW. THEY "TOOK CARE OF ME" AS MUCH AS YOU WOULD NEED TO "TAKE CARE" OF AN ADULT.

I KIND OF DO. IT'S... BETTER THAN EARTH IN A LOT OF WAYS. PEOPLE SEEM MORE AWARE OF THE UNIVERSE AS A WHOLE. THE PEOPLE SEEM MUCH MORE ENLIGHTENED... I... NEVER CARED FOR EARTH ALL THAT MUCH.

OH? I DON'T KNOW THAT YOU SPENT ENOUGH TIME THERE, THEN. THERE'S A LOT TO LIKE.

WHEN WAS THE LAST WAR THAT TOOK PLACE ON THIS PLANET-- THAT ONLY INVOLVED PEOPLE ON THIS PLANET? THE FACT THAT THE PEOPLE ON EARTH STILL FIGHT EACH OTHER... IT'S JUST... STUPID.

I'D WAGER YOU AND MARK CARE FOR EARTH FAR MORE THAN MOST PEOPLE ON EARTH CARE FOR EACH OTHER.

DO YOU THINK THAT'S A BAD THING?

I DON'T KNOW...





BEFORE HE DIED...
THAEDUS TOLD
YOU ABOUT
THE SCOURGE
VIRUS...
DIDN'T HE?



DON'T.
IT'S NO
LONGER
THERE.



WHERE
IS IT?

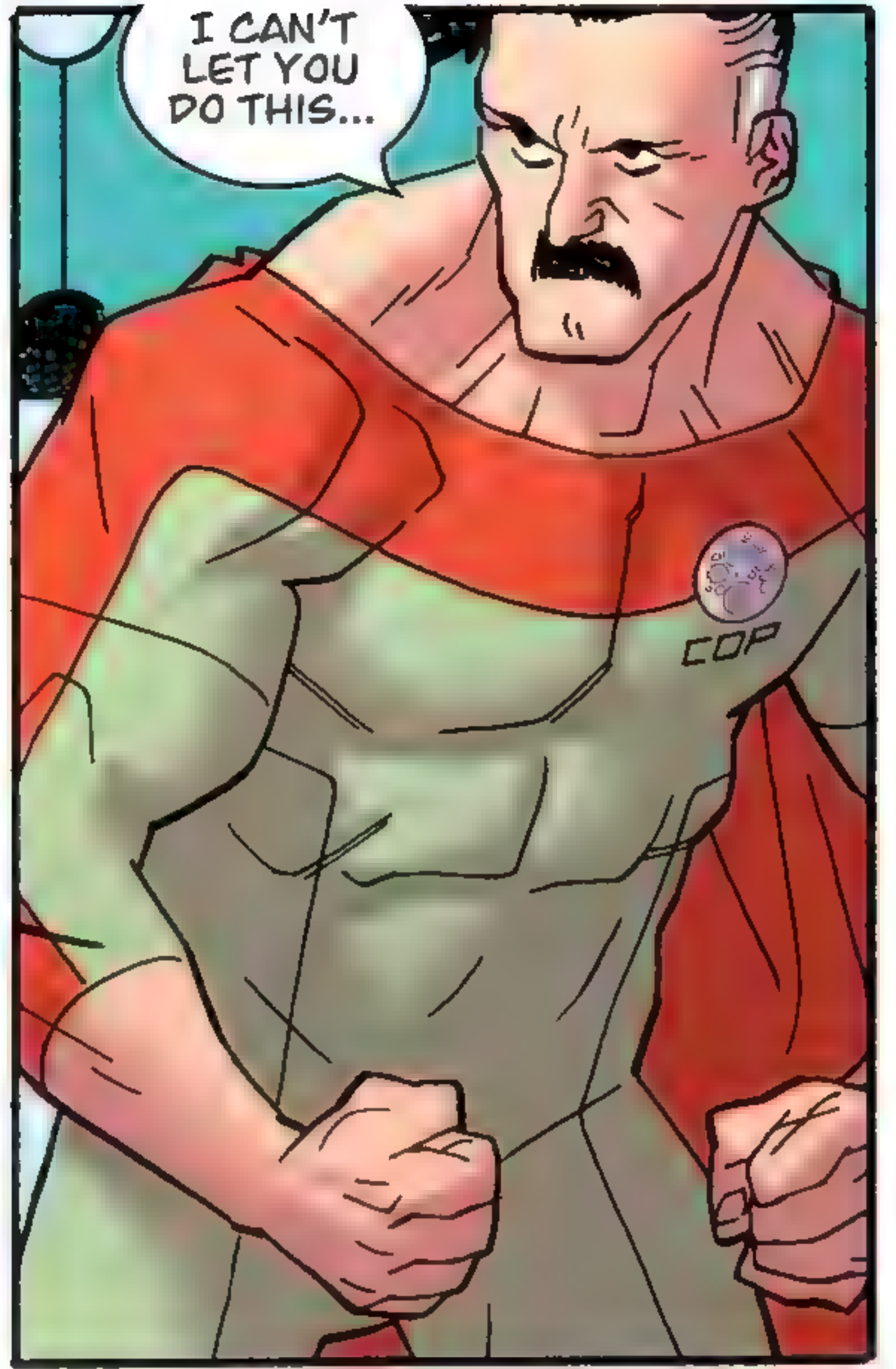


I'M SORRY, THIS
IS GOING TO GET
UGLY, BUT I JUST
COULDN'T DO THIS
WITHOUT TELLING
YOU FIRST.

I VALUE
OUR
FRIENDSHIP
TOO MUCH.

IT'S BEING
LOADED ON A
SHIP, THAT I AM
PERSONALLY
GOING TO TRAVEL
TO EARTH IN... WHERE I
WILL THEN INTRODUCE
THE VIRUS INTO
THE PLANET'S
ATMOSPHERE.

I'M
SORRY.





CHAPTER 86





THIS IS FOR THE GOOD OF THE UNIVERSE--- IT GIVES EVERY LIVING BEING A CHANCE TO THRIVE---TO STEP OUT FROM UNDER THE SHADOW YOUR PEOPLE HAVE CAST ON OUR VERY EXISTENCE!

I WON'T LET YOU STOP ME!

KROOK!



NO!

THE PEOPLE ON EARTH ARE INNOCENT! HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND?!

CRASH!

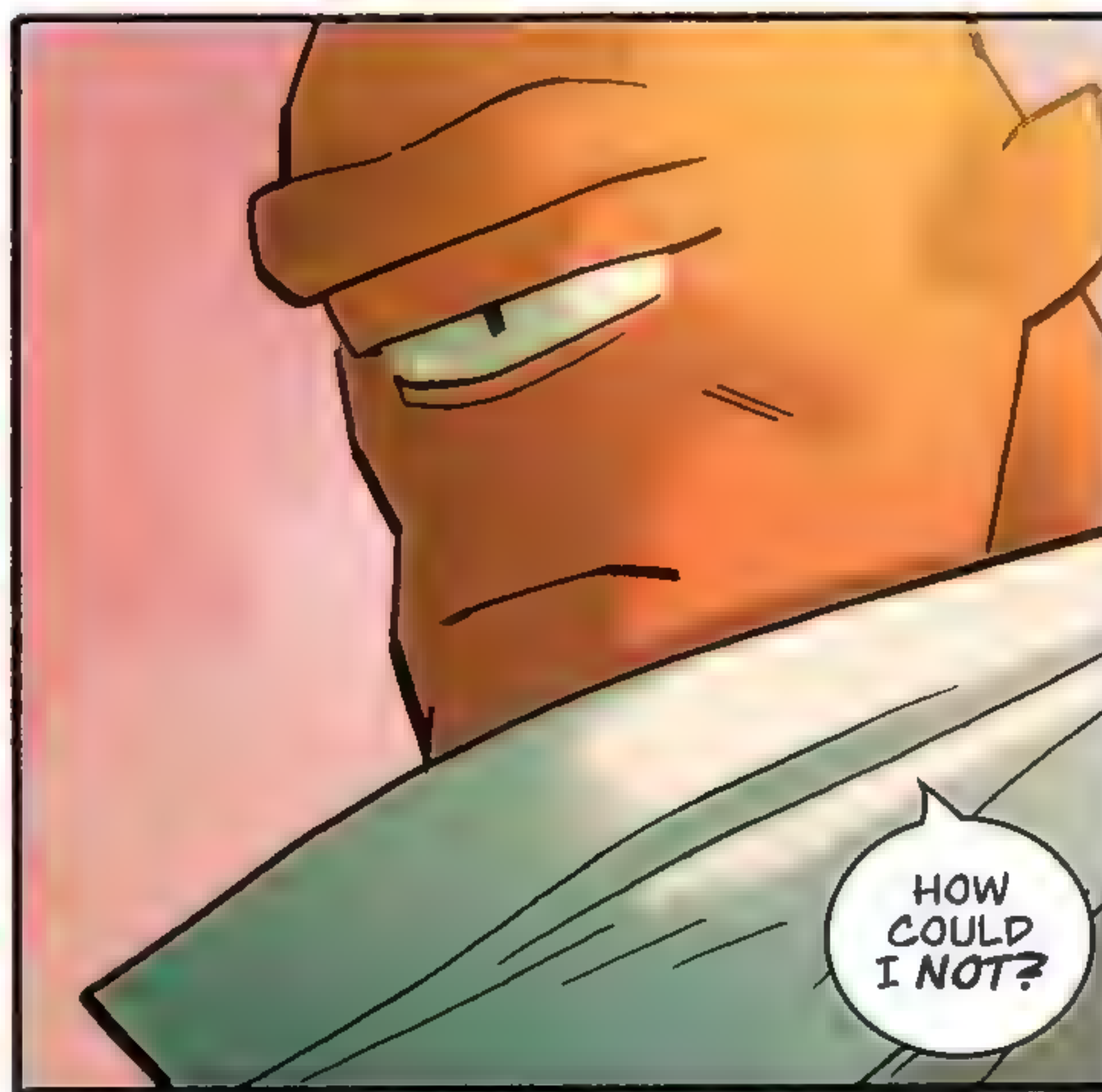
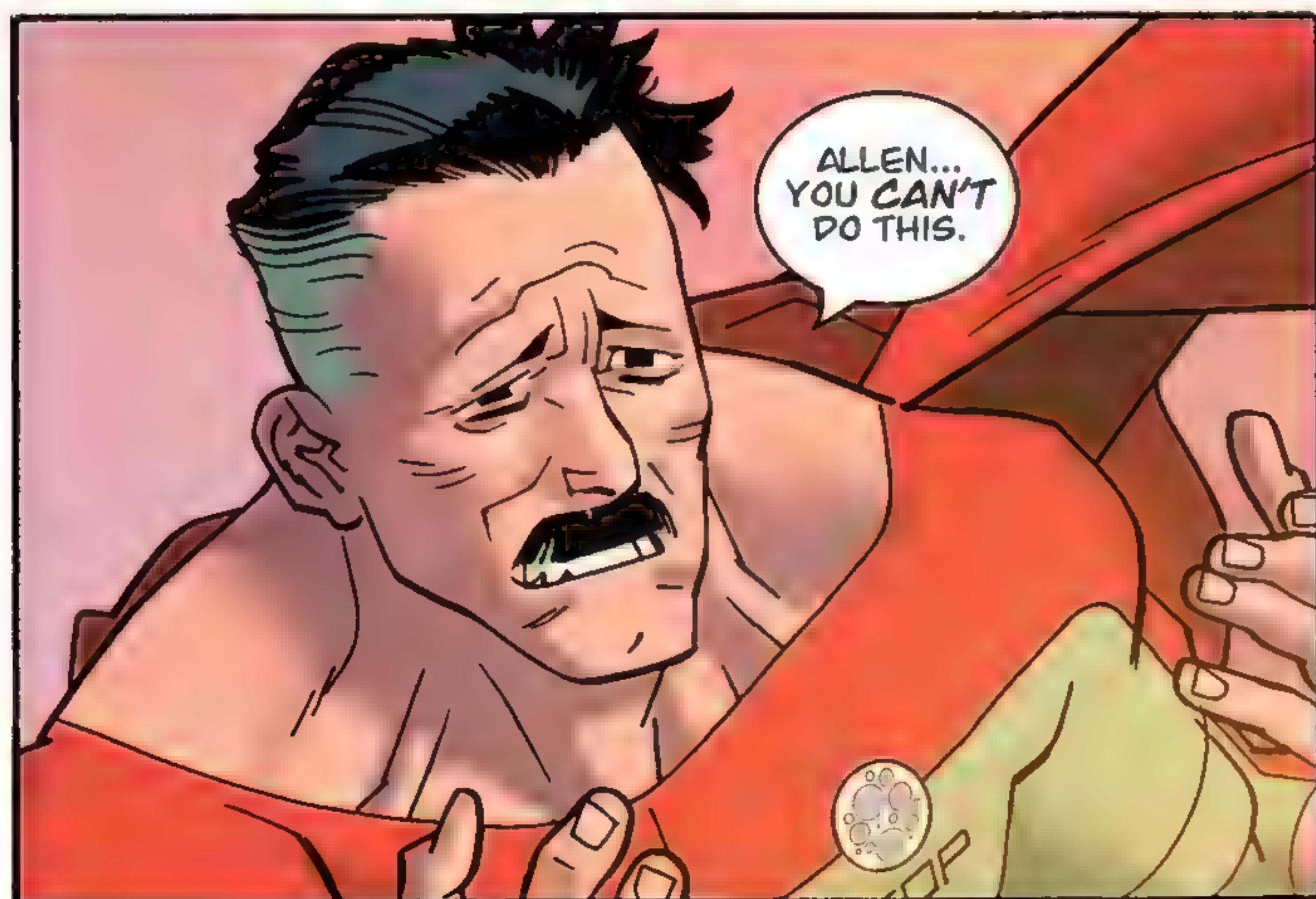
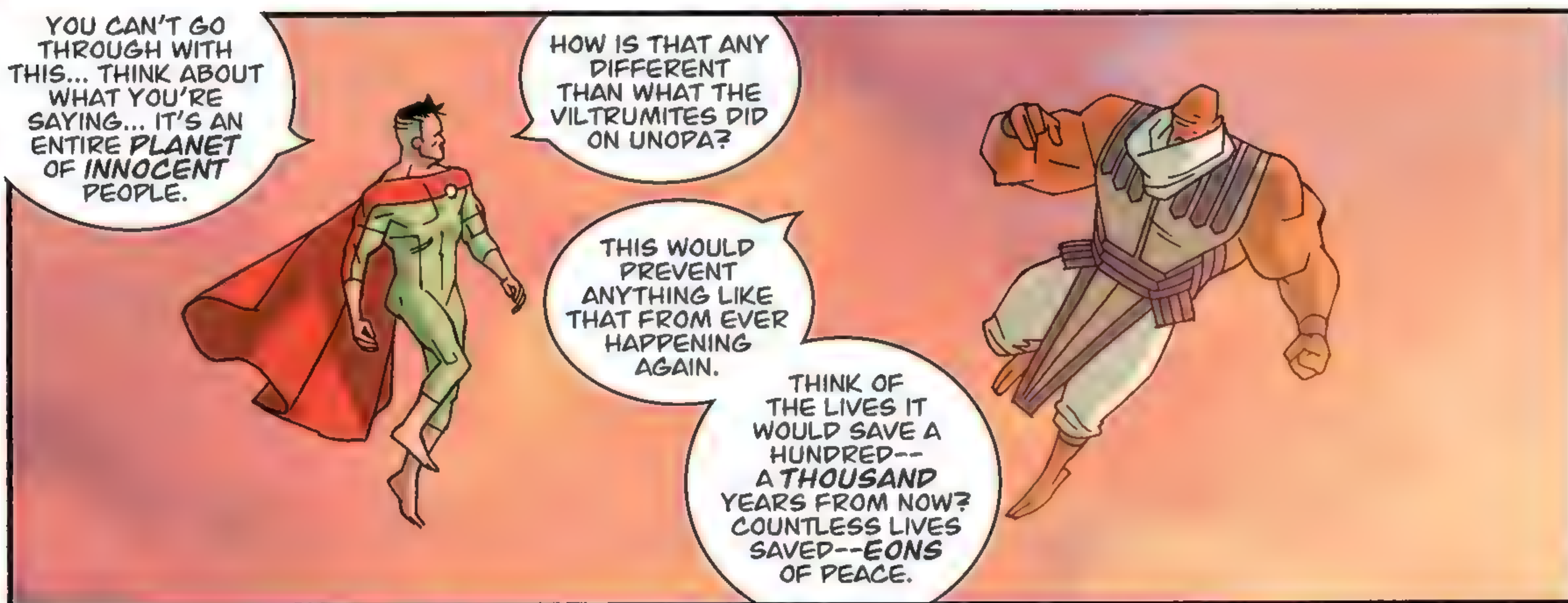


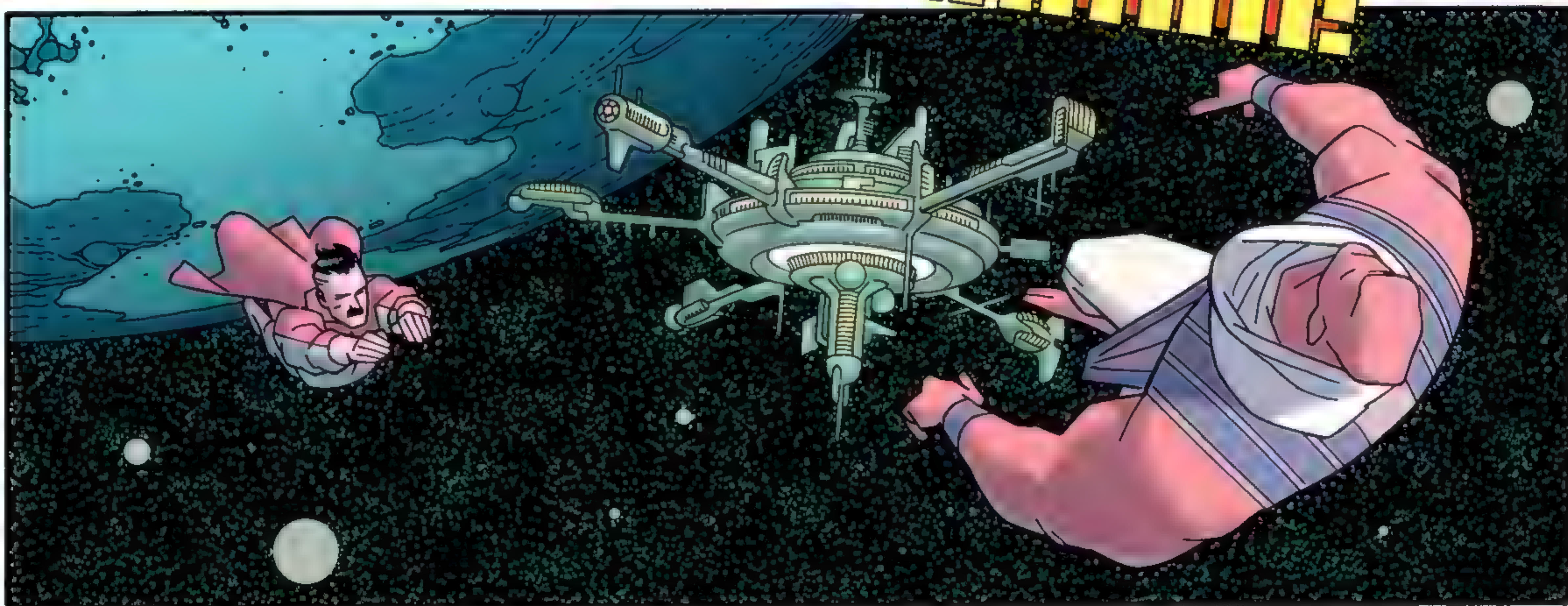
NOT HERE---

WIRRRRR!

--WE'LL BRING THE WHOLE BUILDING DOWN AROUND US!









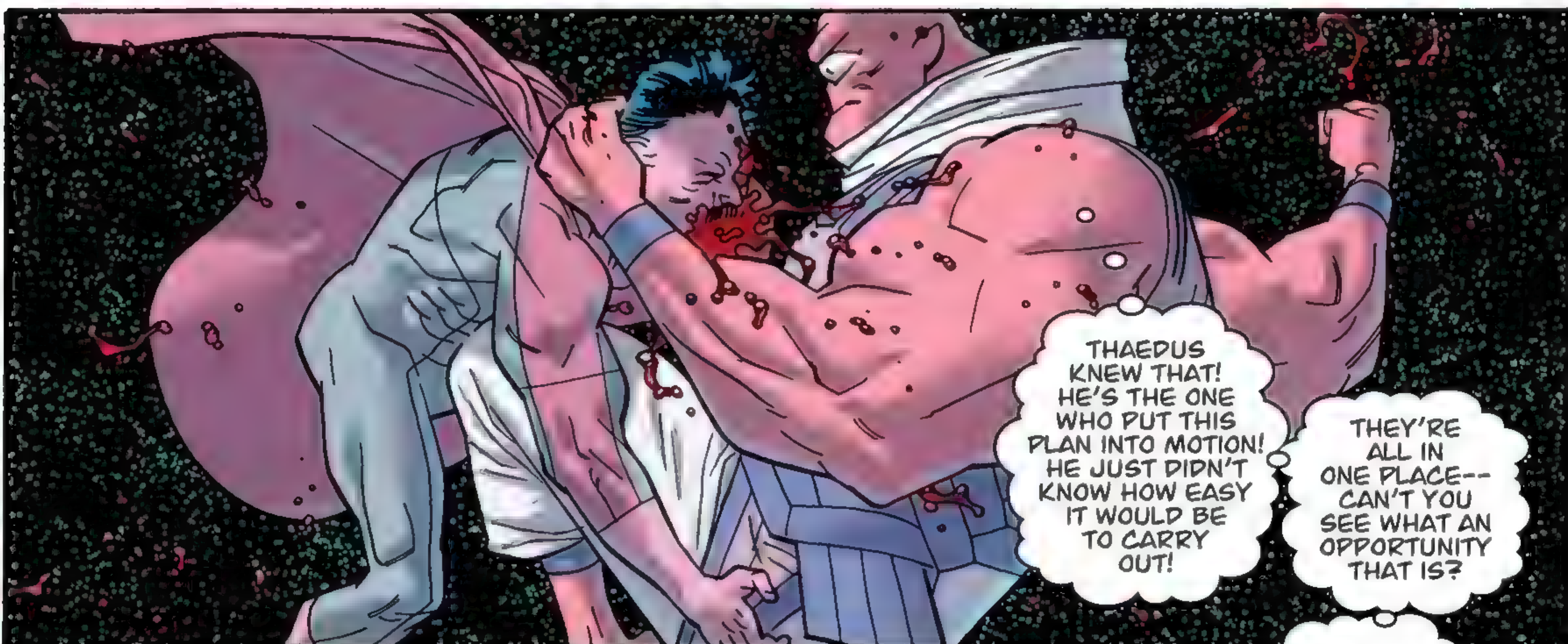
I KNEW
YOU'D MAKE
ME DO THIS! I
KNEW YOU'D
STAND
AGAINST
ME!

YOU CAN'T
SEE THINGS
THE WAY I DO.
YOUR TIME WITH
THE VILTRUMITE
EMPIRE HAS
SCARRED
YOU!



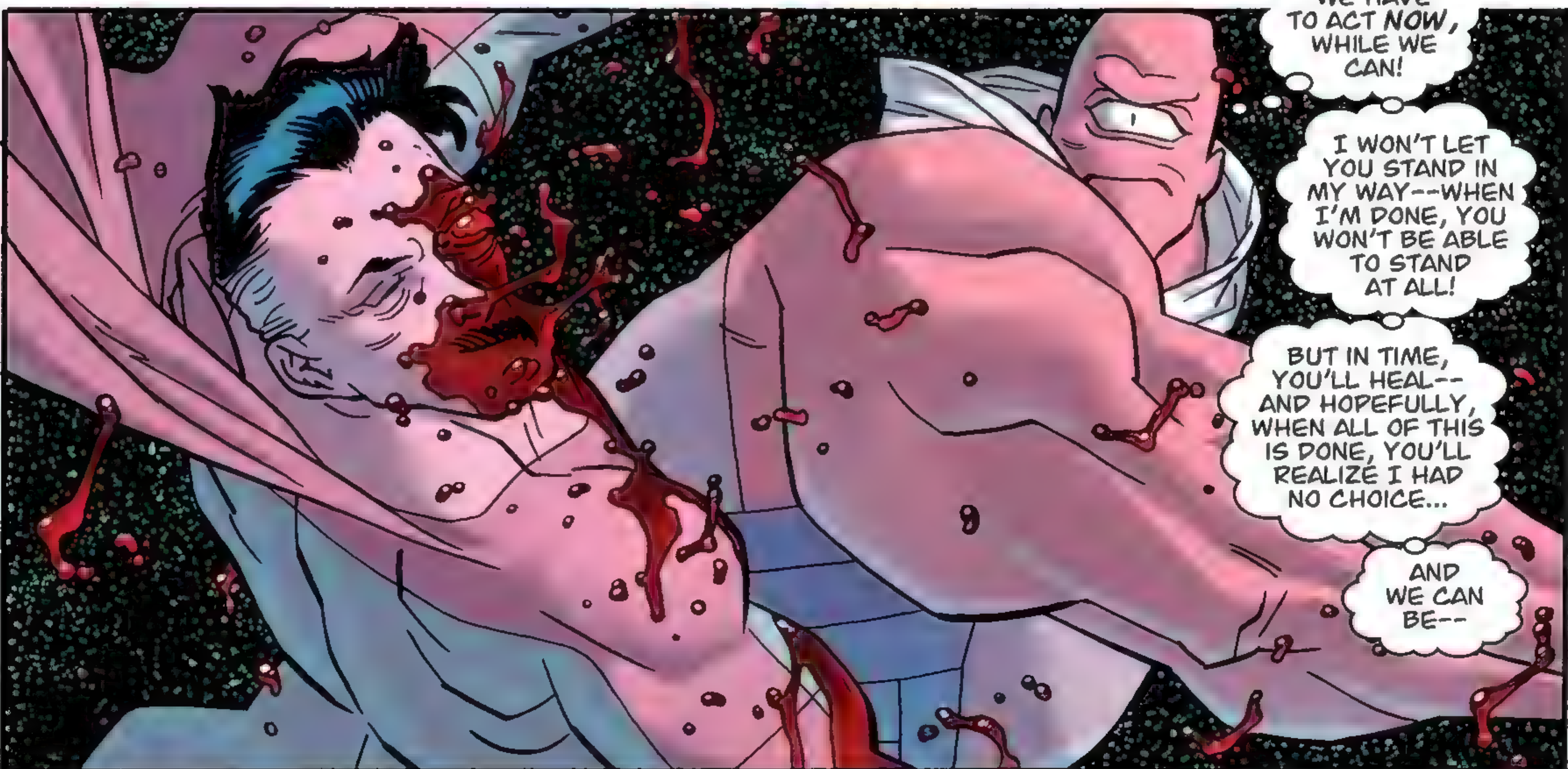
YOU FEEL
LIKE IF YOU TAKE
ONE STEP BACK
TOWARD THAT
LIFE--YOU WON'T
COME BACK!

BUT I LEAD
THE COALITION
NOW! I HAVE TO
PROTECT MILLIONS
OF LIVES! SOMETIMES
THESE KINDS OF
DECISIONS HAVE
TO BE MADE!



THAEDUS
KNEW THAT!
HE'S THE ONE
WHO PUT THIS
PLAN INTO MOTION!
HE JUST DIDN'T
KNOW HOW EASY
IT WOULD BE
TO CARRY
OUT!

THEY'RE
ALL IN
ONE PLACE--
CAN'T YOU
SEE WHAT AN
OPPORTUNITY
THAT IS?



WE HAVE
TO ACT NOW,
WHILE WE
CAN!

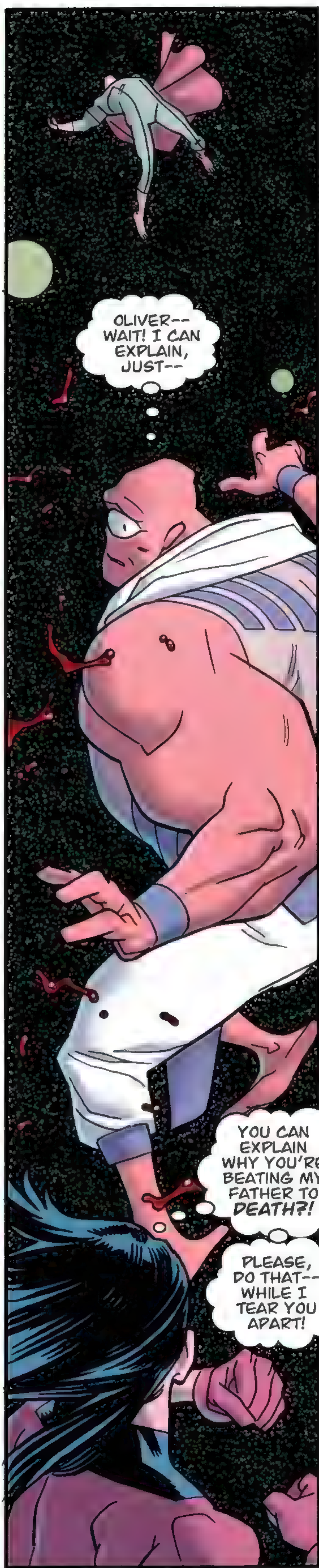
I WON'T LET
YOU STAND IN
MY WAY--WHEN
I'M DONE, YOU
WON'T BE ABLE
TO STAND
AT ALL!

BUT IN TIME,
YOU'LL HEAL--
AND HOPEFULLY,
WHEN ALL OF THIS
IS DONE, YOU'LL
REALIZE I HAD
NO CHOICE...

AND
WE CAN
BE--



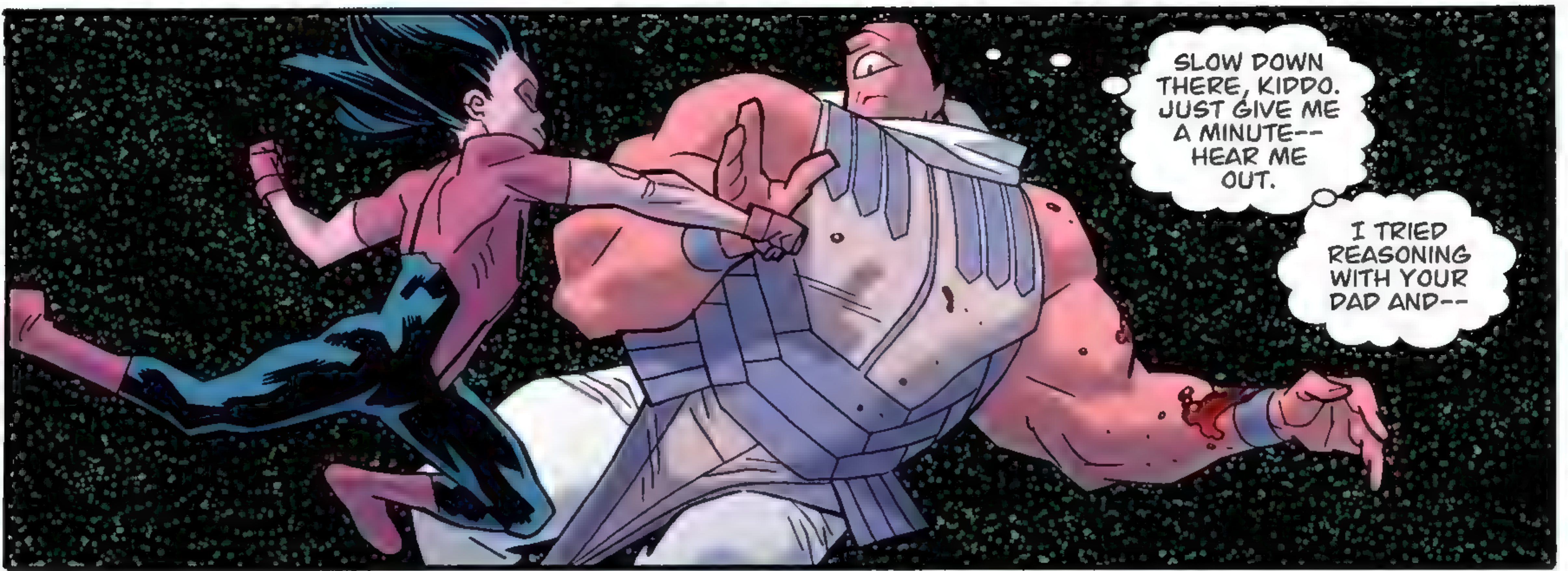
ALLEN!
MY GOD--
WHAT THE
HELL ARE YOU
DOING?!



OLIVER--
WAIT! I CAN
EXPLAIN,
JUST--

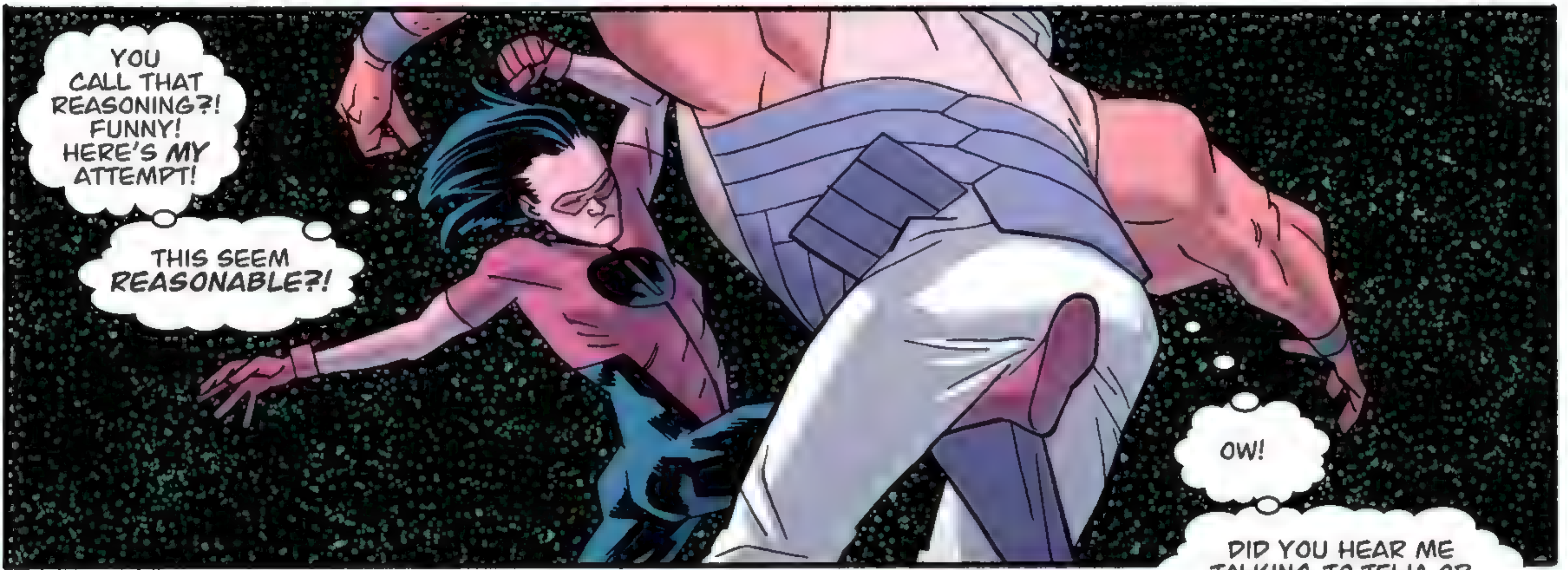
YOU CAN
EXPLAIN
WHY YOU'RE
BEATING MY
FATHER TO
DEATH?!

PLEASE,
DO THAT--
WHILE I
TEAR YOU
APART!



SLOW DOWN THERE, KIDDO. JUST GIVE ME A MINUTE-- HEAR ME OUT.

I TRIED REASONING WITH YOUR DAD AND--



YOU CALL THAT REASONING?! FUNNY! HERE'S MY ATTEMPT!

THIS SEEM REASONABLE?!

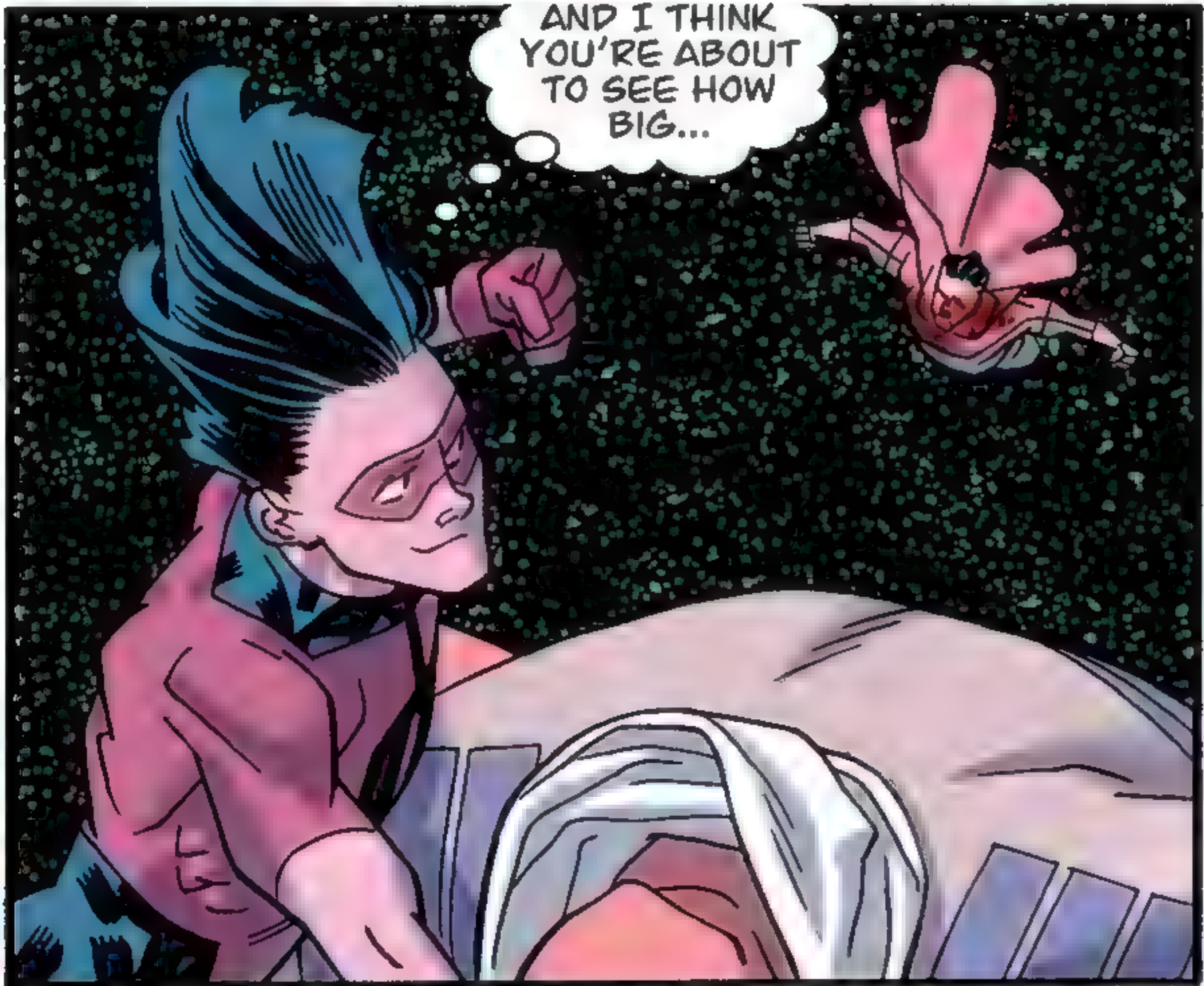
OW!

DID YOU HEAR ME TALKING TO TELIA OR SOMETHING?! THIS KIND OF INJURY HURTS UNOPANS IMMENSELY-- NOT COOL!

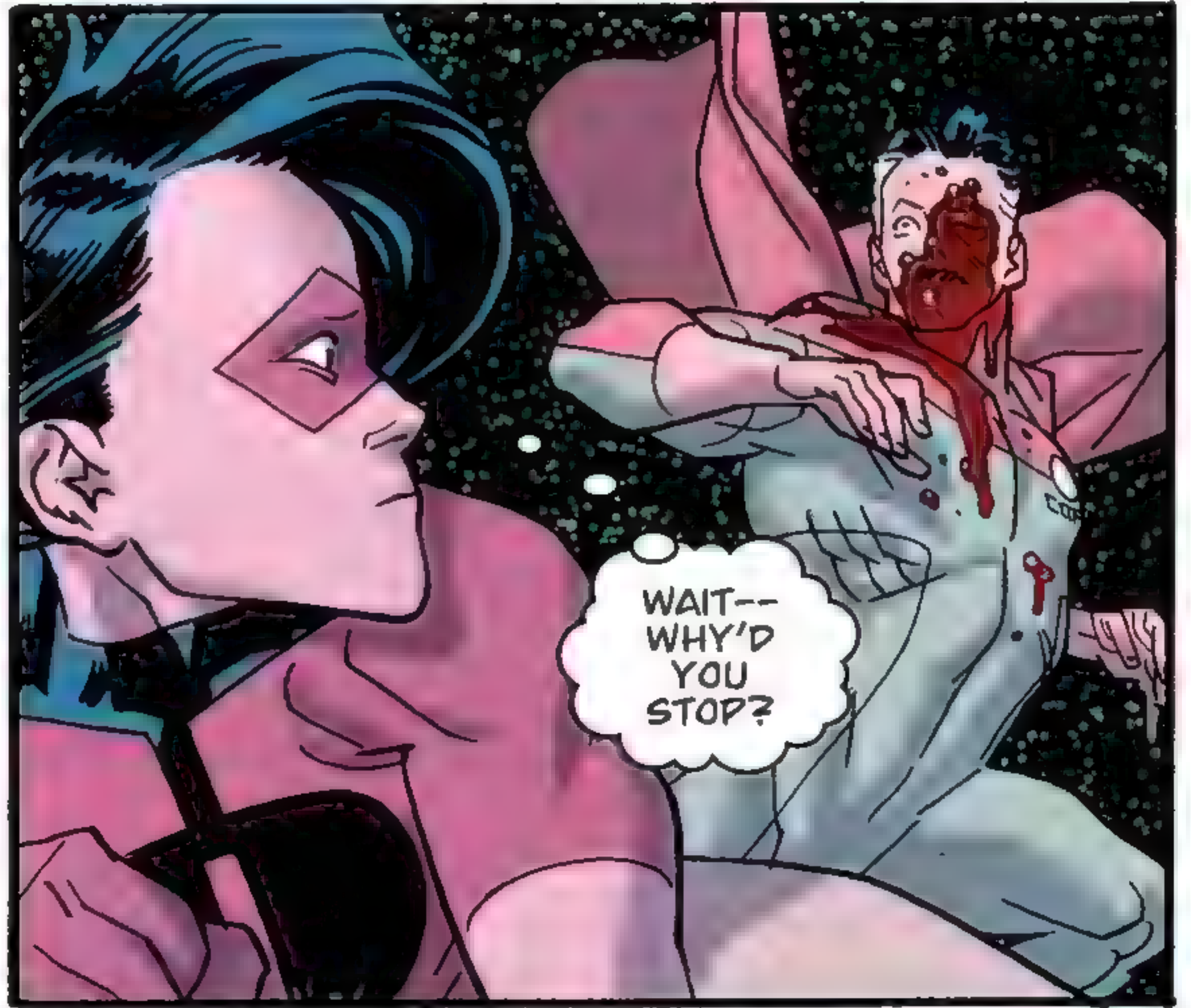


OH, SHUT UP! VILTRUMITES HAVE BALLS-- CRY BABY!

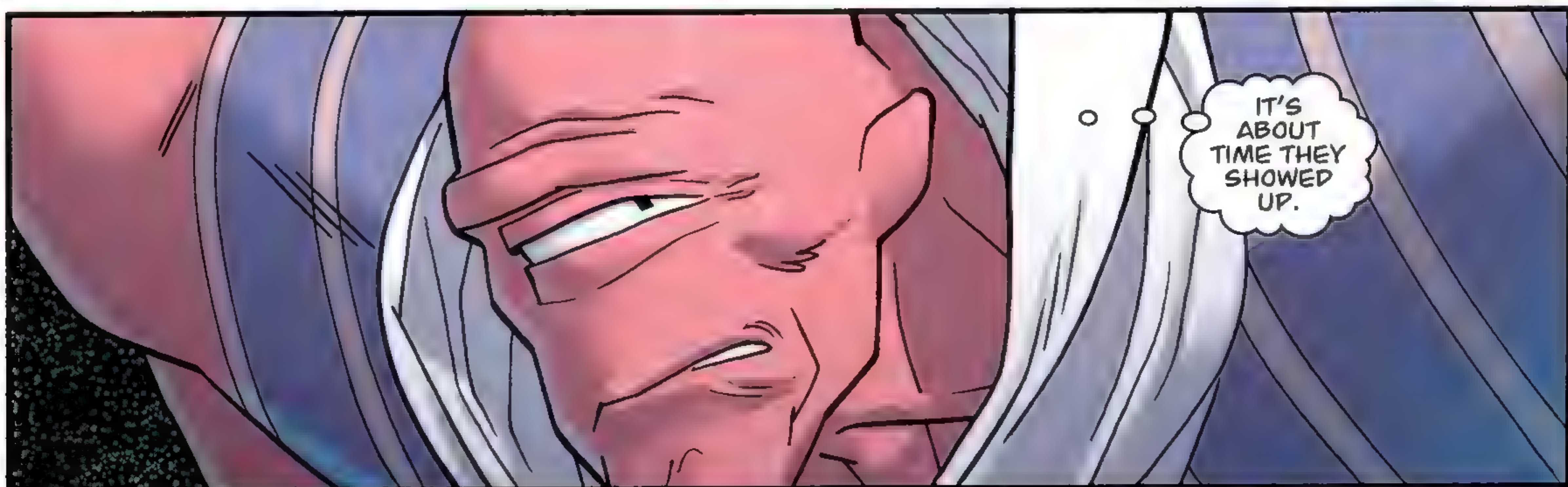
I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF YOUR ANATOMY COMPARES TO MINE--YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH THIS--



AND I THINK YOU'RE ABOUT TO SEE HOW BIG...



WAIT-- WHY'D YOU STOP?





OKAY...



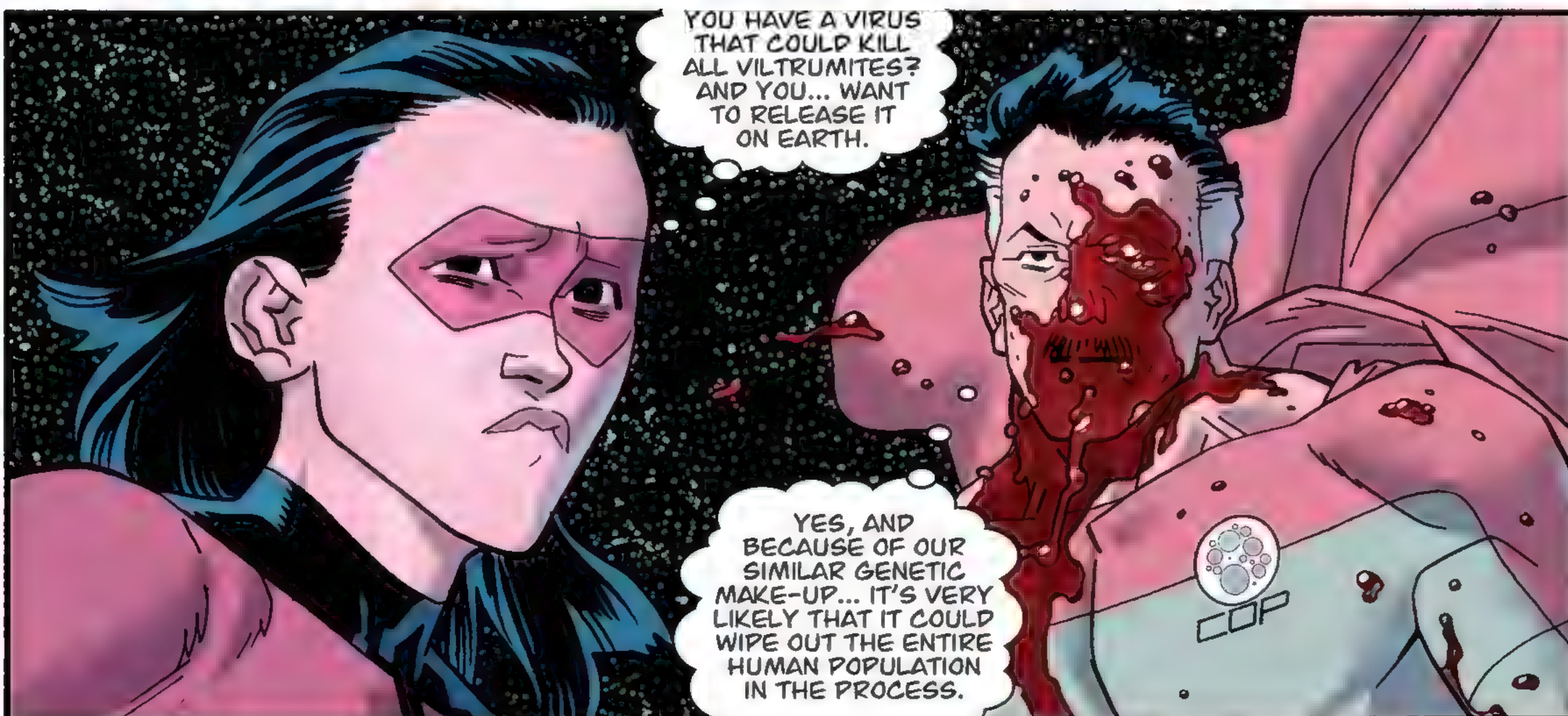
LET ME TRY THIS AGAIN WHILE THE THREAT OF MY SOLDIERS HAS YOU WILLING TO LISTEN.



IF I RELEASE THE SCOURGE VIRUS ON EARTH--IT'S NOT ONE-HUNDRED PERCENT CERTAIN THAT IT WILL AFFECT THE HUMAN POPULATION THERE. IT'S POSSIBLE... BUT THAT'S IT.

I'M SORRY, BUT--THAT'S A RISK WORTH TAKING. IF THAT VIRUS CAN WIPE OUT THE VILTRUMITES ONCE AND FOR ALL--RID THE UNIVERSE OF THAT THREAT... I HAVE TO DO IT.

IF YOU THINK ABOUT THIS... REALLY CONSIDER WHAT IS AT STAKE HERE, YOU'LL SEE THAT I'M RIGHT.



YOU HAVE A VIRUS THAT COULD KILL ALL VILTRUMITES? AND YOU... WANT TO RELEASE IT ON EARTH.

YES, AND BECAUSE OF OUR SIMILAR GENETIC MAKE-UP... IT'S VERY LIKELY THAT IT COULD WIPE OUT THE ENTIRE HUMAN POPULATION IN THE PROCESS.



HE'S
RIGHT.

LET
HIM DO
IT.

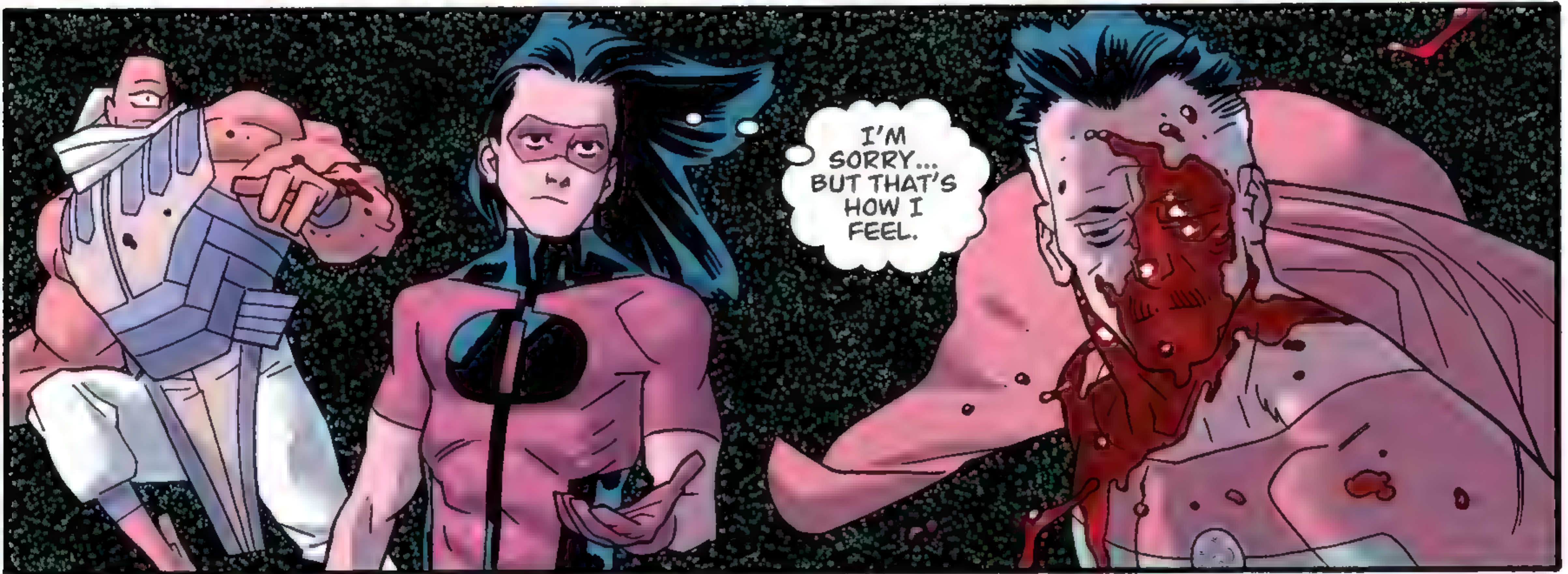


OLIVER?

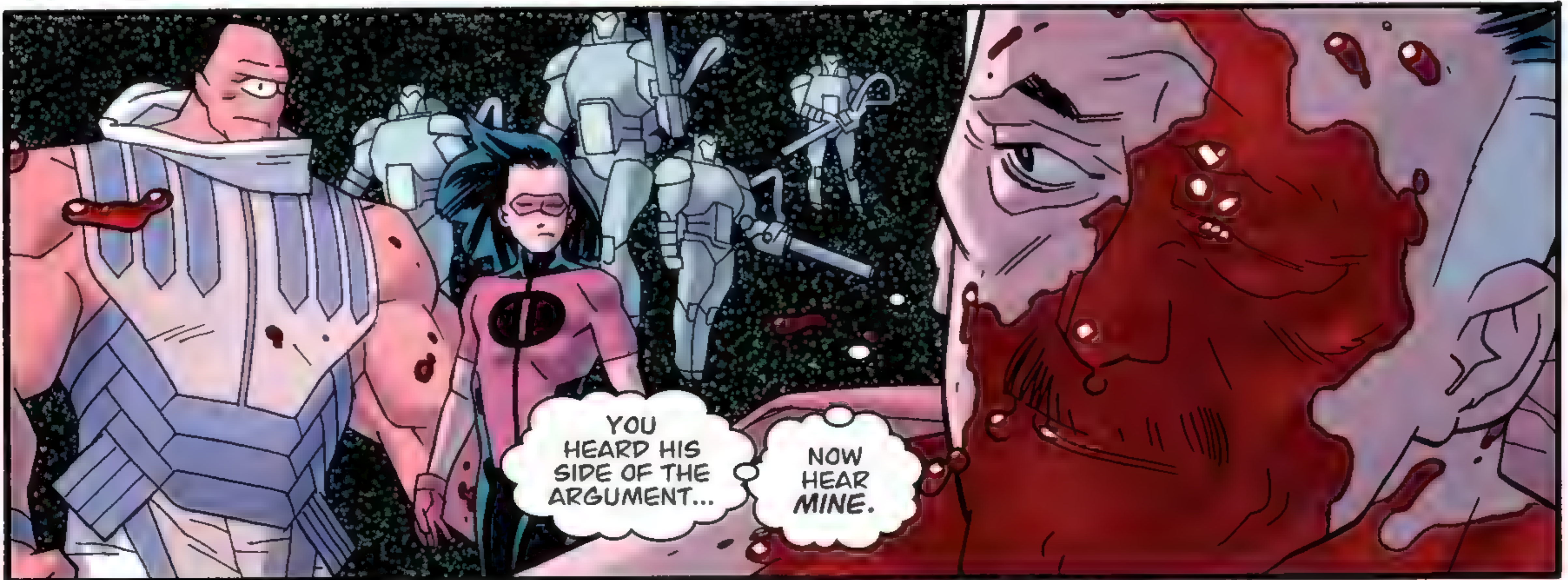


I'M SURE HE'D
WARN MARK--AND
LET HIM TAKE EVE
AND A FEW OTHER
PEOPLE HE LIKED
OFF-PLANET.

MOM'S
ALREADY HERE.
THERE'S REALLY
NO ONE ELSE I
CARE ABOUT.

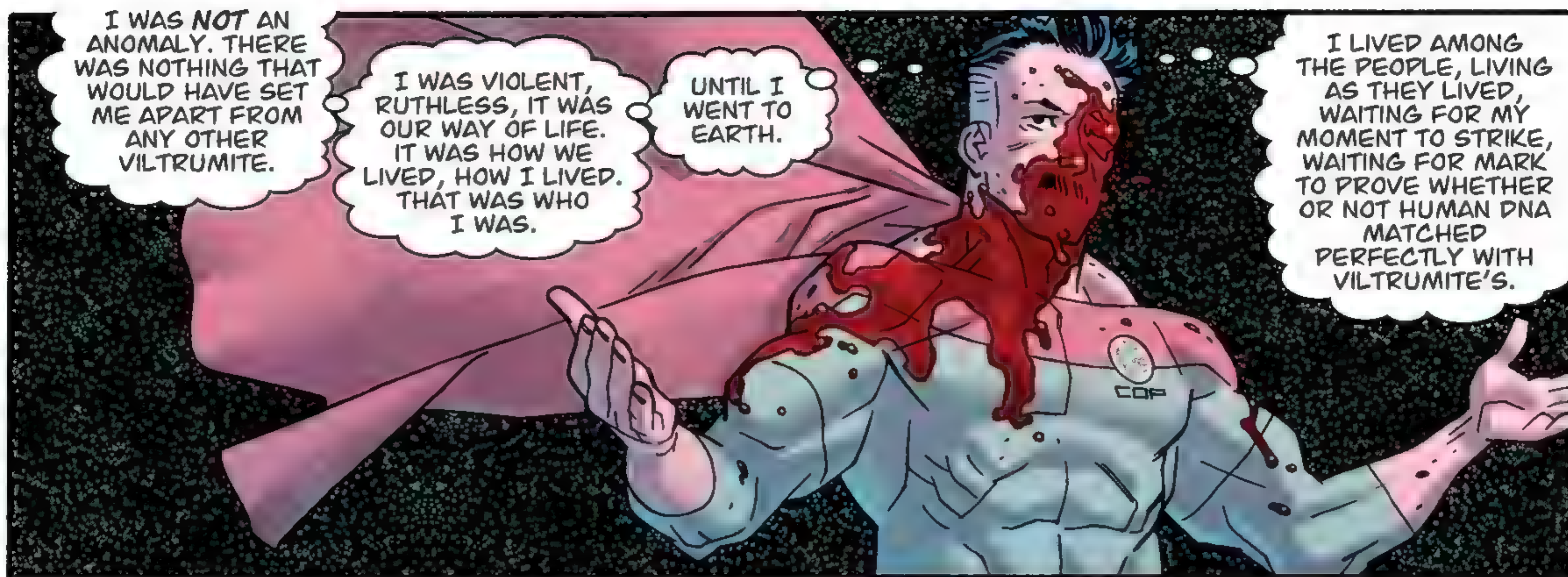


I'M
SORRY...
BUT THAT'S
HOW I
FEEL.



YOU
HEARD HIS
SIDE OF THE
ARGUMENT...

NOW
HEAR
MINE.

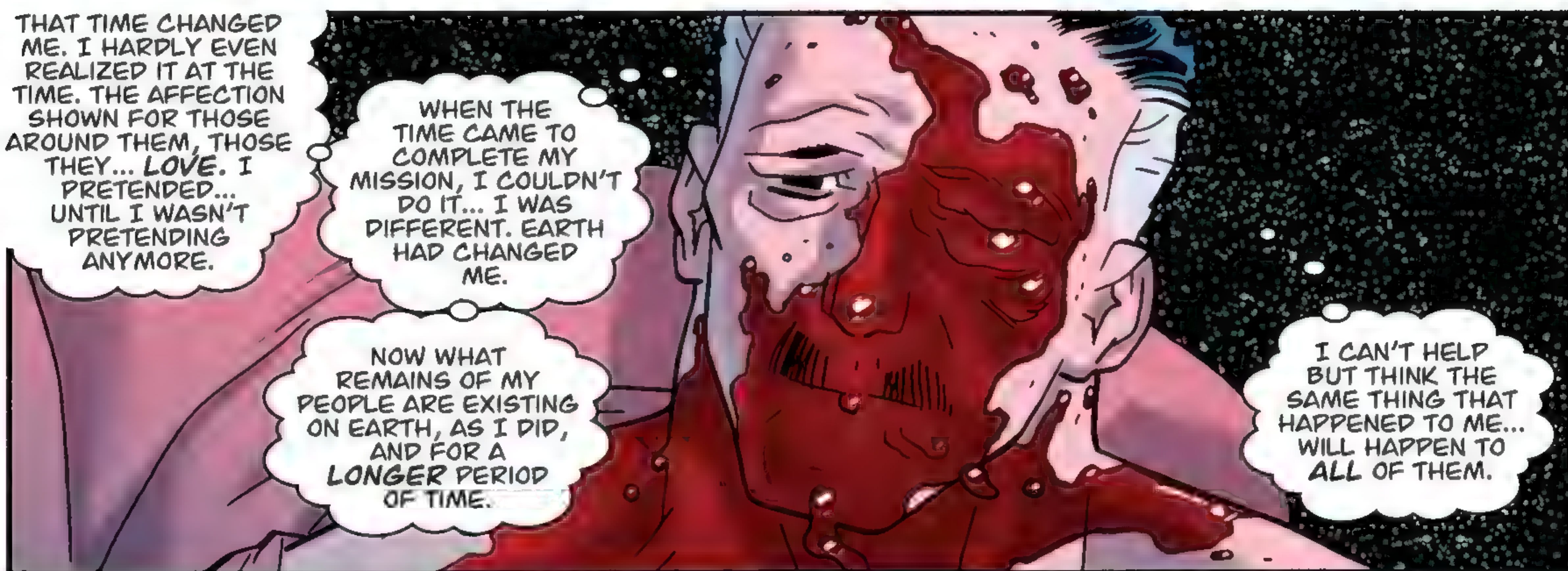


I WAS NOT AN ANOMALY. THERE WAS NOTHING THAT WOULD HAVE SET ME APART FROM ANY OTHER VILTRUMITE.

I WAS VIOLENT, RUTHLESS, IT WAS OUR WAY OF LIFE. IT WAS HOW WE LIVED, HOW I LIVED. THAT WAS WHO I WAS.

UNTIL I WENT TO EARTH.

I LIVED AMONG THE PEOPLE, LIVING AS THEY LIVED, WAITING FOR MY MOMENT TO STRIKE, WAITING FOR MARK TO PROVE WHETHER OR NOT HUMAN DNA MATCHED PERFECTLY WITH VILTRUMITE'S.



THAT TIME CHANGED ME. I HARDLY EVEN REALIZED IT AT THE TIME. THE AFFECTION SHOWN FOR THOSE AROUND THEM, THOSE THEY... LOVE. I PRETENDED... UNTIL I WASN'T PRETENDING ANYMORE.

WHEN THE TIME CAME TO COMPLETE MY MISSION, I COULDN'T DO IT... I WAS DIFFERENT. EARTH HAD CHANGED ME.

NOW WHAT REMAINS OF MY PEOPLE ARE EXISTING ON EARTH, AS I DID, AND FOR A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME.

I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENED TO ME... WILL HAPPEN TO ALL OF THEM.



AND WHAT IF THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN? WE WILL HAVE SQUANDERED OUR ONLY CHANCE TO RID OURSELVES OF THIS THREAT TO OUR ENTIRE UNIVERSE.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT YOUR PEOPLE ARE CAPABLE OF? OUR EFFORTS TO DESTROY THEM IN THE RECENT WAR?

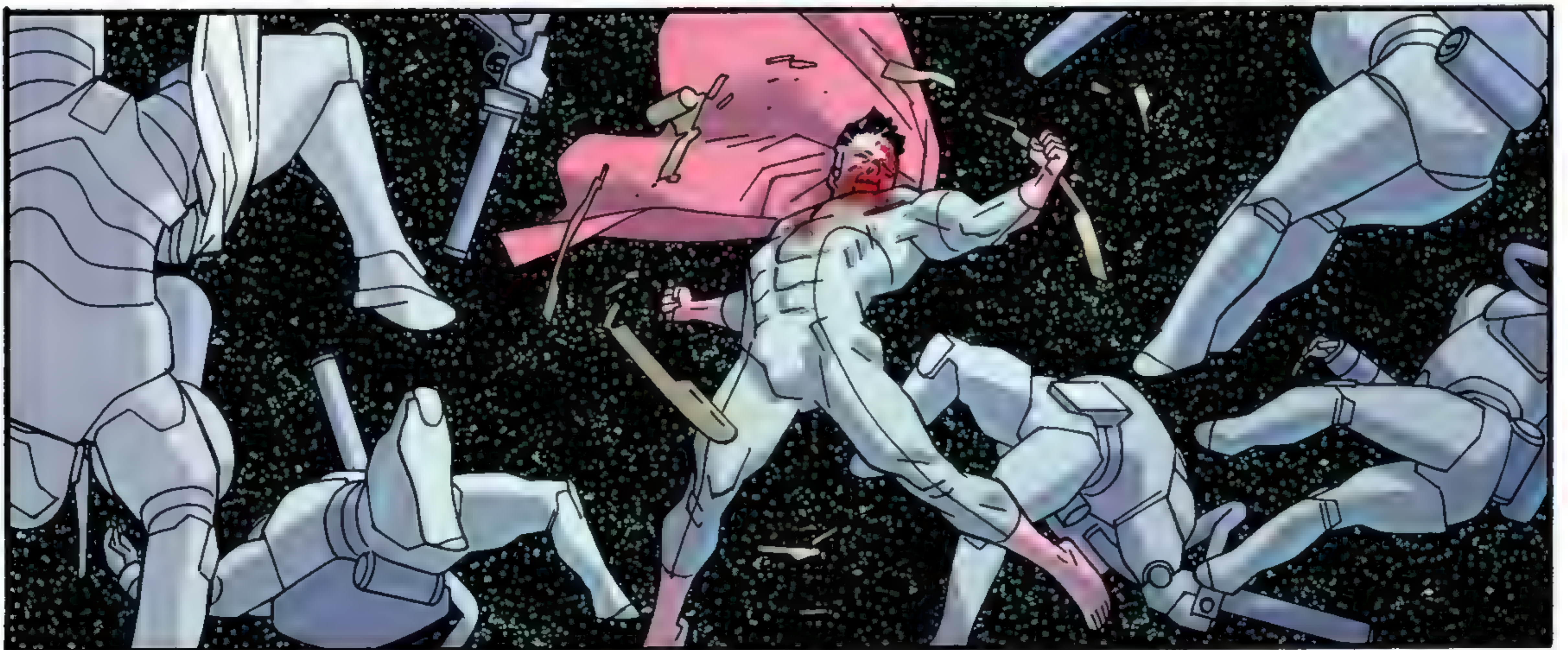
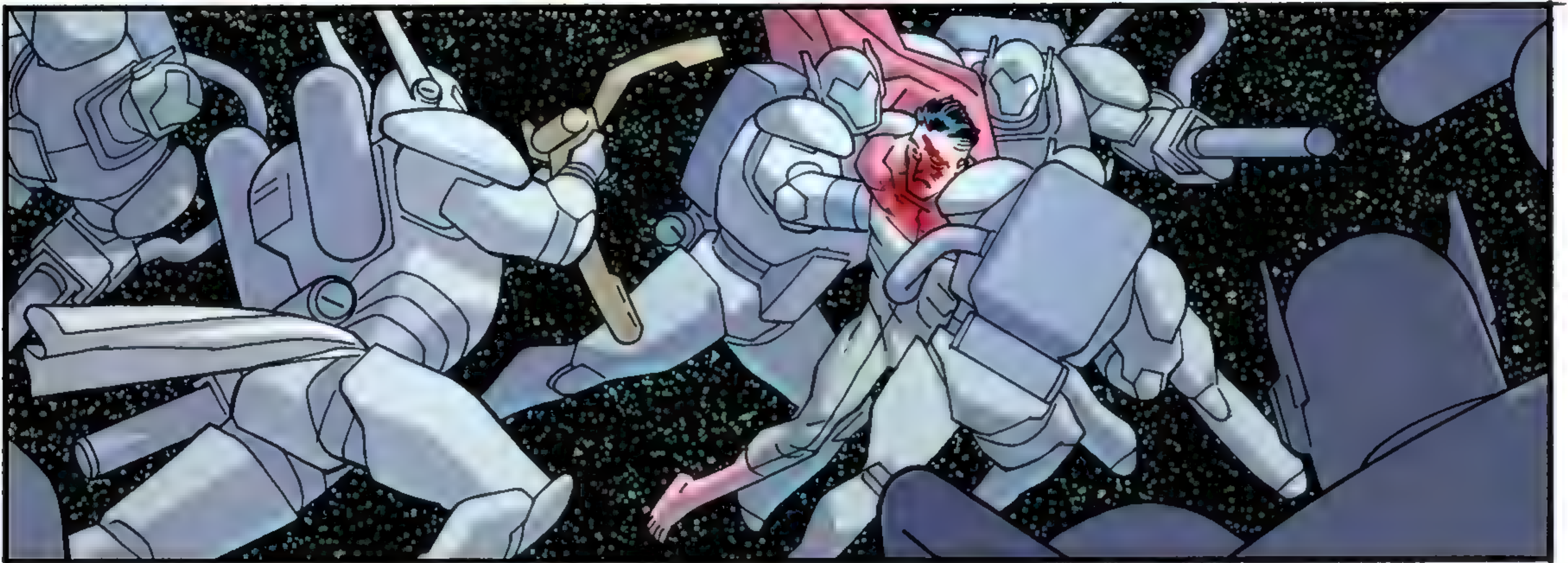
I'M CONFUSED, MY FRIEND. ARE YOU TRYING TO SAVE THE INNOCENT PEOPLE OF EARTH... OR YOUR VILTRUMITE BRETHREN?

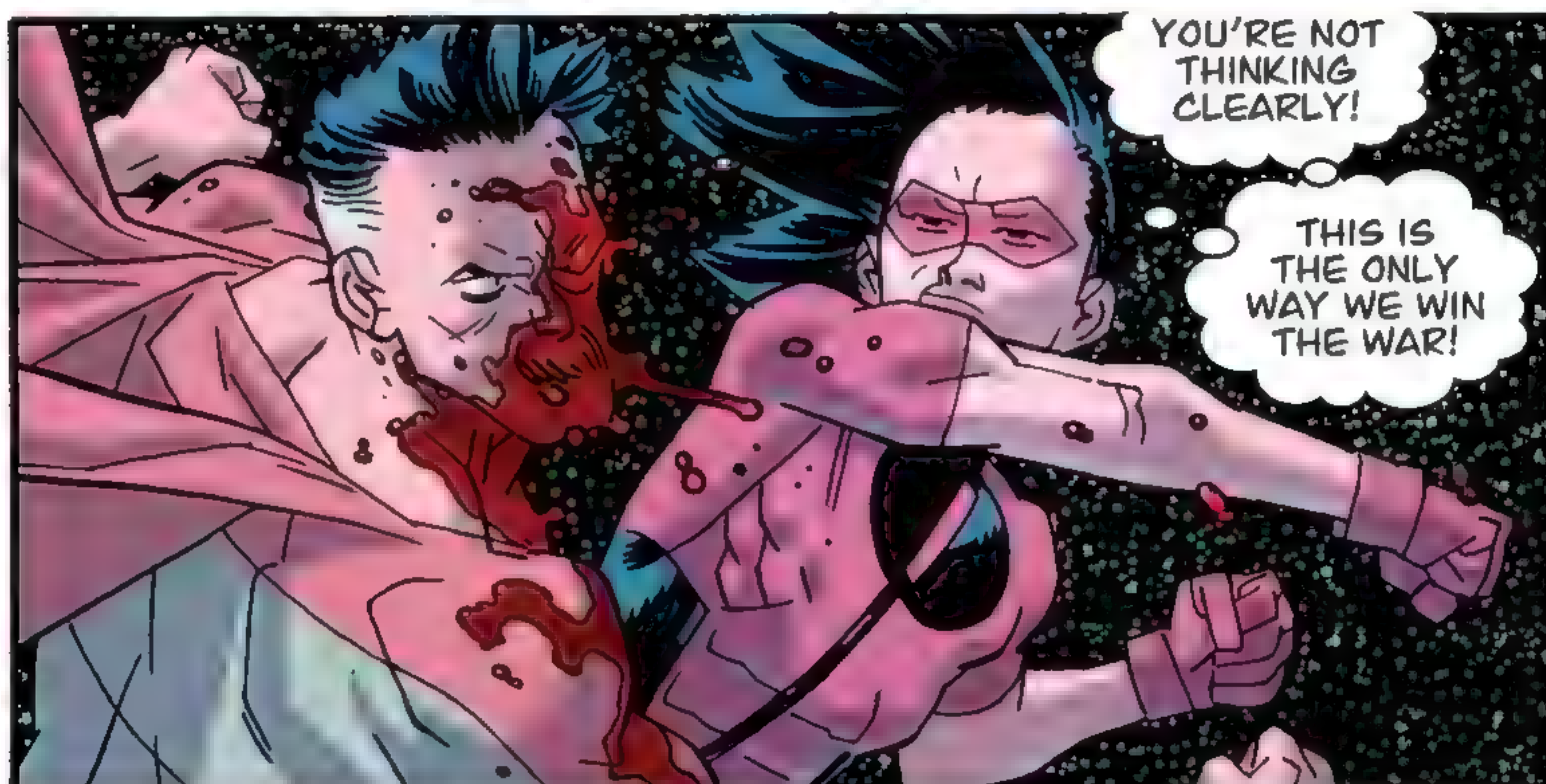
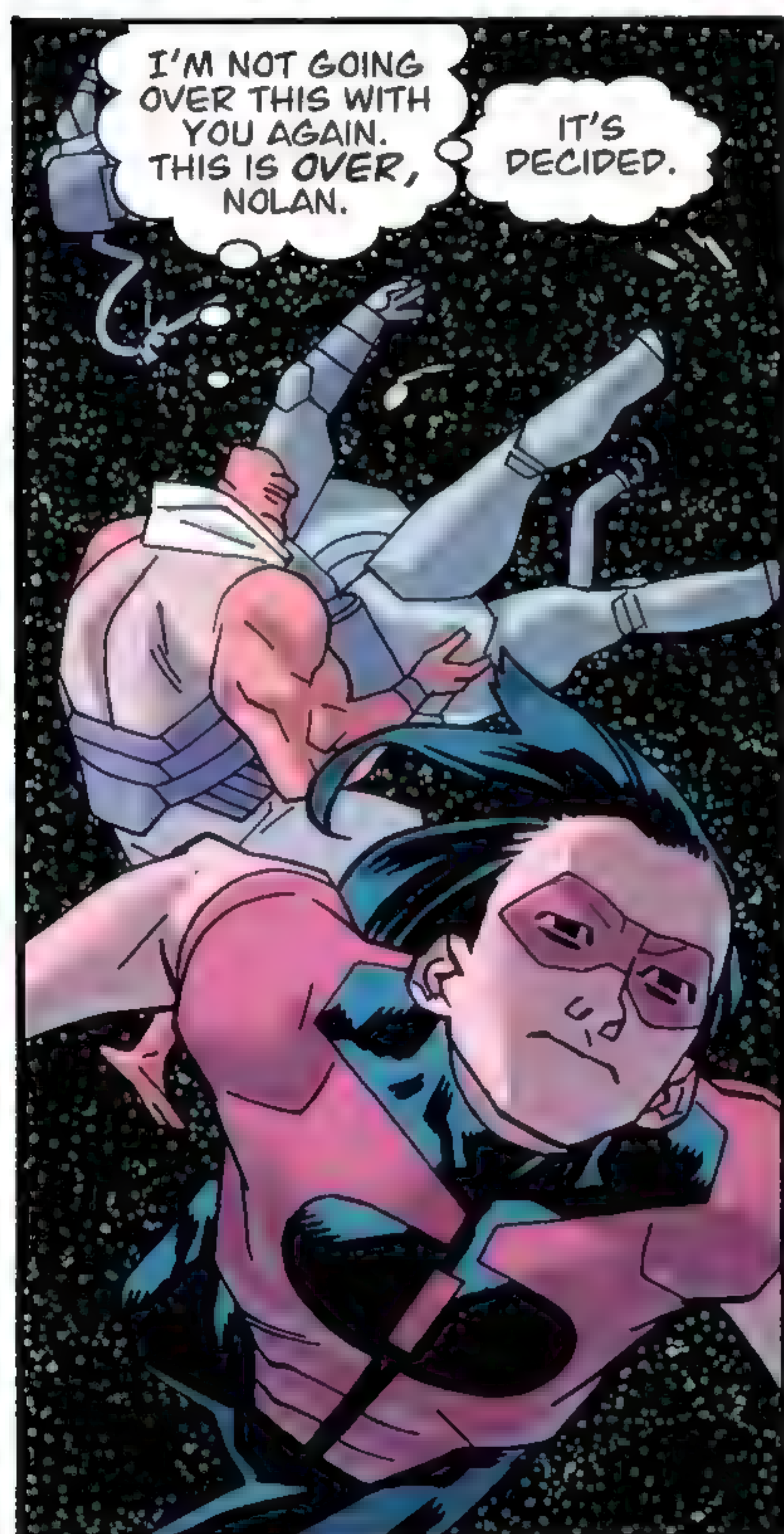
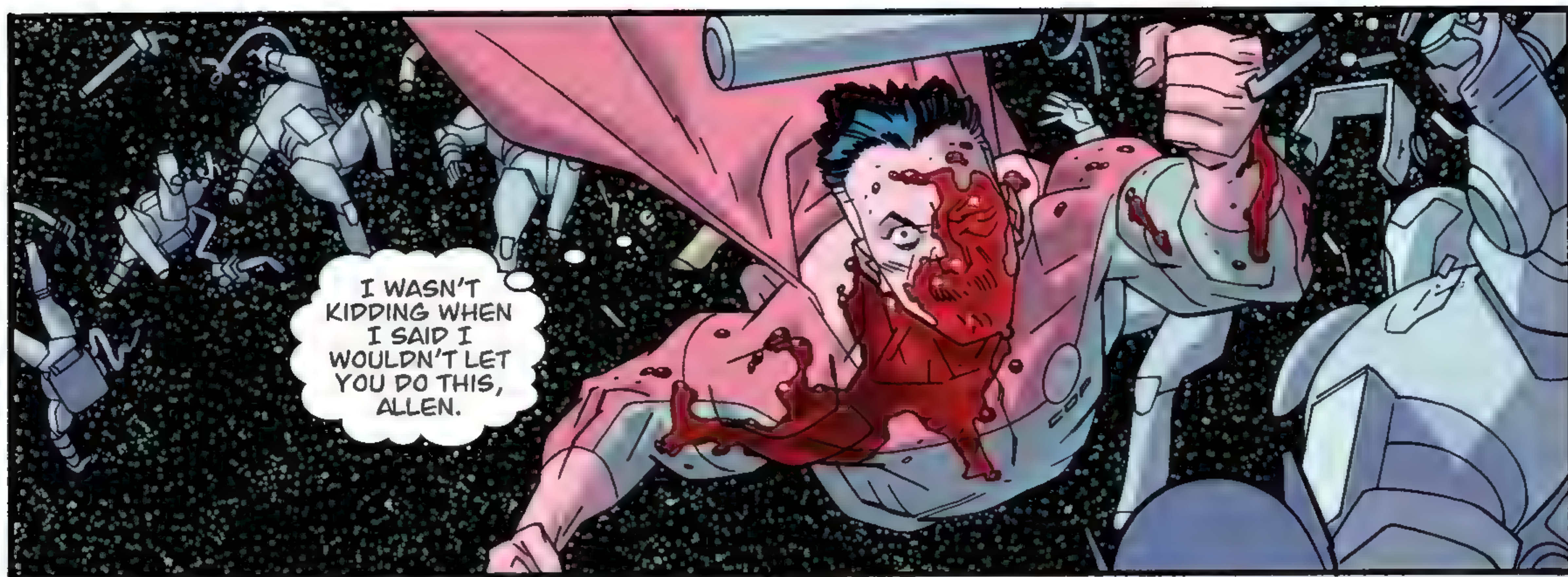


WHAT YOU SAY ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF EARTH IS TRUE OF MY MOTHER, AND VERY FEW OTHERS. I HAVE READ THE ENTIRETY OF THEIR WRITTEN HISTORY... MY OPINION OF THEM DIFFERS FROM YOURS... SUBSTANTIALLY.

THEY'RE ASSHOLES. THEY CARE ONLY FOR TAKING WHAT THEY DON'T HAVE FROM THOSE THAT DO. THEY'RE A SMALL AND PETTY PEOPLE WHO ARE NEARLY AS ADDICTED TO VIOLENCE AS OUR RACE IS.

YOU BELIEVE VILTRUMITES WILL LEARN FROM THEM, AND BE MADE BETTER BY IT. I'M SORRY, FATHER... BUT... YOU'RE WRONG.





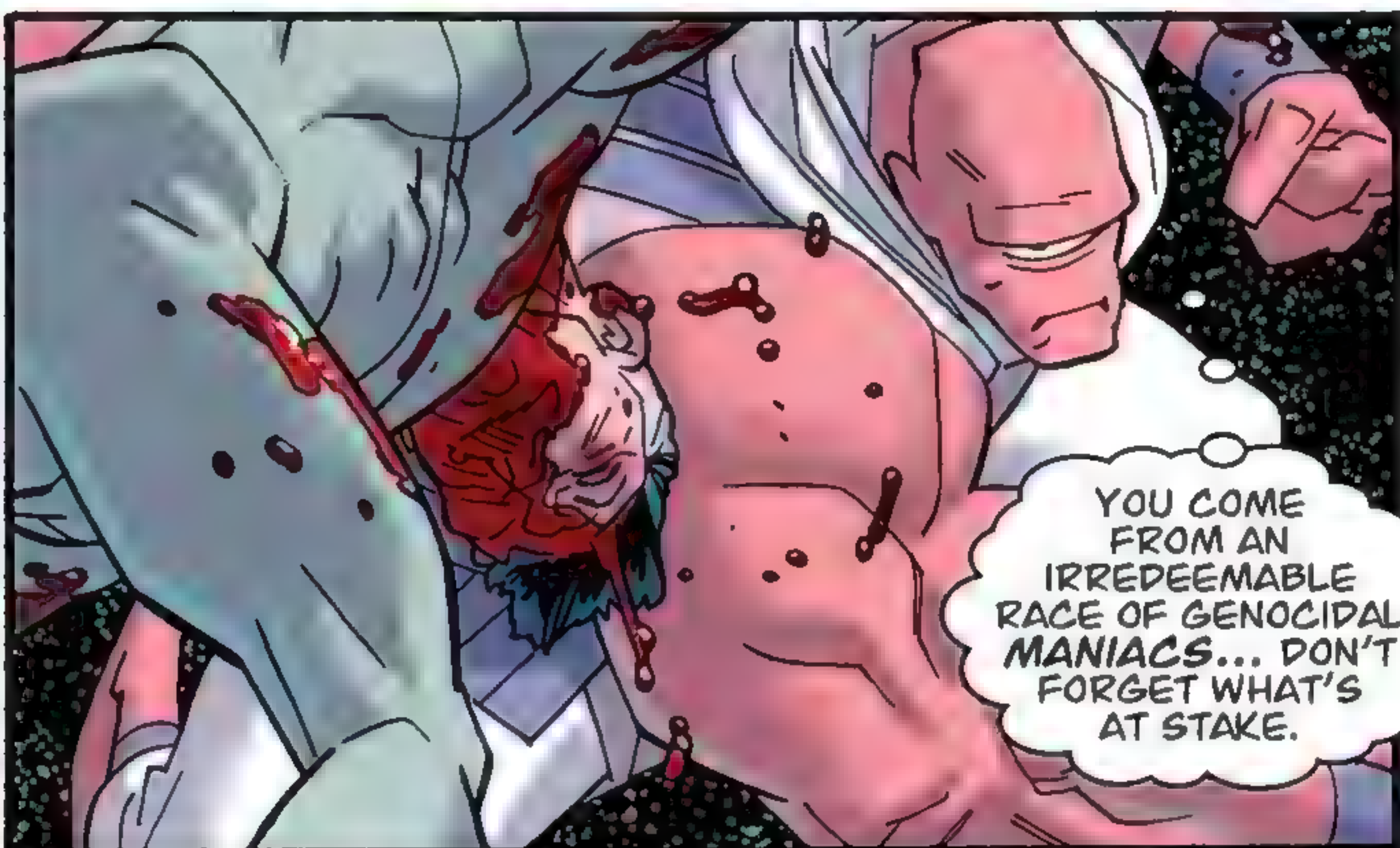


WELL, THAT WAS TOUCHING... YOU HAVE CHANGED.

STILL, THOUGH... I'M CONVINCED YOU'RE AN ANOMALY. I JUST CAN'T SEE GRAND REGENT THRAGG MARRYING A NICE LITTLE HUMAN WOMAN AND SETTLING DOWN.



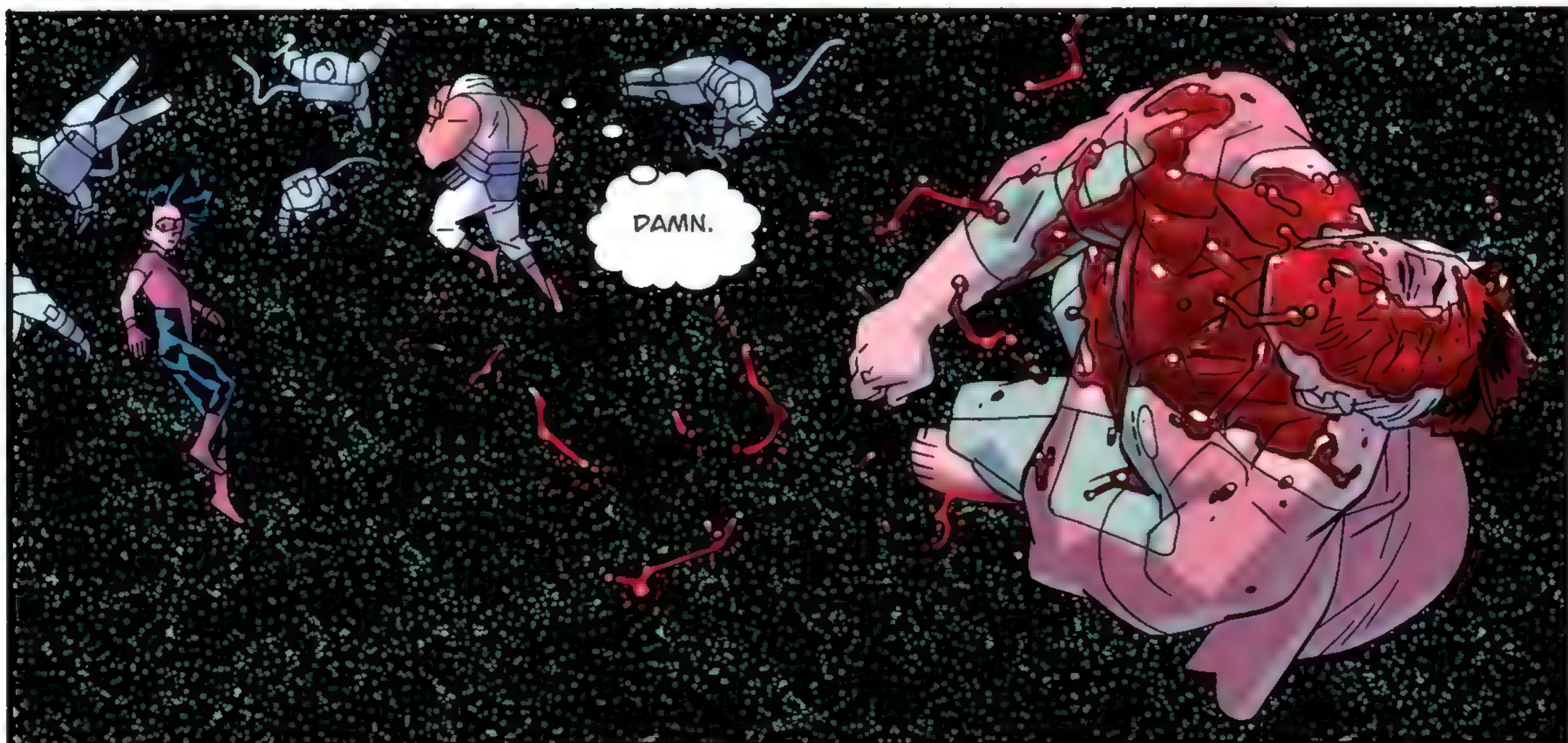
YOU'RE SPECIAL. DON'T SELL YOURSELF SHORT.



YOU COME FROM AN IRREDEEMABLE RACE OF GENOCIDAL MANIACS... DON'T FORGET WHAT'S AT STAKE.



AND PLEASE, DON'T HOLD ALL THIS AGAINST--



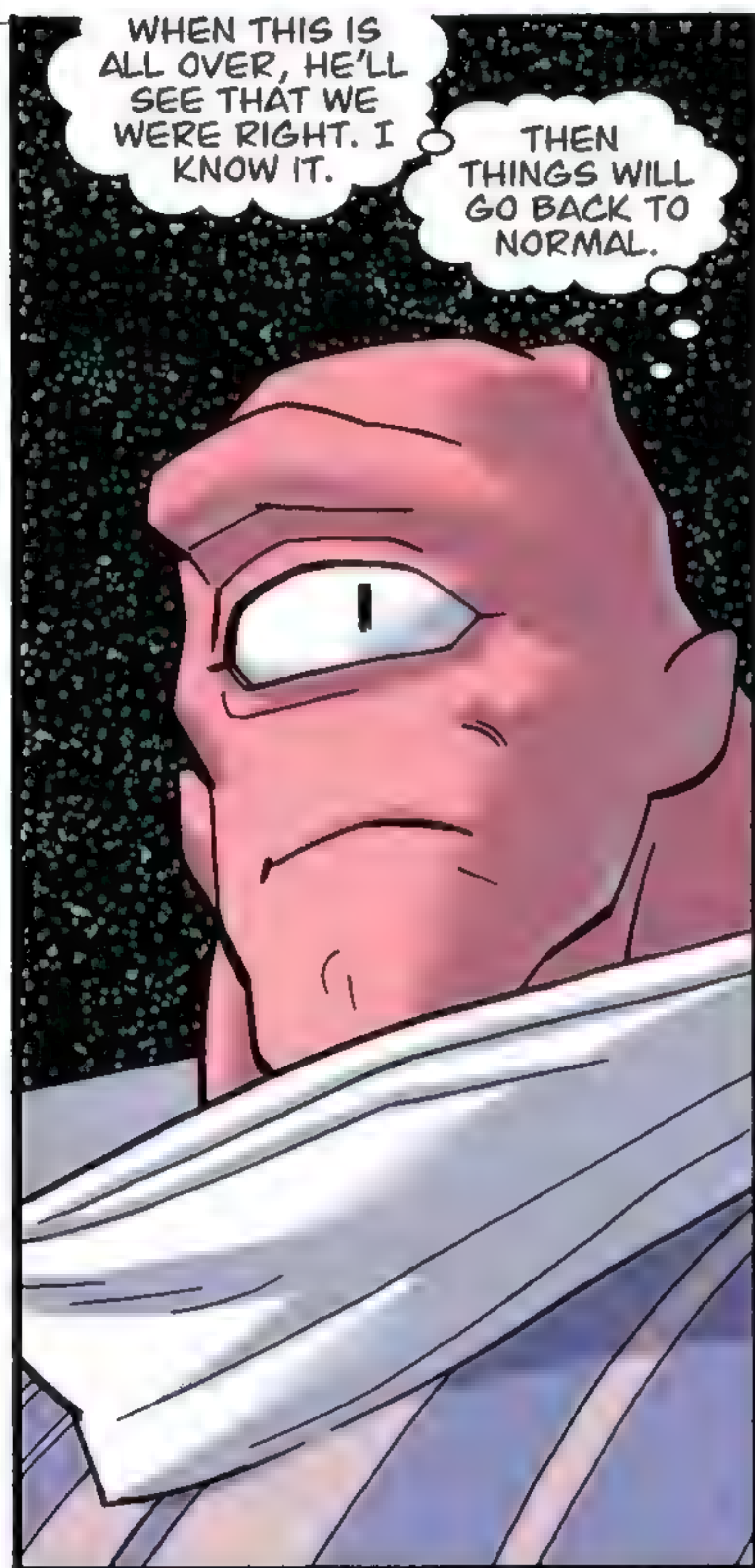
DAMN.



LET HIM GO, HE'S IN NO SHAPE TO PURSUE US ON HIS OWN. I'M SORRY, I KNOW THAT WAS HARD TO SEE. I WAS TRYING TO SUBDUE HIM WITHOUT HURTING HIM TOO BADLY... BUT I COULD ONLY HOLD BACK SO MUCH...

I...

I GET IT.



WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER, HE'LL SEE THAT WE WERE RIGHT. I KNOW IT.

THEN THINGS WILL GO BACK TO NORMAL.



I... HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT, ALLEN.

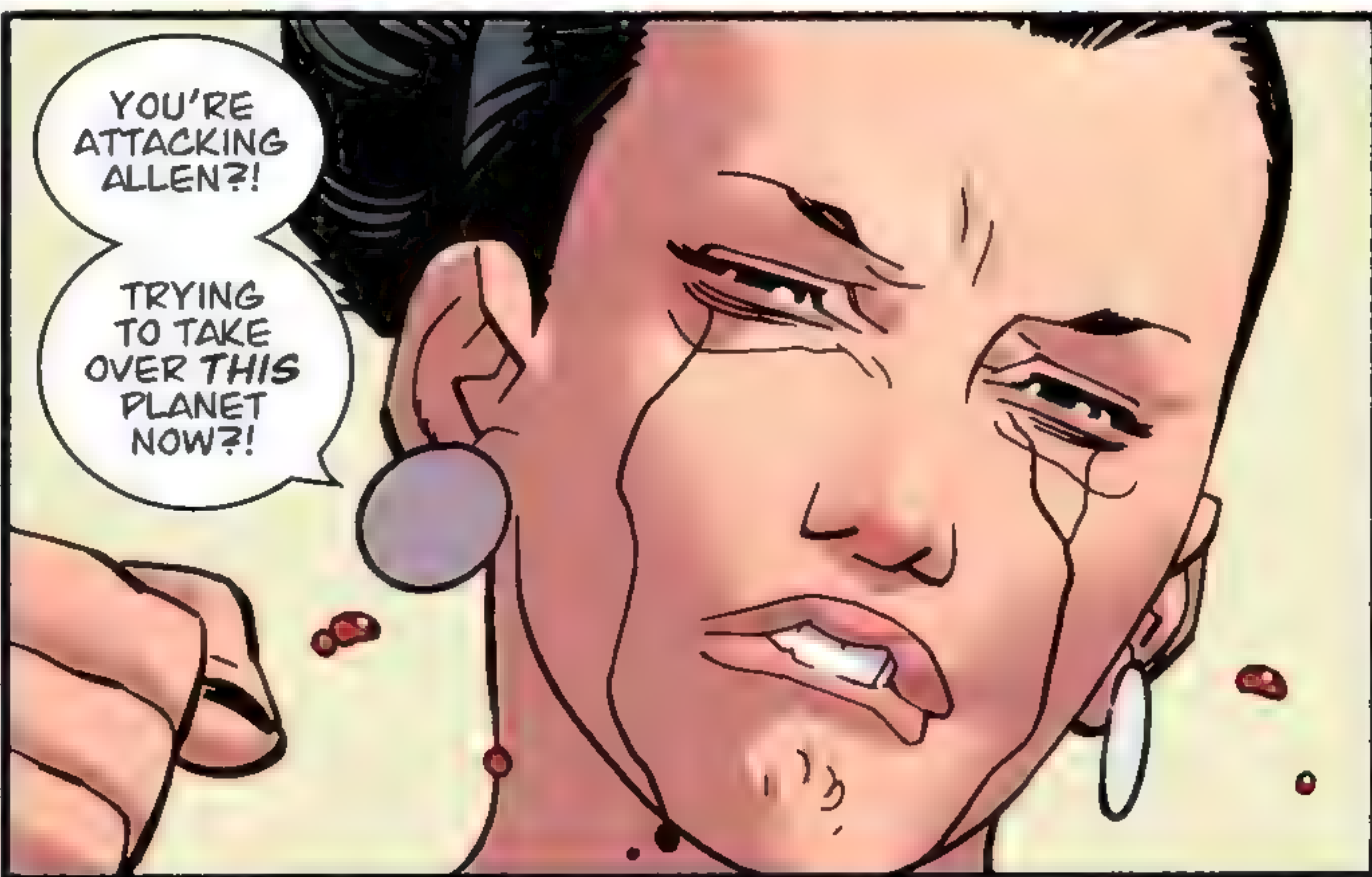
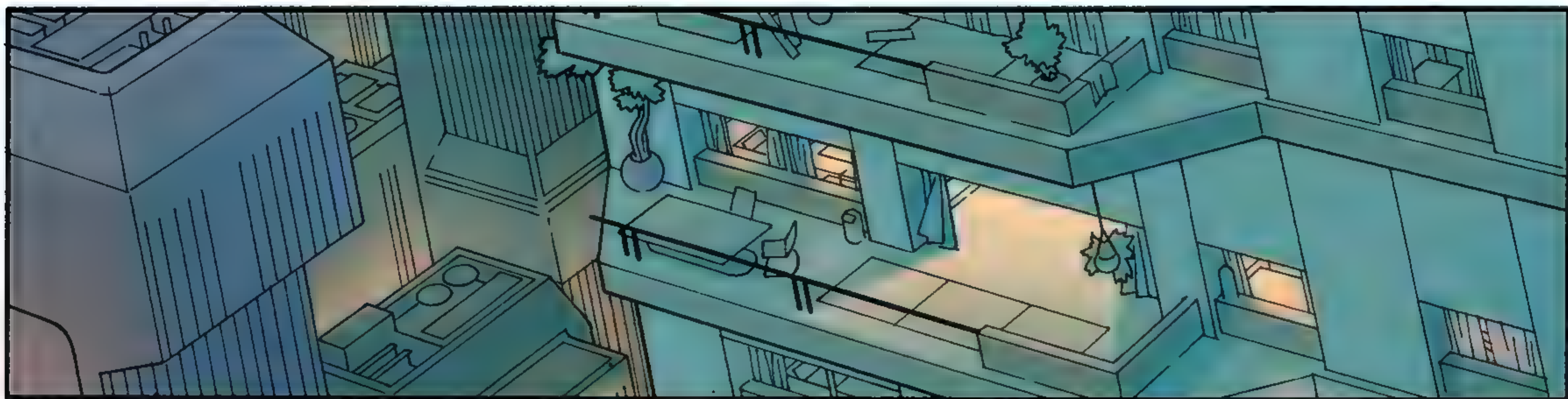


WILL YOU ACCOMPANY ME TO EARTH?

I COULD USE YOUR HELP EITHER CONVINCING MARK... OR MORE LIKELY, RESTRAINING HIM.



LET'S GO.







WE'VE
GOT TO
GET TO
EARTH...

WE'VE
GOT TO...


WE...





CHAPTER 87





MY FIRST
ATTEMPT TO RULE
THIS DIMENSION
WAS A HALF-HEARTED
ATTEMPT, DOOMED
TO FAIL FROM
THE VERY
START.*

MY WORLD
WAS DYING, ITS
ENERGY DEPLETED,
I WAS DESPERATE
AND HUNGRY--I
ENTERED YOUR
WORLD IN MY
DEPLETED FORM,
TRYING IN VAIN
TO OVERTAKE
YOU.

I UNDERESTIMATED
THE RESISTANCE THIS
WORLD WOULD HAVE
TO OFFER... BUT NOT
THIS TIME.


THIS TIME
I ENTERED YOUR
WORLD UNDETECTED,
SPENT MONTHS
RESTORING MYSELF,
DRAINING YOUR WORLD
OF ENERGY WITHOUT
DETECTION--WAITING
FOR THE PERFECT
MOMENT TO
STRIKE...

*SEE INVINCIBLE 27.



AND
THAT
TIME...

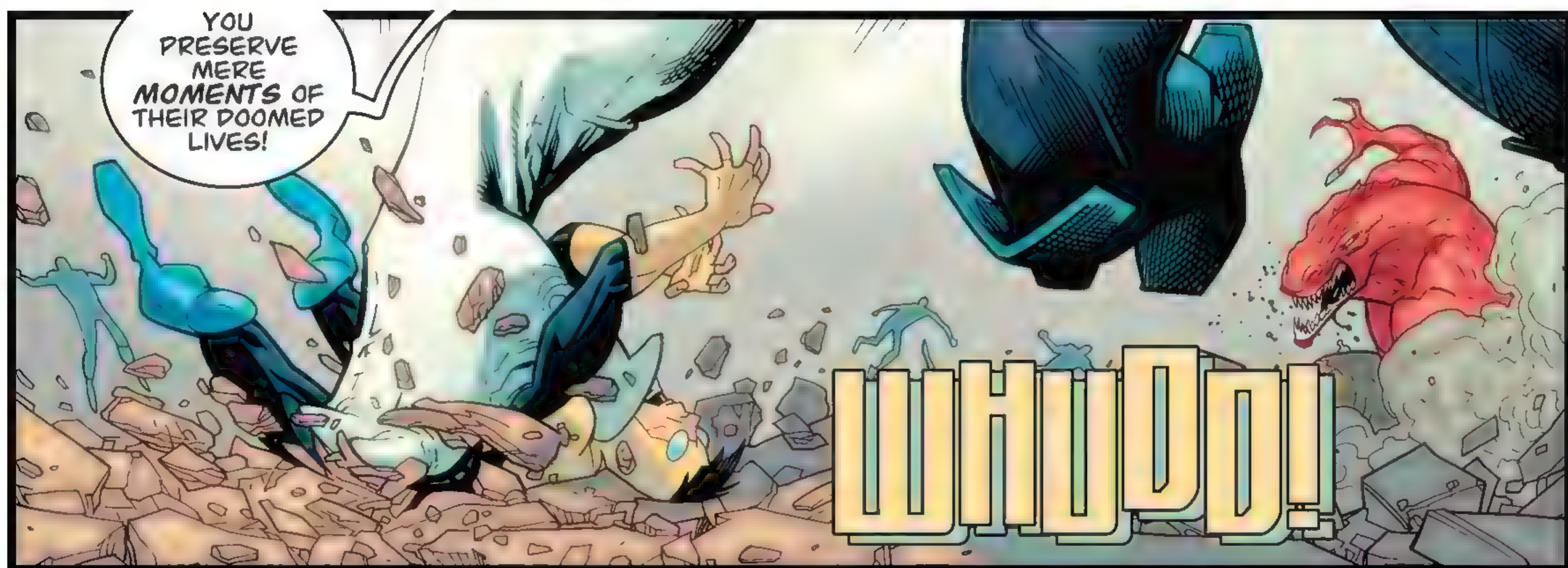
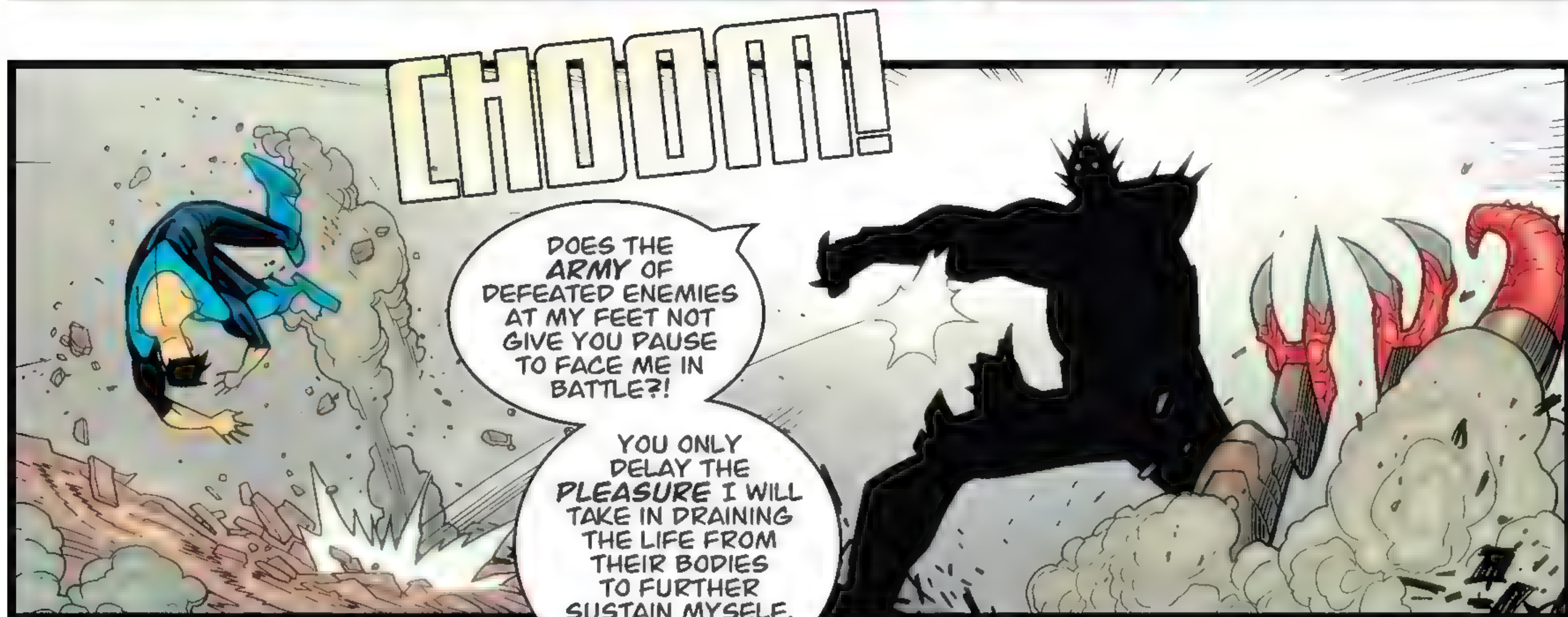
...HAS
PASSED.



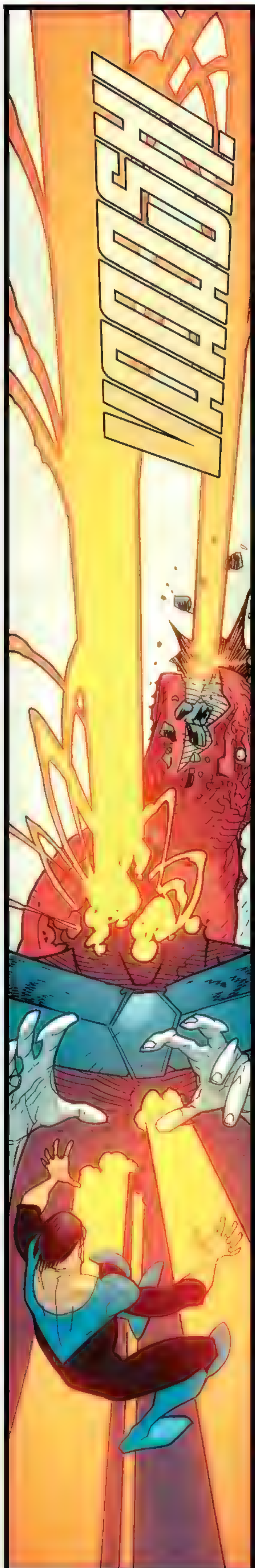
HOW LONG
DID YOU WAIT
TO TELL ME ABOUT
THIS?! THESE ARE
MY **FRIENDS!** THEY
COULD HAVE BEEN
KILLED!! SOME OF
THEM MIGHT
ALREADY BE
DEAD!

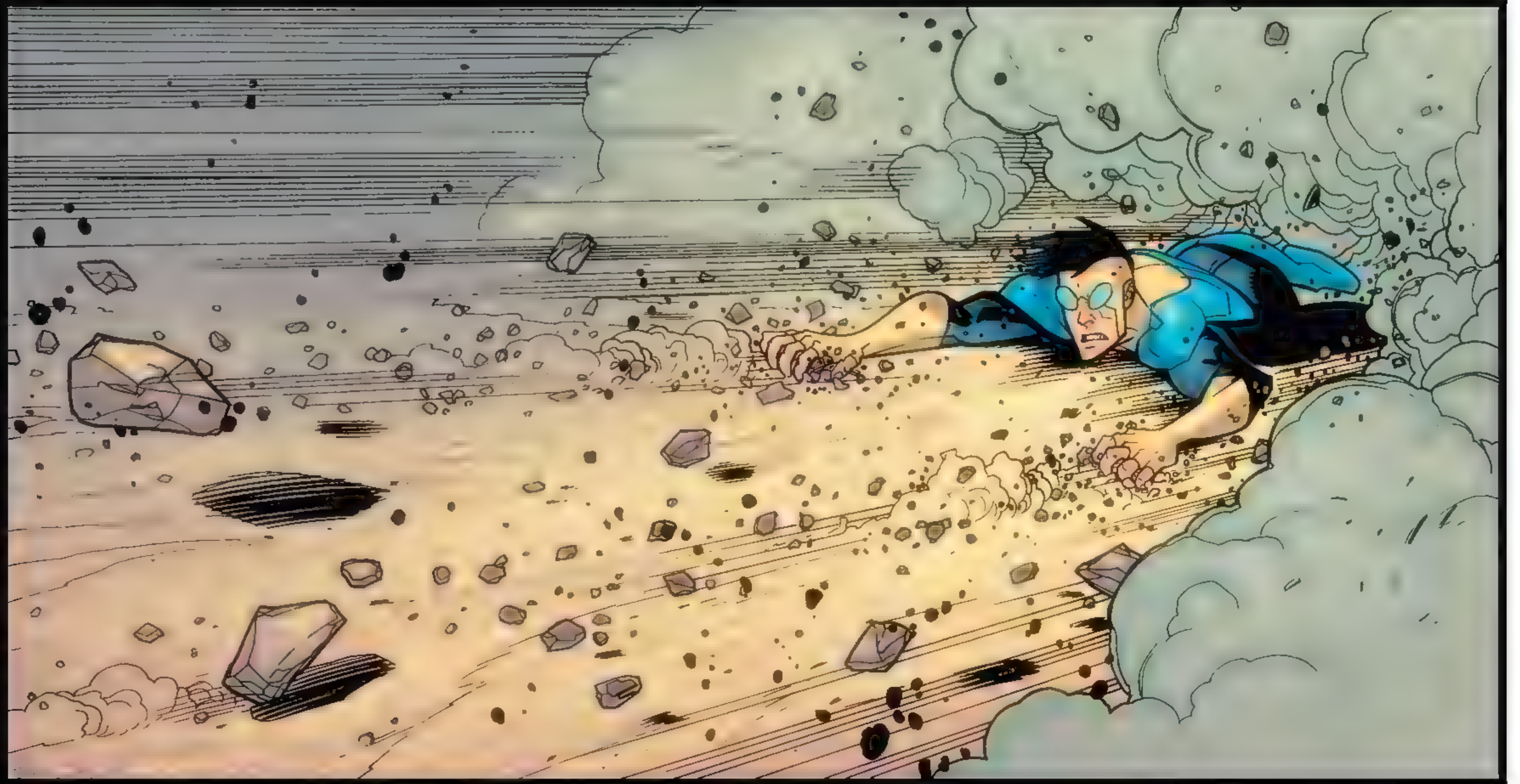
THOSE
IRRIGATION
CHANNELS YOU
WERE DIGGING
WERE FAR MORE
IMPORTANT IN
THE GRAND
SCHEME OF
THINGS.

I ONLY
ALERTED YOU
WHEN IT
WAS CLEAR
WE'D BE
NEEDED.

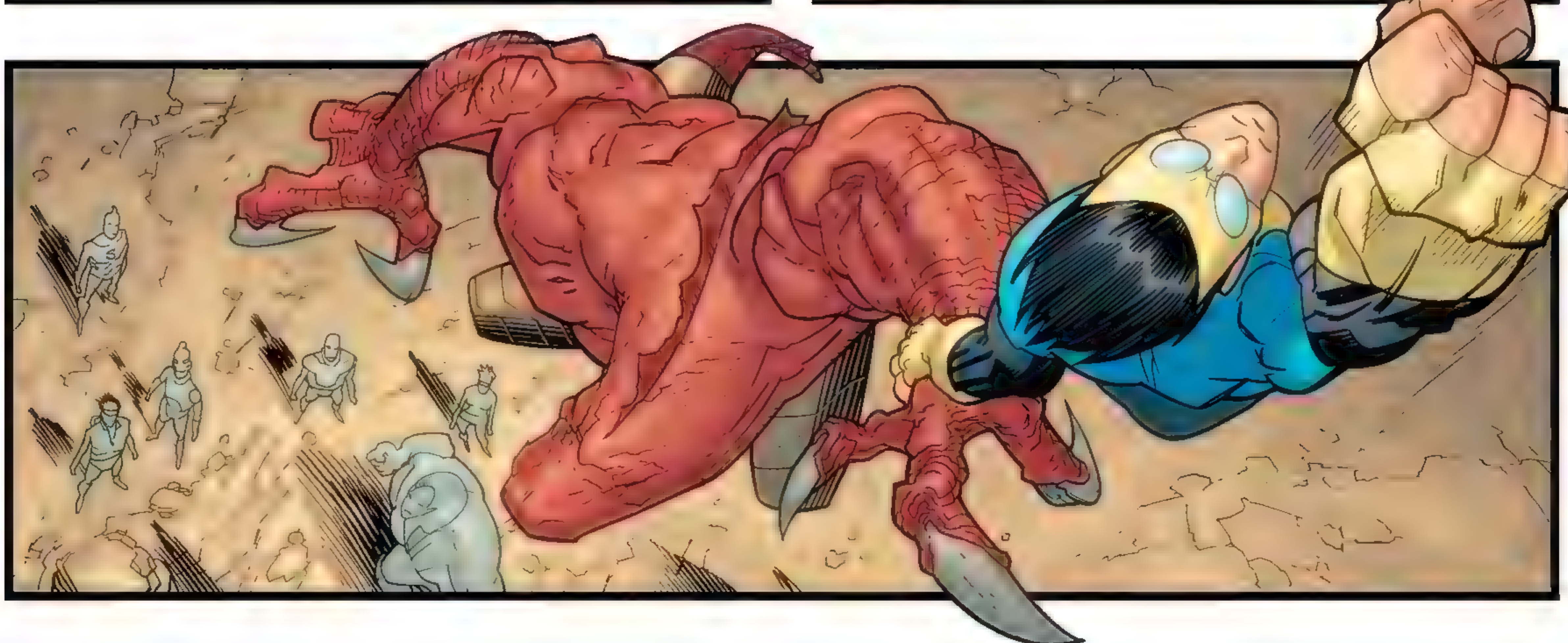
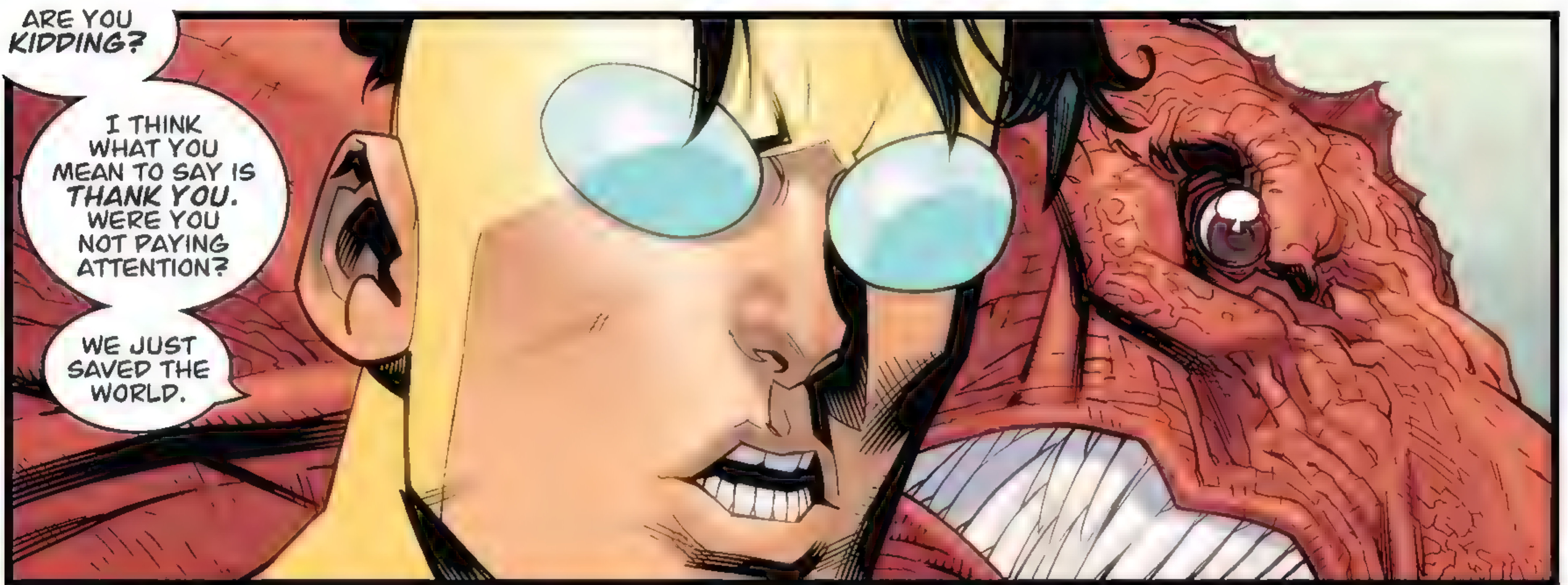
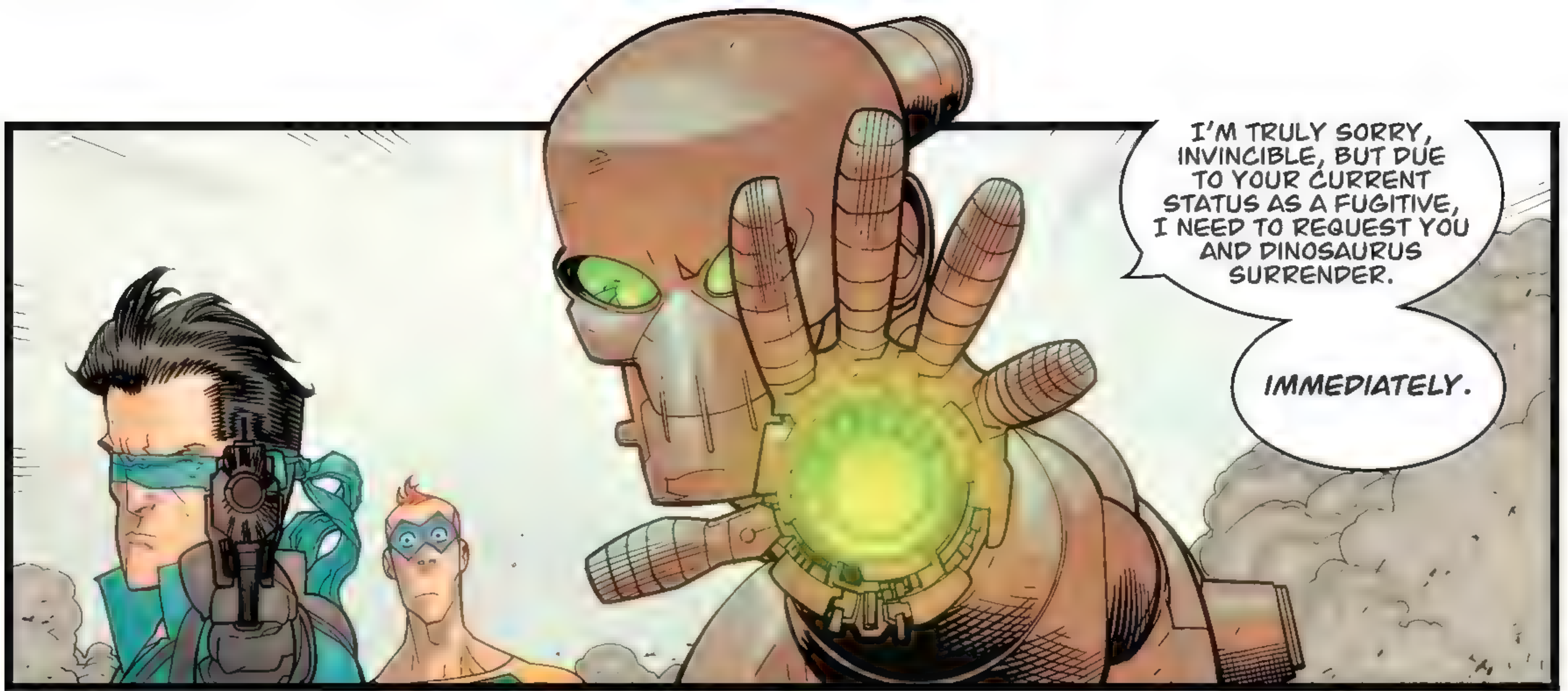


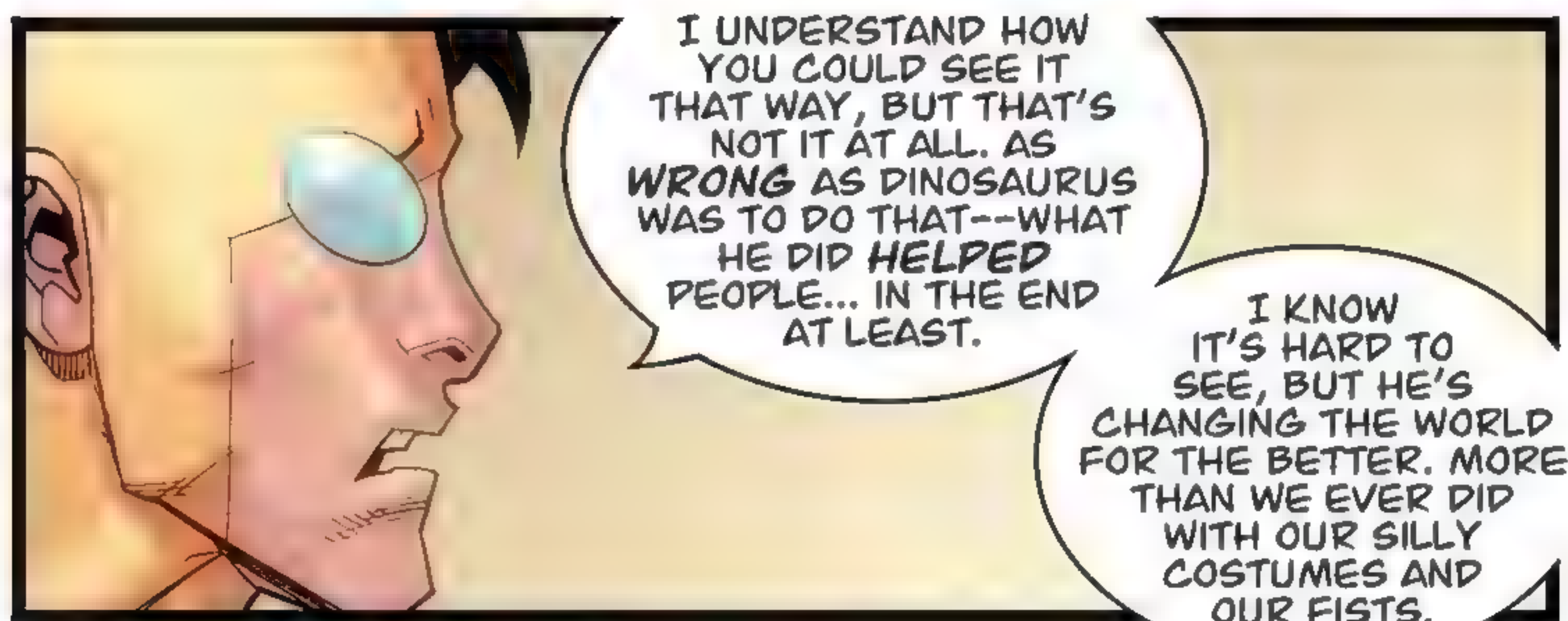
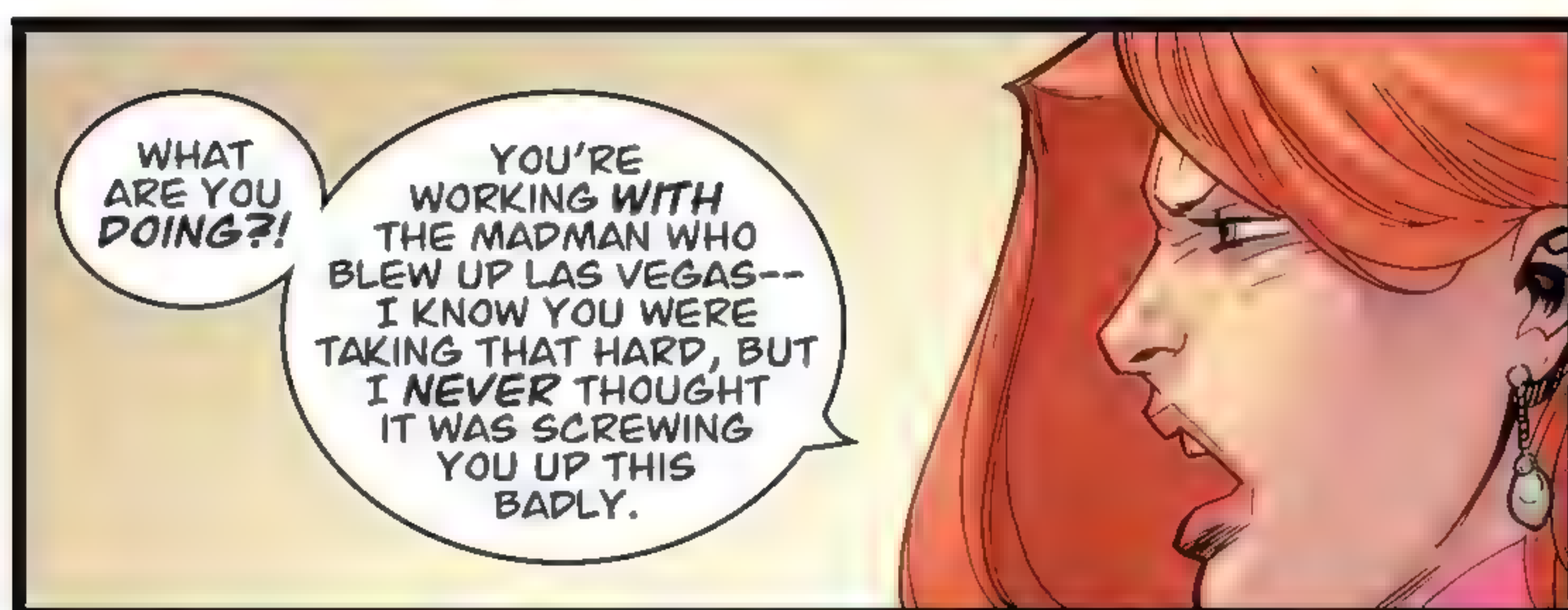
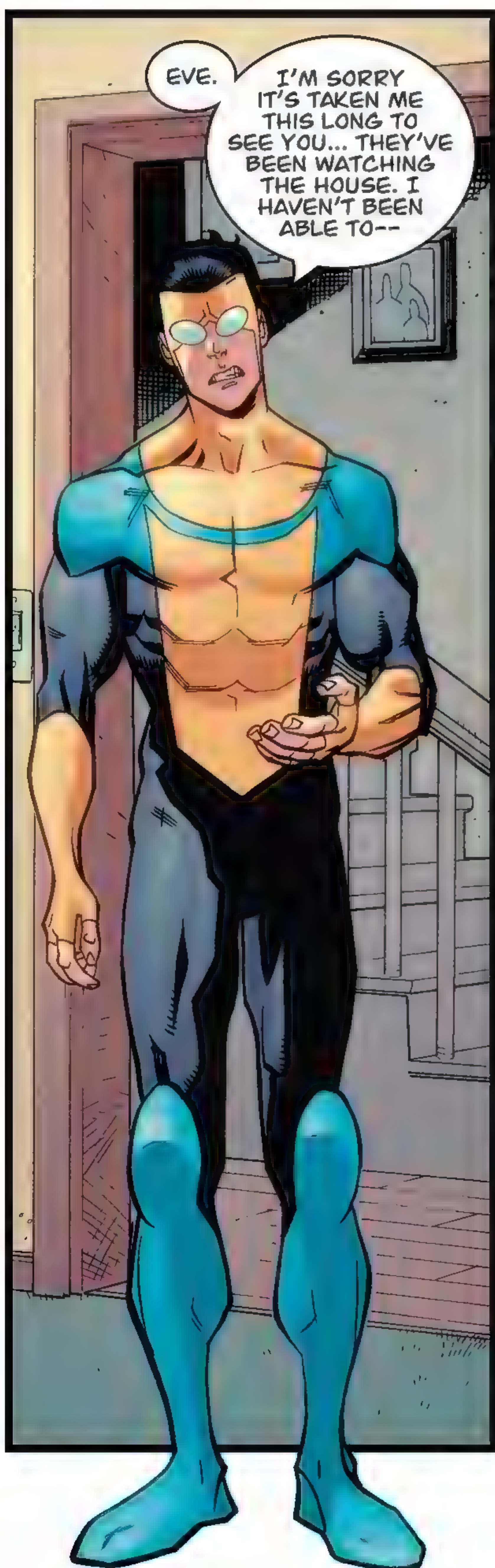
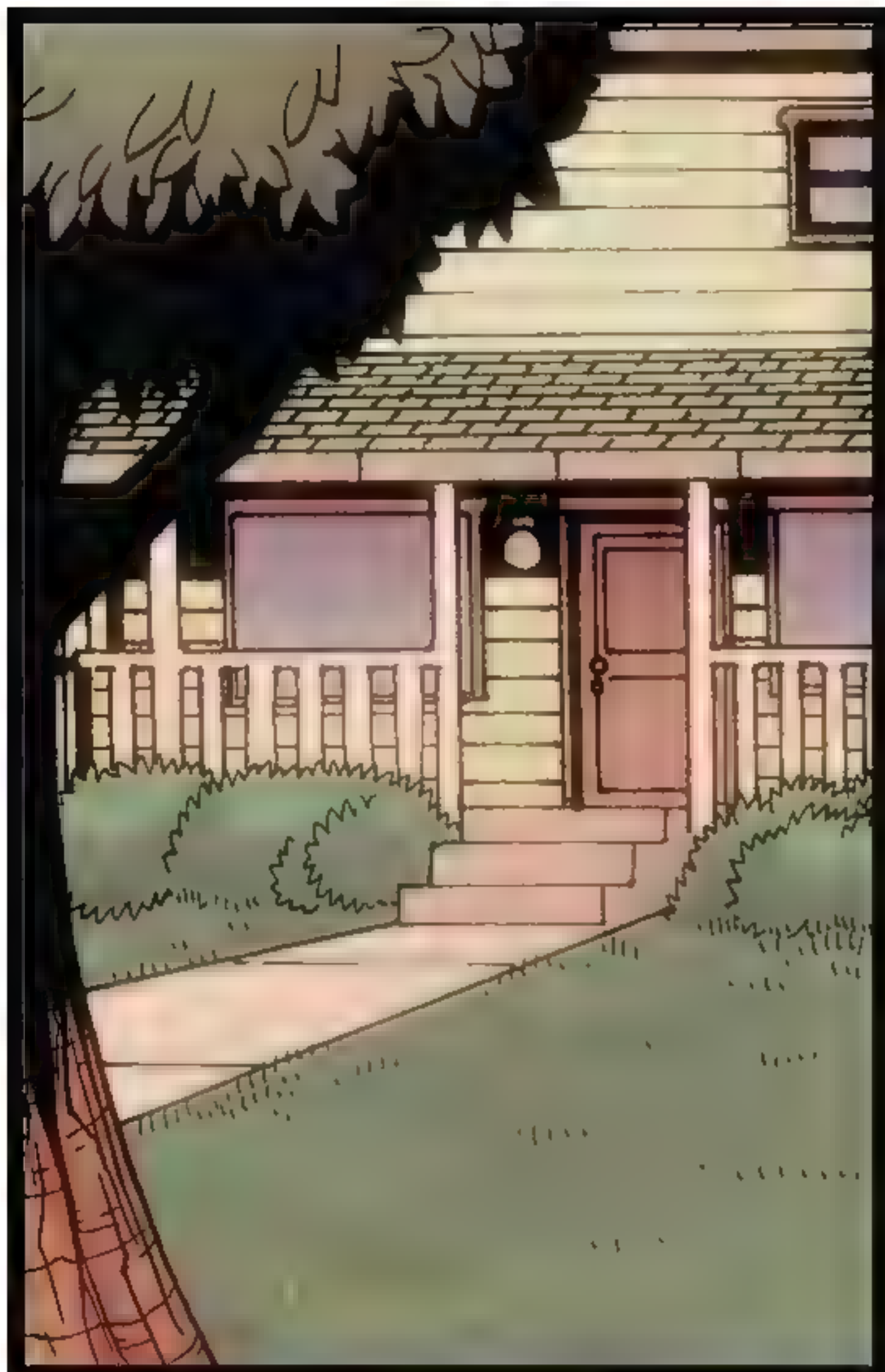
BOOM!

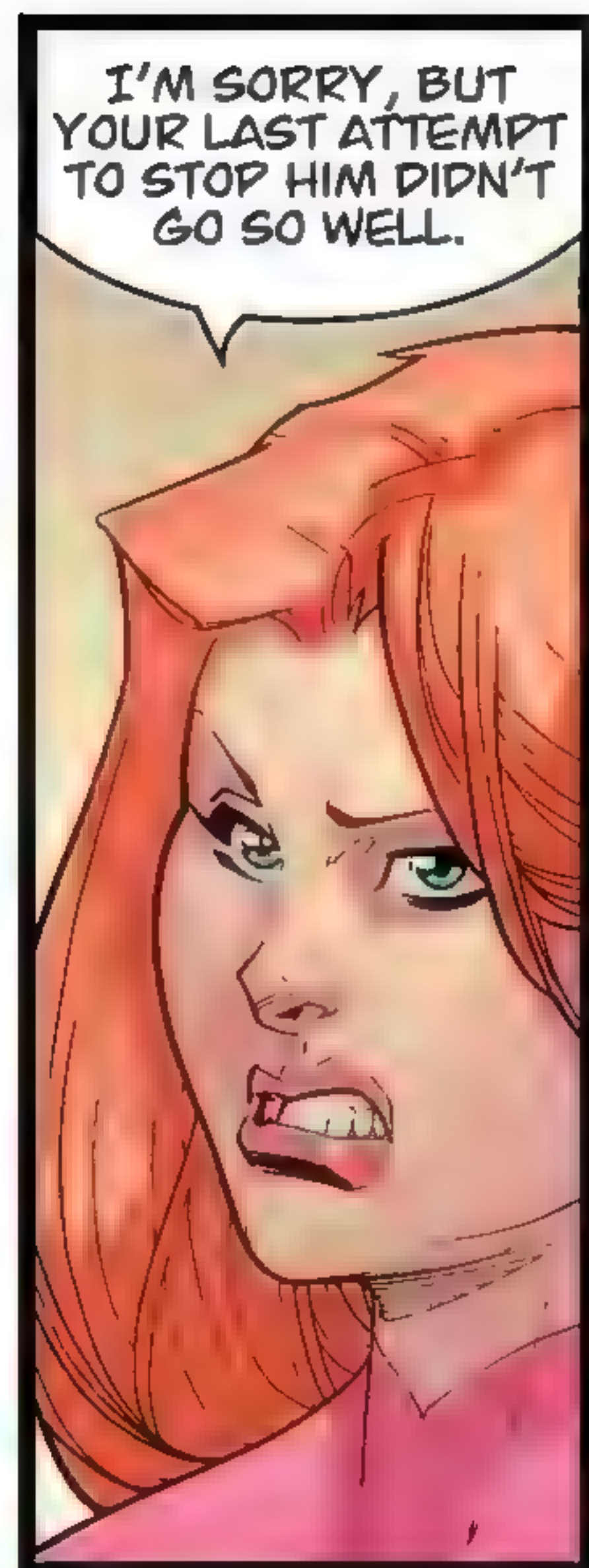
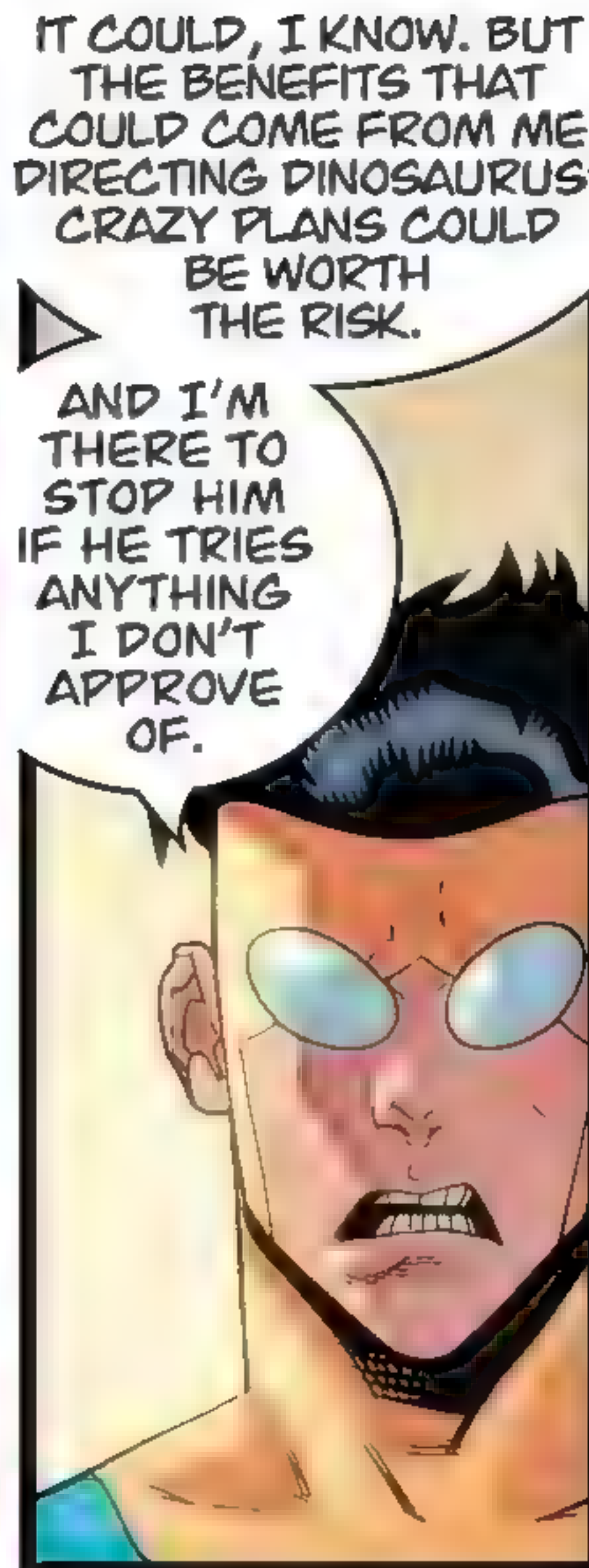
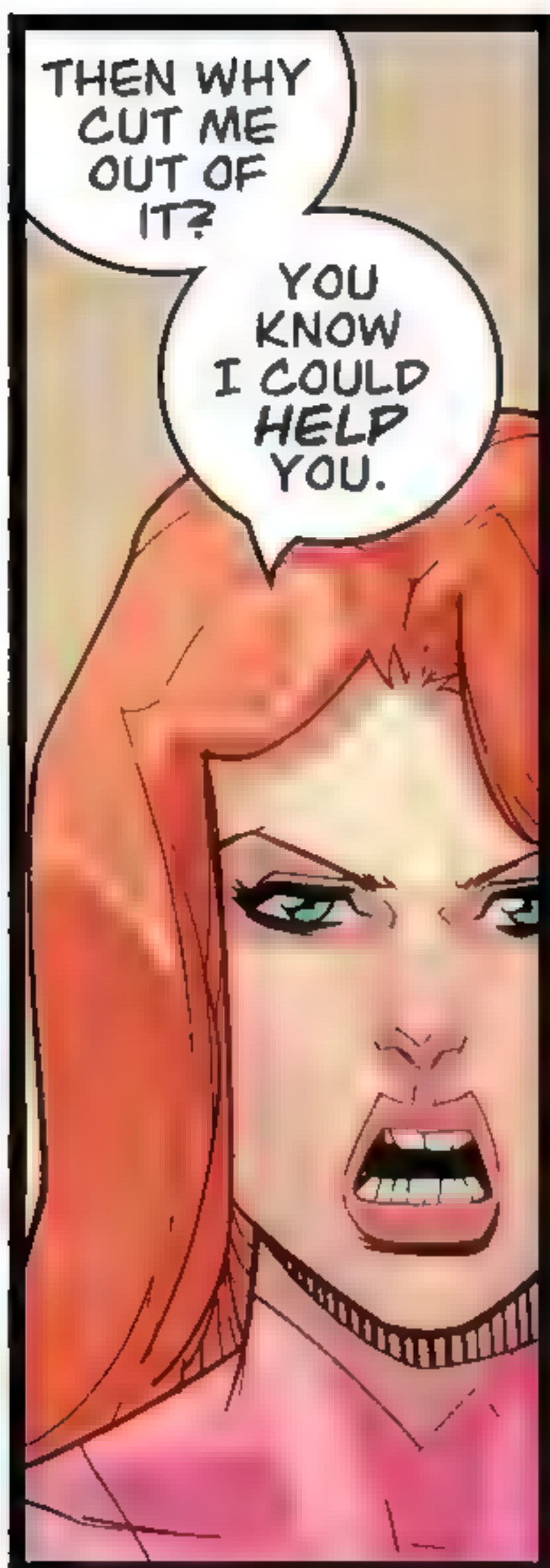


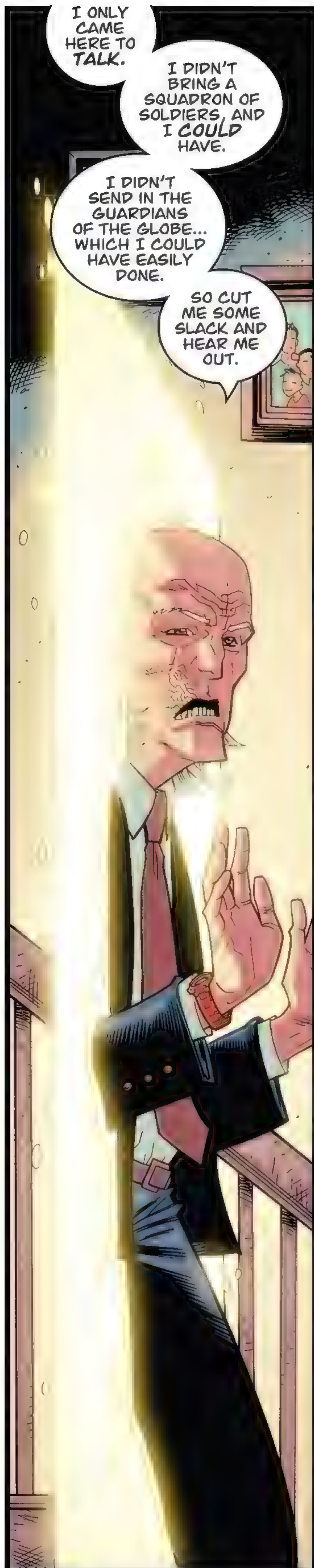












I ONLY
CAME
HERE TO
TALK.

I DIDN'T
BRING A
SQUADRON OF
SOLDIERS, AND
I **COULD**
HAVE.

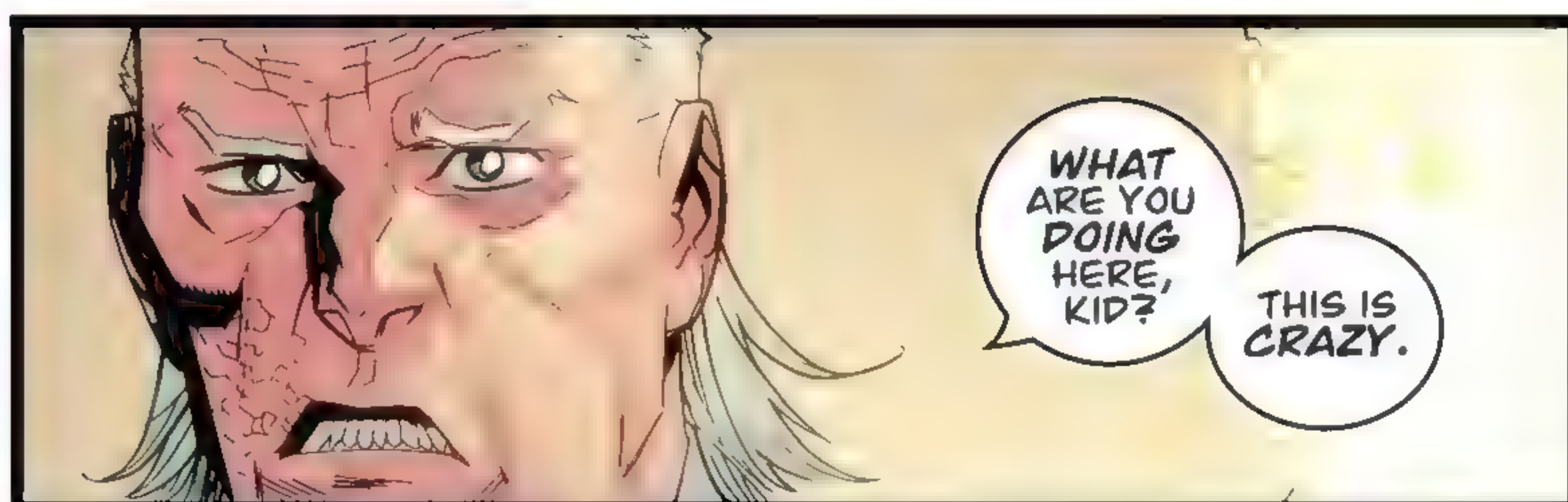
I DIDN'T
SEND IN THE
GUARDIANS
OF THE GLOBE...
WHICH I COULD
HAVE EASILY
DONE.

SO CUT
ME SOME
SLACK AND
HEAR ME
OUT.



I DON'T HAVE DINOSAURUS
WITH ME. YOU WOULDN'T
OUTRIGHT ATTACK ME
UNLESS YOU KNEW YOU
COULD GET HIM,
TOO.

I FIGURED
YOU WERE
MONITORING
THE PLACE. I
ACTUALLY WANT
TO TALK TO
YOU.



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE,
KID?

THIS IS
CRAZY.

YOU SAW THAT SOLAR PANEL
ARRAY... YOU **BUILT** IT. YOU
CAN'T ARGUE THAT IT WON'T
HELP PEOPLE. IT'S GOING
TO CHANGE PEOPLE'S LIVES,
AND HELP THE WHOLE
PLANET... AND IT COULD
LEAD TO MORE
LIKE IT.

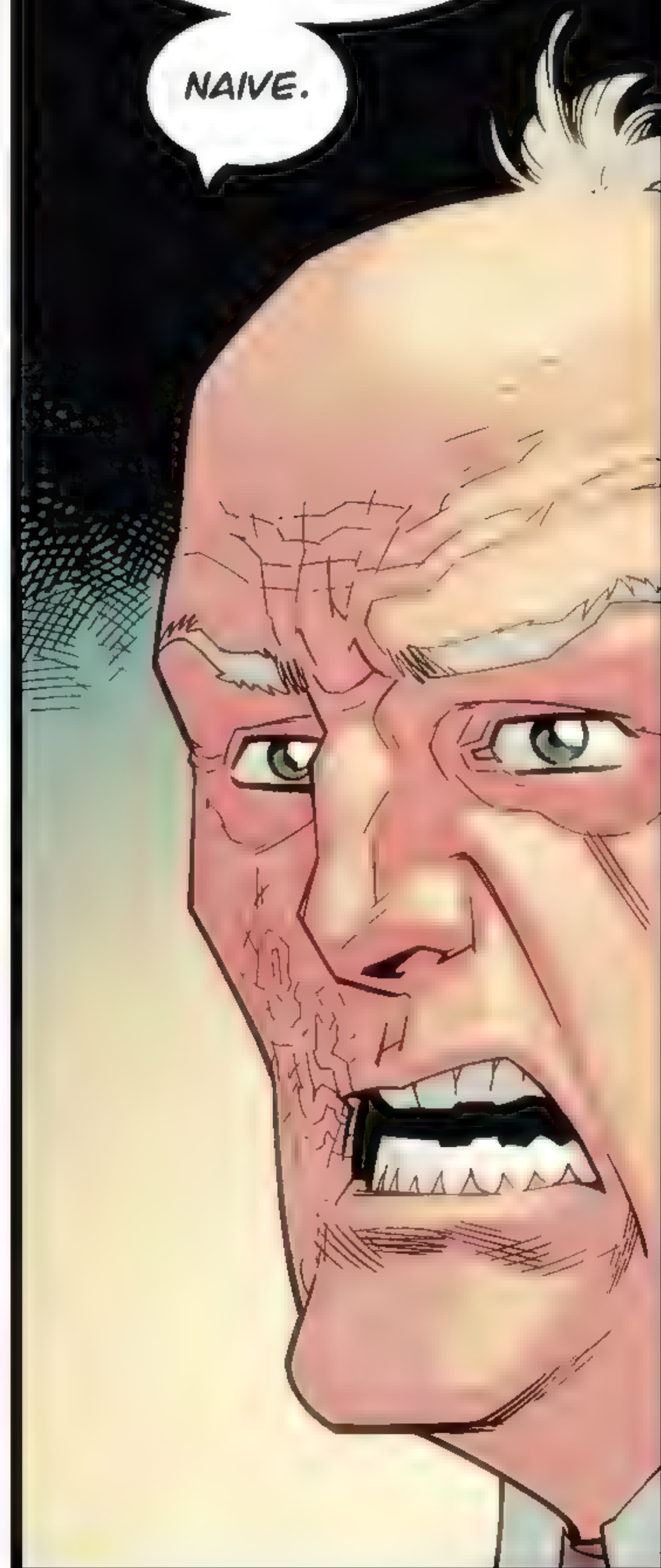
DINOSAURUS
DID THAT. HE DID
A HORRIBLE,
UNFORGIVABLE THING
TO ACCOMPLISH IT--
BUT HIS REASONING
WAS **SOUND**.

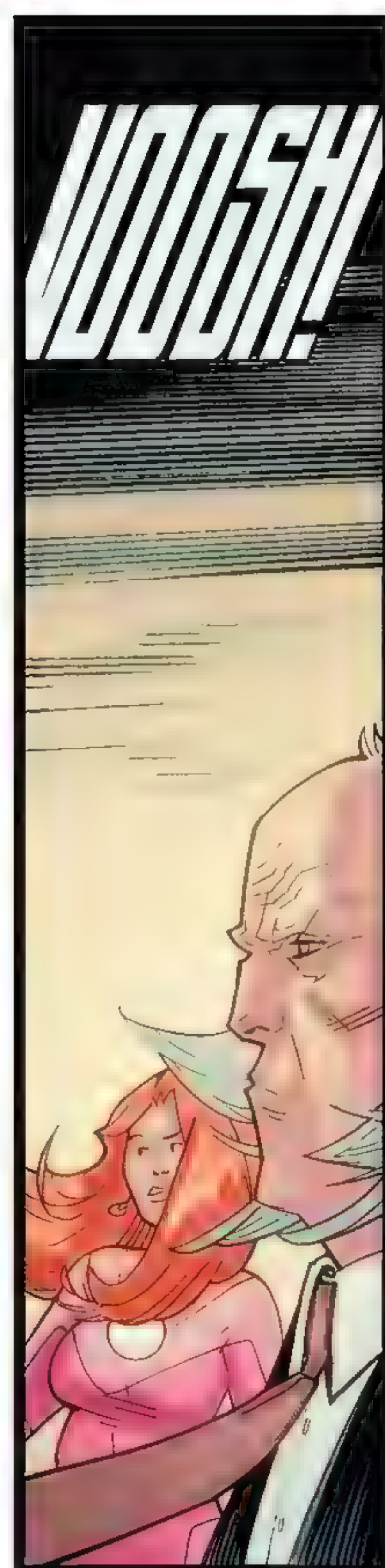
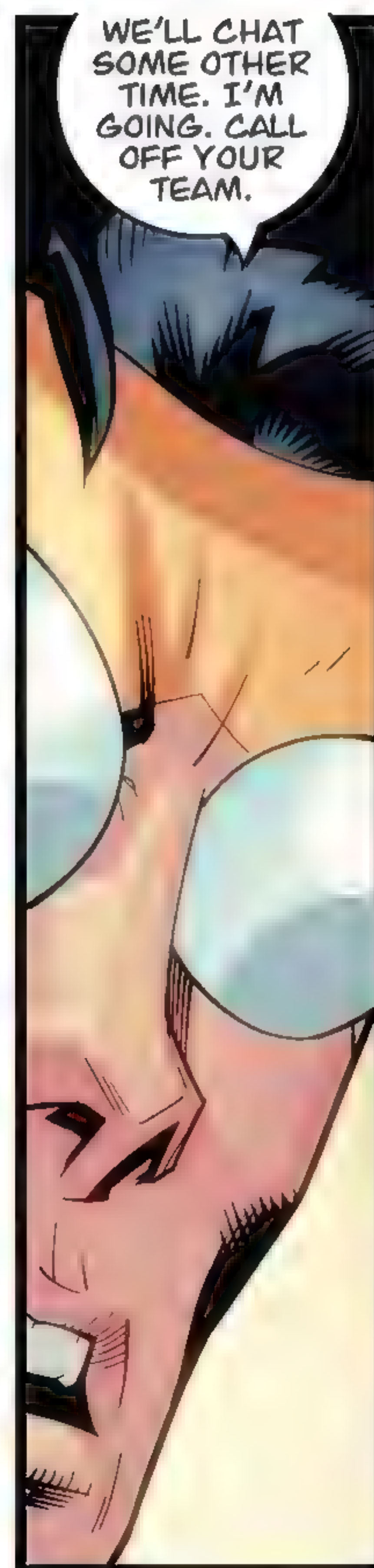
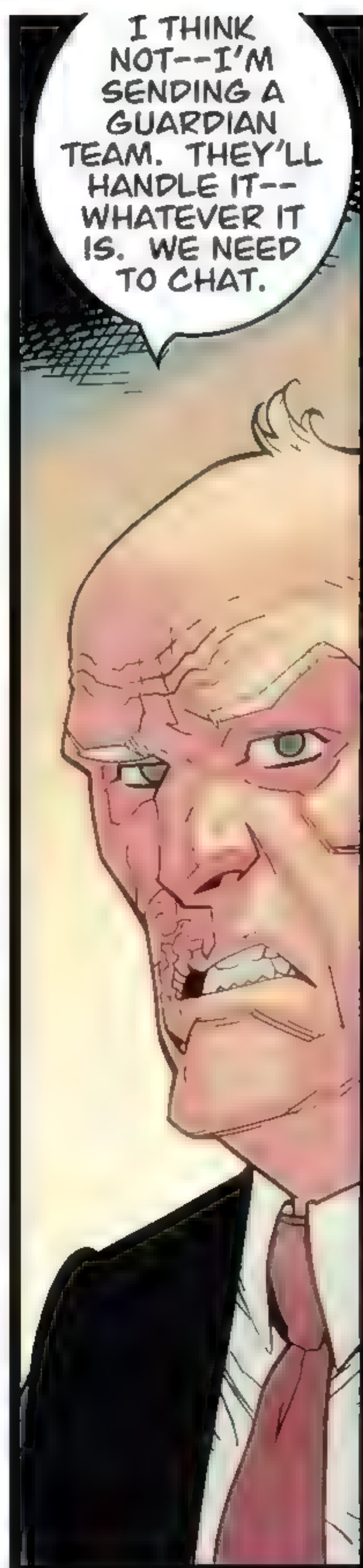
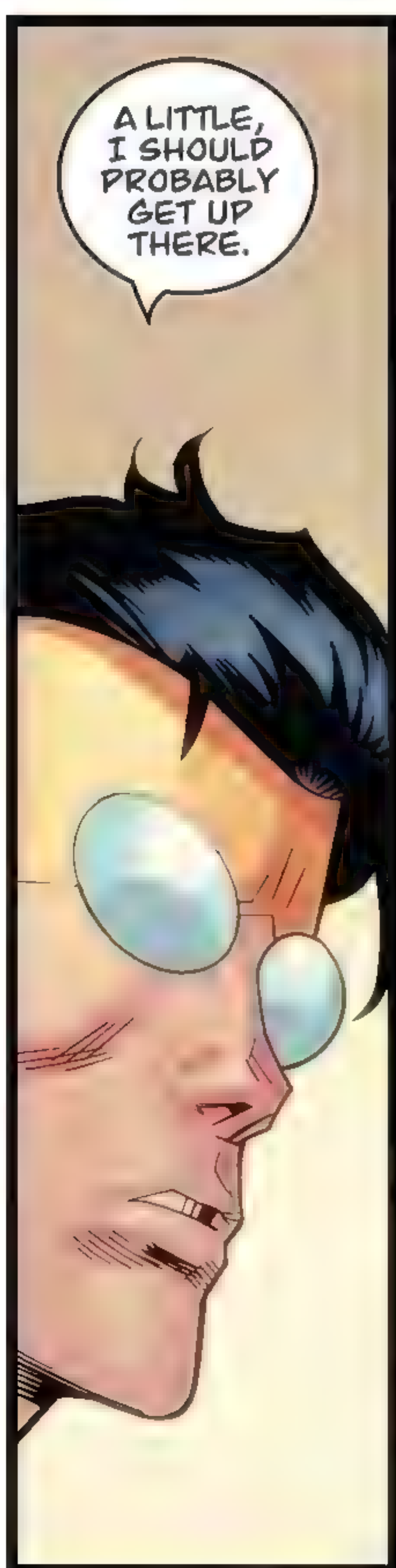
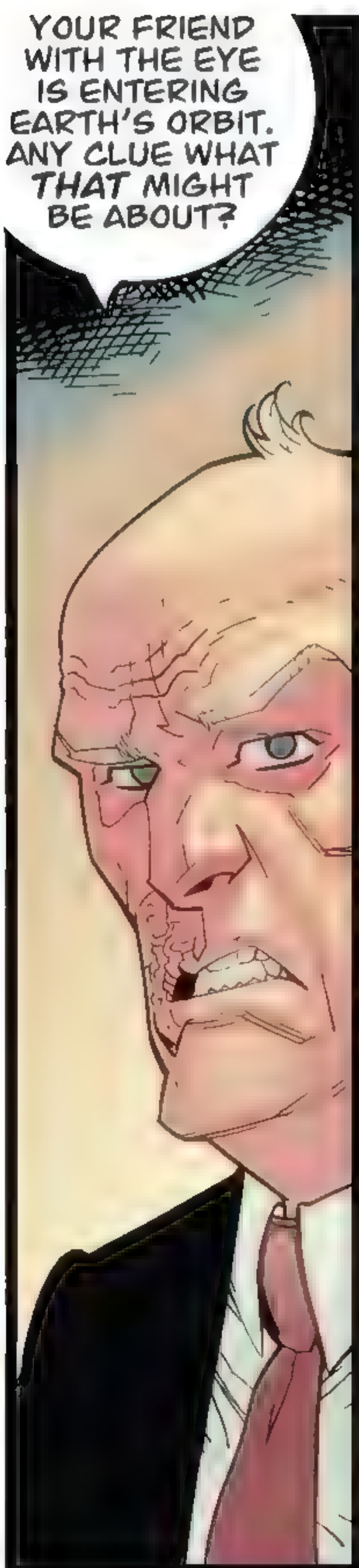
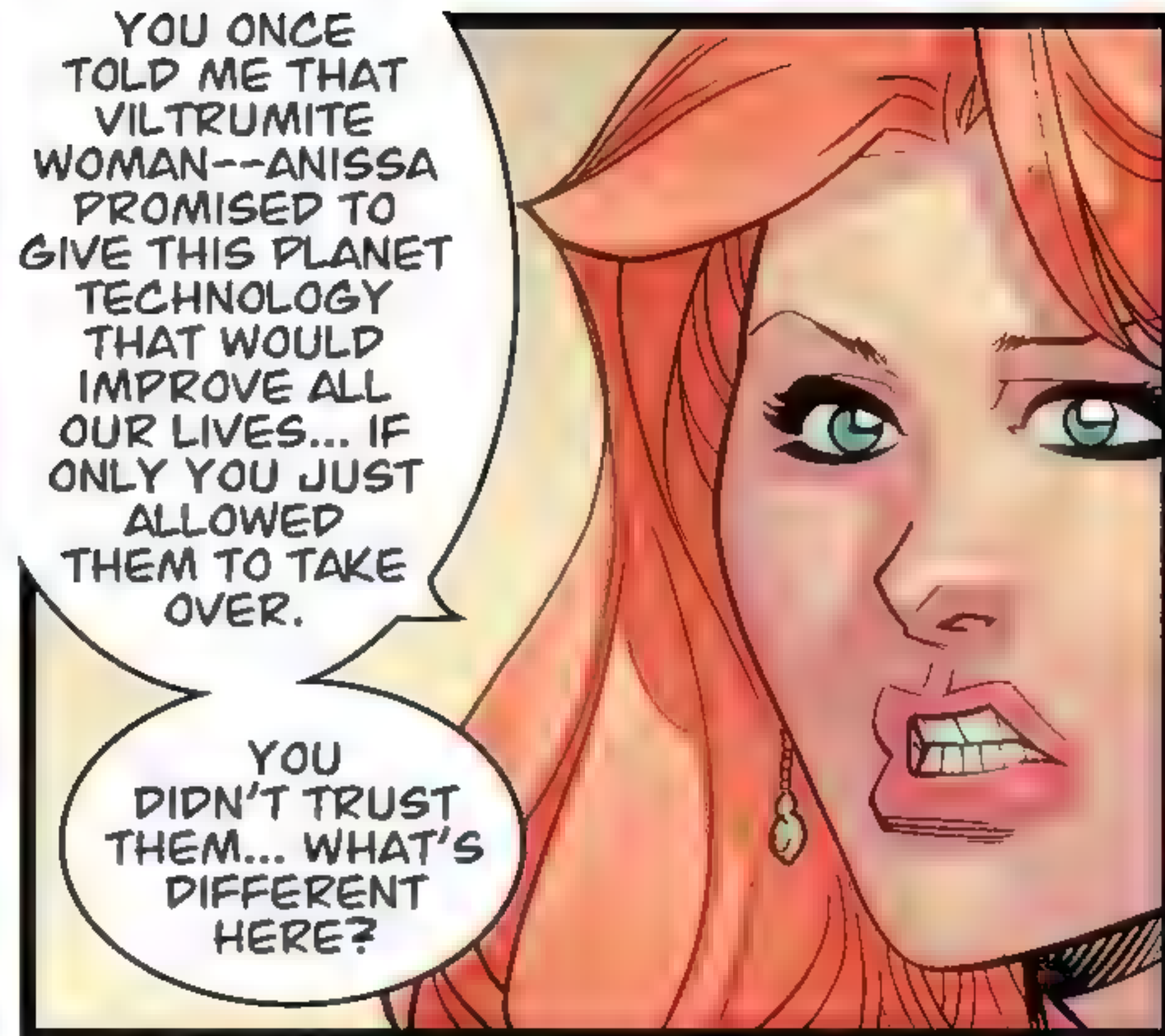
I CAN
GUIDE HIM,
PREVENT HIM
FROM CARRYING
OUT HIS PLANS IN A
WAY THAT HURTS
PEOPLE... AND HE
CAN HELP ME DO
THINGS THAT
ACTUALLY HELP
PEOPLE...
THINGS THAT
MATTER.



MARK... MY GOD, ONE
MINUTE YOU IMPRESS
ME WITH YOUR PLANNING
OF THIS MEETING,
THINKING ONE STEP AHEAD
OF ME... AND THE NEXT...
YOU COULDN'T
SOUND MORE...

NAIVE.

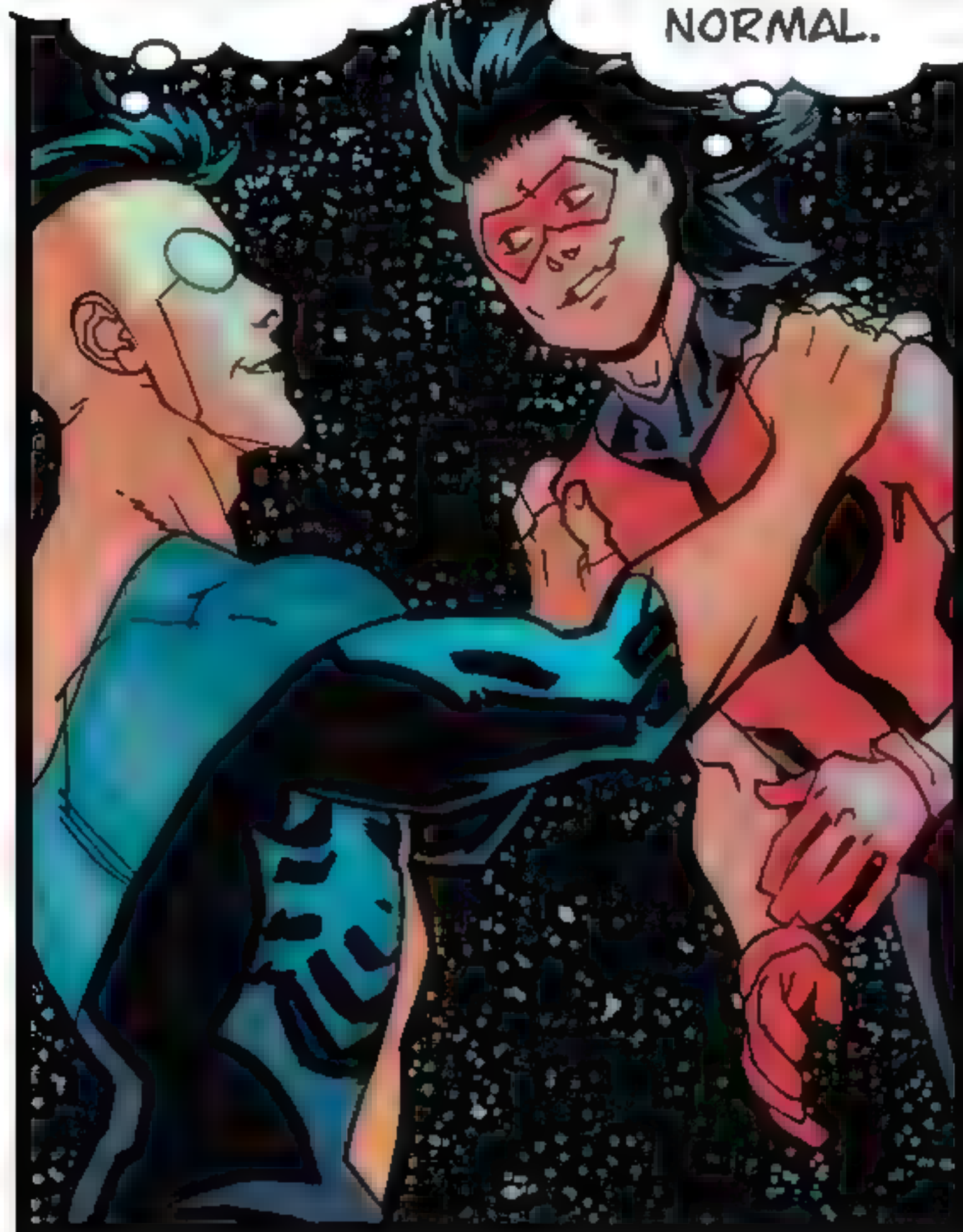






WOW, THEY'VE GOT YOU BACK IN ONE PIECE-- YOU'D NEVER KNOW ANYTHING HAPPENED!

YEAH, THEY GREW MY SKIN OVER NEW MECHANICAL PARTS. THEY ALMOST FEEL NORMAL.



I DON'T MEAN TO INTERRUPT THIS REUNION, BUT WE'RE HERE FOR A REASON...



WHERE'S MOM AND DAD? DID THEY COME?

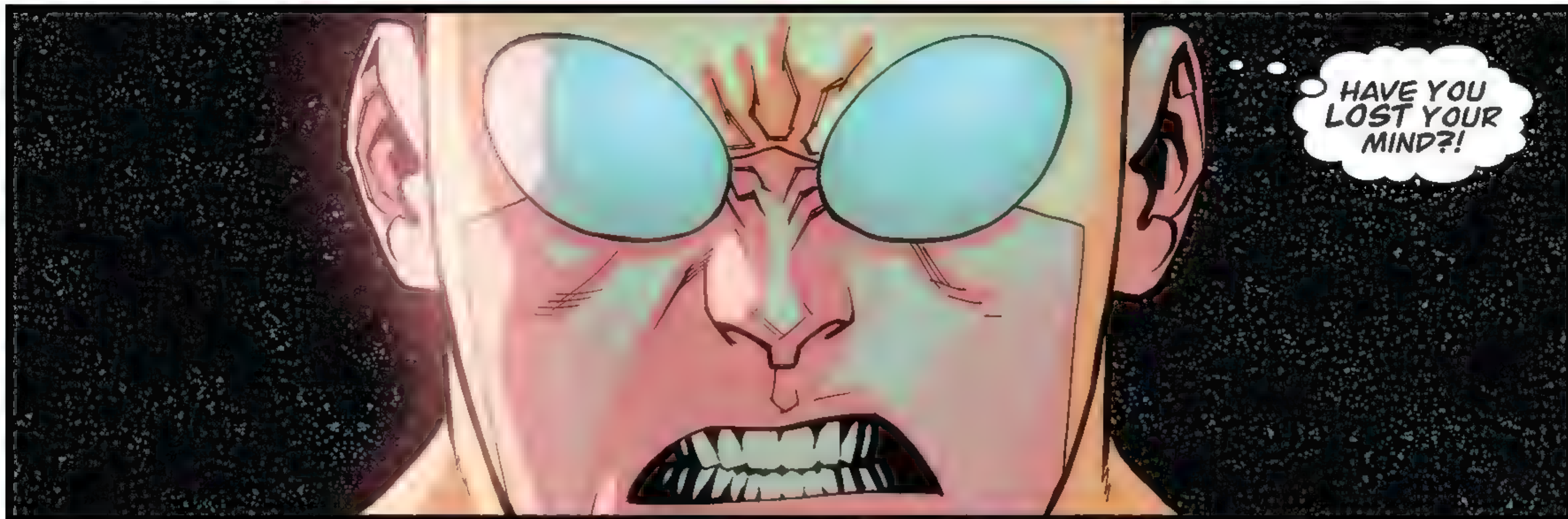
WELL, NO... THEY...



THEY REMAINED ON TALESCRIA. THERE'S A LOT TO DISCUSS. YOUR FATHER INFORMED ME OF THE VILTRUMITES' STATUS HERE ON EARTH, AND...

I'VE DEVISED A PLAN I NEED TO RUN PAST YOU.



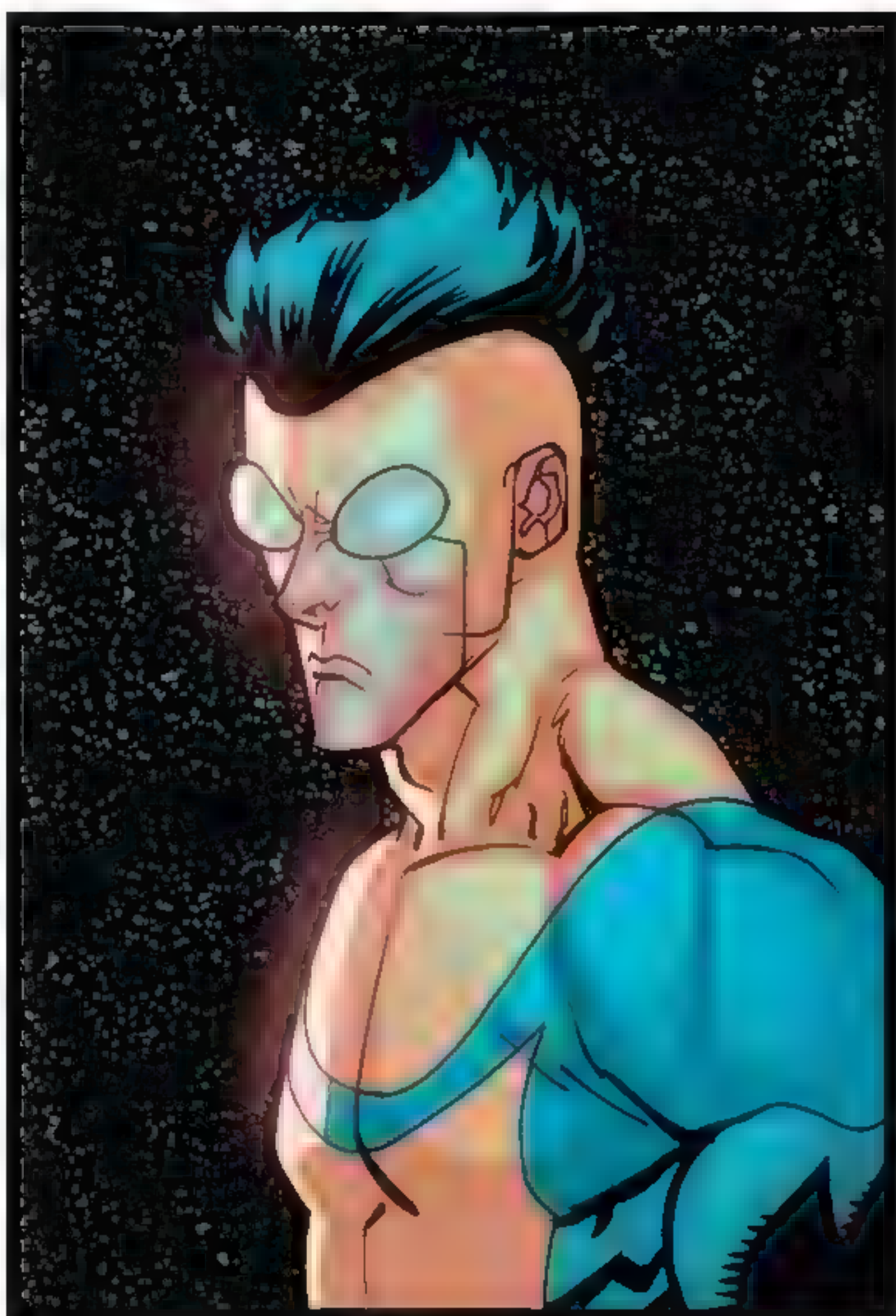


HAVE YOU
LOST YOUR
MIND?!



MARK, PLEASE. JUST
THINK THIS THROUGH...
I UNDERSTAND YOUR
INITIAL REACTION, BUT
YOU NEED TO WEIGH
THIS AGAINST THE
ATROCITIES THE
VILTRUMITES HAVE
COMMITTED
ALL OVER THE
UNIVERSE.

JUST
CONSIDER
IT...



THIS SEEMS
WRONG AT FIRST,
BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S
THE ONLY WAY WE
CAN SAVE THE
UNIVERSE. THIS
FIXES EVERYTHING.



NO... IT
DOESN'T.

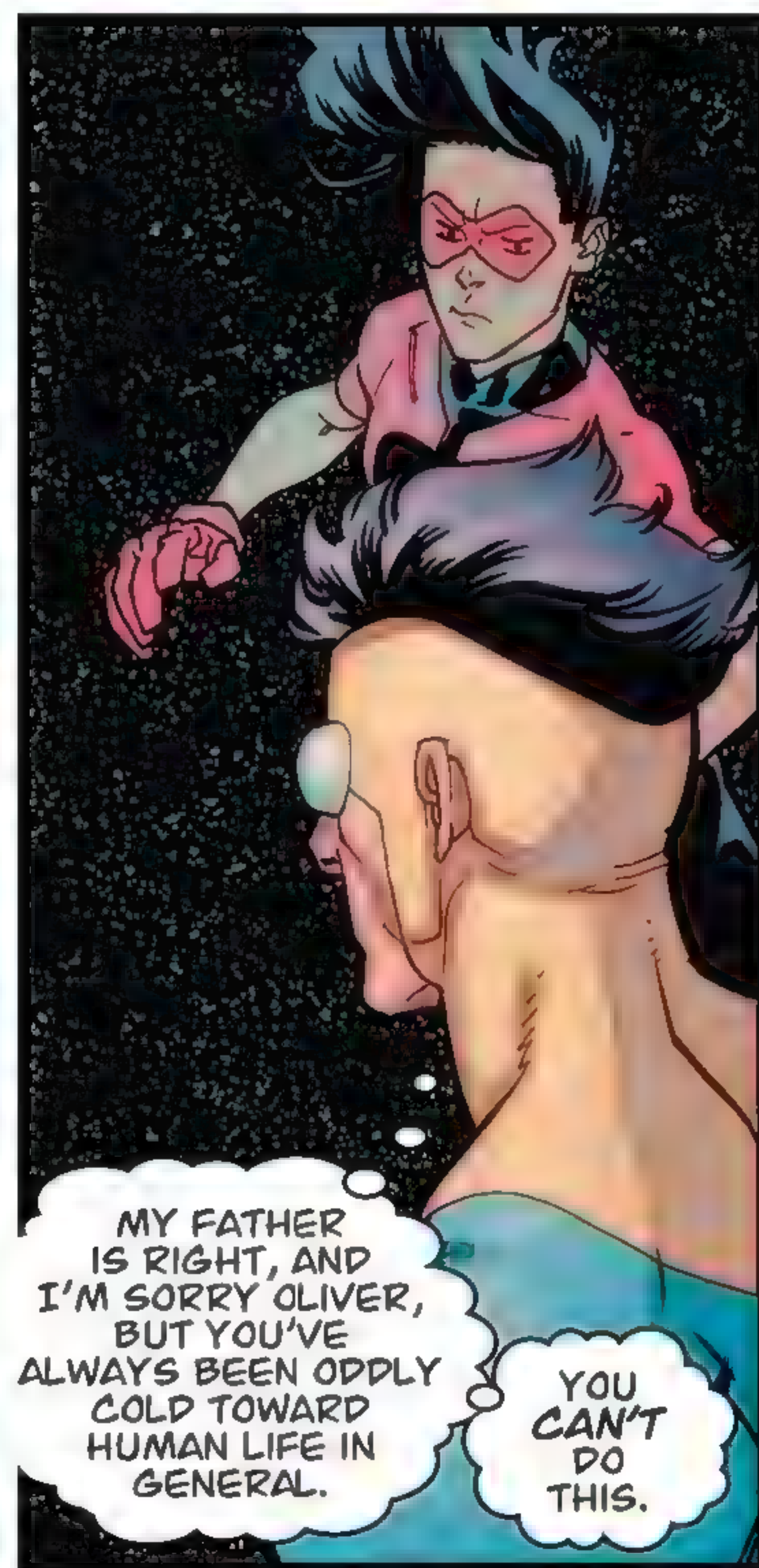
IF THERE'S
EVEN THE
SLIGHTEST CHANCE
THIS SCOURGE VIRUS
YOU HAVE WILL AFFECT
HUMANS... AND IT SOUNDS
LIKE IT'S PRETTY MUCH
CERTAIN... THERE'S
NO WAY YOU CAN
DO THIS.

ALLEN, THE
VILTRUMITES
KILLED NEARLY
ALL OF YOUR
PEOPLE...
HOW IS THIS
DIFFERENT?

IT'S DIFFERENT BECAUSE
ONCE THE VILTRUMITES
FEEL THEIR NUMBERS ARE
SUFFICIENT AND THEY'RE
THROUGH INTERBREEDING
WITH EARTH THEY WILL
RESUME THEIR MISSION
OF UNIVERSAL
CONQUEST.

THEN MORE
PEOPLE, LIKE MINE,
WILL BE PUSHED TO
THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION...
AND THAT'S ONLY THE
BEGINNING. THINK OF
WHAT THEY DID WITH THEIR
NUMBERS DWINDLING.
HOW MUCH WORSE WILL
THINGS BE WITH
THEIR FULL POWER
RESTORED?

IF I CAUSE
THE EXTINCTION
OF HUMANITY IN
ORDER TO RID US OF
THE VILTRUMITES--
THAT'S IT. IT STOPS
HERE AND THE HUMAN
RACE BECOMES A
WORTHY SACRIFICE
FOR THE GOOD OF
ALL LIFE IN THE
UNIVERSE.





DON'T ACT
SURPRISED,
ALLEN.

YOU KNEW I
COULD NEVER
LET YOU DO
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS.



IN FACT, I'M
ALMOST CERTAIN
THAT SOMEWHERE,
DEEP INSIDE, YOU
WANT ME TO
STOP YOU!

DON'T
BET ON
IT!

AND YOU--
DON'T DO
THIS, OLIVER.
HELP ME STOP
ALLEN.

THERE ARE
PEOPLE ON THAT
PLANET YOU KNOW--
AND COUNTLESS
OTHERS WHO ARE
INNOCENT. THEY
DON'T DESERVE TO DIE!

THIS
ISN'T
ABOUT
THEM!

OLIVER IS
RIGHT--
BUT ENOUGH
ARGUING!
YOU'RE
WASTING
TIME!

THIS HAS
TO BE DONE
QUICKLY--IT HAS
TO BE DONE NOW!
BEFORE THEY GET
A CHANCE TO
DETECT WHAT'S
HAPPENING!

YOU NEED
TO JUST LET
THIS HAPPEN.
TRUST THAT I KNOW
WHAT IS BEST. I
WAS MADE HEAD OF
THE COALITION OF
PLANETS FOR
A REASON.

BESIDES--
NOLAN
COULDN'T
STOP ME.

WHAT
CHANCE
DO YOU
HAVE?!



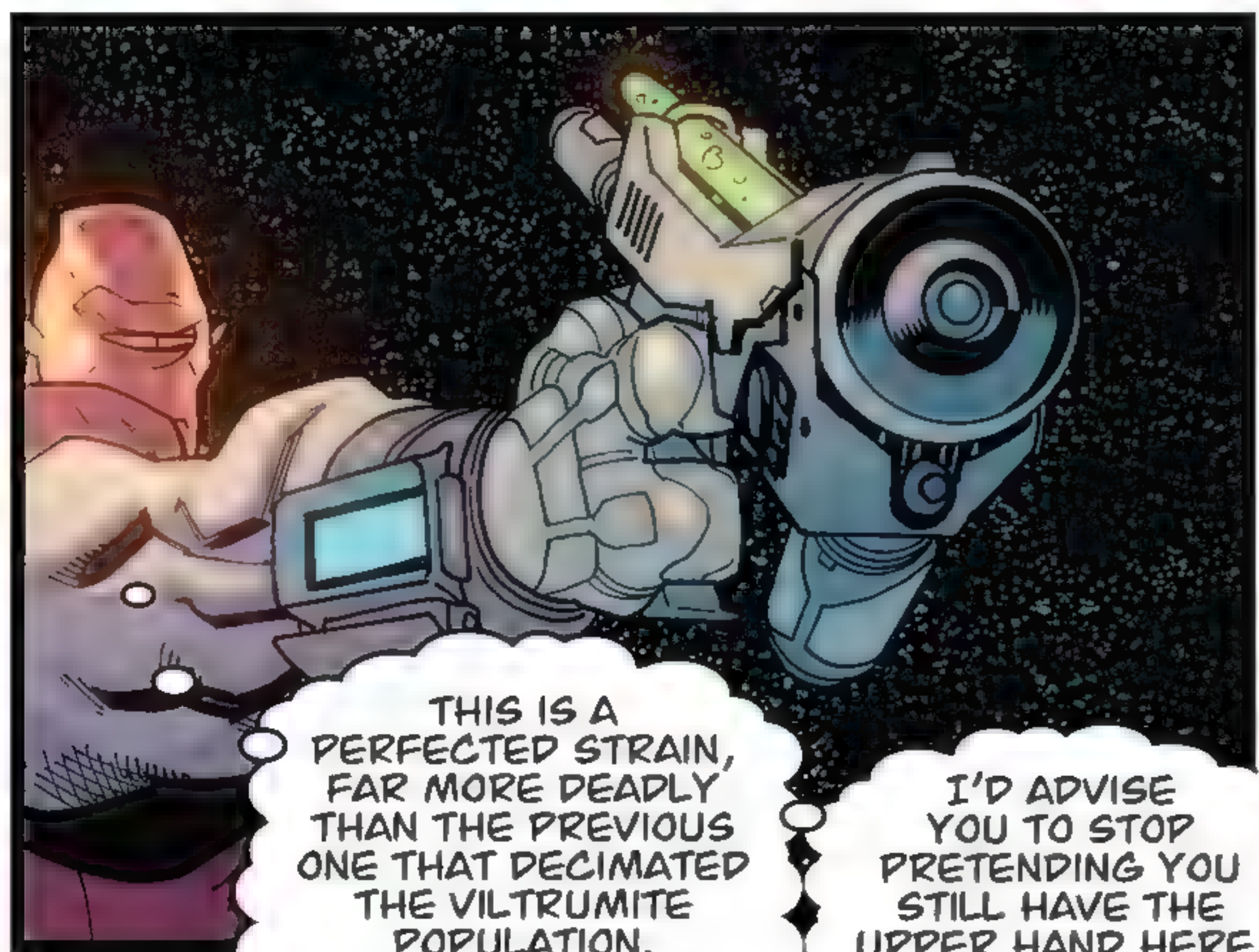
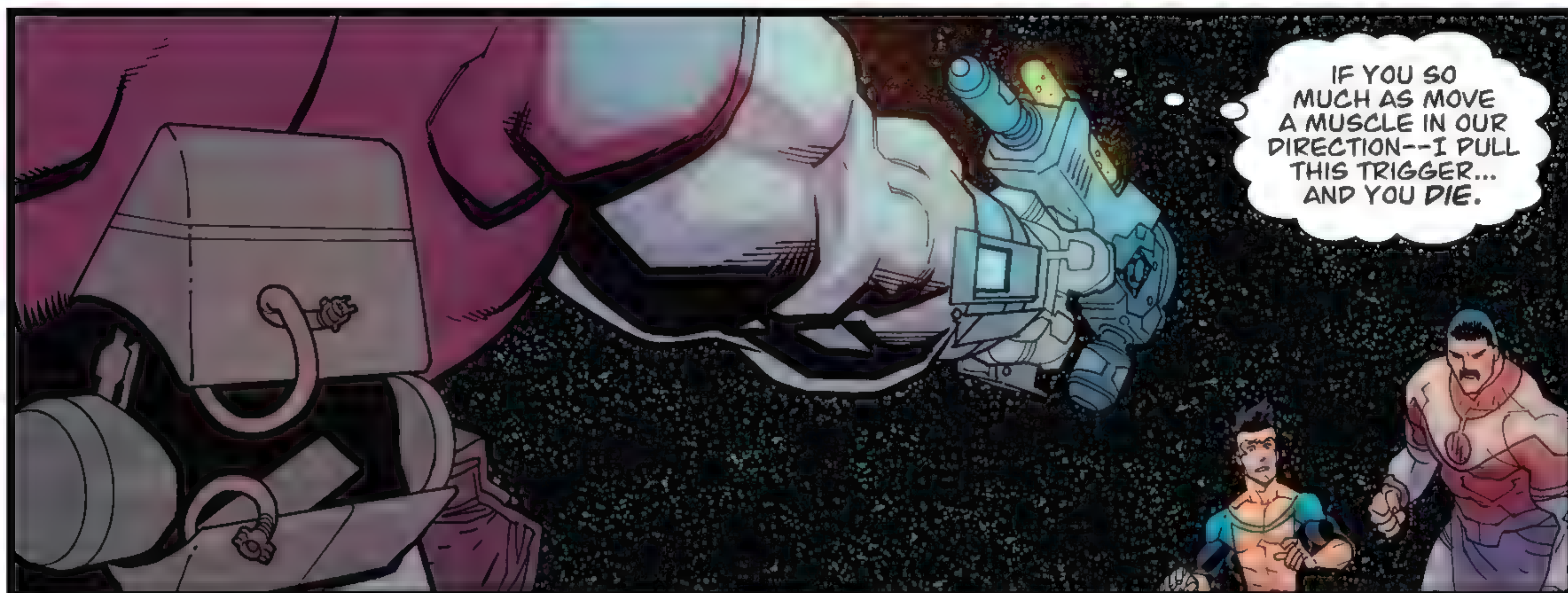
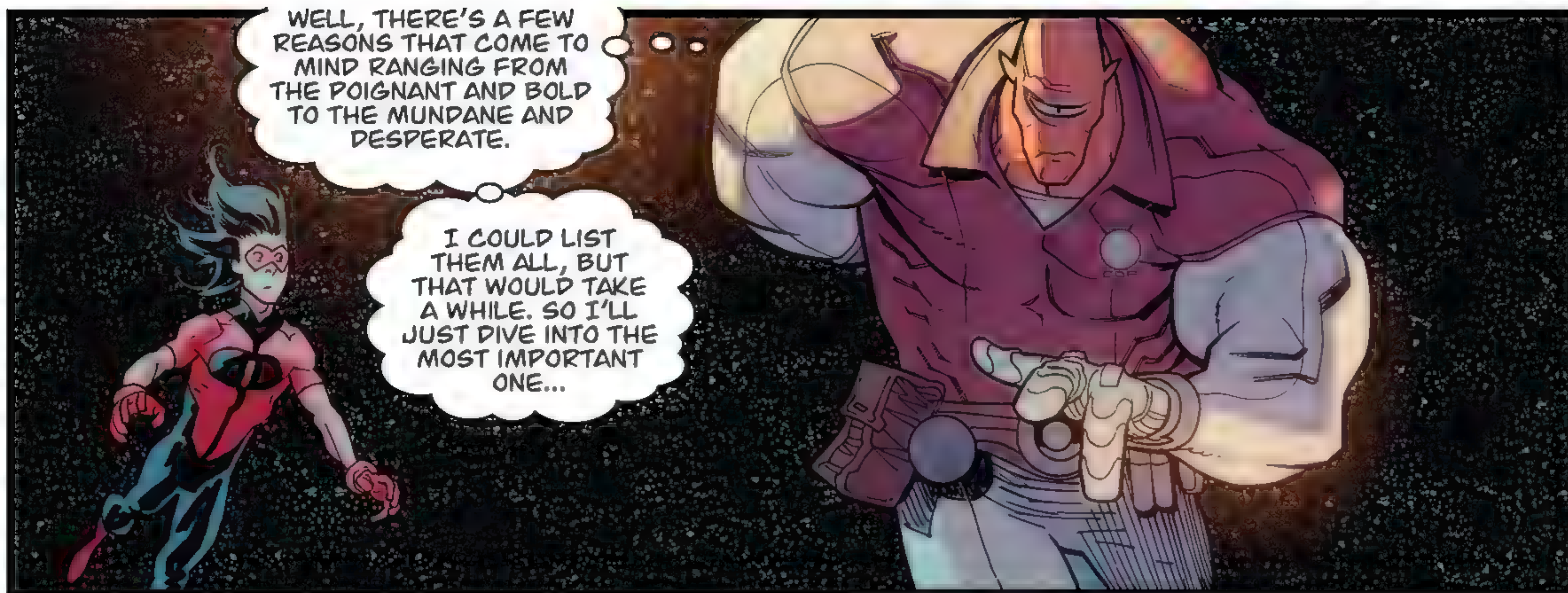
HE
HAS
ME.



CHAPTER 88









OKAY, SO
IT'S OVER, RIGHT?
ALLEN--YOU'RE
PACKING IT IN AND
GOING HOME?

THRAGG KNOWS--
YOU'RE NOT CATCHING
THEM BY SURPRISE--
YOU RELEASE THIS THING
INTO EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE
NOW AND THEY JUST TAKE
OFF, LEAVING THE PLANET
BEFORE THE VIRUS
SPREADS.

SO THAT'S
IT--YOUR
PLAN IS
OFFICIALLY
FOILED.



COME ON,
GUYS... LET'S
NOT DO
ANYTHING
CRAZY,
OKAY?

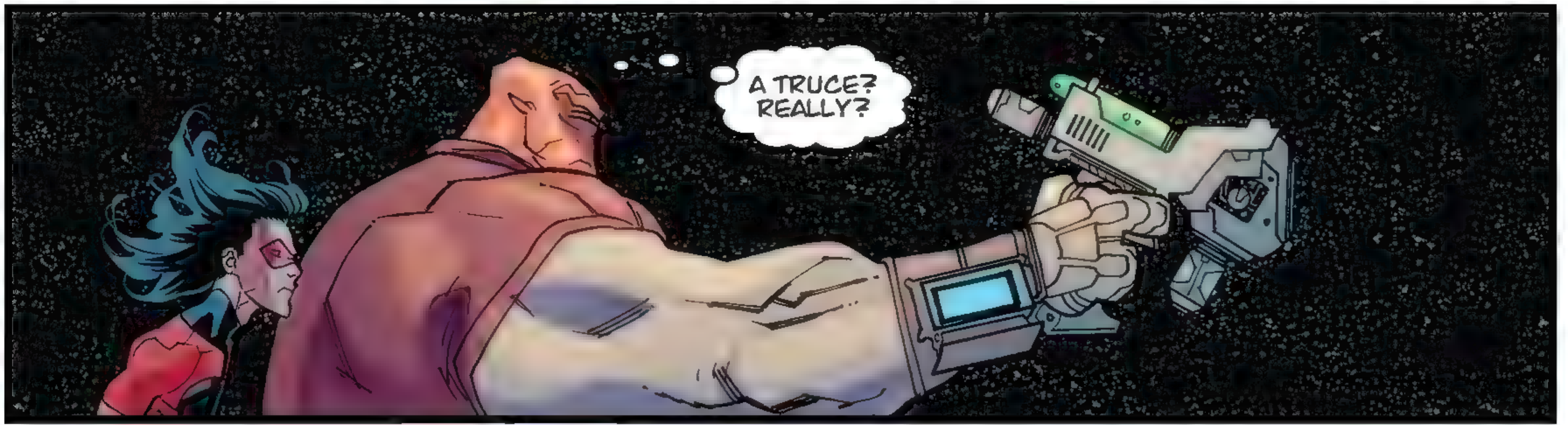
I'M SO
TOTALLY
UNPREPARED
FOR CRAZY
RIGHT NOW.



LET ME
BE CLEAR.
THERE WILL
BE NO FIGHT
HERE... NOT
NOW.

AS THE NEW HEAD OF THE
COALITION OF PLANETS, ALLEN...
I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE
UNDER TREMENDOUS PRESSURE...
AND NEED TO PROVE YOURSELF
WORTHY OF THE
APPOINTMENT.

I WOULD
LIKE TO
PROPOSE A
TRUCE.



A TRUCE?
REALLY?



YES. I COULD
SLAUGHTER YOU NOW,
MAYBE YOU WOULD
INFECT ME, MAYBE
NOT. MY PEOPLE WOULD
BE SAFE, YOU WOULD
BE DEAD.

BUT WHAT DOES
THAT ACCOMPLISH?
YOU ARE NOT SO STUPID
THAT THIS IS THE ONLY
SAMPLE OF THE VIRUS.
YOU'VE GOT IT STORED
AWAY SOMEWHERE,
BEYOND MY
REACH.

SO AFTER
YOU DIE YOUR
SUCCESSOR COMES
BACK HERE AND
WE'RE IN THE
EXACT SAME
PLACE.



FUTHERMORE, I DON'T
BELIEVE YOU REALLY
WANT TO DO THIS. I KNOW
WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE MADE
A LEADER, TO HAVE
YOURSELF THRUST INTO
THAT ROLE.

AT THIS
STAGE, YOU ARE
ALLOWING YOUR
PERCEIVED DUTY TO
OVERSHADOW YOUR OWN
GOOD JUDGMENT. THE
EXTINCTION OF LIFE ON
EARTH IS SIMPLY NOT
WORTH THE LIVES
OF THIRTY
VILTRUMITES.

ALSO, I WOULD
BE REMISS IF I DIDN'T
POINT OUT THAT YOU
ONLY HAVE MY WORD
THAT WE ARE ALL EVEN
ON THIS PLANET. DO YOU
REALLY TRUST THAT I
WOULD ALLOW MY PEOPLE
TO BE IN SUCH A
VULNERABLE
POSITION?

IF THE
OVERWHELMING
SENSE OF OBLIGATION
TO YOUR NEW ROLE
WASN'T CLOUDING YOUR
JUDGEMENT... YOU WOULD
SEE ALL THIS, AND BE
AWARE OF IT. INSTEAD, YOU
ARE ACTING ON IMPULSE,
ALLOWING YOUR
UNCERTAINTY TO
DRIVE YOUR
DECISIONS.

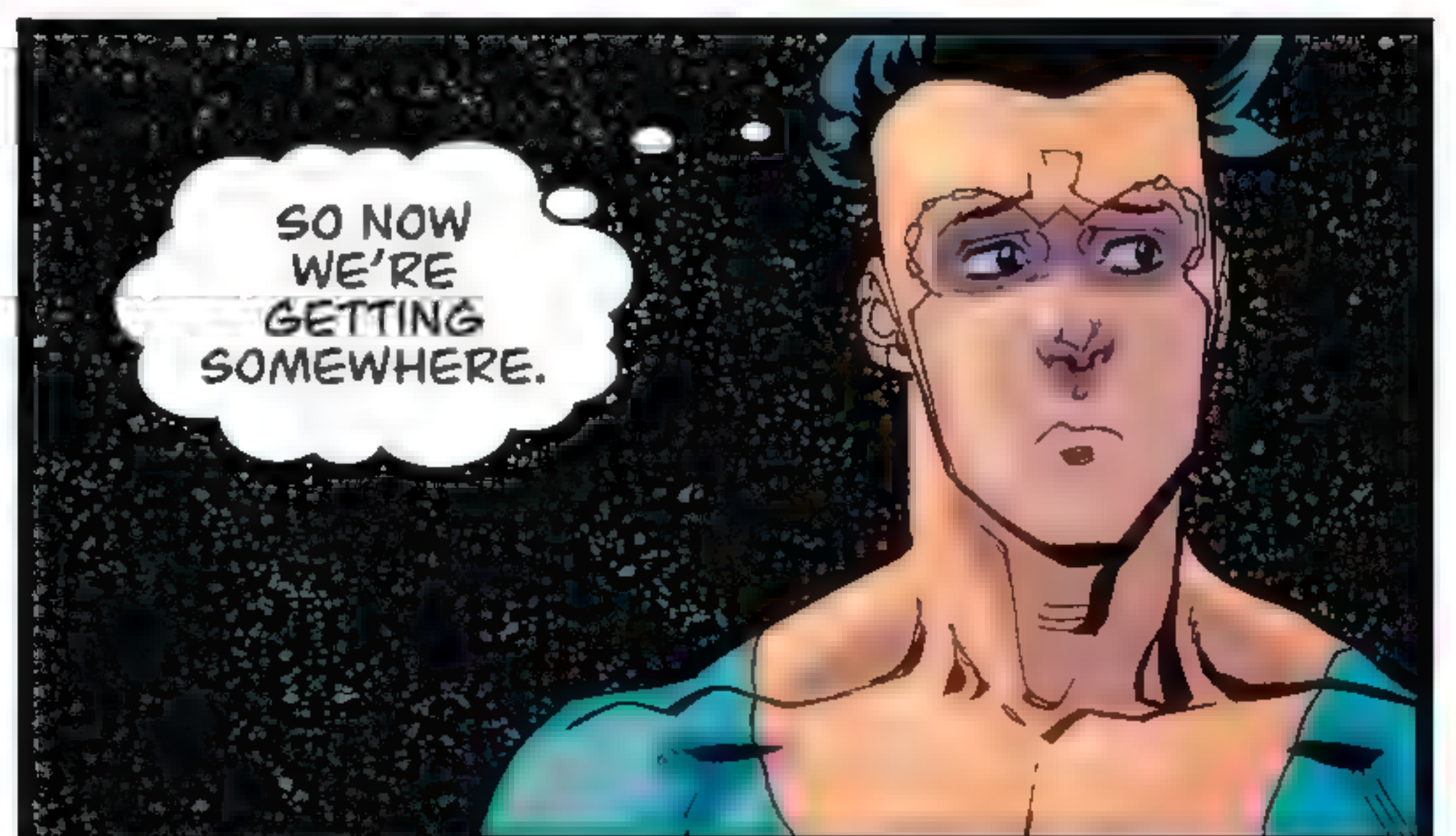
THIS IS
NOT A
GOOD
IDEA.



CONSIDER HOW
YOU REALLY
FEEL ABOUT IT,
AND YOU WILL
AGREE.



OKAY...



SO NOW
WE'RE
GETTING
SOMEWHERE.

SO AGAIN, I PROPOSE A TRUCE. WE OCCUPY THIS PLANET, IT'S NOT A HOSTILE OCCUPATION, OUR PRESENCE IS LARGELY UNKNOWN BY THE POPULATION. YOU ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH IT... BUT I AM UNCOMFORTABLE WITH YOU HAVING THE SCOURGE VIRUS IN HAND, AT THE READY.

YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO STRIKE AT US WITH THIS VIRUS AT ANY TIME. WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO SLAUGHTER EVERY LIVING THING ON THIS PLANET--AND RESUME OUR WAR WITH THE COALITION.

WE ARE IN A STANDOFF. I SAY WE ALLOW OUR POSITION TO REMAIN AS SUCH, WITH EACH PARTY KEEPING THE OTHER IN CHECK.

WE WILL LIVE HERE, NOTHING MORE... AND IN RETURN, YOU WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO KILL US.

I DON'T KNOW THAT I CAN MAKE THAT WORK.

LET ME HELP YOU. YOU ARE BACKED INTO A CORNER.

YOU HAVE NO CHOICE.

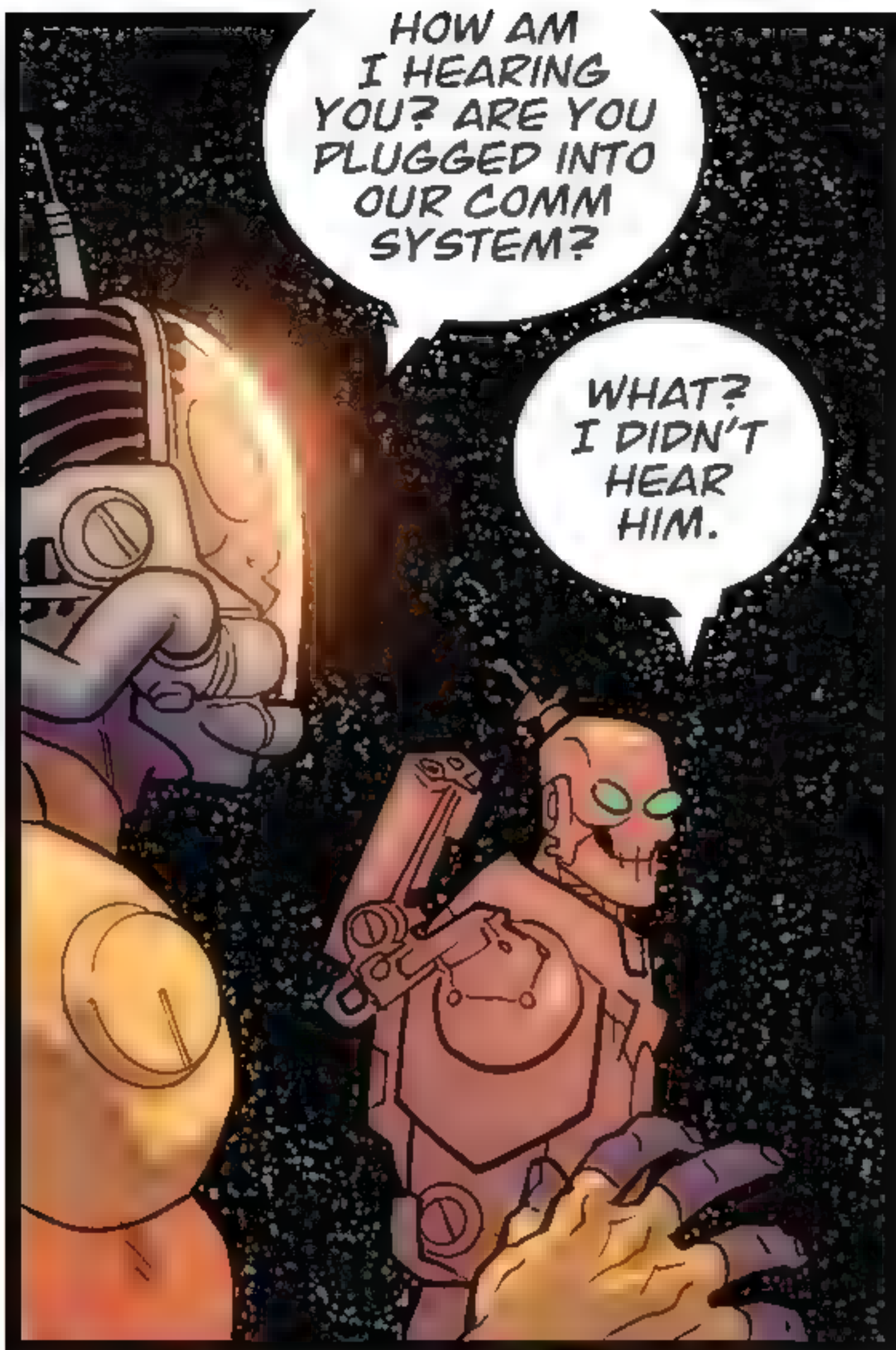
THE HELL WE DON'T! I'M WILLING TO BET YOUR PEOPLE ARE IN DEEP COVER... I BET THIS VIRUS WOULD GET TO THEM BEFORE THEY COULD GET OFF WORLD, WE MAY NOT GET ALL OF YOU, BUT--

OLIVER... STOP.

THRAGG IS RIGHT.

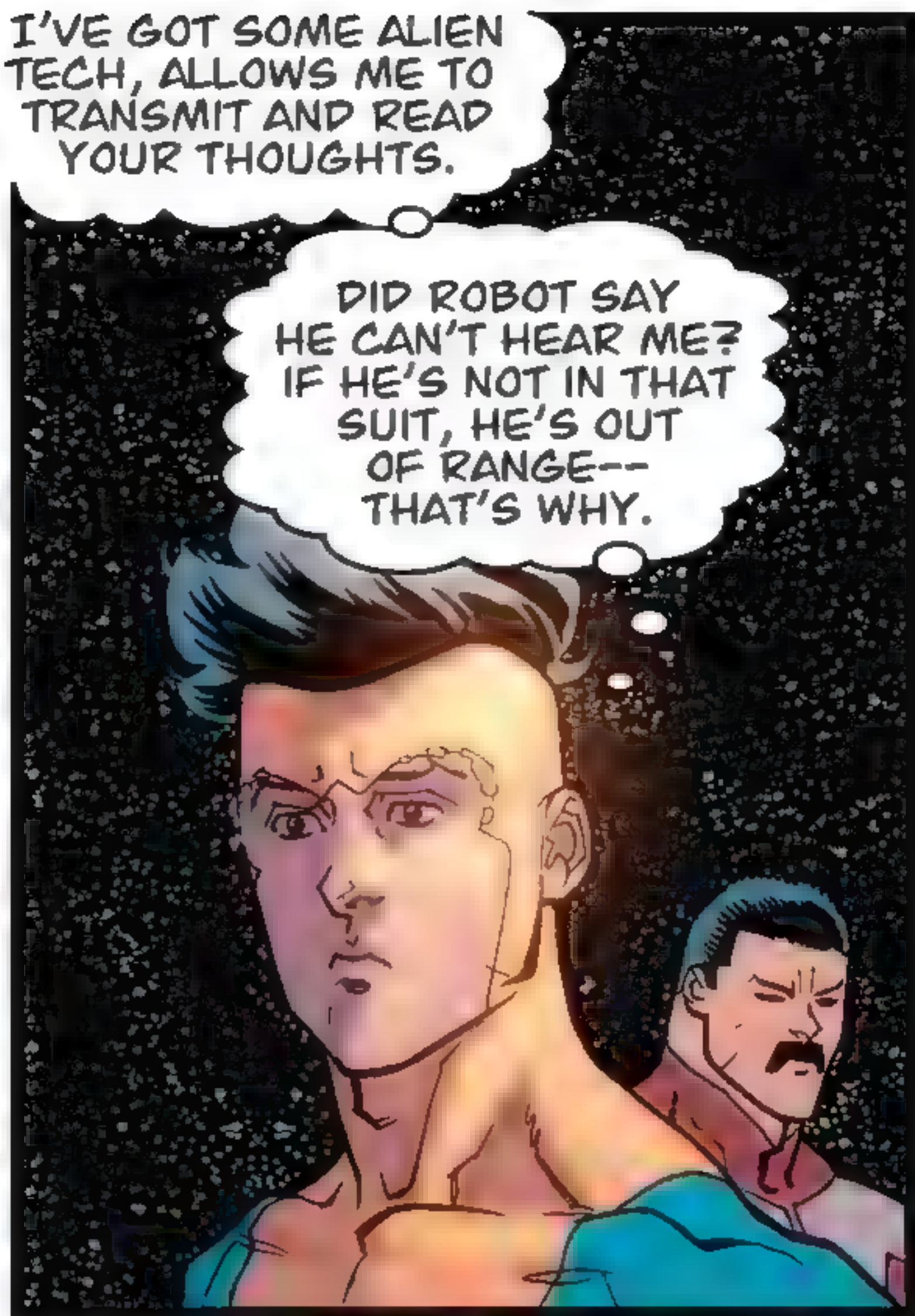


OH,
WHAT THE
HECK?



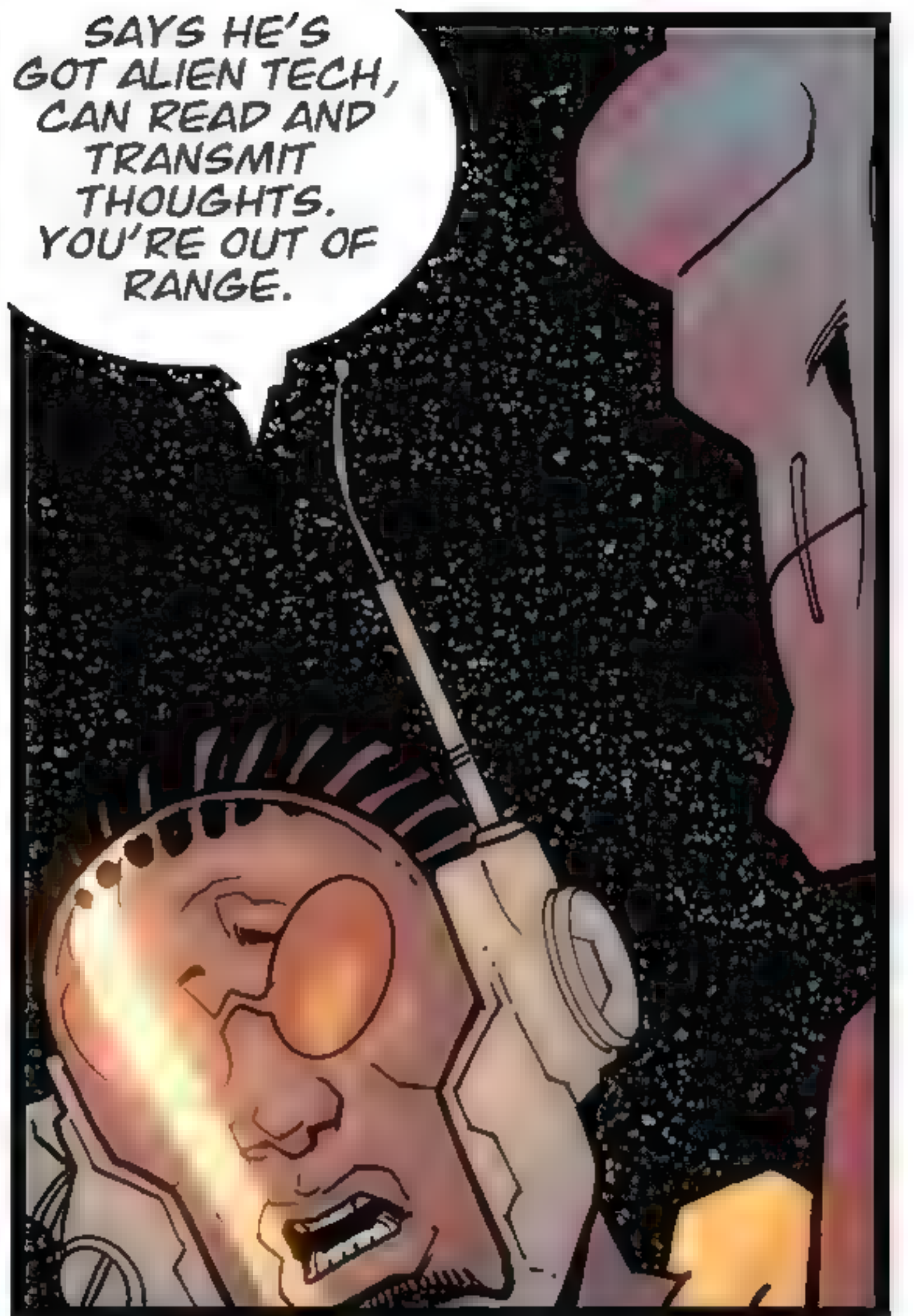
HOW AM I HEARING YOU? ARE YOU PLUGGED INTO OUR COMM SYSTEM?

WHAT? I DIDN'T HEAR HIM.

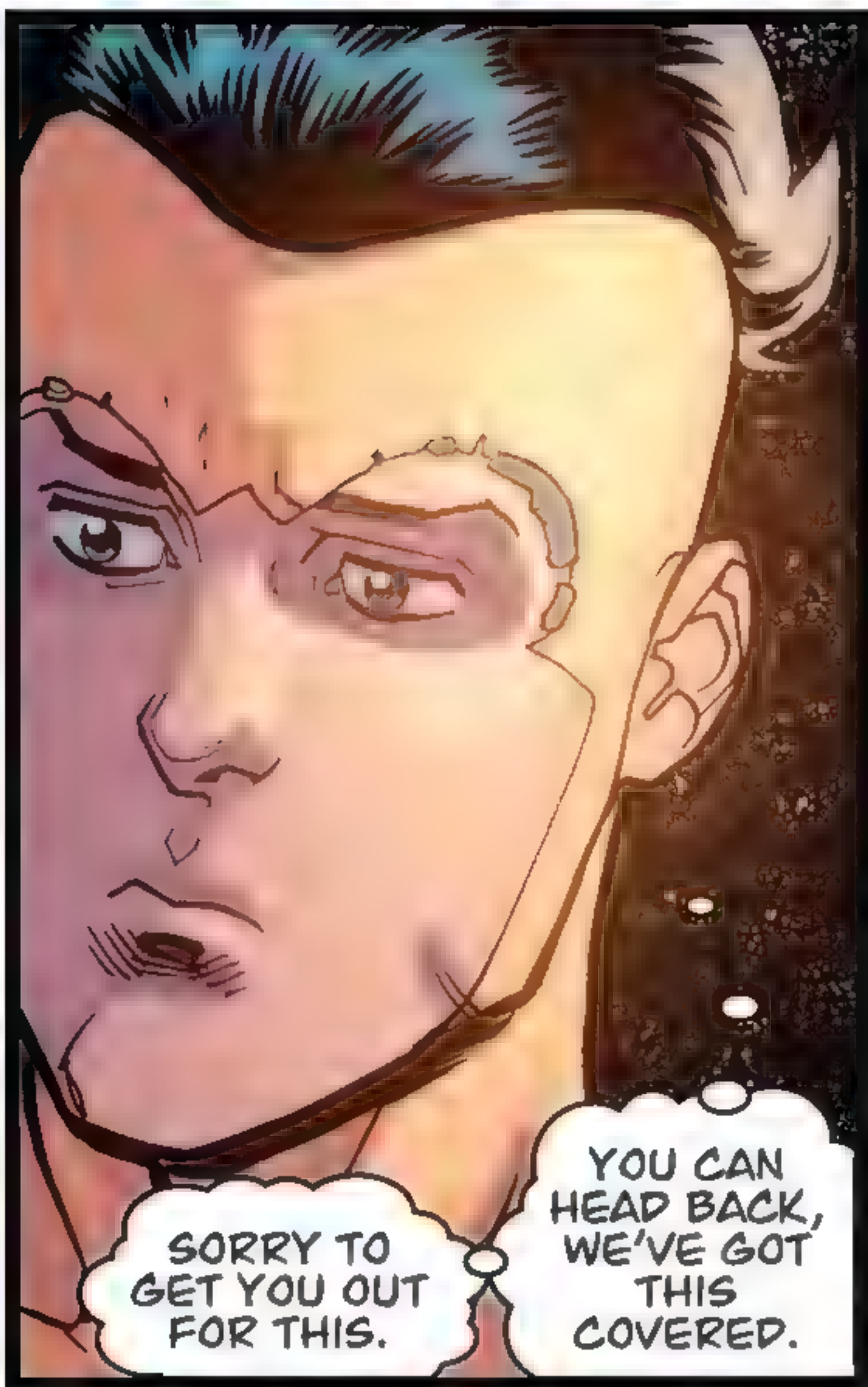


I'VE GOT SOME ALIEN TECH, ALLOWS ME TO TRANSMIT AND READ YOUR THOUGHTS.

DID ROBOT SAY HE CAN'T HEAR ME? IF HE'S NOT IN THAT SUIT, HE'S OUT OF RANGE-- THAT'S WHY.



SAYS HE'S GOT ALIEN TECH, CAN READ AND TRANSMIT THOUGHTS. YOU'RE OUT OF RANGE.



SORRY TO GET YOU OUT FOR THIS.

YOU CAN HEAD BACK, WE'VE GOT THIS COVERED.



HE'S TELLING US TO LEAVE. HE'S IN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION.

IS THAT WHAT HE'S SAYING?



WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?

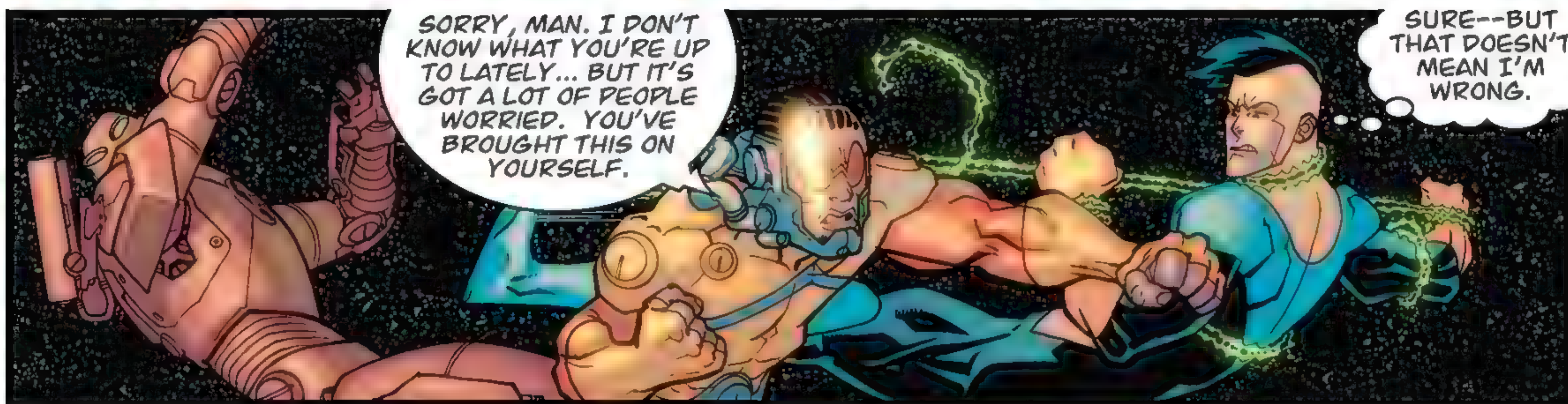
FRIENDS OF MINE, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM. THEY WON'T INTERFERE.

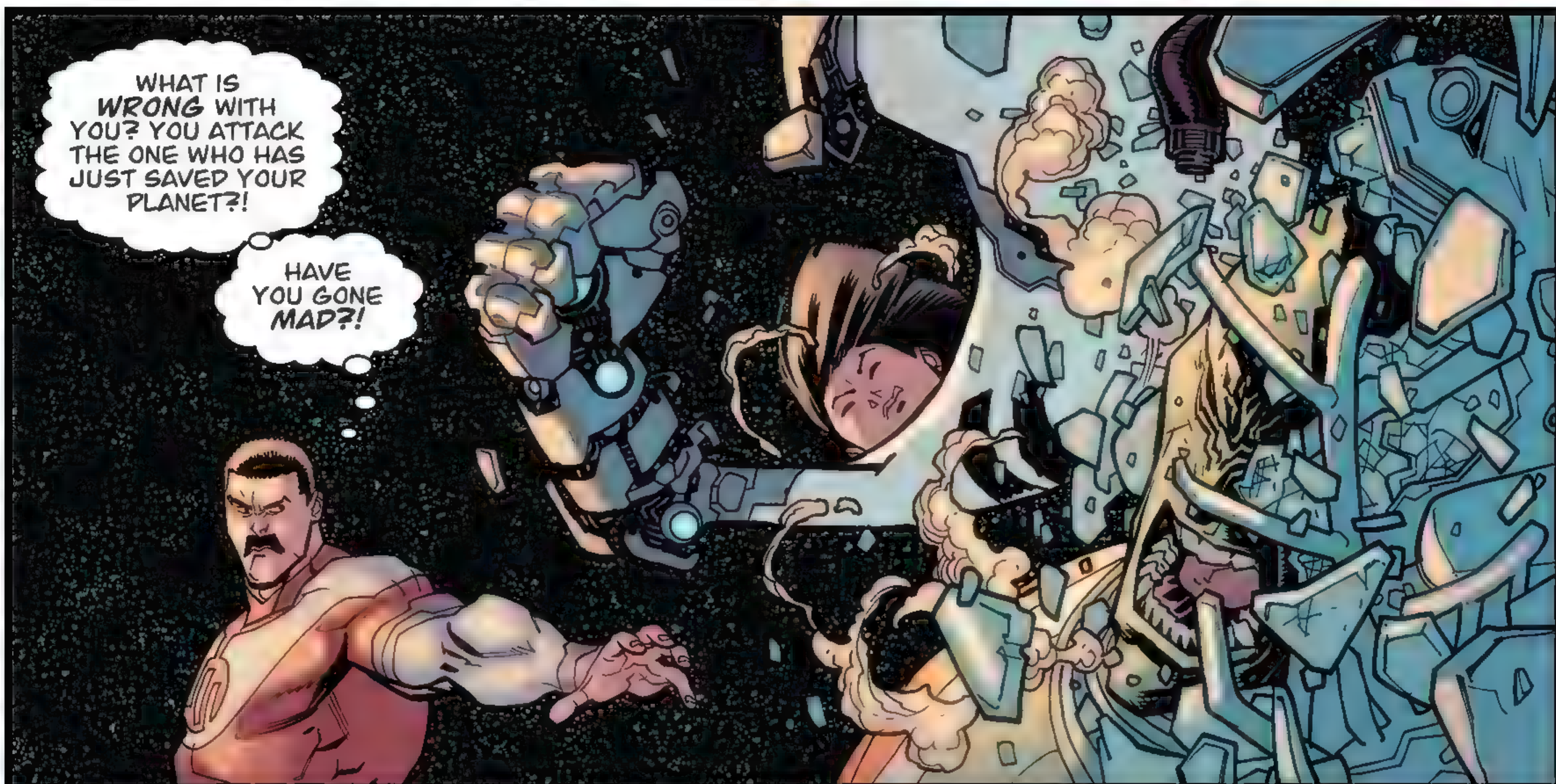


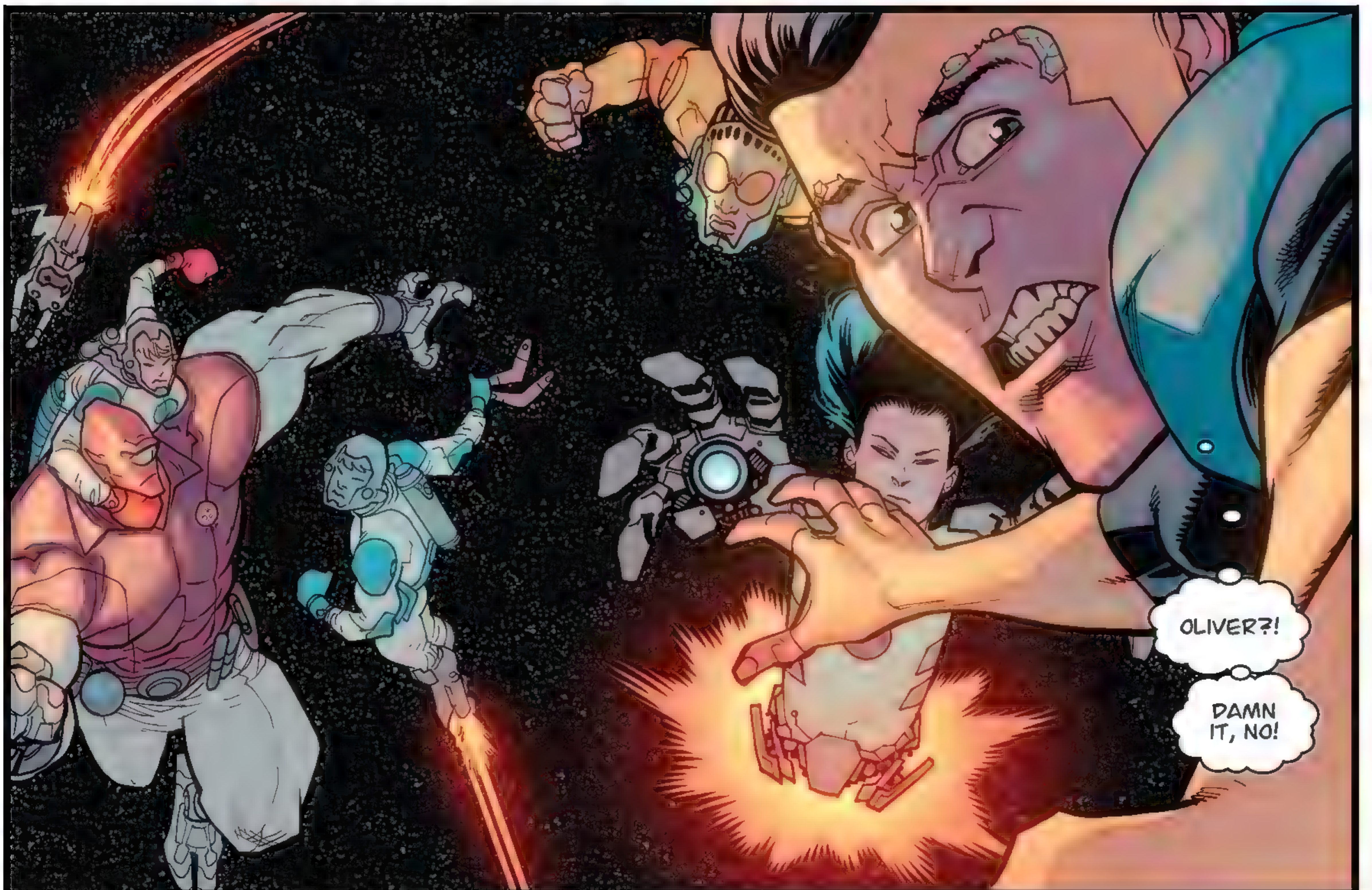
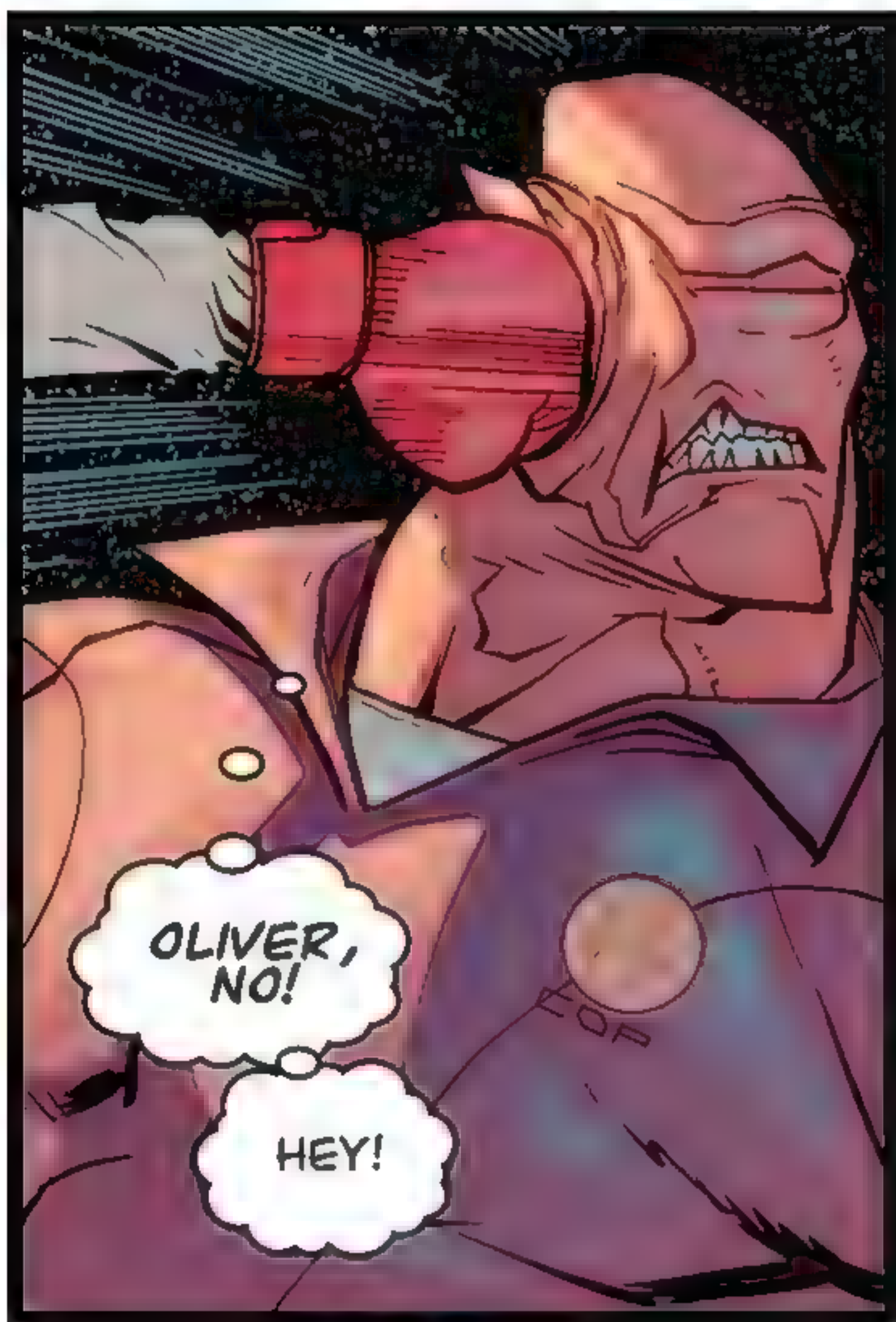
ROBOT SAYS THAT YOUR STATUS AS A FUGITIVE MAKES HIM SKEPTICAL OF YOUR ACTIONS HERE, AND HE'D LIKE ALL OF YOU TO ACCOMPANY US BACK TO THE PENTAGON FOR DETAINMENT UNTIL THINGS ARE SORTED.

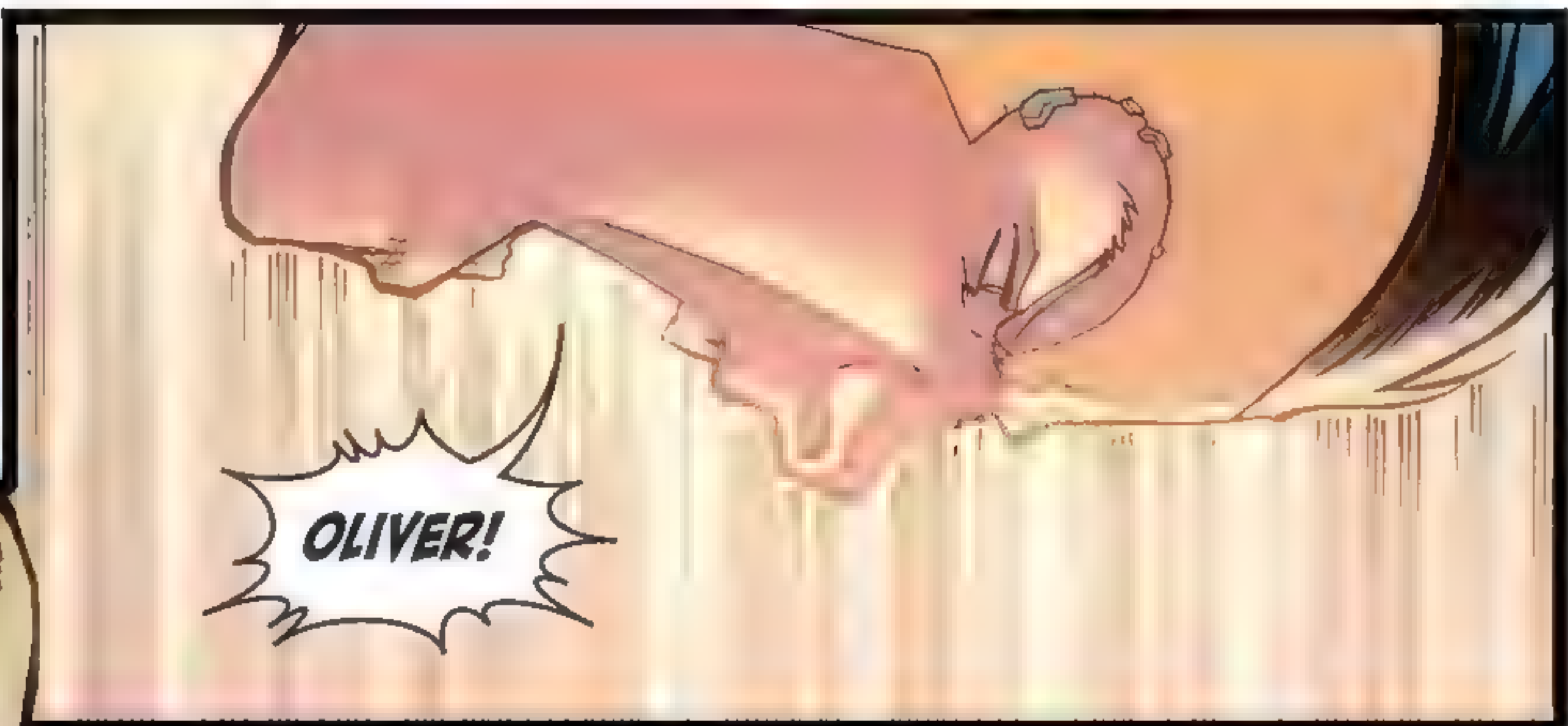
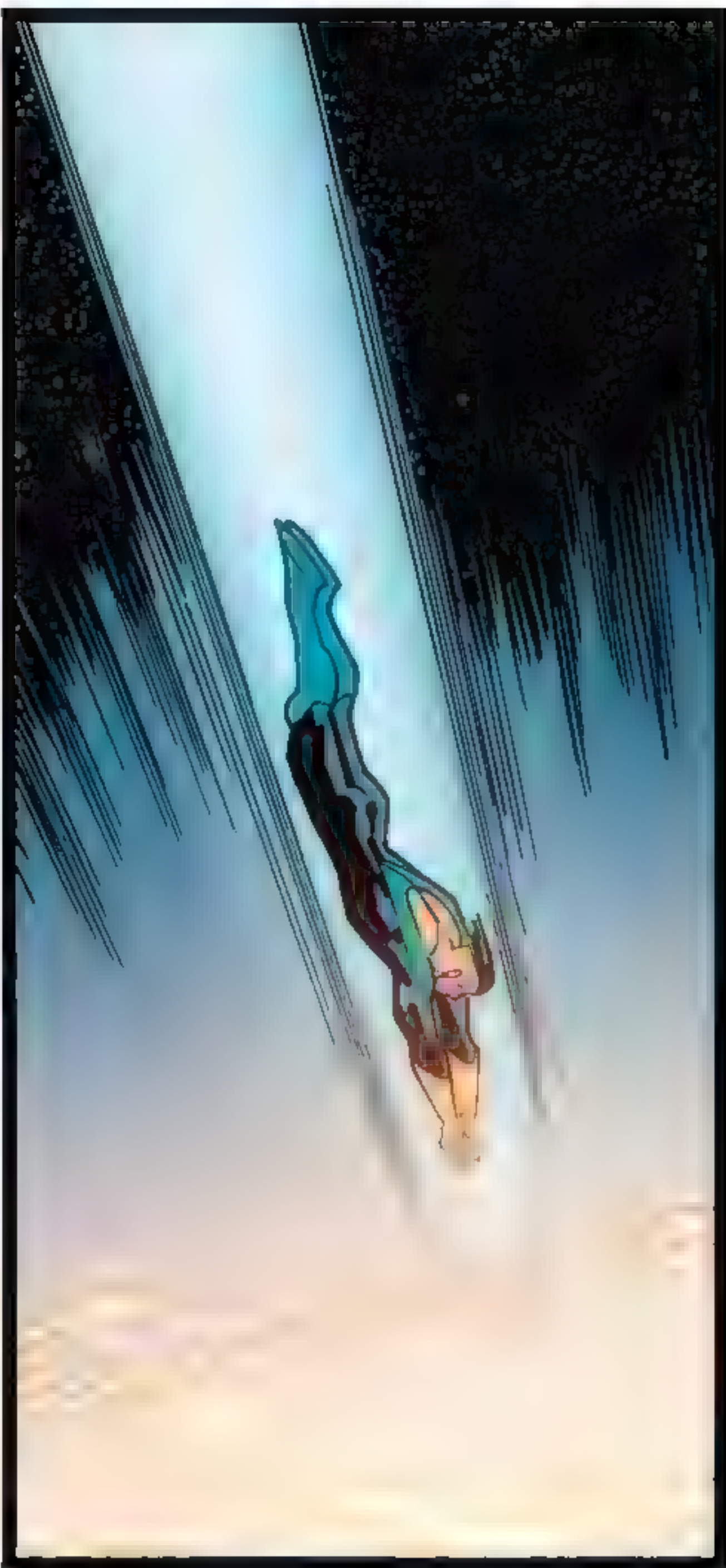
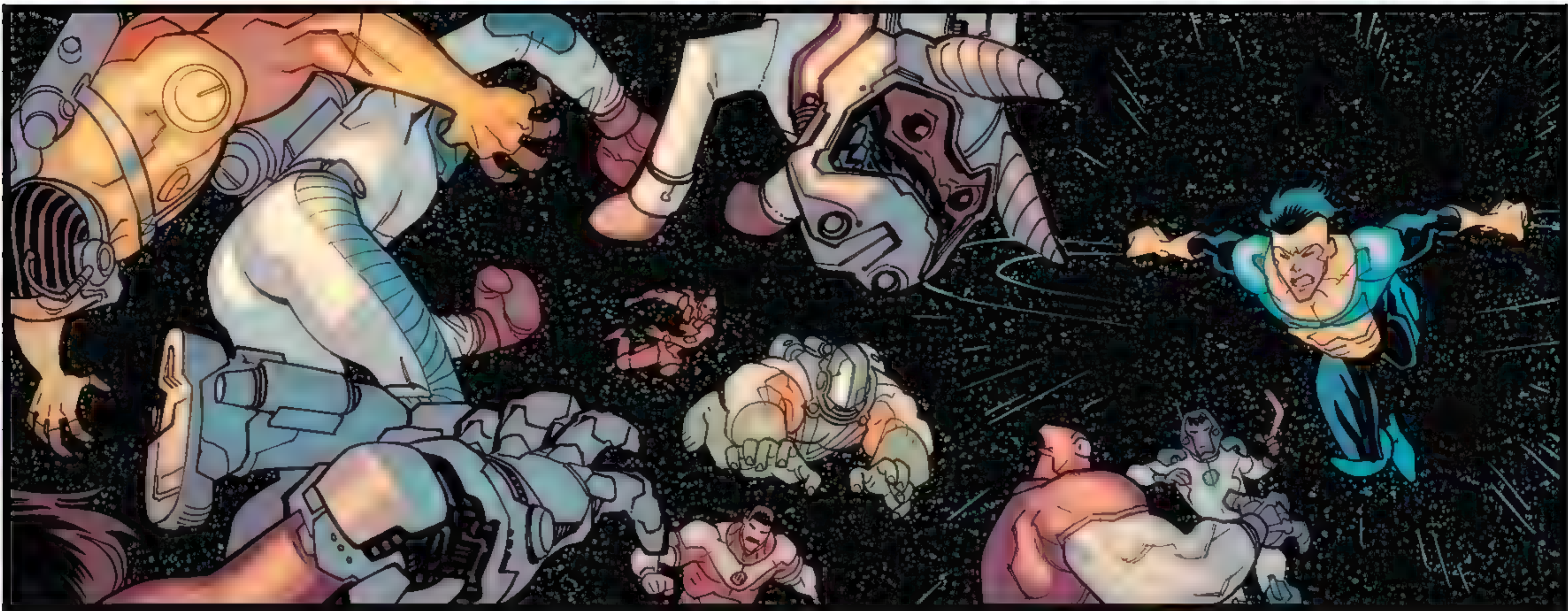


THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

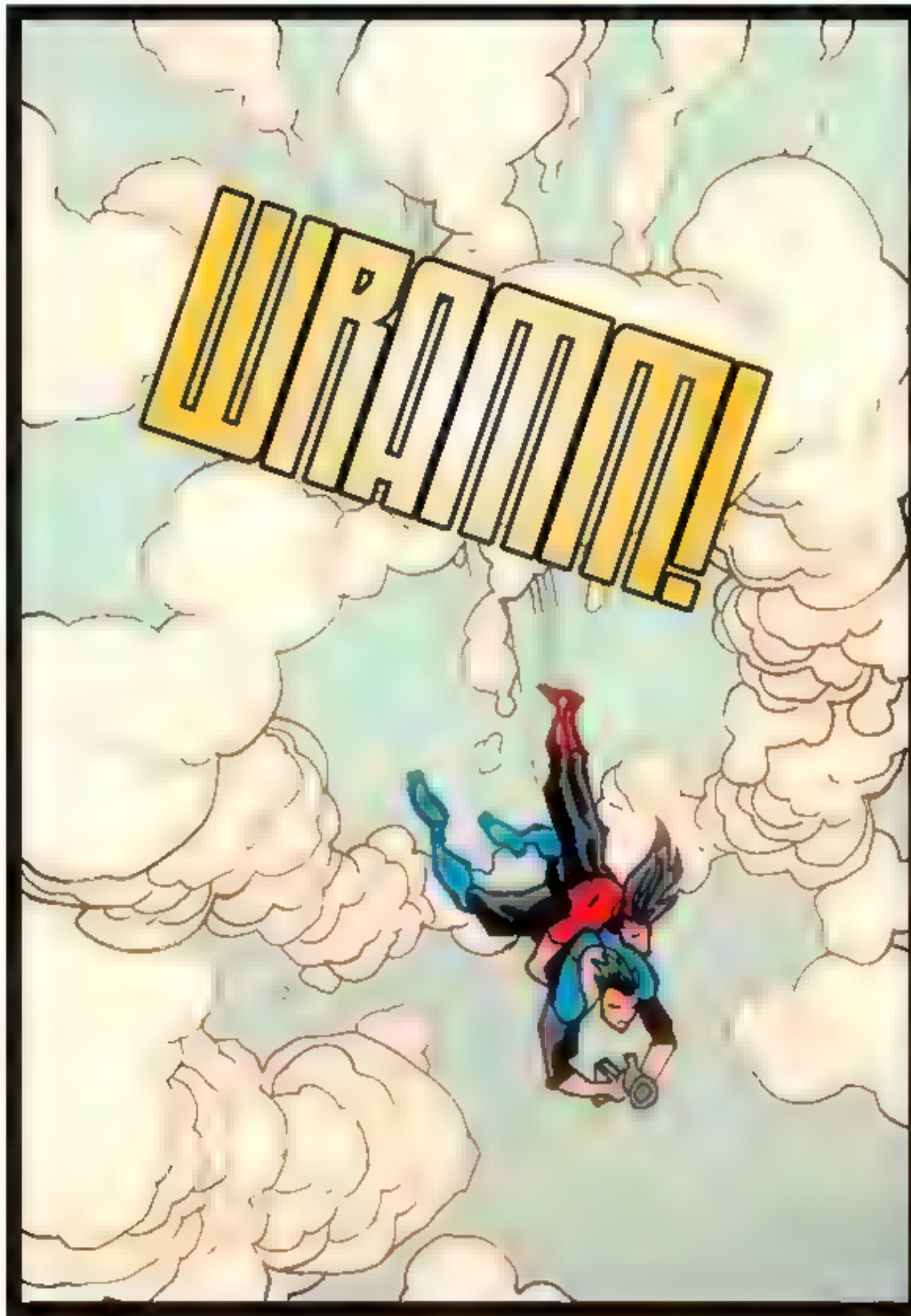
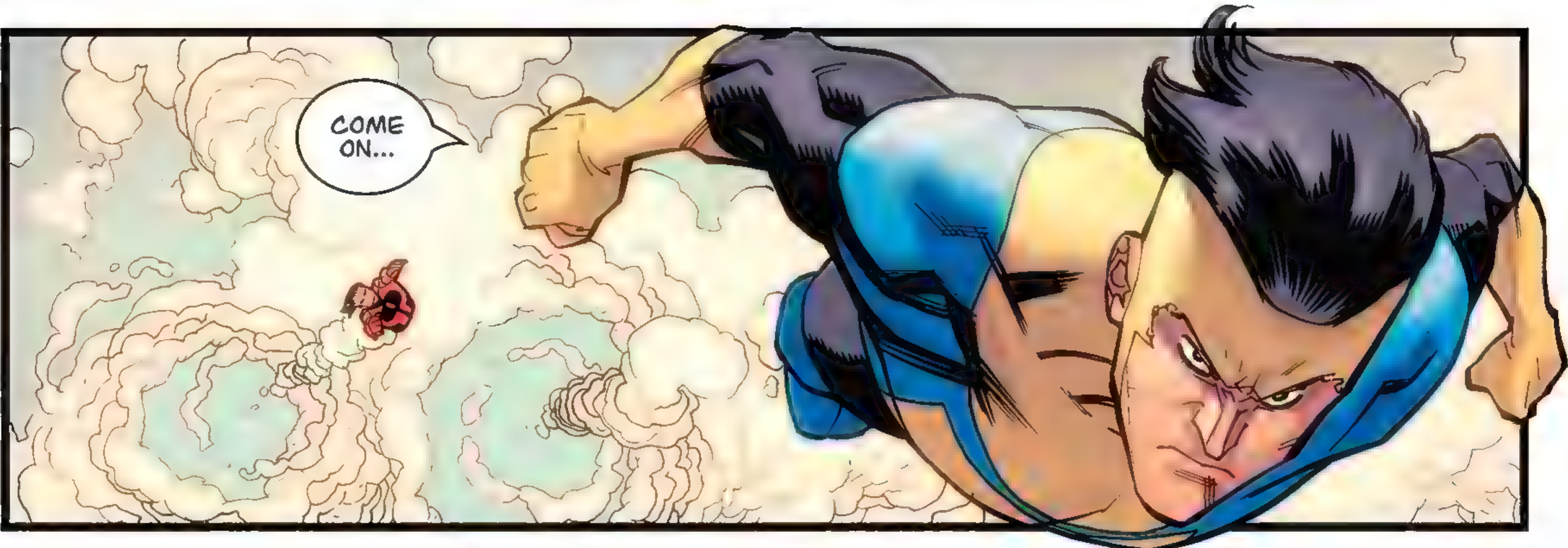


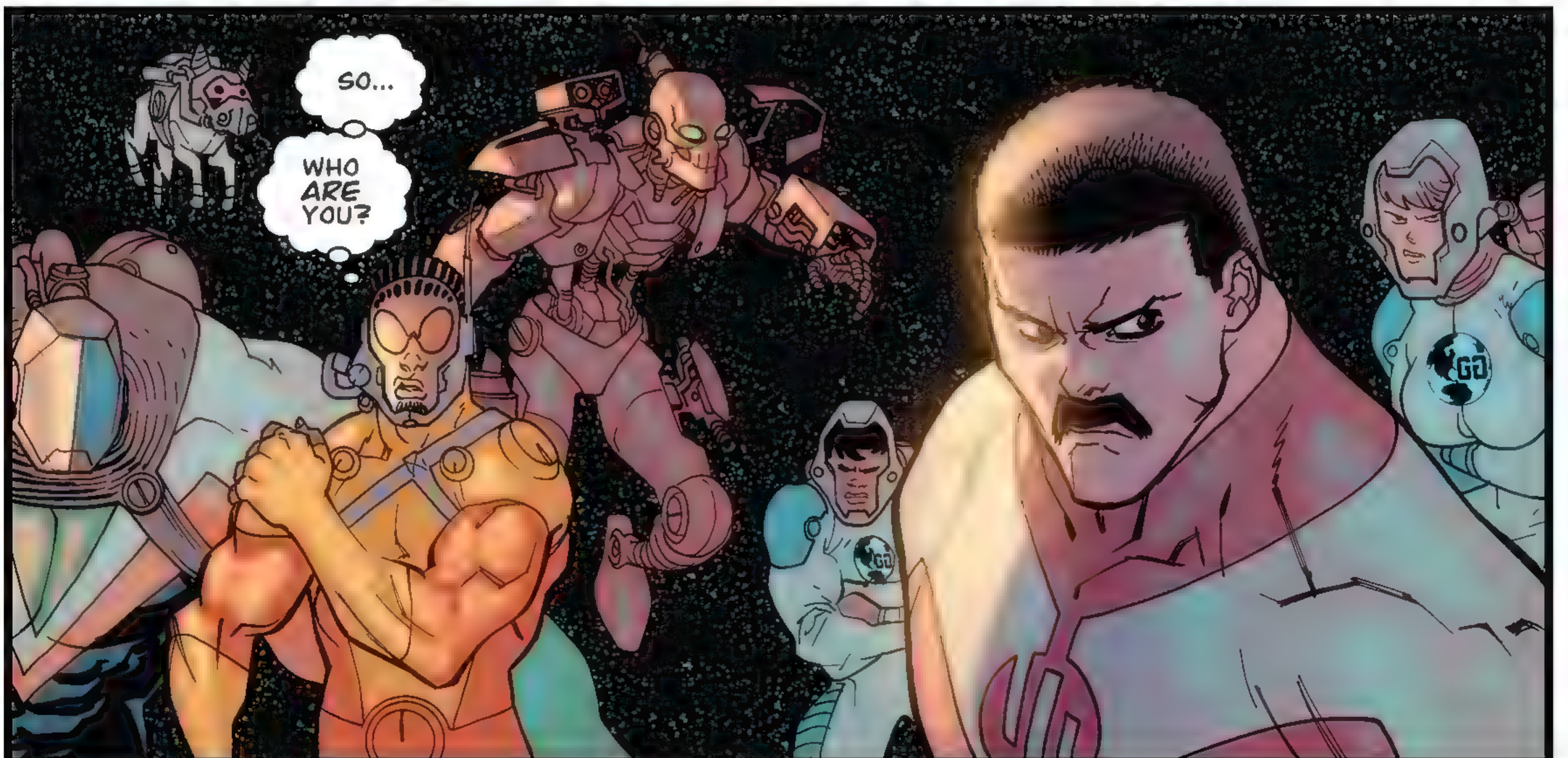
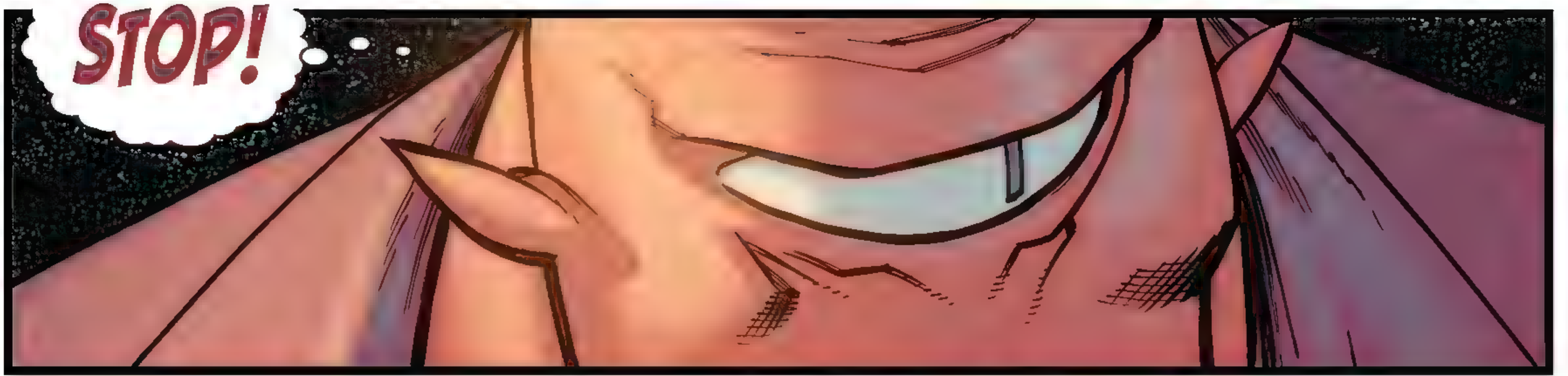






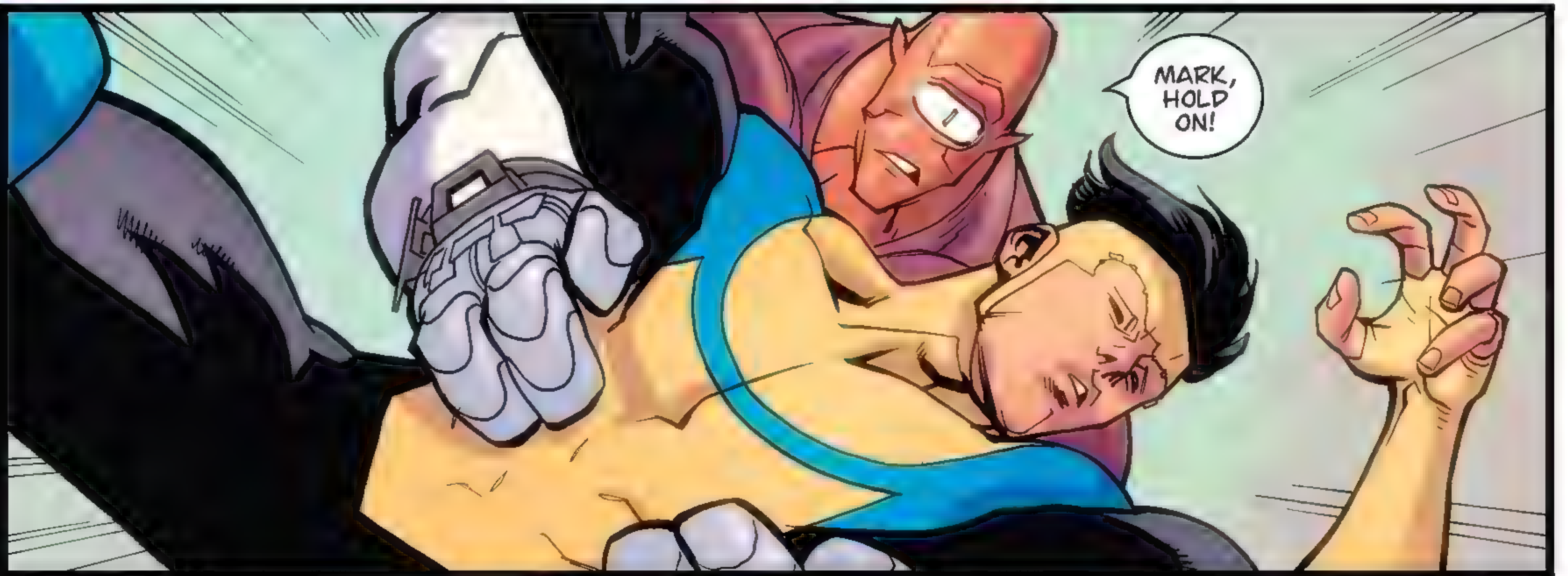
















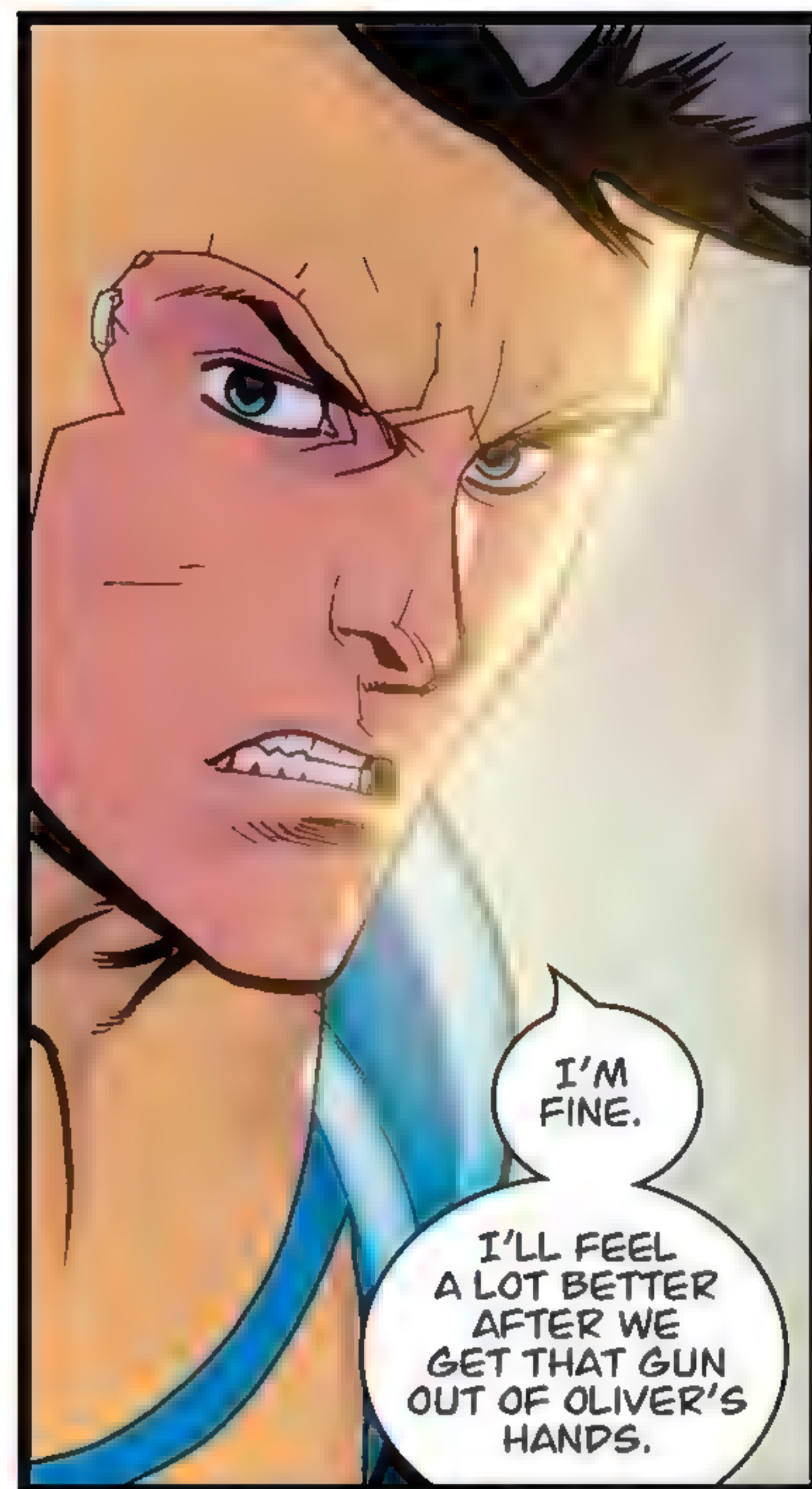
OKAY...

GOOD.



HOW DO YOU FEEL?
ARE YOU OKAY?

THE VIRUS...
I'M PRETTY SURE YOU'RE EXPOSED.



I'M FINE.

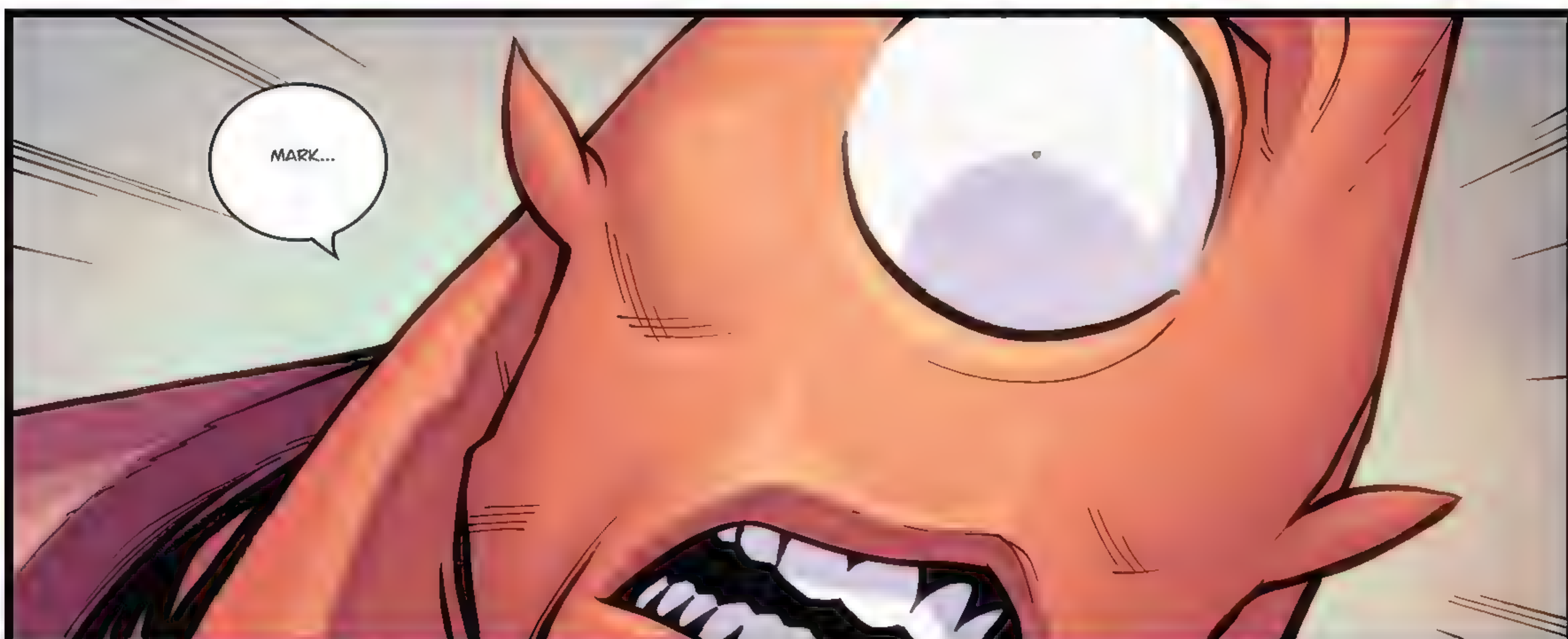
I'LL FEEL A LOT BETTER AFTER WE GET THAT GUN OUT OF OLIVER'S HANDS.



I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO HAVE CONTACT WITH ANYONE OF HUMAN OR VILTRUMITE DNA UNTIL YOU'VE HAD EXTENSIVE SCREENINGS.

YOU NEED TO BE QUARANTINED UNTIL WE'RE CERTAIN YOU WERE NOT INFECTED.

INFECTED-- QUARANTINE?! ALLEN, I'M FINE. I GROSSLY OVERESTIMATED YOUR PEOPLE'S ABILITY TO SYNTHESIZE A VIRUS. THIS STUFF DOESN'T WORK.



MARK...



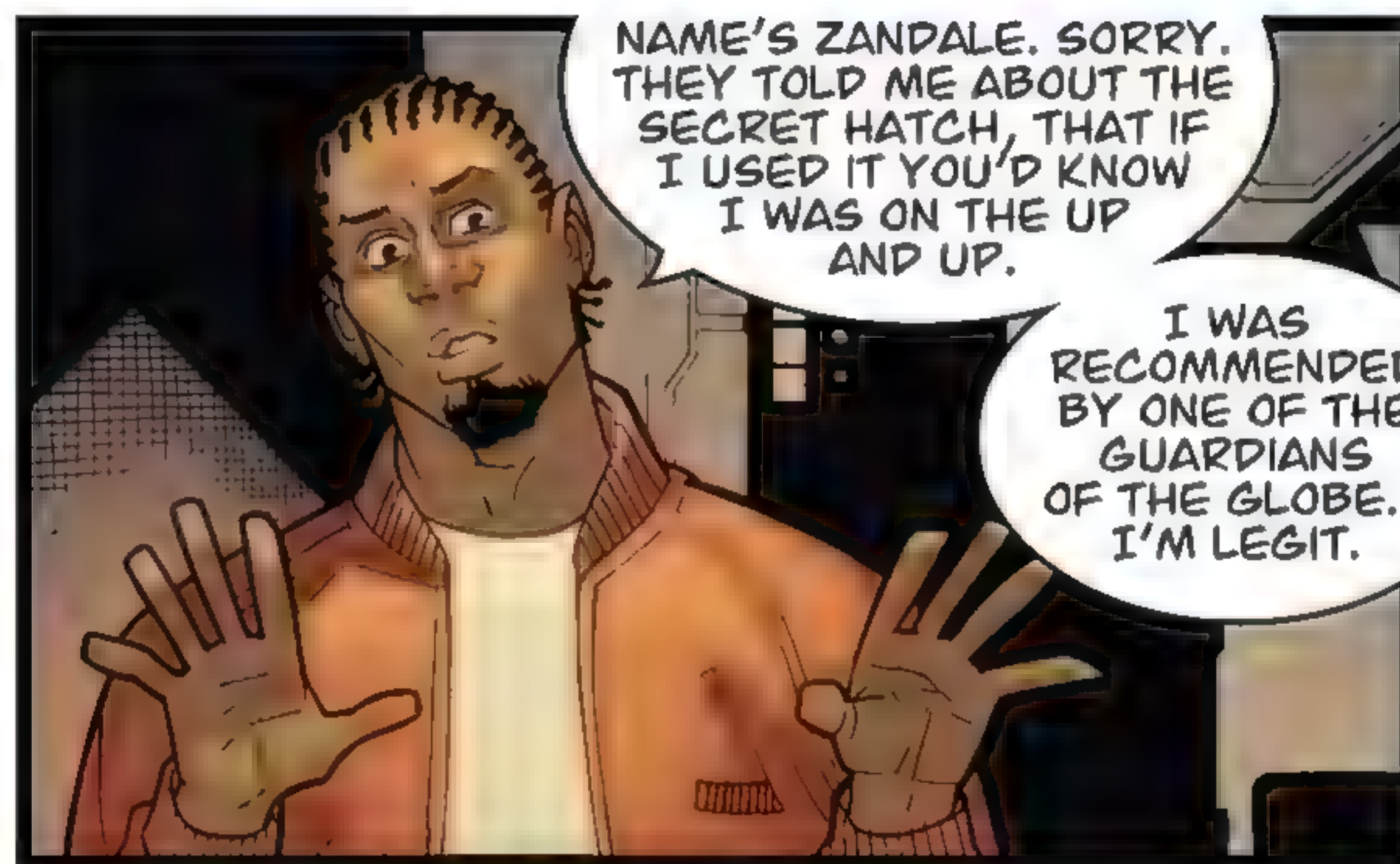
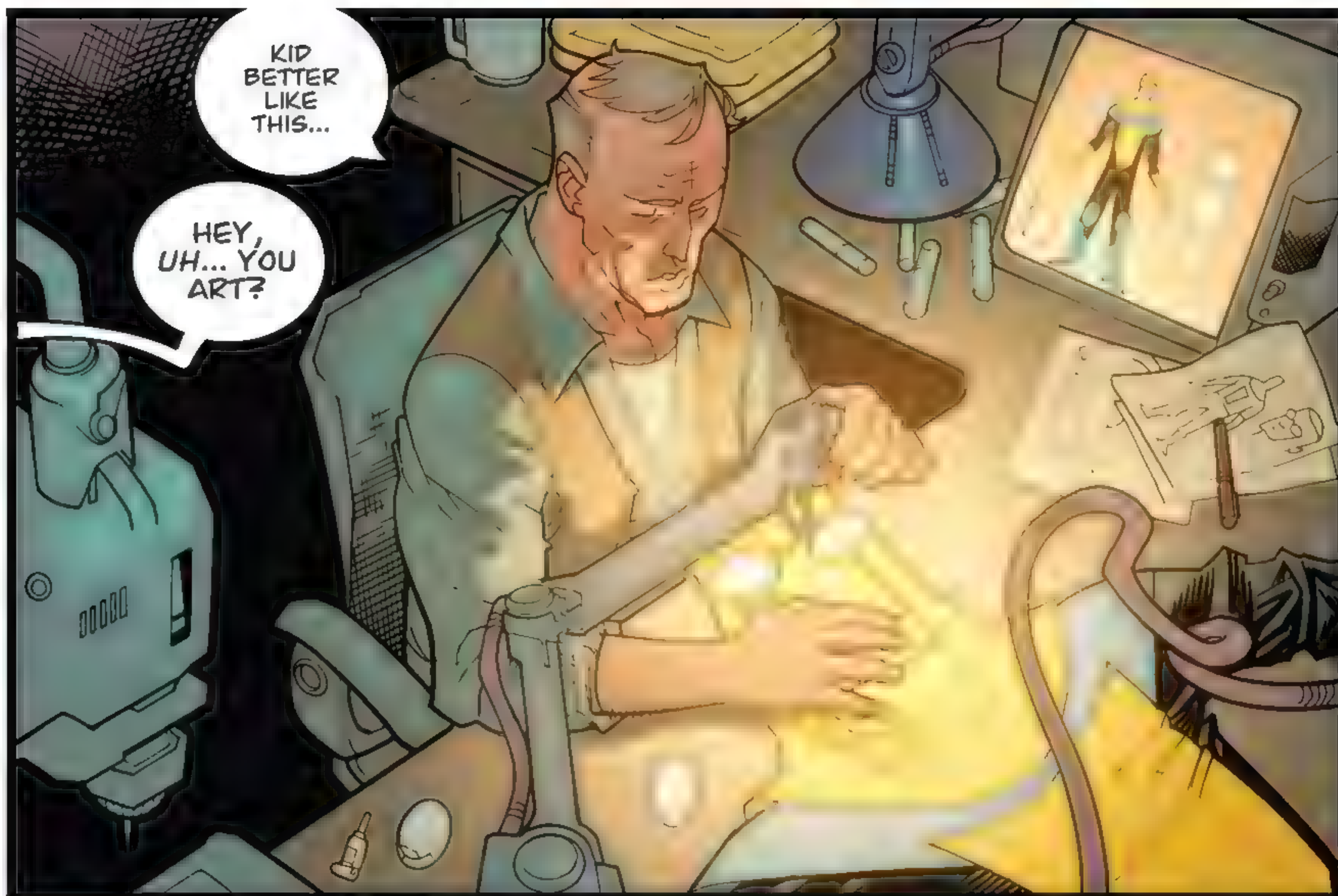
WHAT?

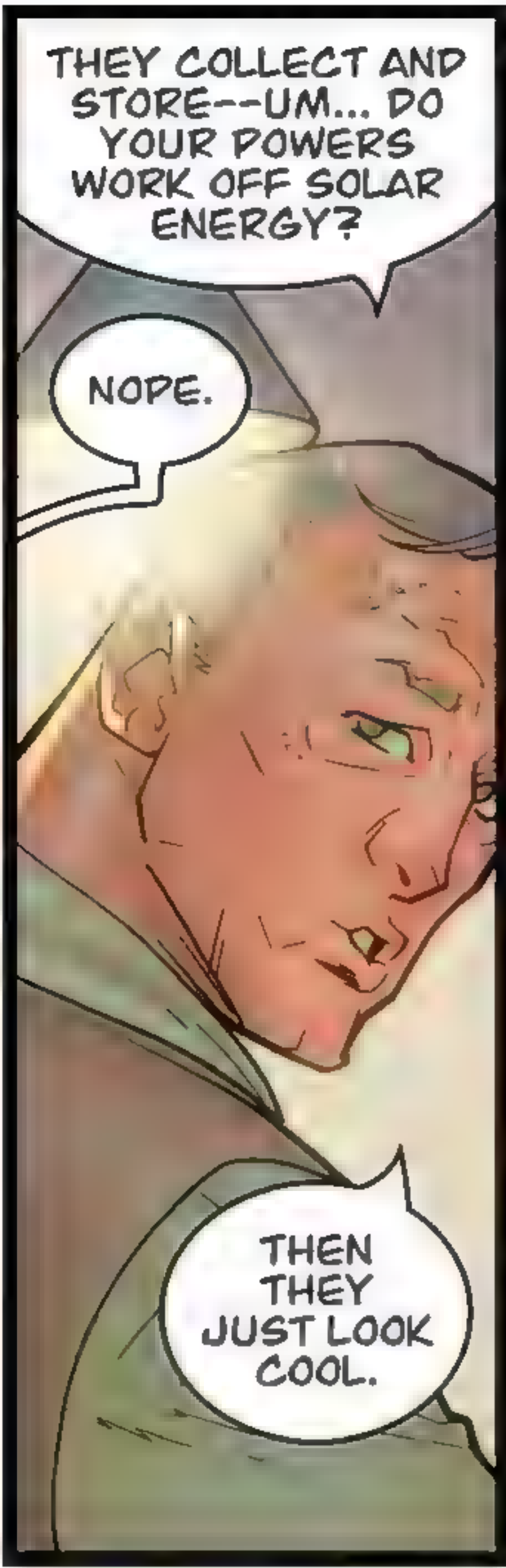
ALLEN,
I'M FINE.



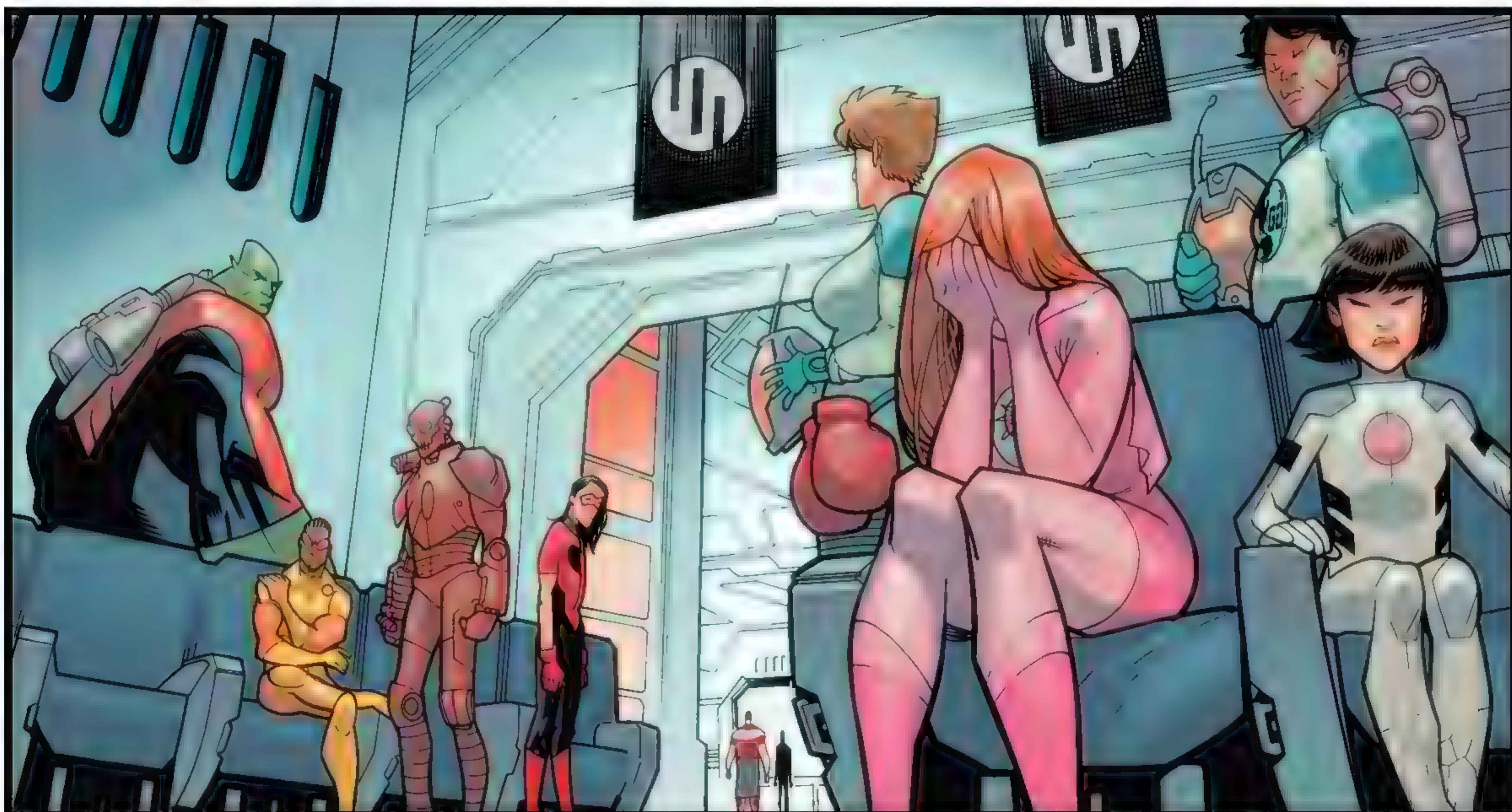
CHAPTER 89







THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON.



SO, YOU ARE
THE ONE WHO
IS IN CHARGE
OF PLANET
EARTH?

NOT
HOW I'D
PUT IT.

IN
CHARGE
OF ITS
PROTECTION,
YES. I'M NOT
RUNNING THE
SHOW OR
ANYTHING.



I HAVE A MOON BASE
NOT TWO HUNDRED
MILES FROM HERE, AND
WE DID NOT DETECT THIS
SHIP. HOW LONG
HAVE YOU BEEN
HERE?

MONTHS.
I GATHER
MARK GRAYSON
DIDN'T TELL
YOU ABOUT OUR
AGREEMENT. FOR
THE BETTER,
REALLY.

AND
I'M JUST
SUPPOSED TO
ALLOW ALL
THIS? WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING HERE?



YOU SIMPLY
HAVE NO **CHOICE**
IN THE MATTER.
THERE IS NOTHING YOU
CAN DO. YOU DID NOT
DETECT OUR PRESENCE
HERE, BECAUSE OUR
TECHNOLOGY IS **VASTLY**
MORE ADVANCED
THAN YOURS.

YOU MUST
HONOR THE
AGREEMENT WE
HAVE WITH MARK.
OTHERWISE, WE
WILL **DESTROY**
YOU.

WE WILL
COEXIST IN
PEACE BECAUSE
TO DO OTHERWISE
WOULD DRAW THE
ATTENTION OF THE
COALITION OF PLANETS,
WHICH COULD LEAD TO
THE EXTINCTION OF
MY PEOPLE.

AND, IT
APPEARS,
YOURS AS
WELL.

AS TO
OUR CURRENT
SITUATION. WE
HAVE DEALT WITH
THE SCOURGE
VIRUS BEFORE.
WE KNOW HOW
TO HANDLE
IT.



WE ARE THE BOY'S ONLY CHANCE OF SURVIVAL. HIS LIFE RESTS IN OUR HANDS.

WE WILL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO SAVE HIM, DESPITE OUR HISTORY AS BITTER ENEMIES.

WE WILL DO THIS TO SHOW HIM THAT WE ARE BETTER THAN THE COALITION, WHO CAUSED HIS CURRENT SITUATION.

BUT ALSO OUT OF RESPECT FOR HIM, AND BECAUSE IF WE DO ALLOW HIM TO DIE, I IMAGINE THAT WOULD CREATE TENSION BETWEEN US AND THE PEOPLE OF YOUR PLANET, YOU CHIEF AMONG THEM.



YES, IT WOULD.



YOU SHOULD KNOW, HIS CONDITION WILL GET WORSE BEFORE IT GETS BETTER. HE IS ONLY IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE VIRUS.

AND THIS IS A NEW, STRONGER STRAIN. WE'RE NOT YET COMPLETELY SURE OF WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH.

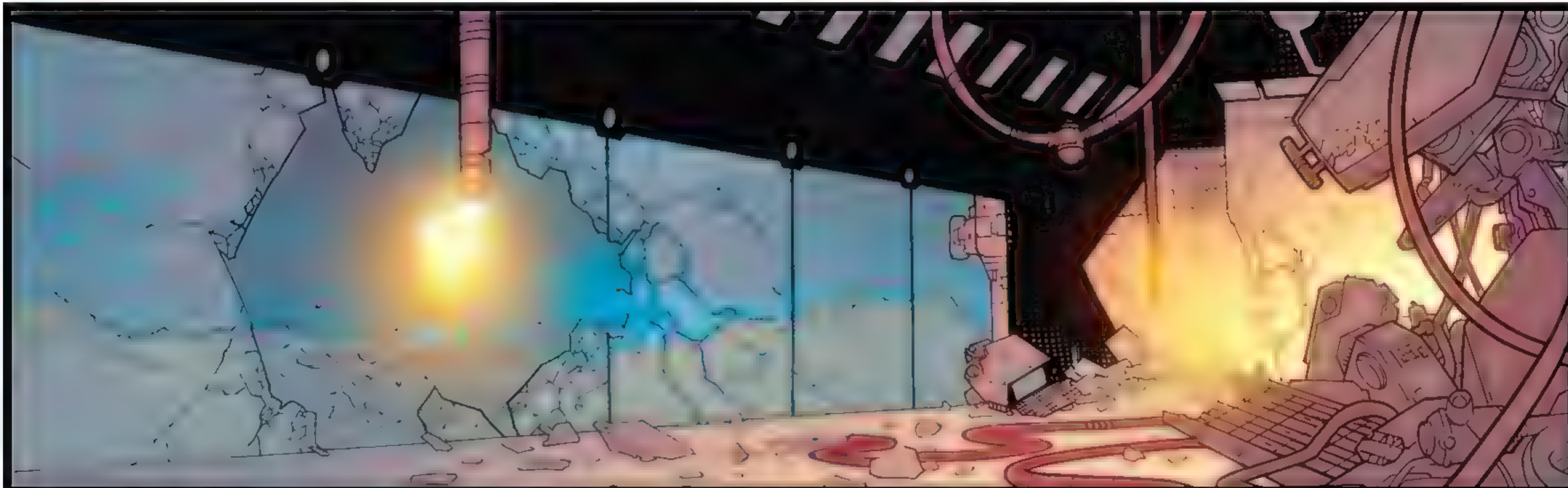
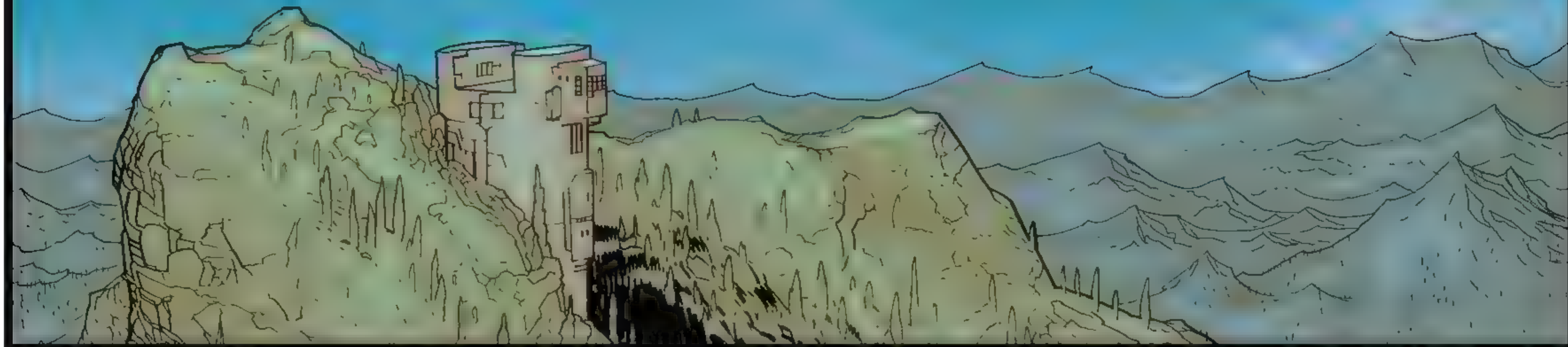
WE ARE NOT CERTAIN HE WILL SURVIVE.




PLEASE...

...DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN.

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION,
THE SECRET BASE OF
DINOSAURUS.

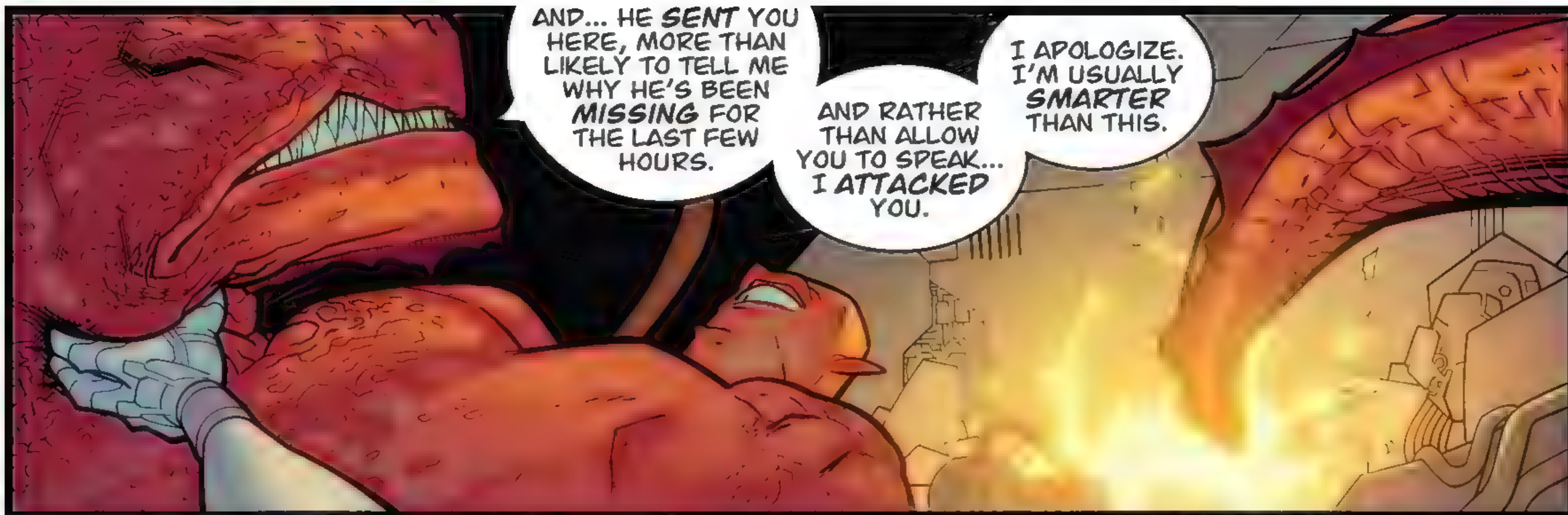




IT WOULD
APPEAR WE
ARE MORE OR
LESS EVENLY
MATCHED.

ACTUALLY,
I'VE BEEN
RESTRAINING
MYSELF QUITE
A BIT THIS
ENTIRE
TIME.

I HAVE NO
INTENTION OF
HURTING YOU.
I'M FRIENDS
WITH
INVINCIBLE.



AND... HE **SENT** YOU
HERE, MORE THAN
LIKELY TO TELL ME
WHY HE'S BEEN
MISSING FOR
THE LAST FEW
HOURS.

AND RATHER
THAN ALLOW
YOU TO SPEAK...
I **ATTACKED**
YOU.

I APOLOGIZE.
I'M USUALLY
SMARTER
THAN THIS.



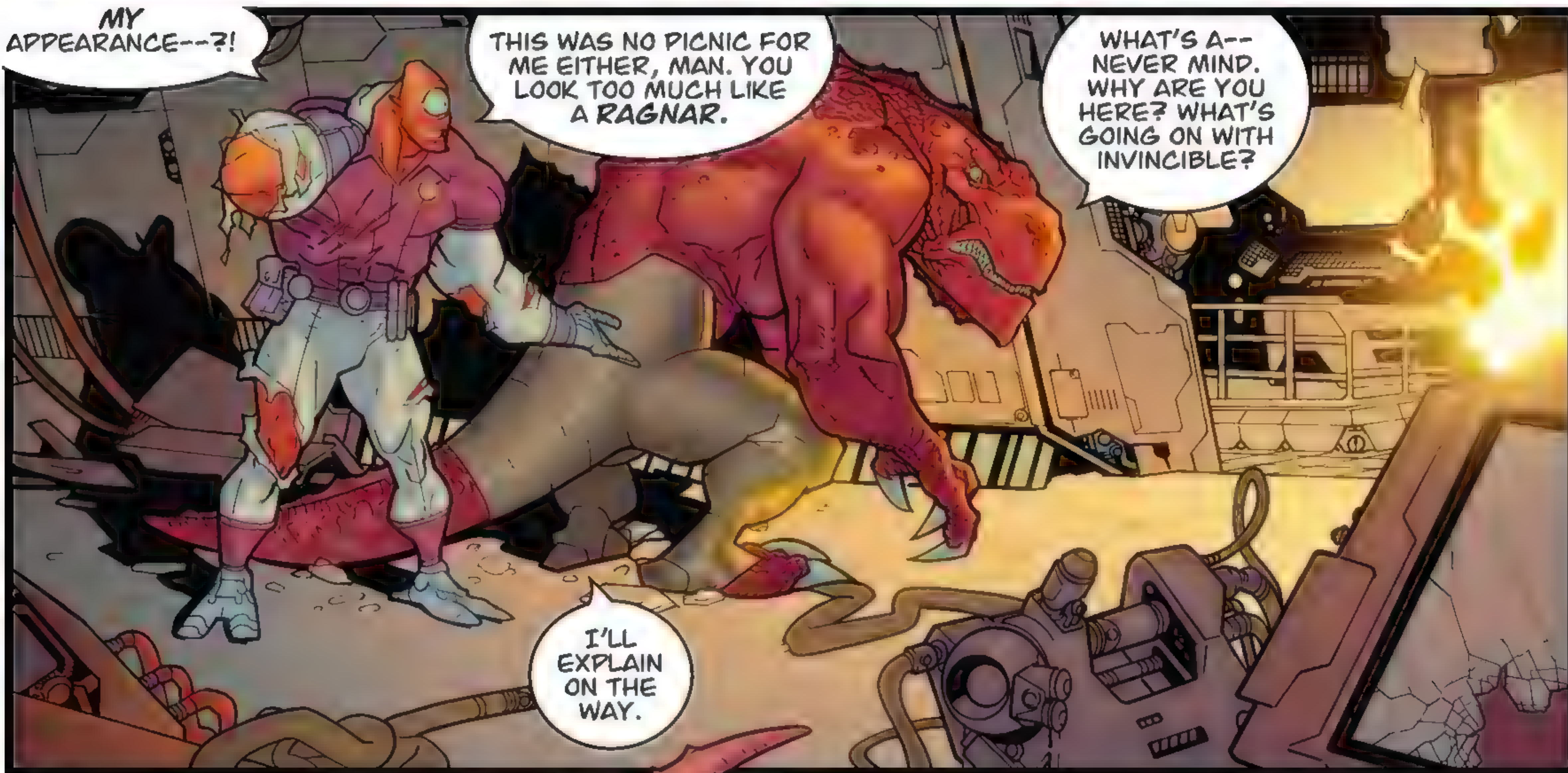
IT'S OKAY,
NO REAL
HARM
DONE.

SORRY
ABOUT THE
MESS.



YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND,
I'VE NOT HAD MANY
DEALINGS WITH ACTUAL
ALIENS FROM OTHER
PLANETS.

YOUR
APPEARANCE
STARTLED ME.

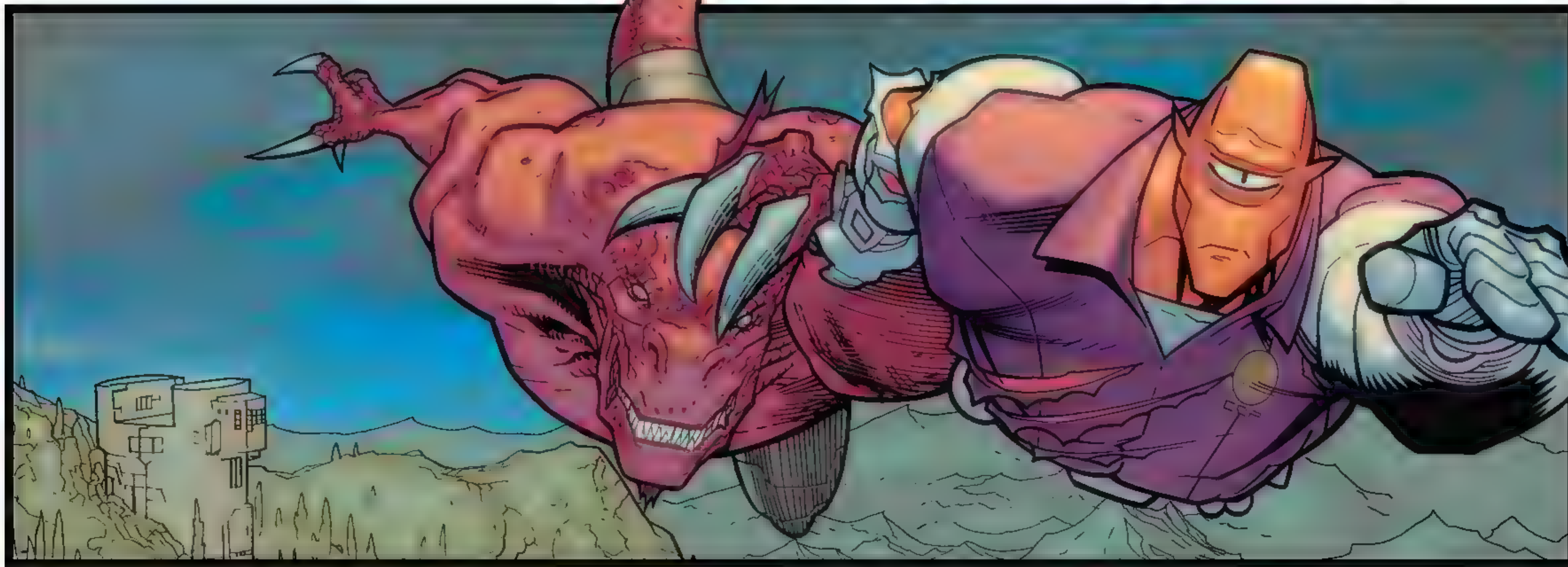


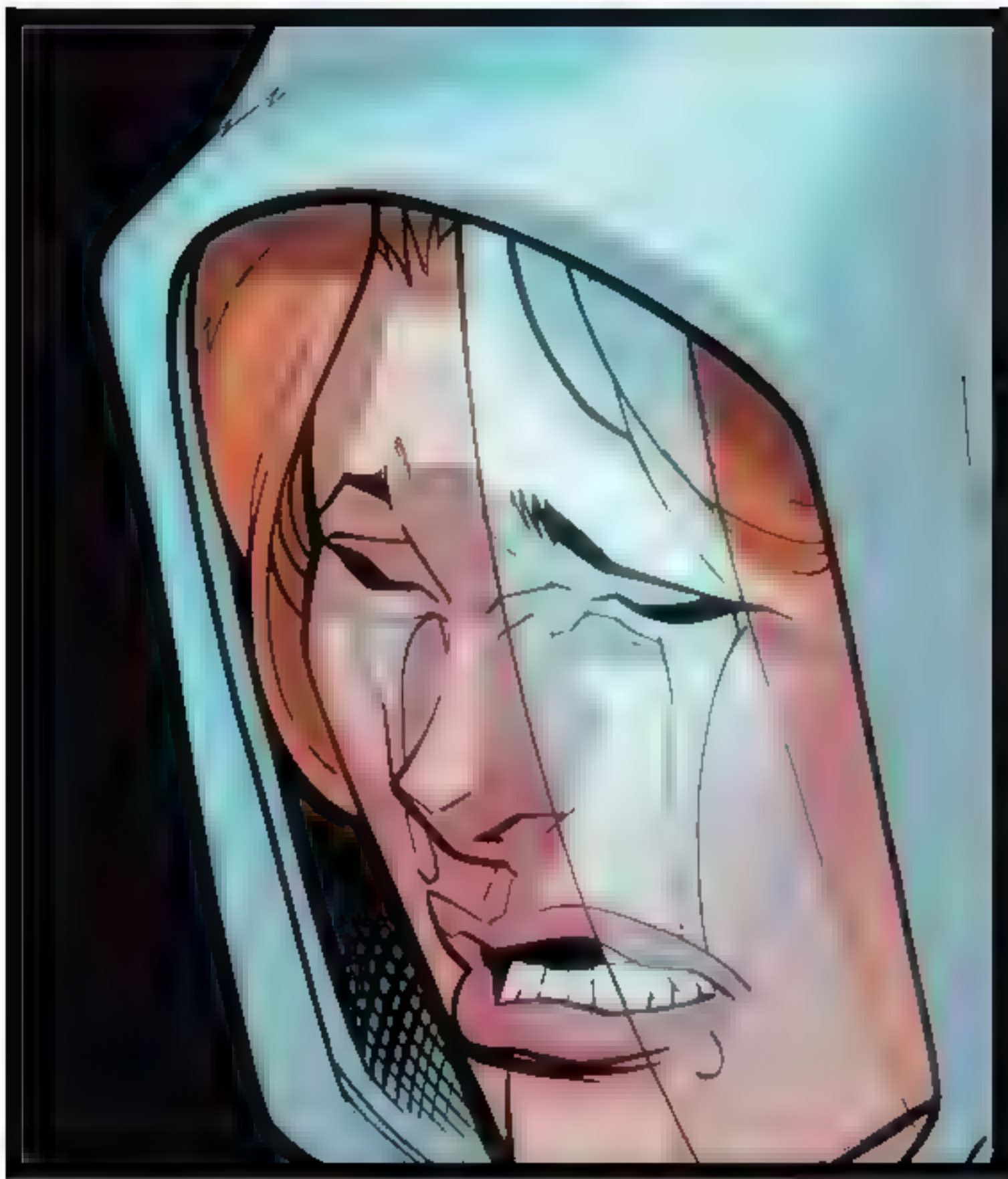
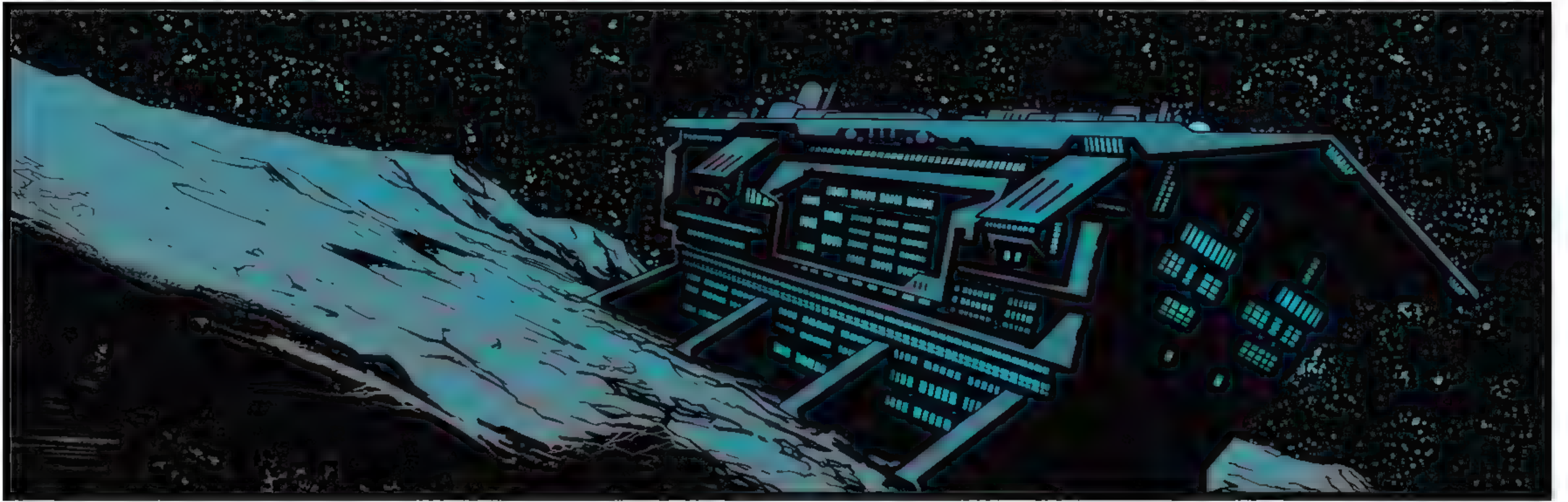
MY
APPEARANCE---?!

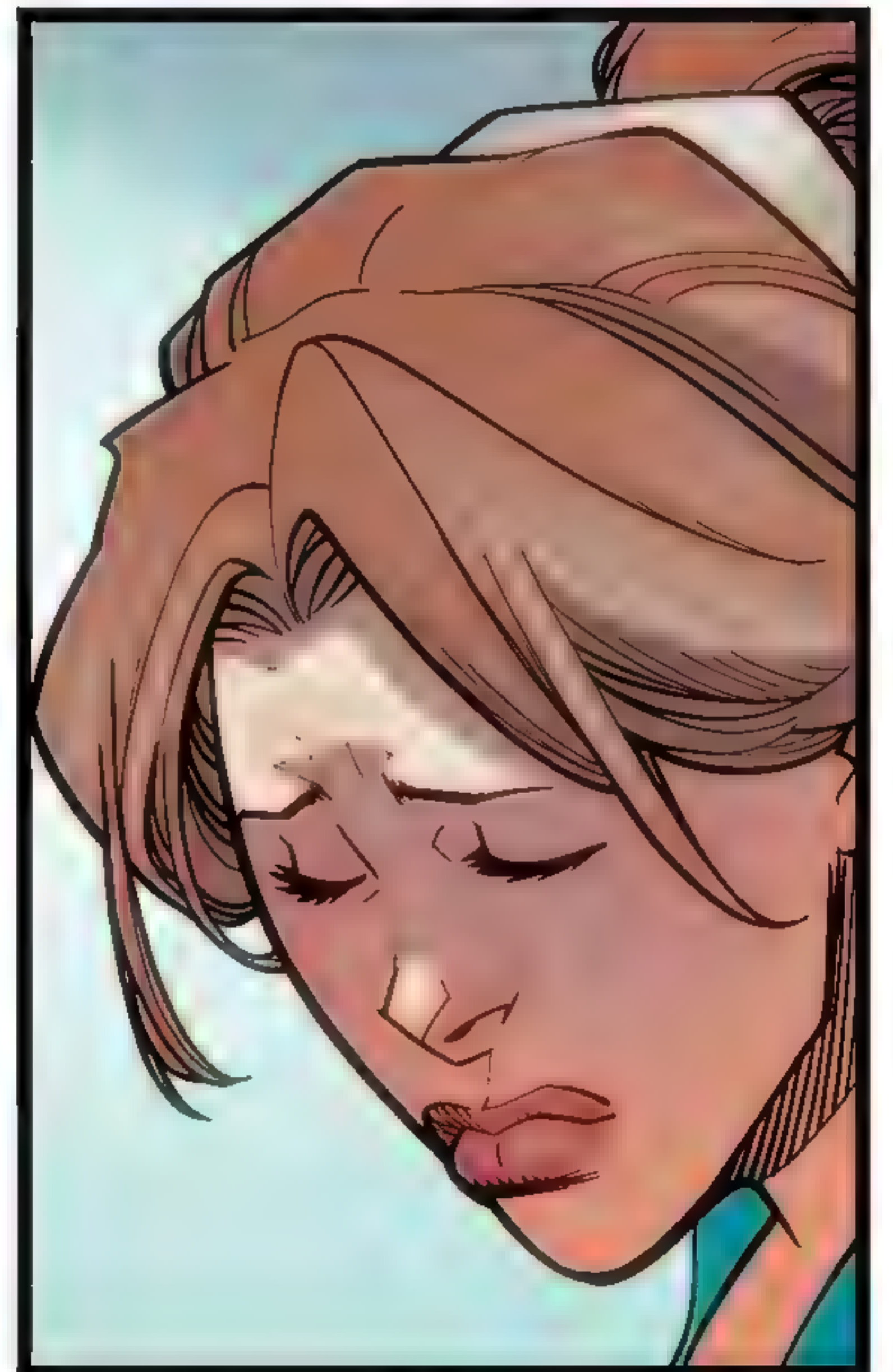
THIS WAS NO PICNIC FOR
ME EITHER, MAN. YOU
LOOK TOO MUCH LIKE
A RAGNAR.

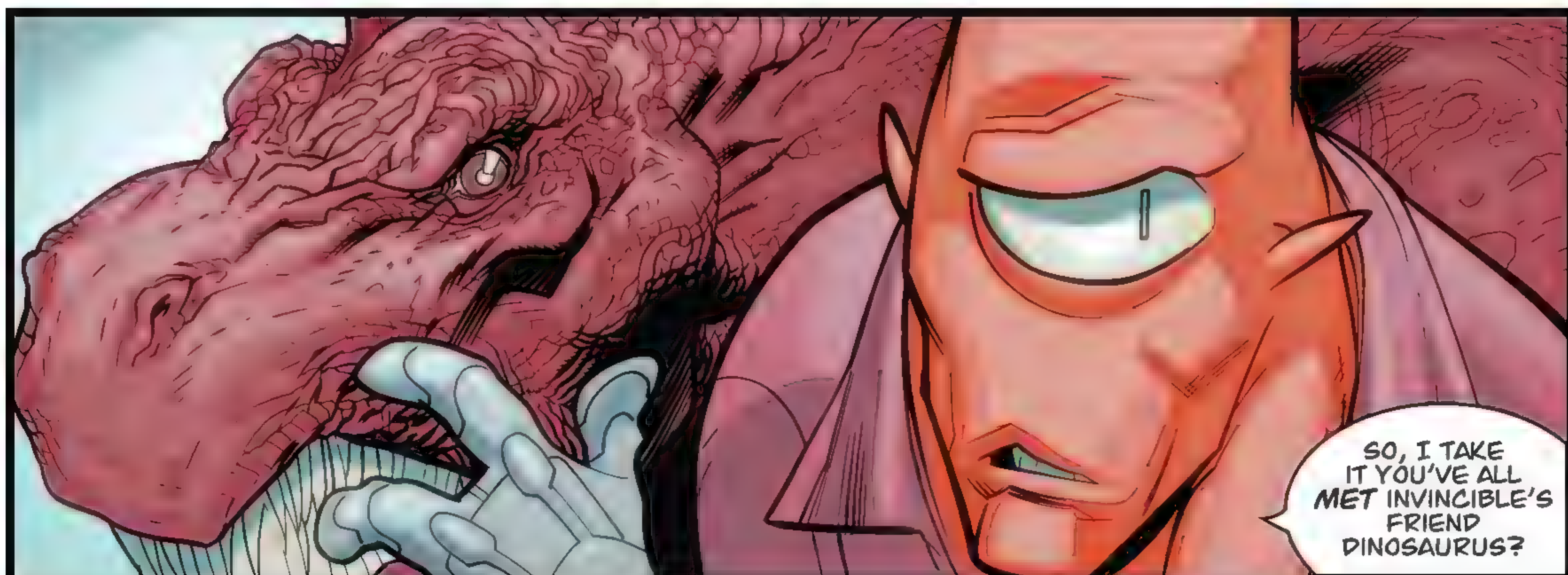
WHAT'S A--
NEVER MIND.
WHY ARE YOU
HERE? WHAT'S
GOING ON WITH
INVINCIBLE?

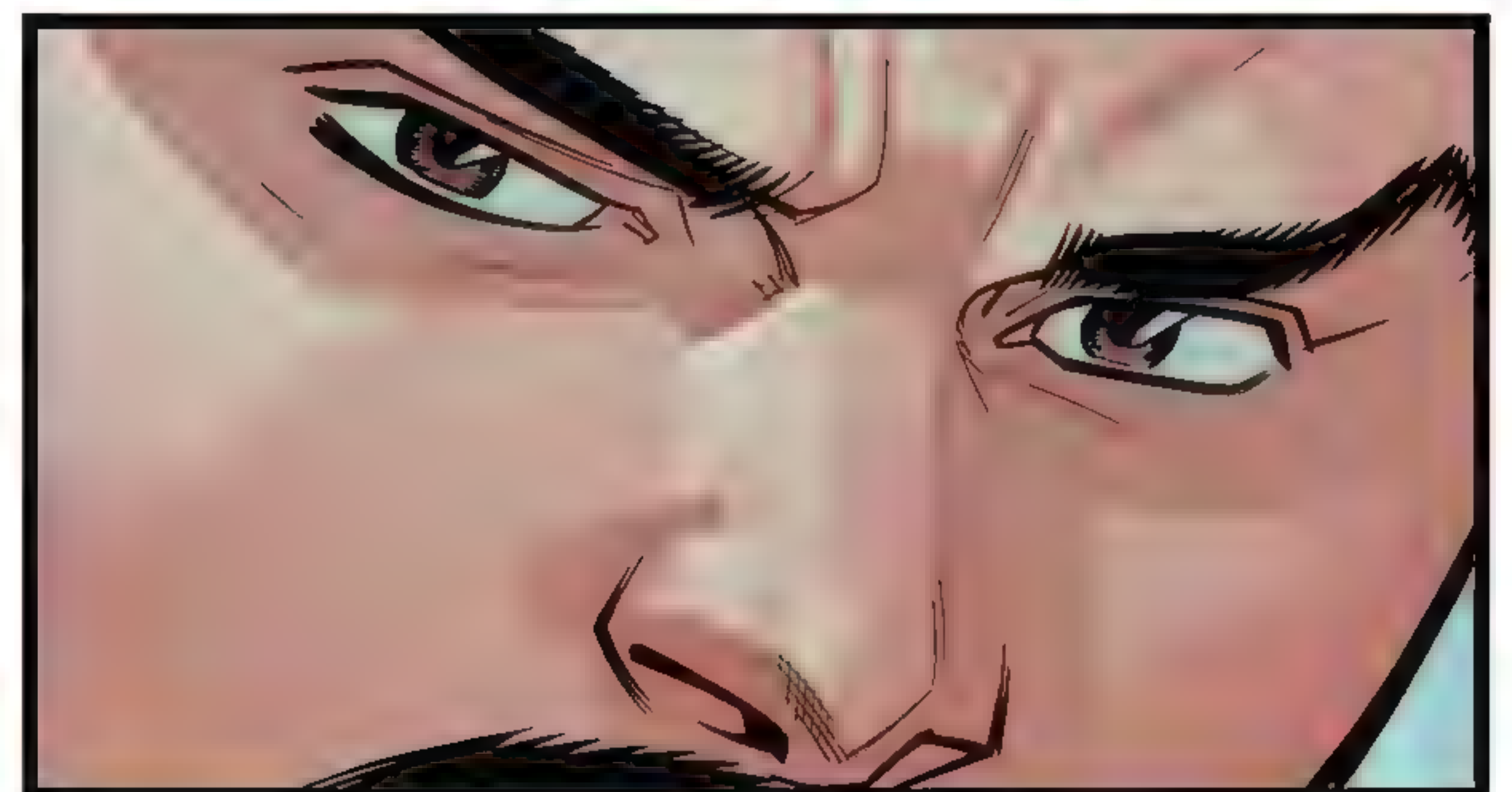
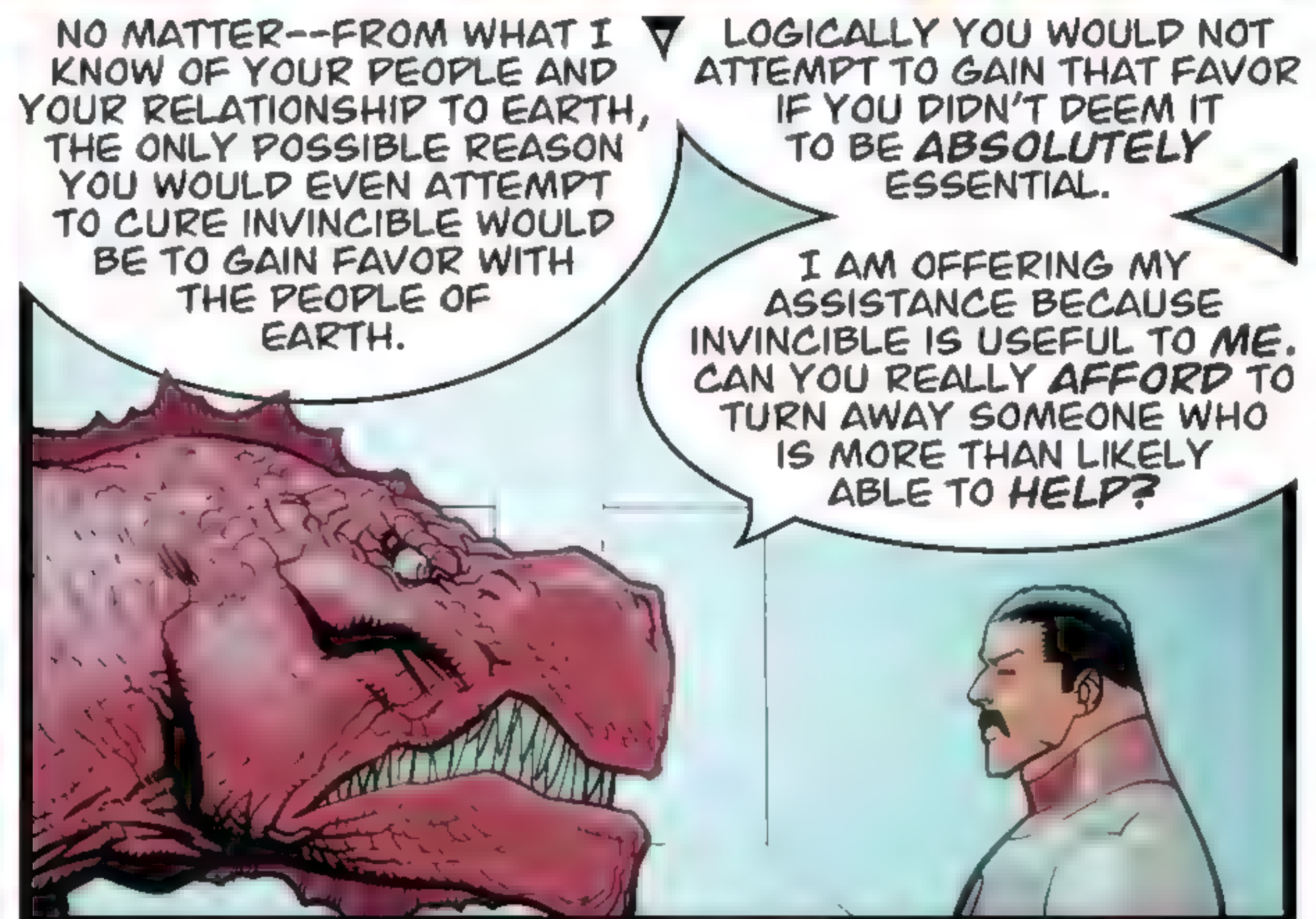
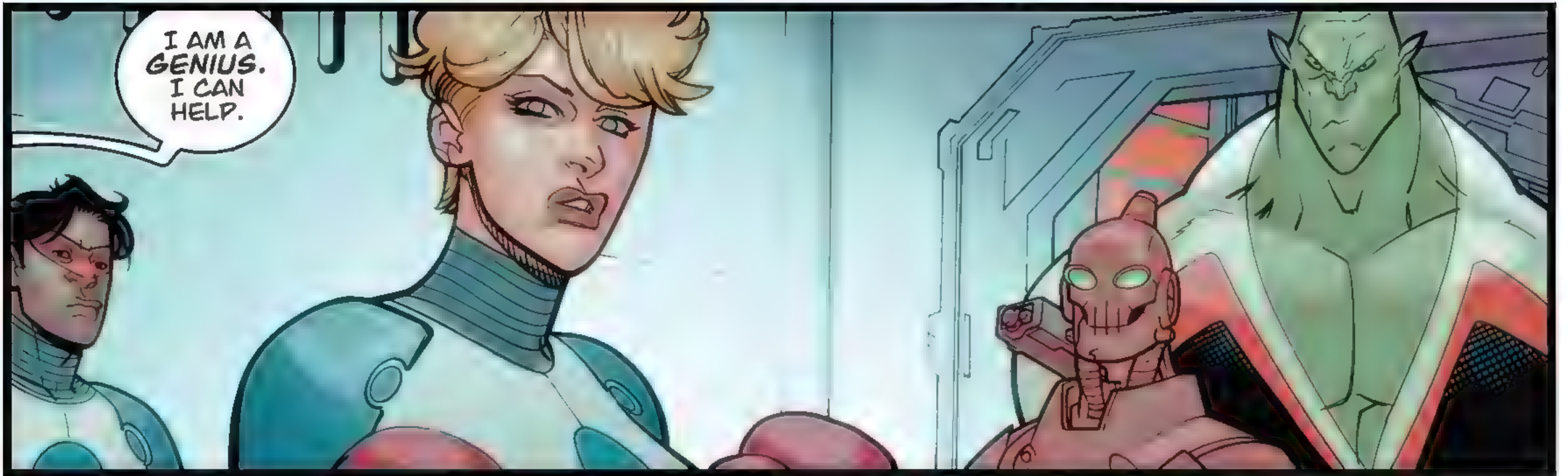
I'LL
EXPLAIN
ON THE
WAY.



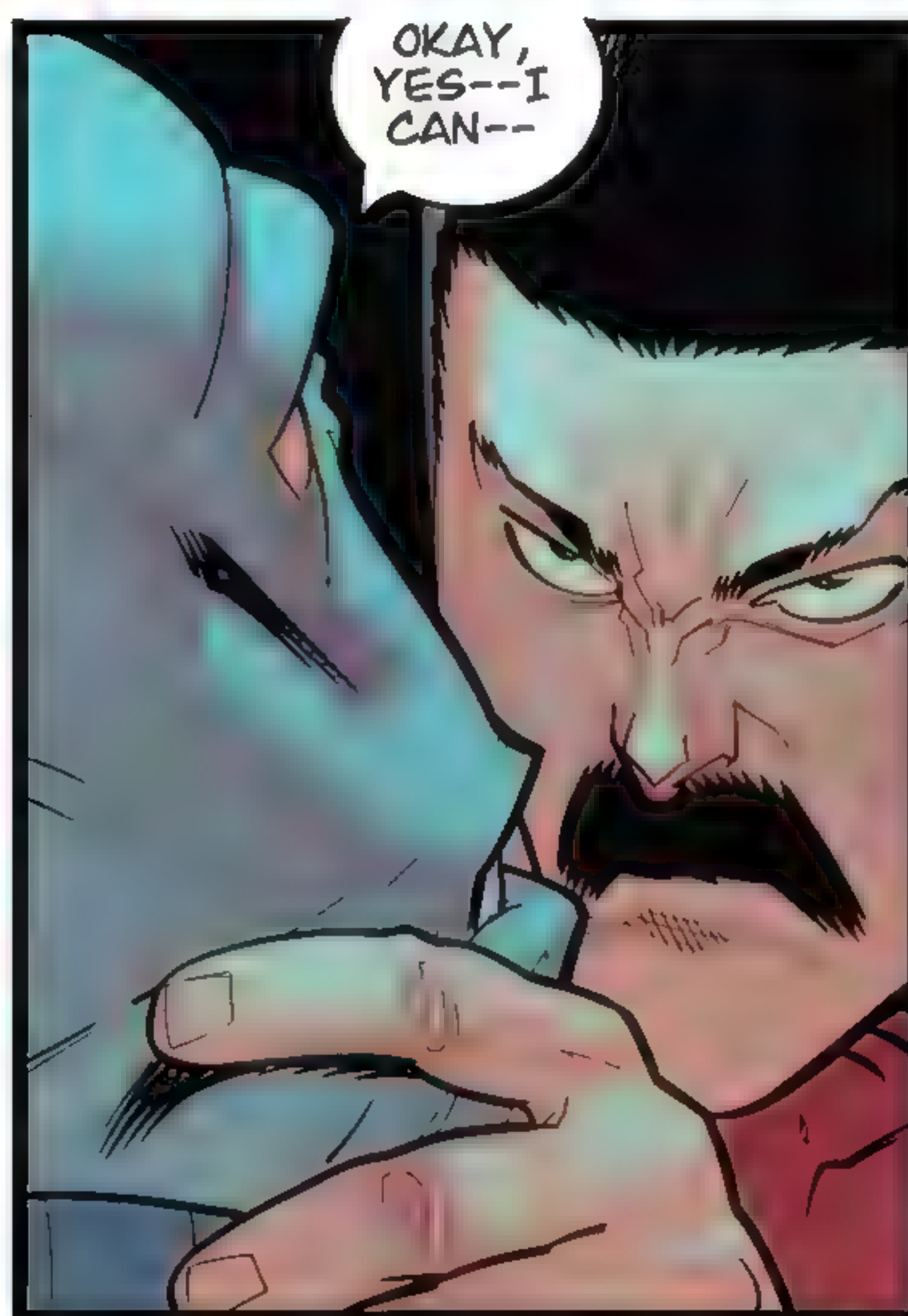


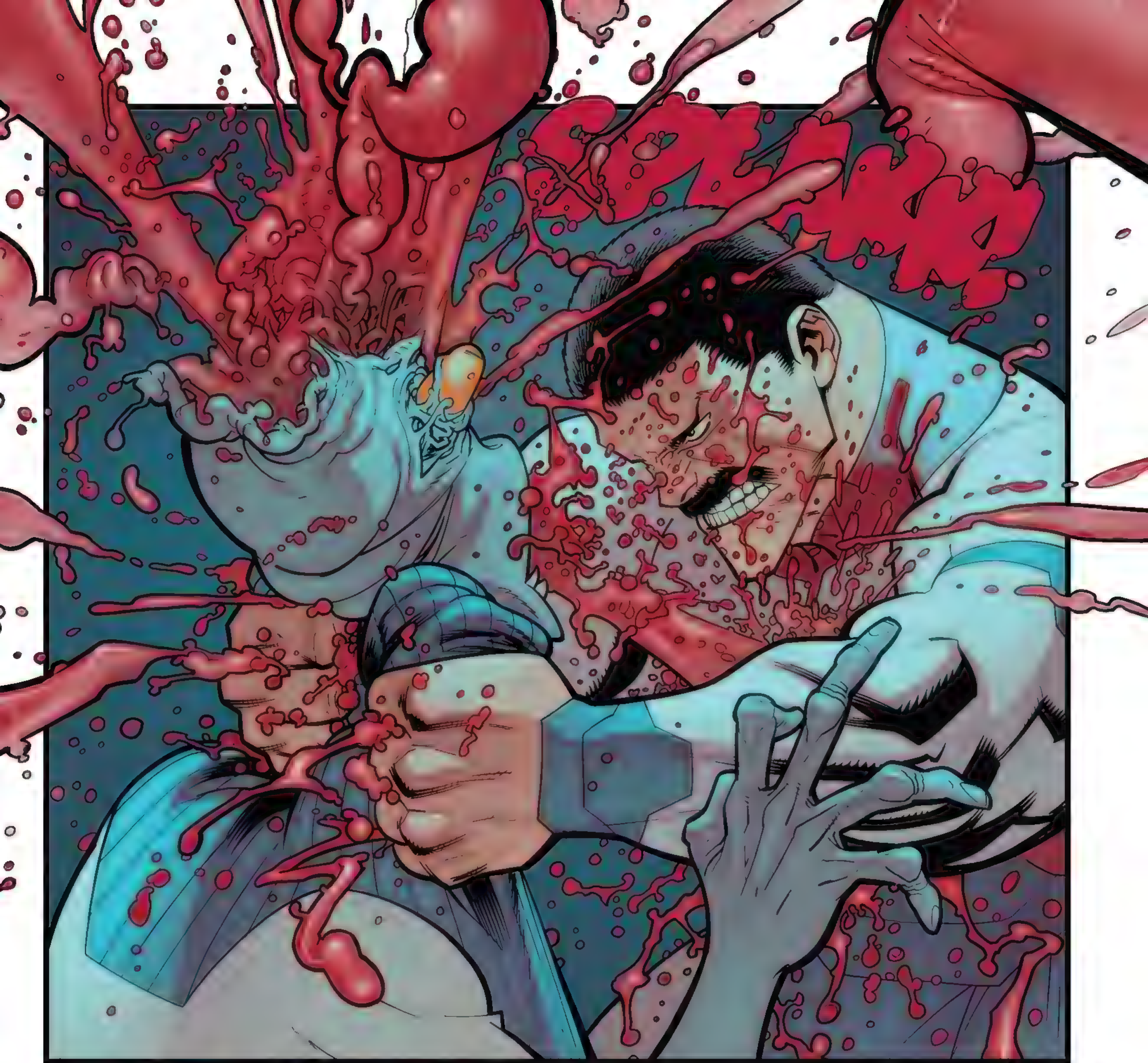


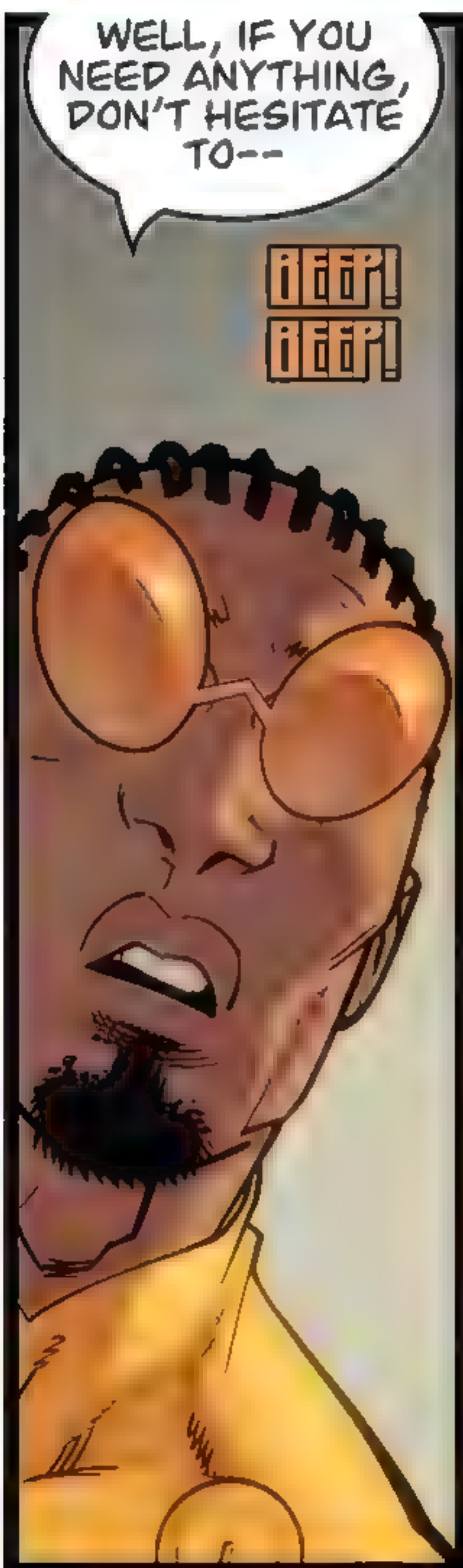
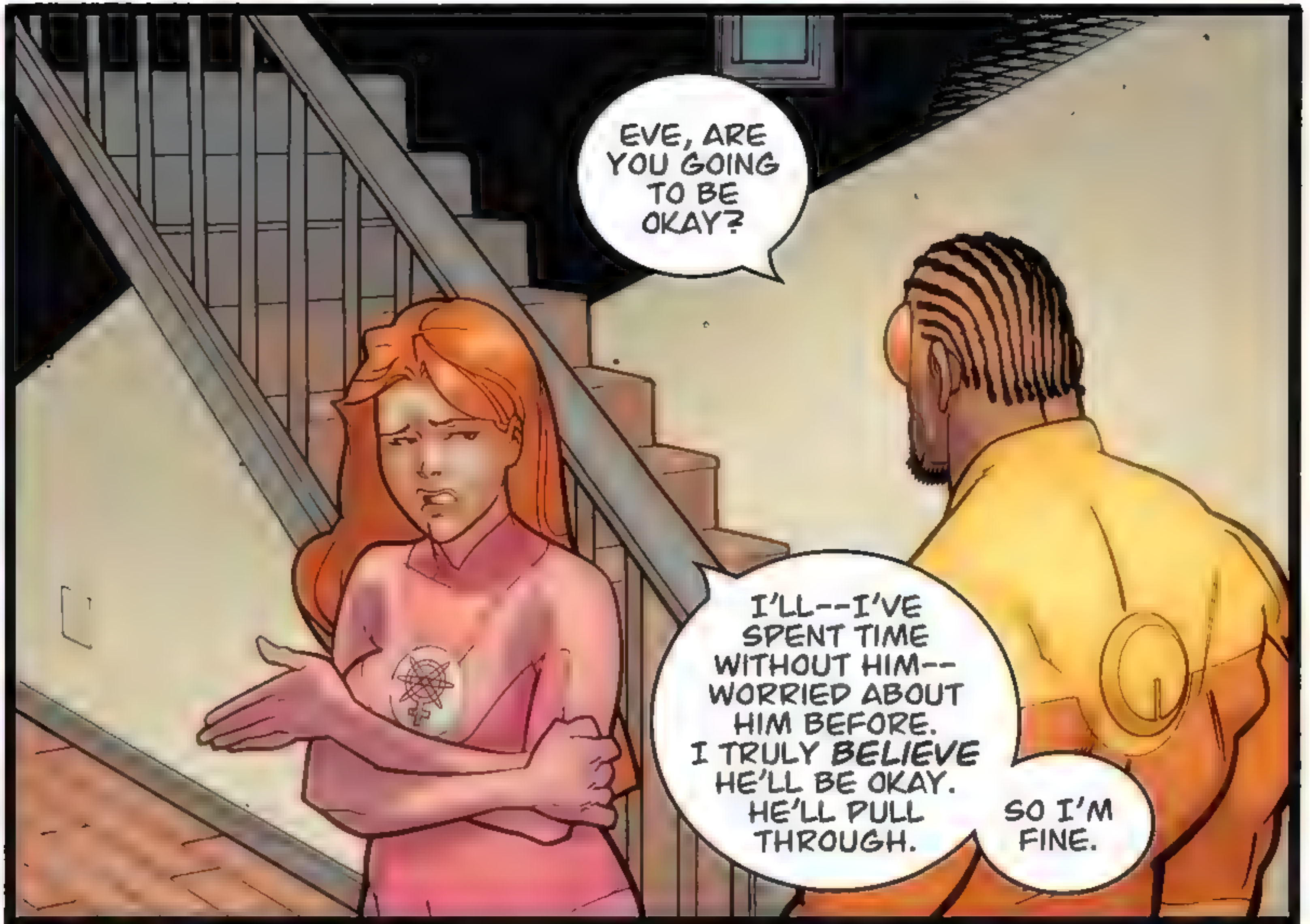
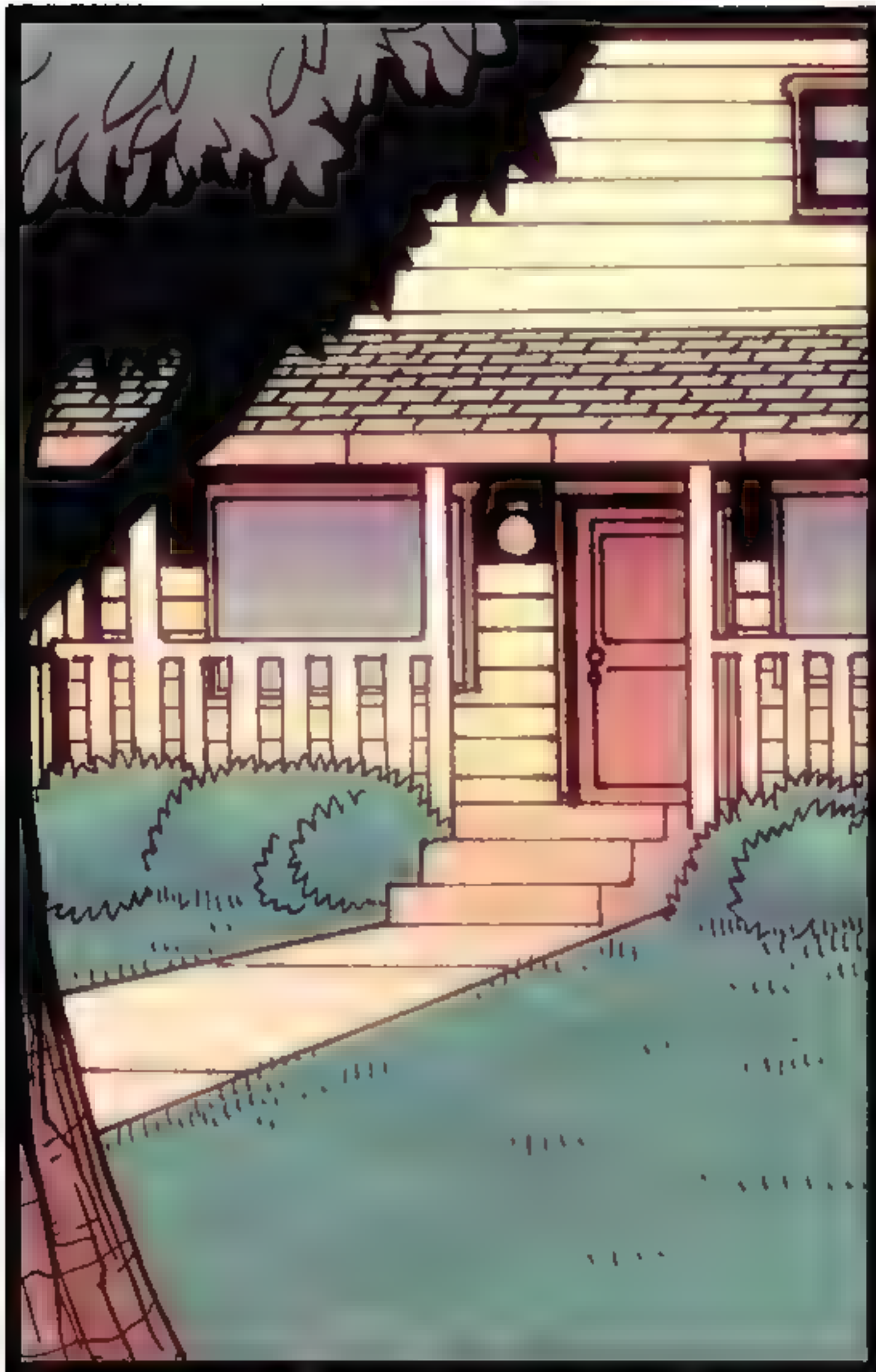






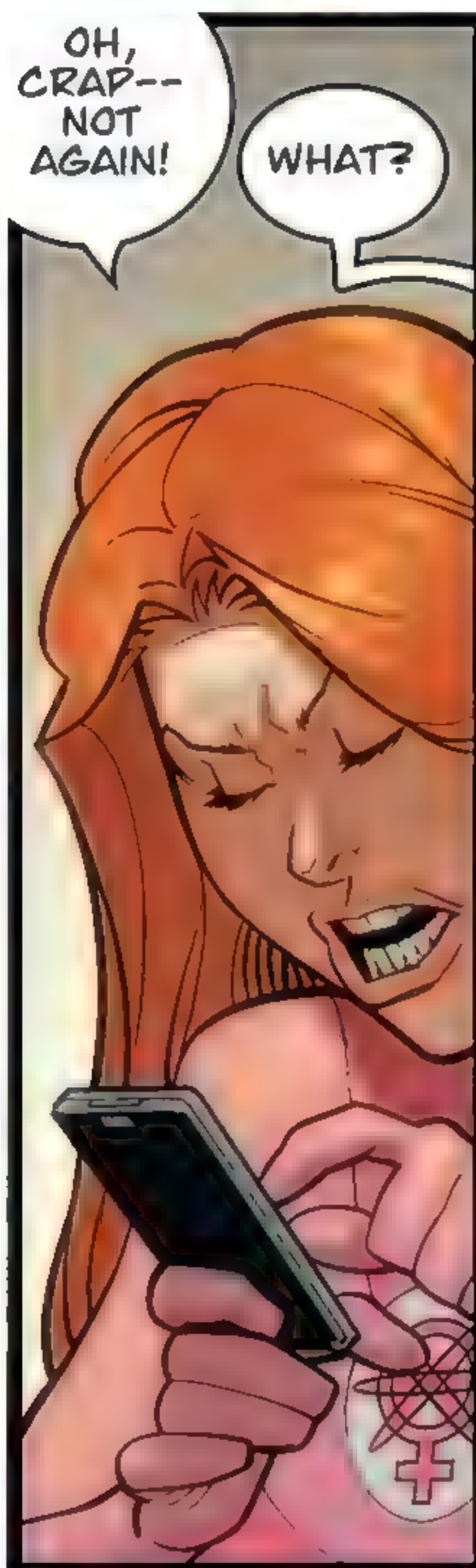






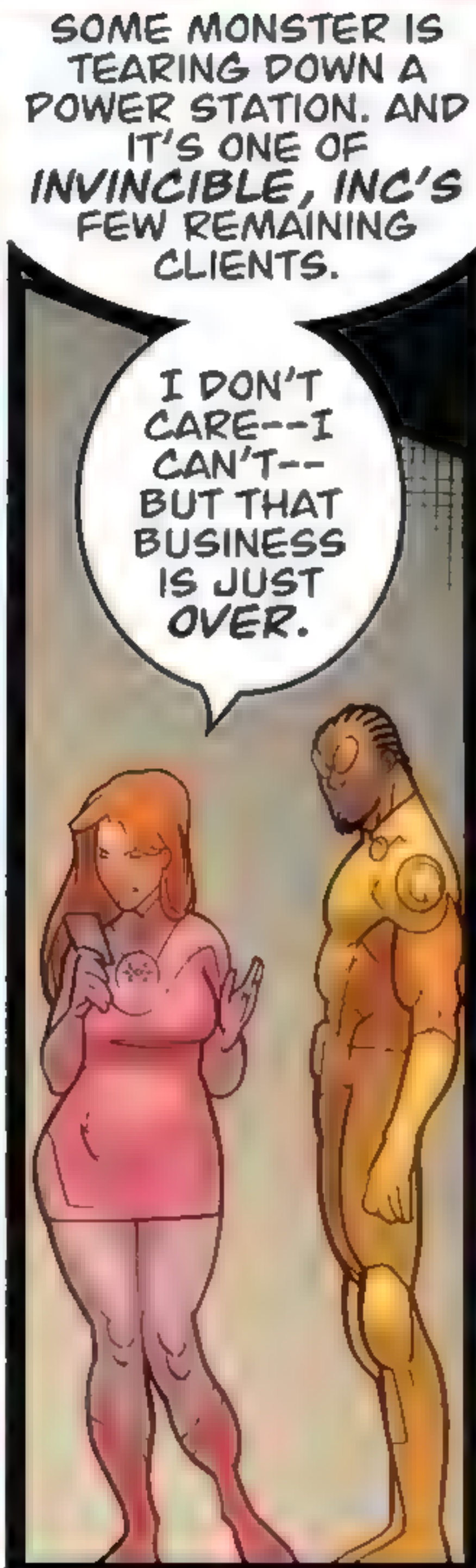
WELL, IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, DON'T HESITATE TO--

BEEP!
BEEP!



OH, CRAP-- NOT AGAIN!

WHAT?



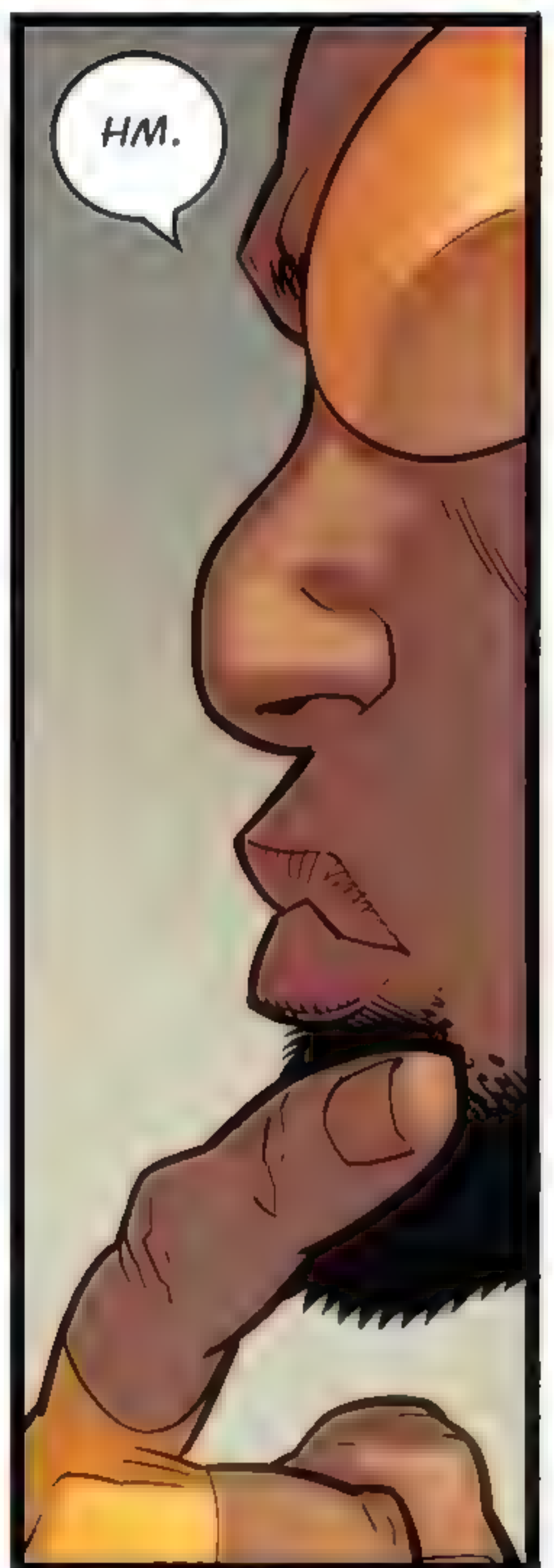
SOME MONSTER IS TEARING DOWN A POWER STATION. AND IT'S ONE OF INVINCIBLE, INC'S FEW REMAINING CLIENTS.

I DON'T CARE---I CAN'T--- BUT THAT BUSINESS IS JUST OVER.

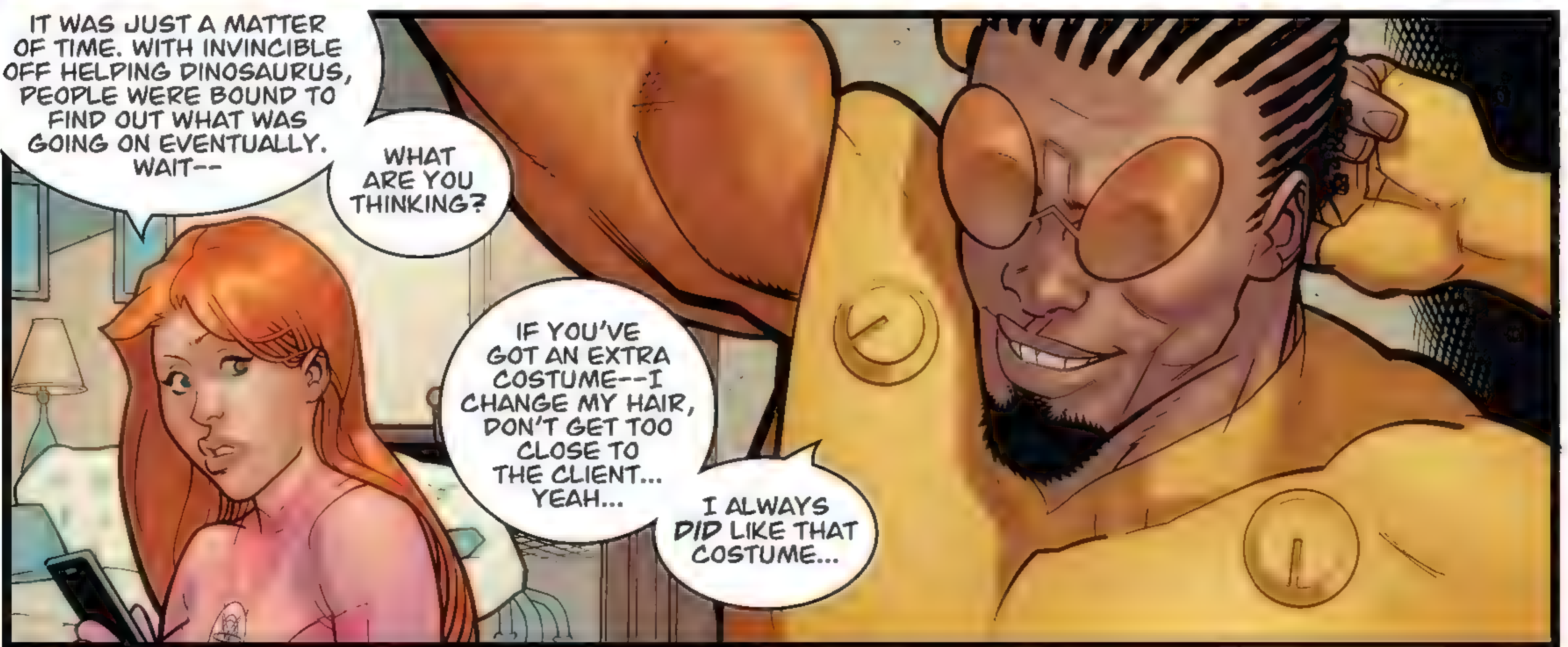


I'D BE HAPPY TO--

NO, LAST TIME YOU HELPED OUT, WHEN INVINCIBLE WAS IN SPACE--THE CLIENTS ASKED FOR REFUNDS. YOU DID A GOOD JOB, BUT THEY CLAIM THEY "PAID FOR INVINCIBLE."



HM.



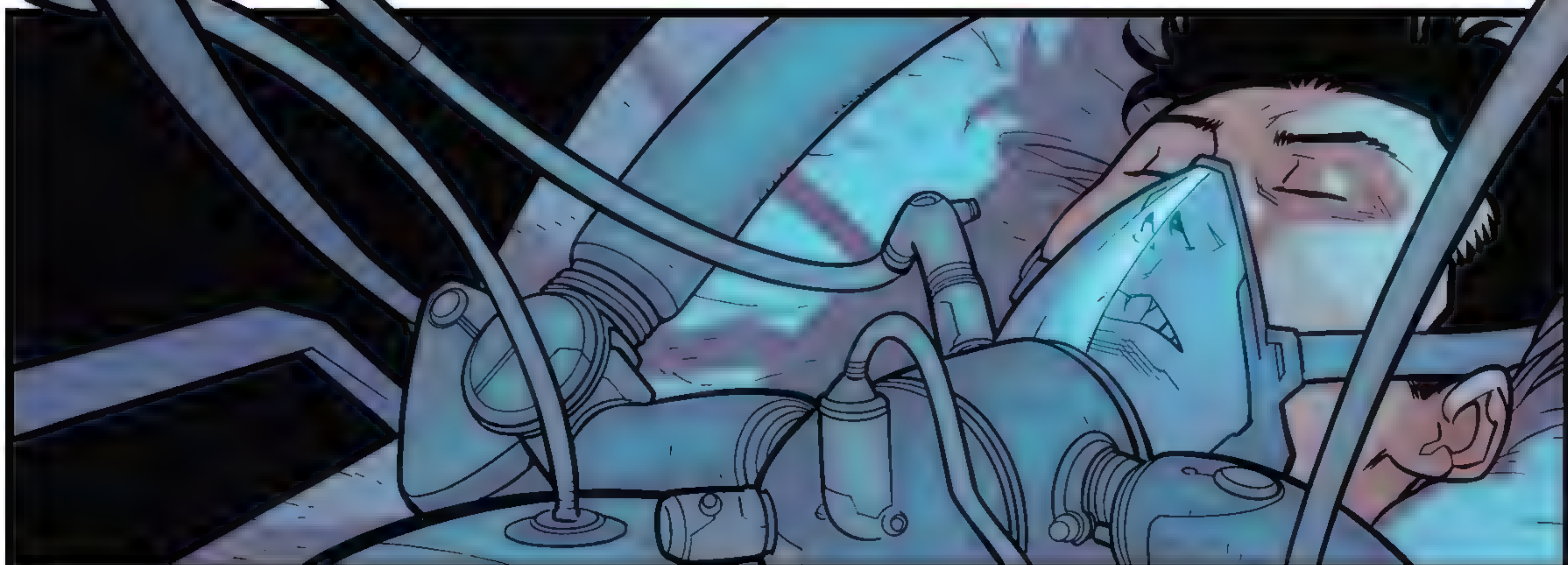
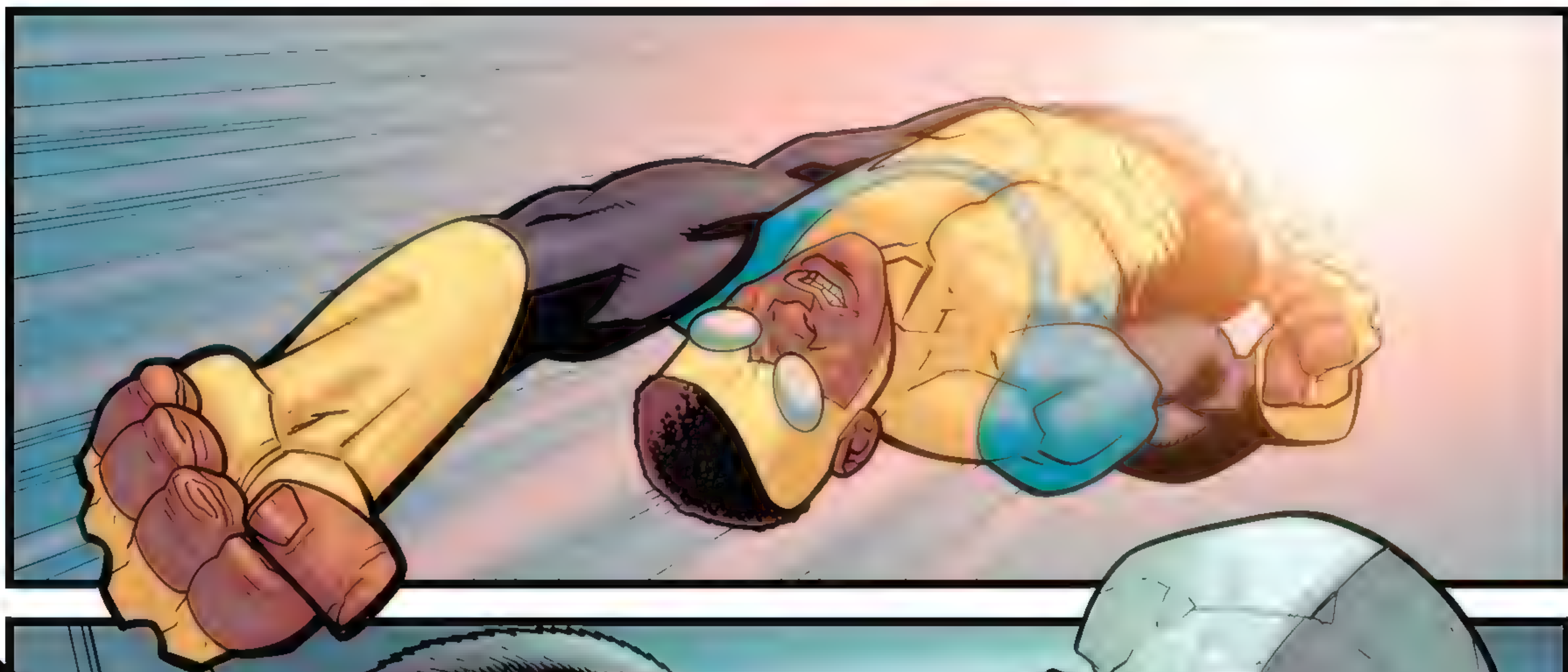
IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF TIME. WITH INVINCIBLE OFF HELPING DINOSAURUS, PEOPLE WERE BOUND TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON EVENTUALLY. WAIT--

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

IF YOU'VE GOT AN EXTRA COSTUME---I CHANGE MY HAIR, DON'T GET TOO CLOSE TO THE CLIENT... YEAH...

I ALWAYS DID LIKE THAT COSTUME...







CHAPTER 90









THE LAST REMAINING
VILTRUMITE WARSHIP,
STATIONED ON THE MOON.



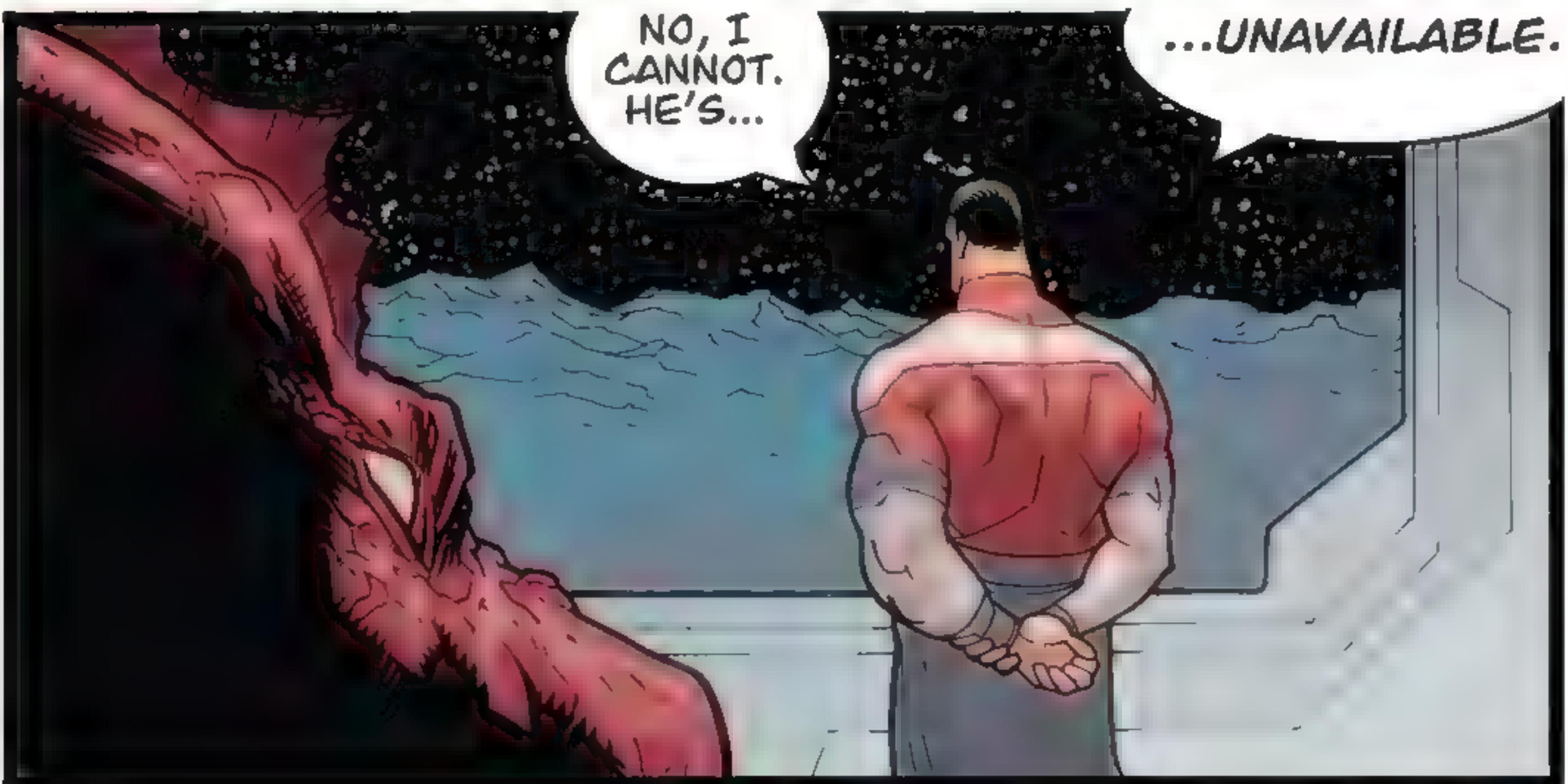
EXCUSE
ME.



HOW HAVE
YOU GAINED
ACCESS TO
MY--?!

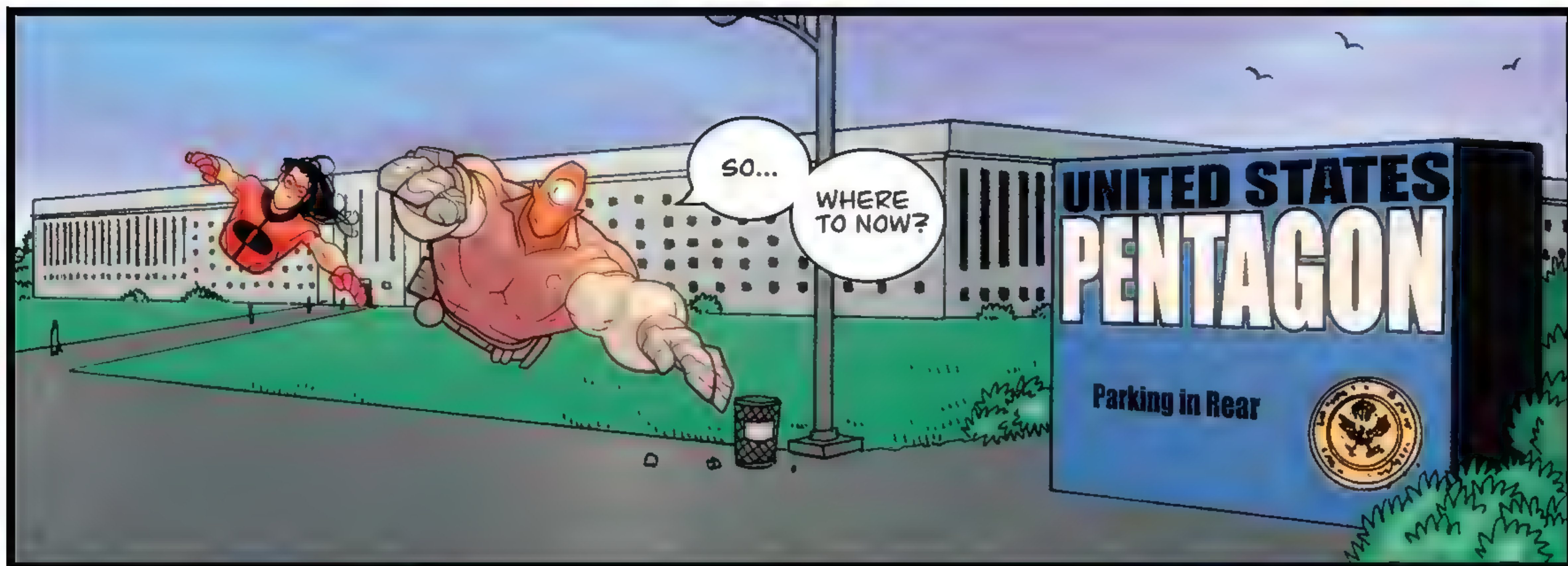
CALM YOURSELF. I
TRUST YOU FAR LESS
THAN YOU TRUST ME.
I'VE TAPPED INTO
YOUR SYSTEM, I KNOW
THE LAYOUT WELL
ENOUGH TO FIND YOUR
QUARTERS... AND
ESCAPE IF I
NEED TO.

I'VE MADE SOME ADVANCES,
BUT THERE ARE SOME NOTES
I'M CURRENTLY UNABLE TO
DECIPHER. COULD YOU ALLOW
ME ACCESS TO THE SCIENTIST
WHOSE WORK I'M STUDYING?
I HAVE SOME
QUESTIONS.



NO, I
CANNOT.
HE'S...

...UNAVAILABLE.





WE WERE READY TO KILL EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD ON THIS PLANET-- AND IF THRAGG HADN'T REVEALED HIMSELF WHEN HE DID... WE WOULD HAVE DONE IT--AND IT WOULDN'T HAVE WORKED.

WE WOULDN'T HAVE ACCOMPLISHED A THING... THE VILTRUMITES WOULD STILL BE OUT THERE.

YOU DON'T KNOW THAT. THE VIRUS COULD HAVE KILLED THEM ALL.

HOW CAN YOU CARE FOR THESE PEOPLE LESS THAN I DO? I'VE SPENT NO TIME HERE.



I WAS BROUGHT HERE WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG--BUT I HAVE FULL RECOLLECTION OF EVERY MOMENT OF MY LIFE.

MY PEOPLE, THE THRAXANS, DO NOT FORM SIMILAR ATTACHMENTS AS THE PEOPLE OF EARTH. THRAXAN LIFESPANS ARE VERY SHORT, DEATH IS A PART OF LIFE... NOT A HORRIBLE OCCURRENCE.

I HAVE GROWN ATTACHED TO MY FAMILY AND SOME PEOPLE I'VE KNOWN... BUT TO ME... LIFE IS NOT SUCH A SPECIAL THING.



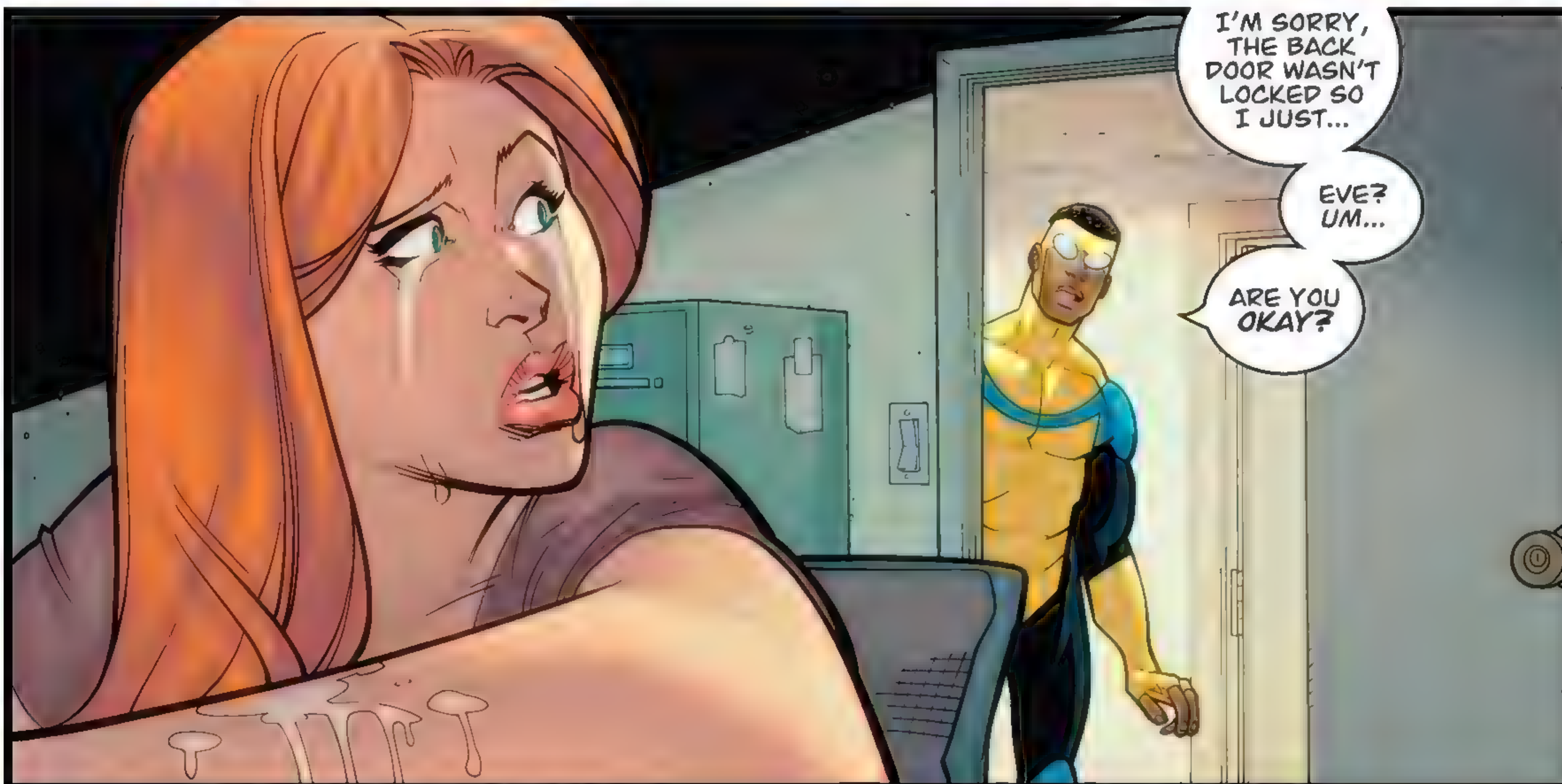
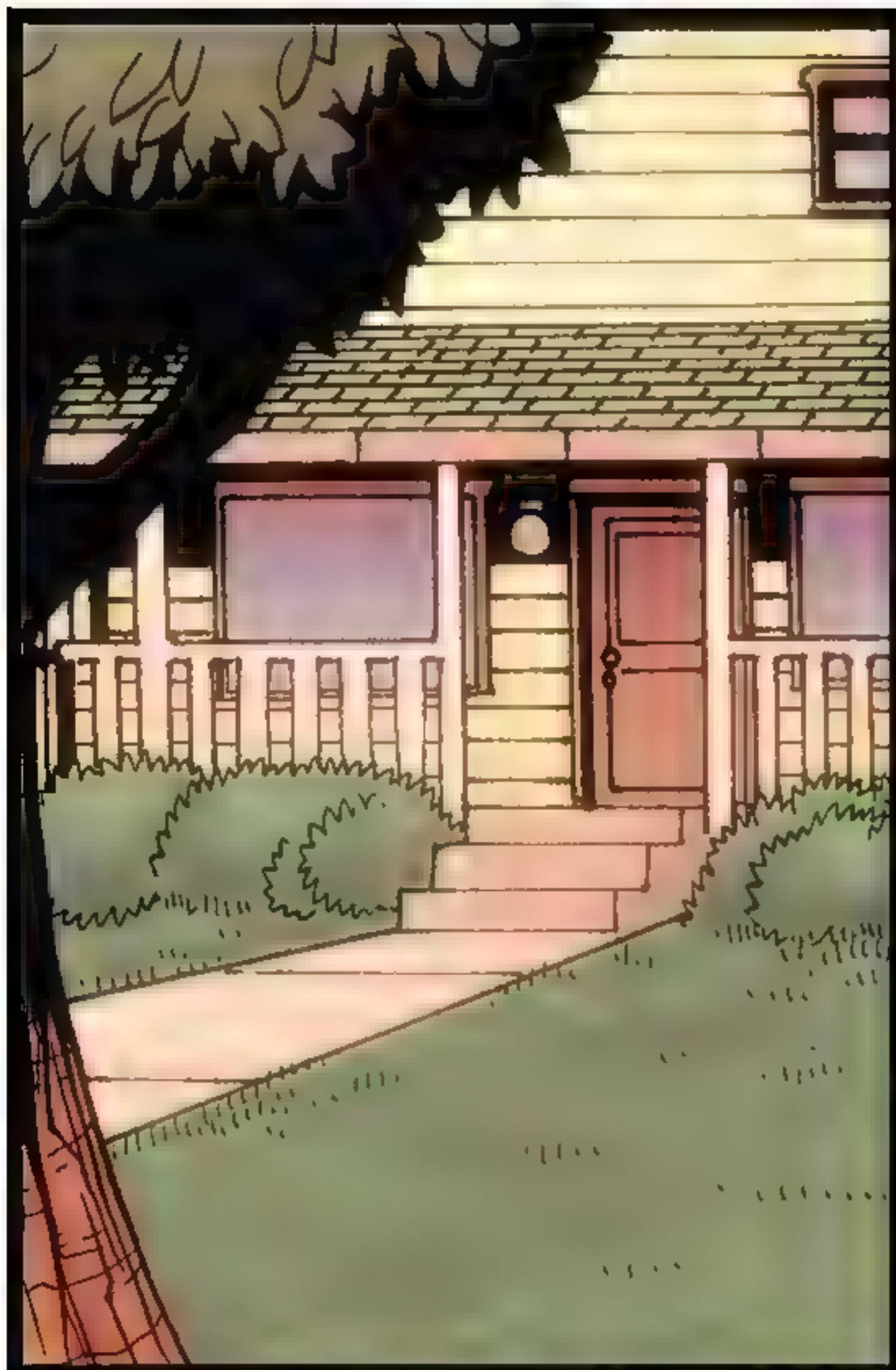
INTERESTING... ODD, MAYBE UNSETTLING BUT... INTERESTING.

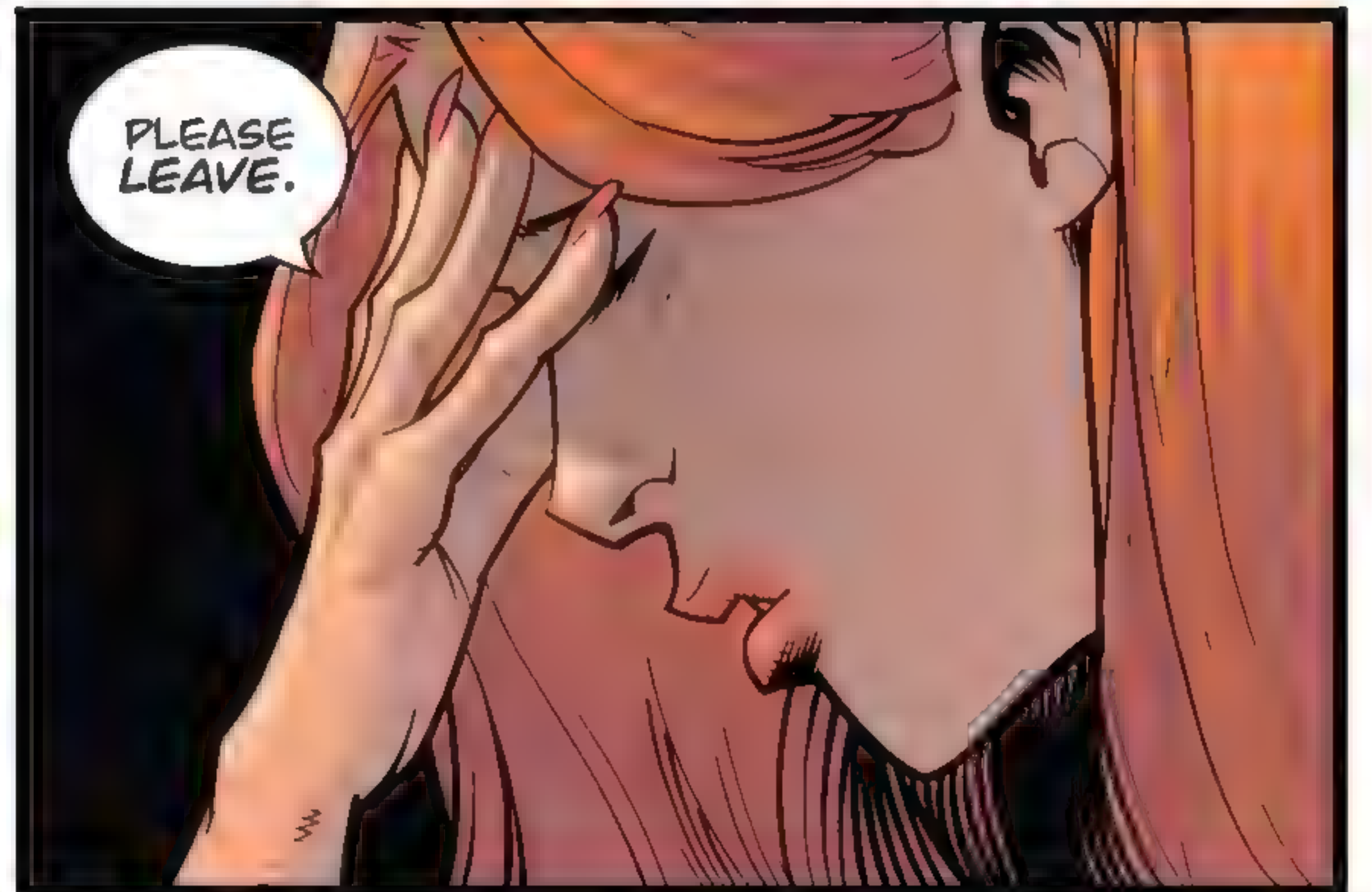
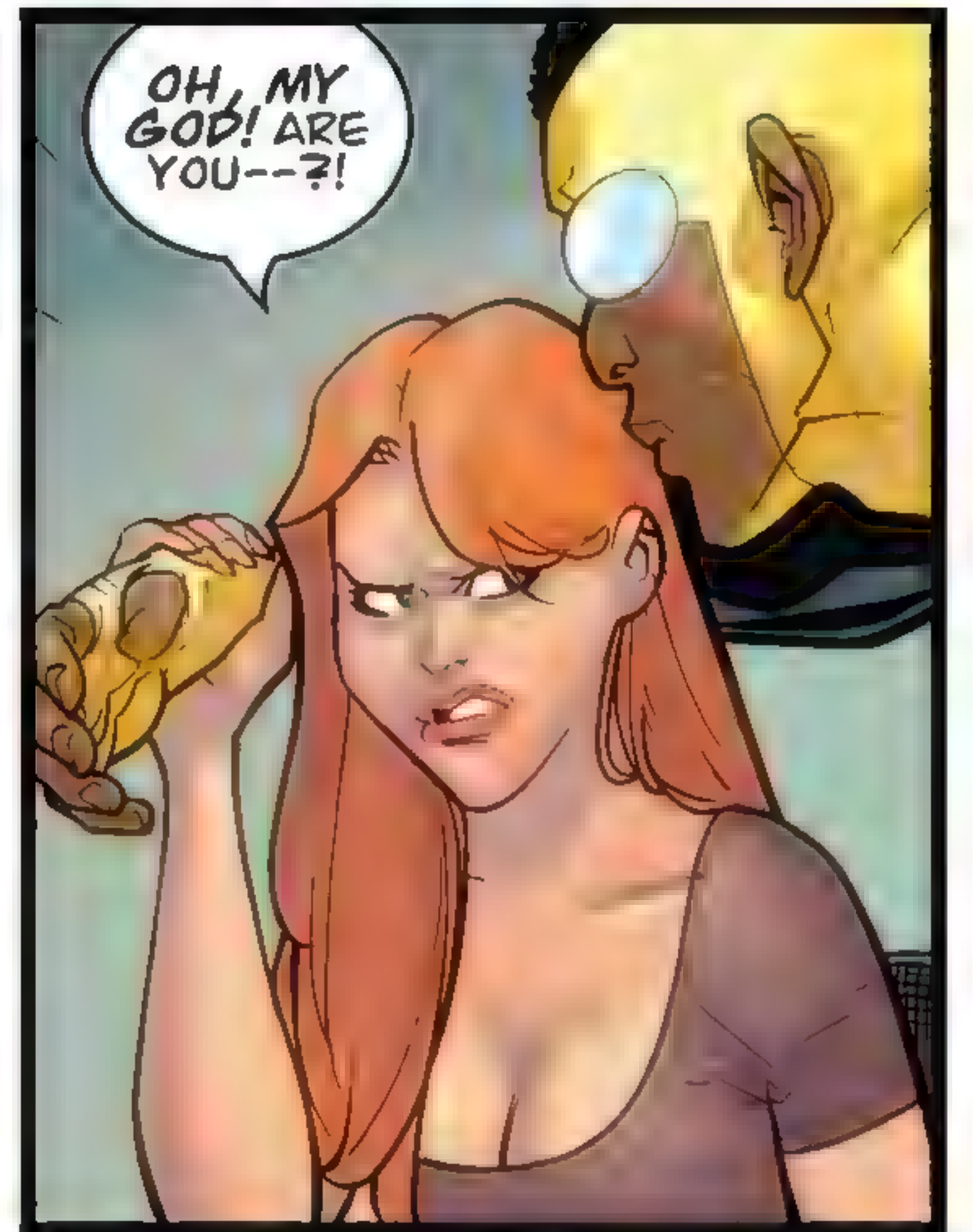
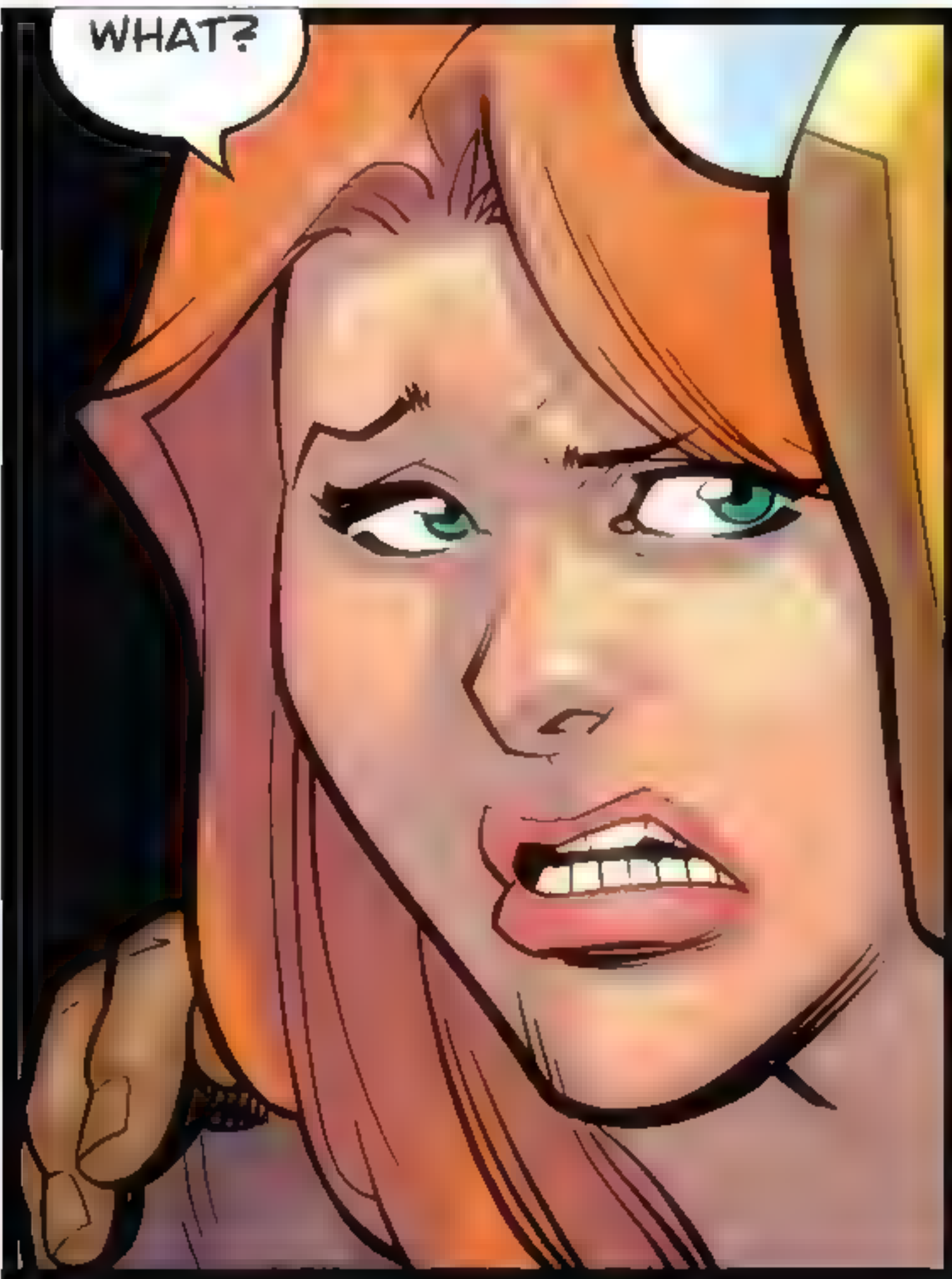
DO YOU WANT TO GO VISIT TECH JACKET?

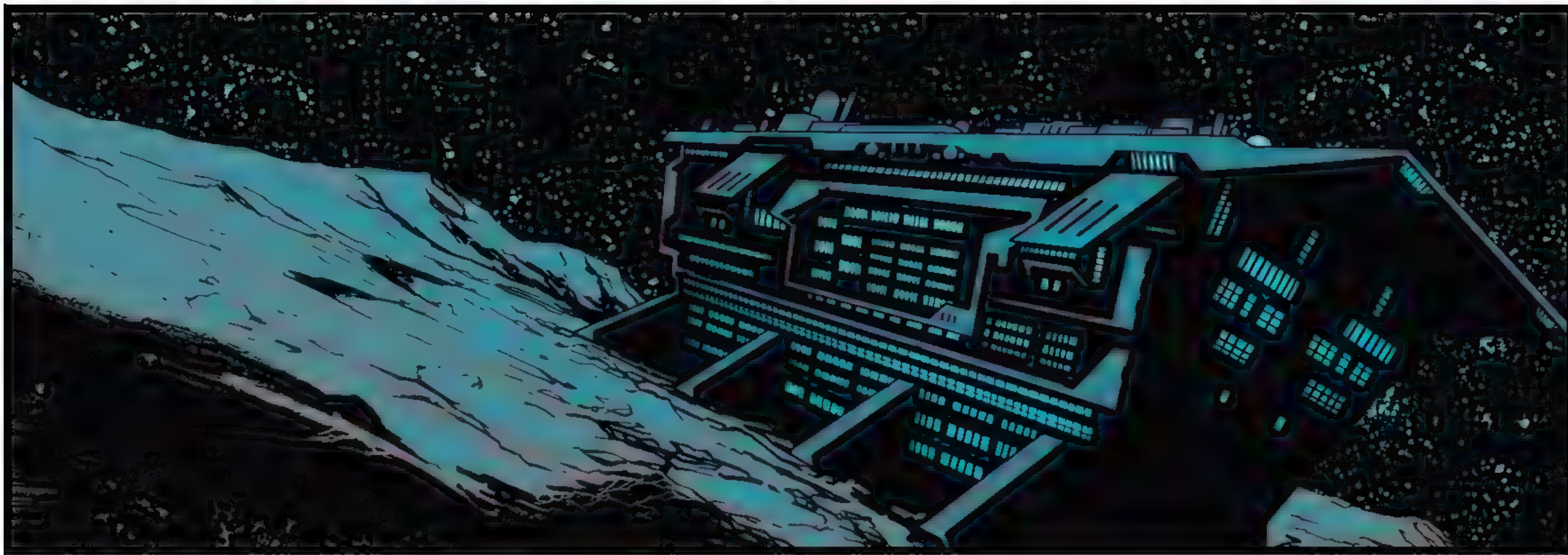


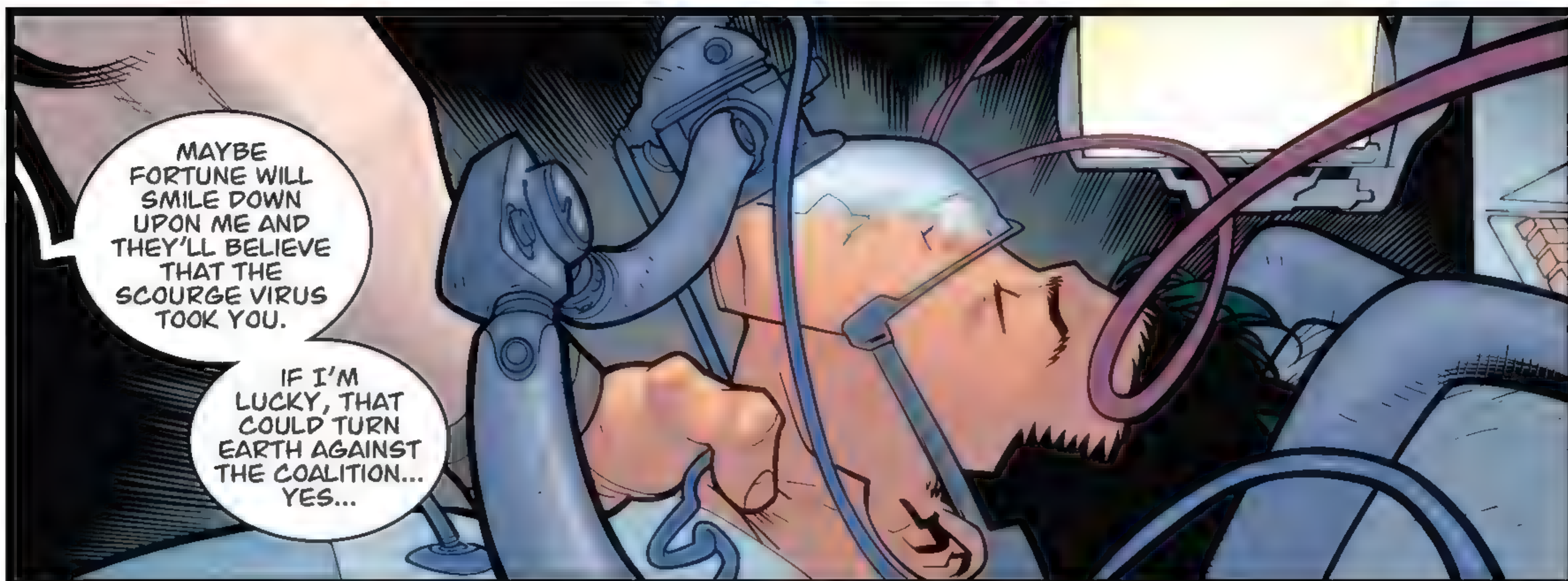
SURE.



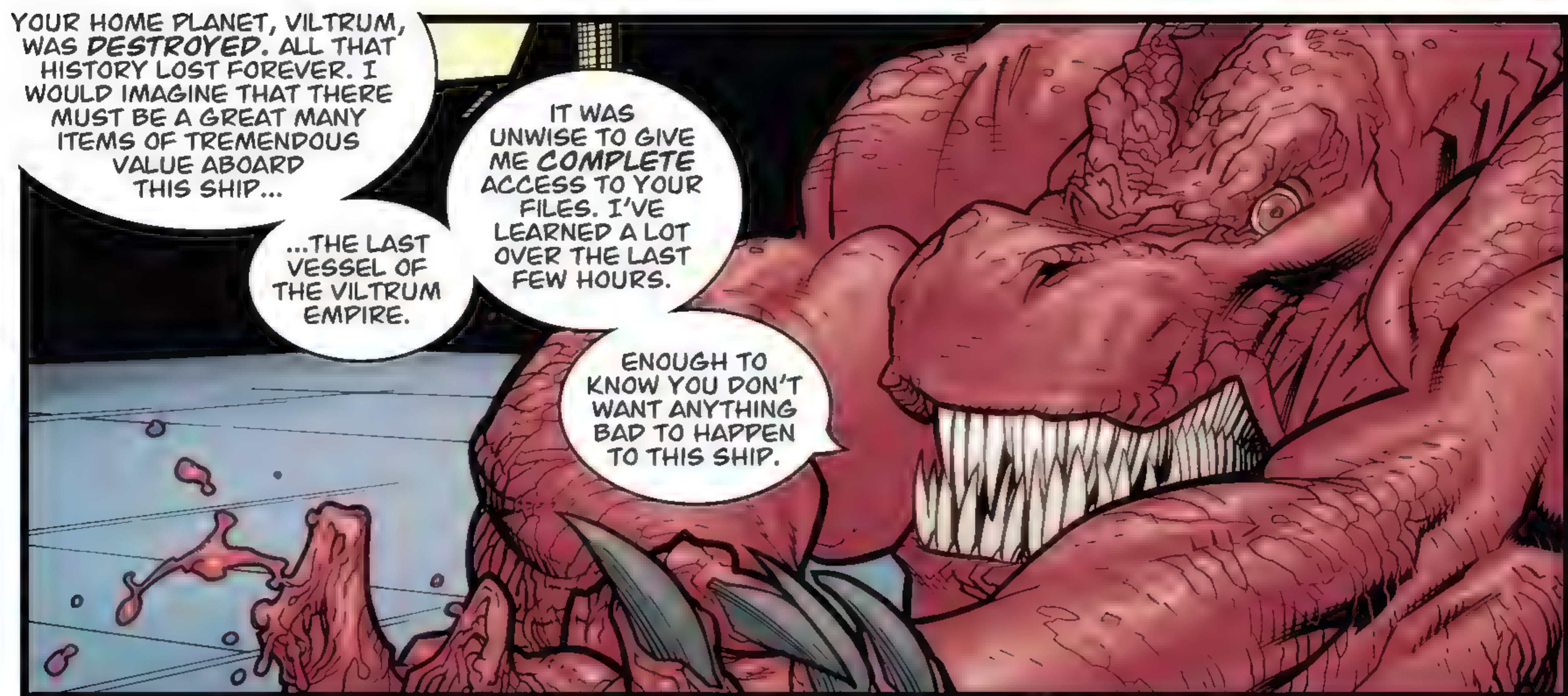












YOUR HOME PLANET, VILTRUM, WAS **DESTROYED**. ALL THAT HISTORY LOST FOREVER. I WOULD IMAGINE THAT THERE MUST BE A GREAT MANY ITEMS OF TREMENDOUS VALUE ABOARD THIS SHIP...

...THE LAST VESSEL OF THE VILTRUM EMPIRE.

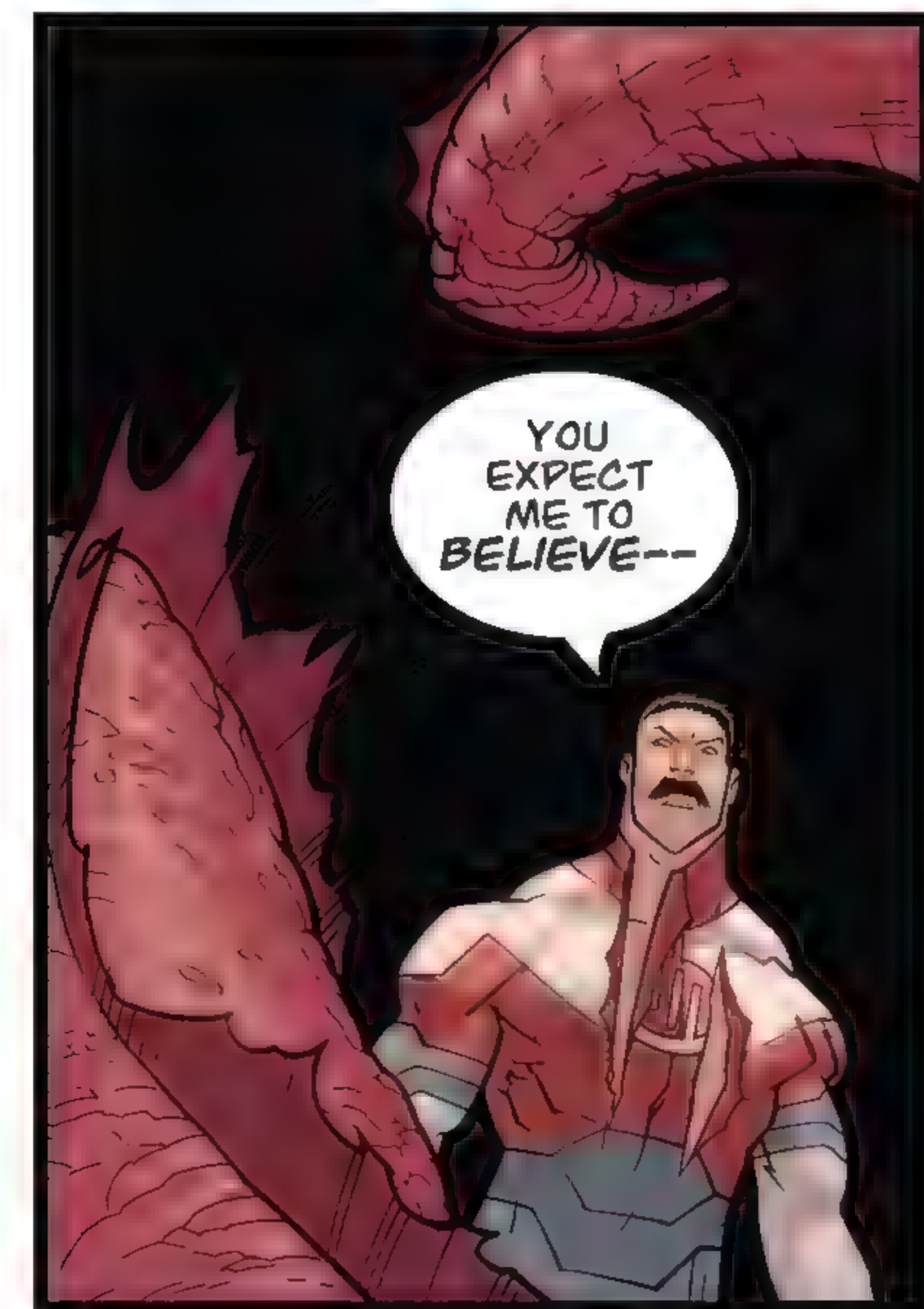
IT WAS UNWISE TO GIVE ME **COMPLETE** ACCESS TO YOUR FILES. I'VE LEARNED A LOT OVER THE LAST FEW HOURS.

ENOUGH TO KNOW YOU DON'T WANT ANYTHING BAD TO HAPPEN TO THIS SHIP.

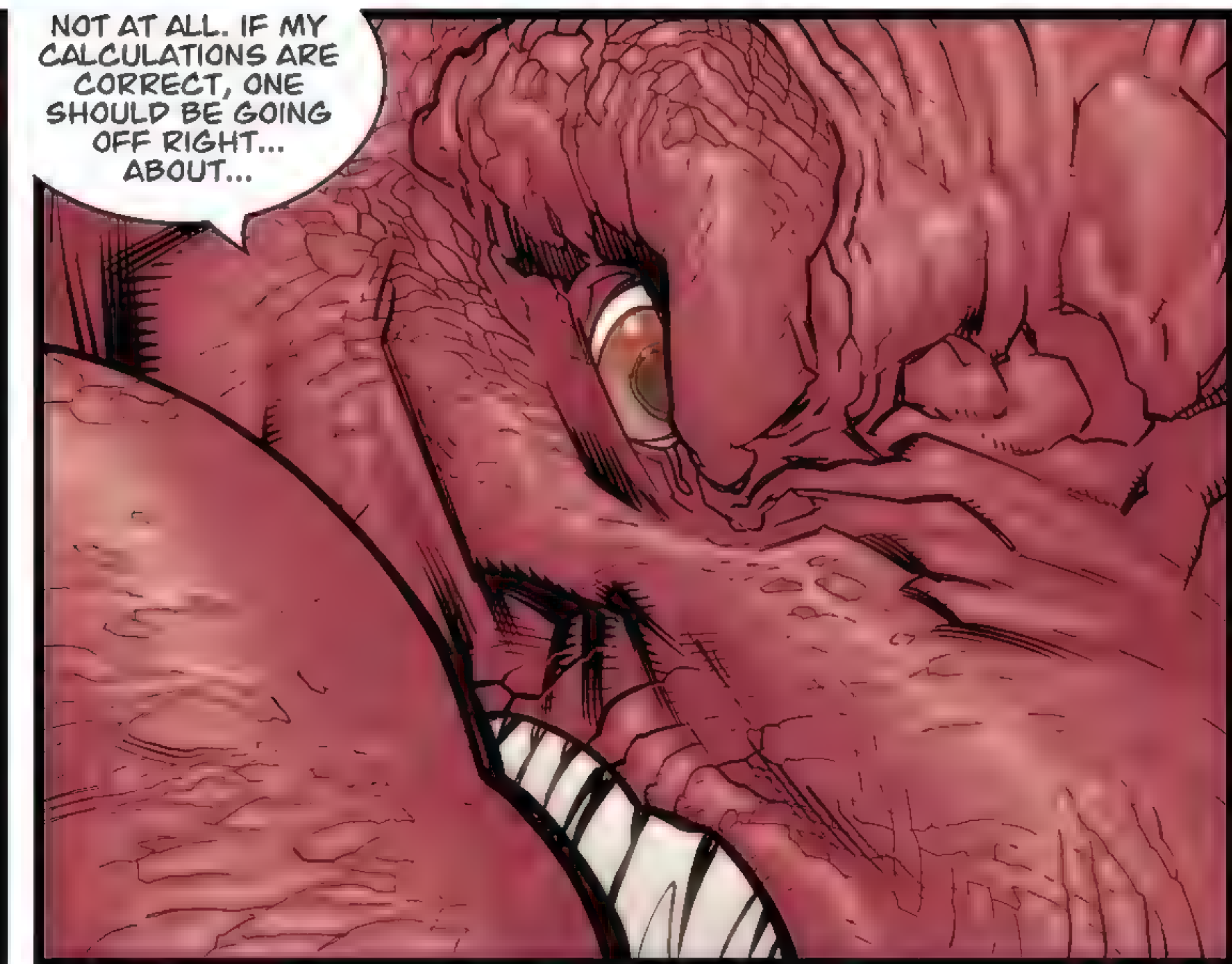


I'VE BEEN ABLE TO PINPOINT A FEW KEY AREAS, PLACES WHERE AN ELEMENT COULD BE ALTERED, CLIMATE ADJUSTED... TO CAUSE DISASTROUS, NO--**EXPLOSIVE** RESULTS.

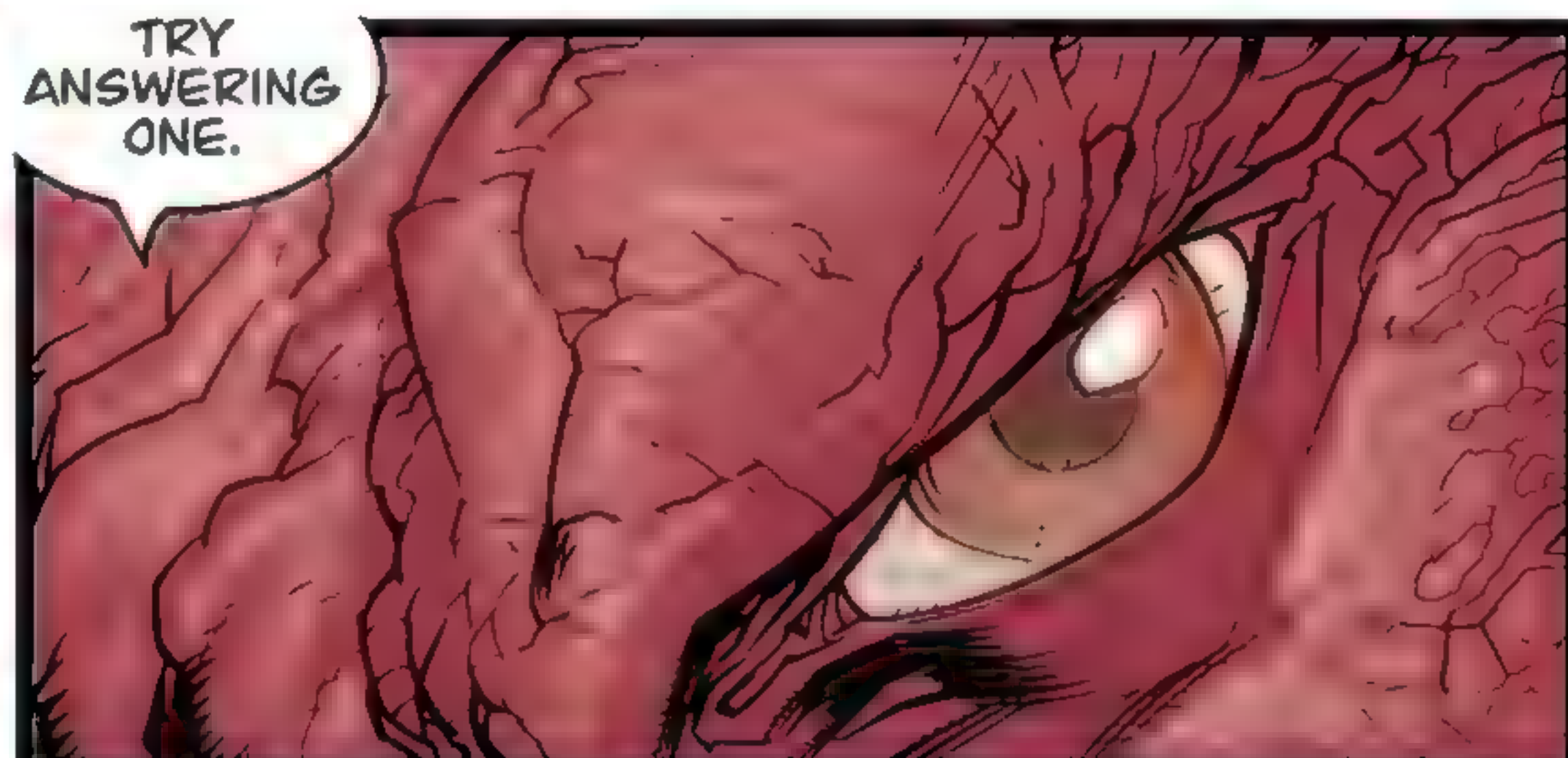
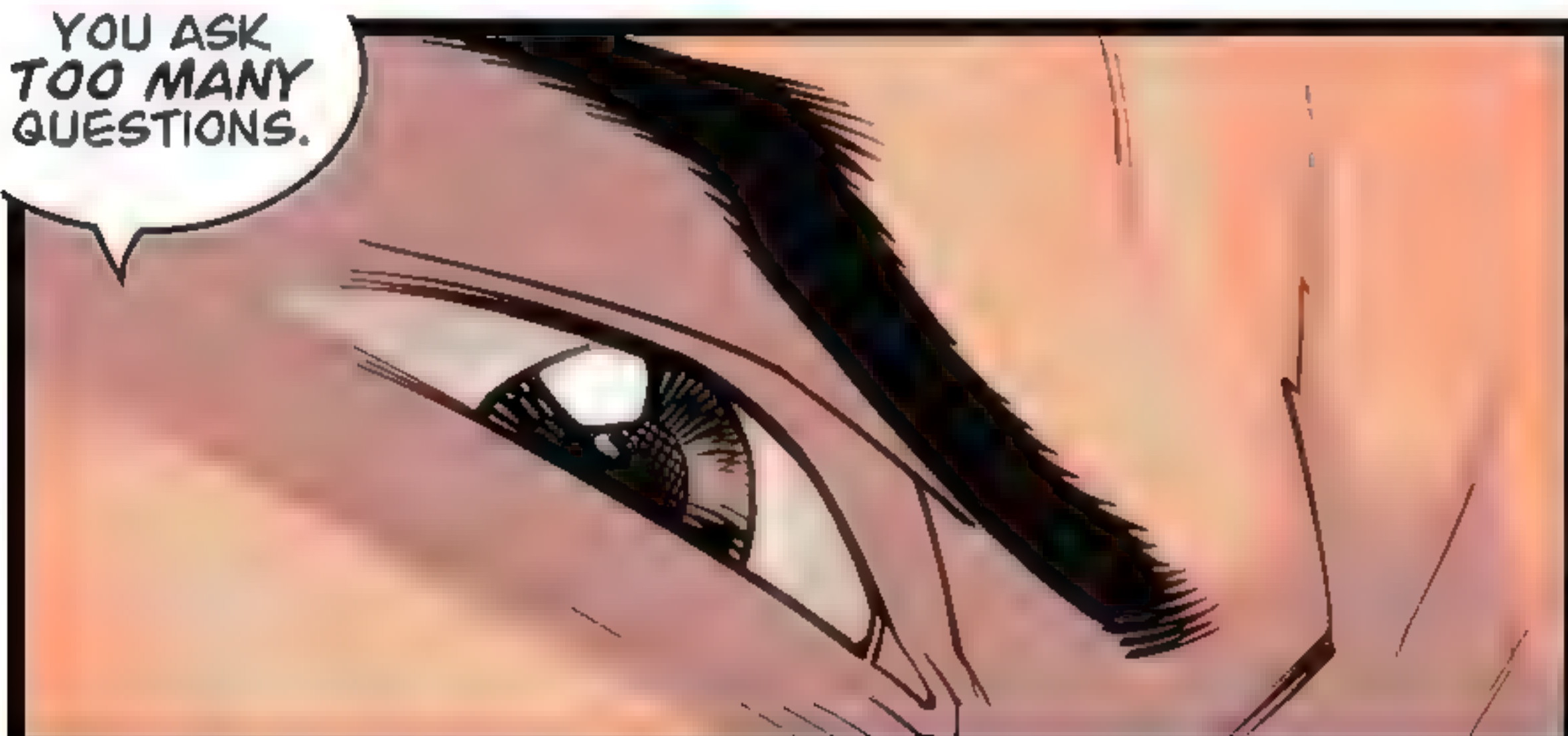
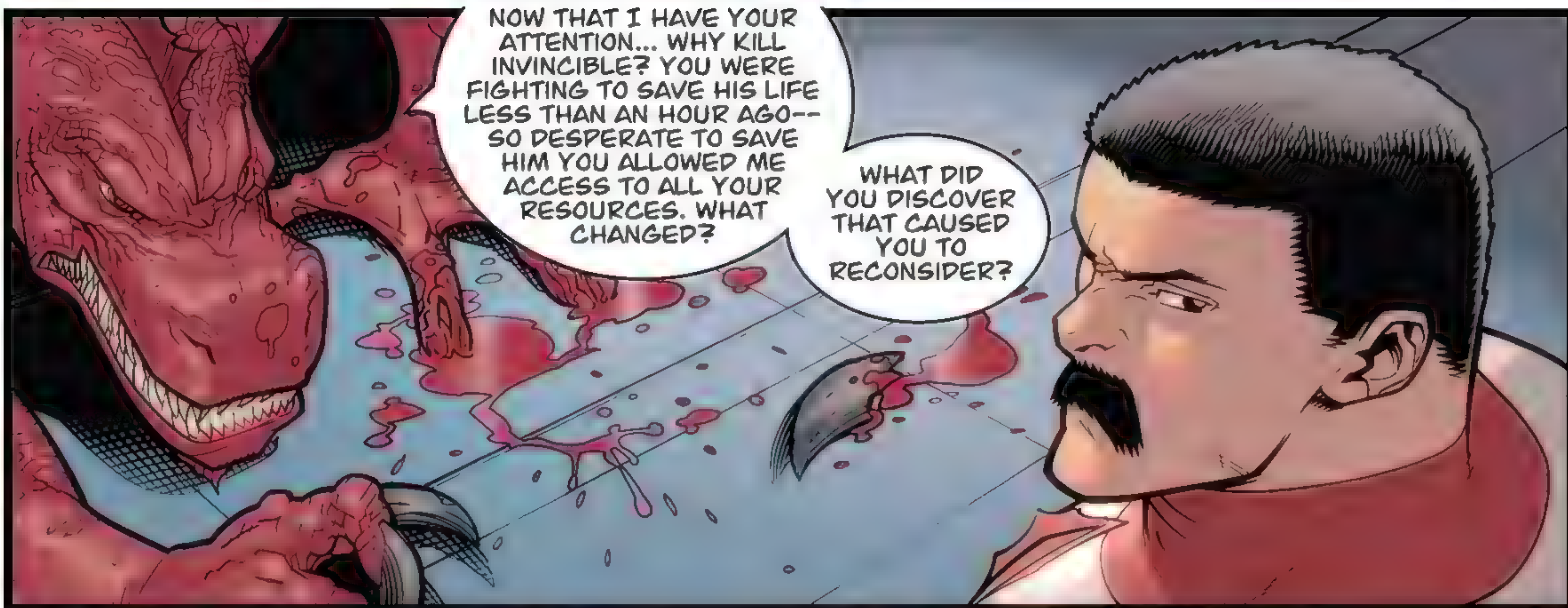
I'VE GOT A SYSTEM MONITORING MY HEART RATE. AS IT RISES, IT WILL SET OFF A SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS INSIDE THIS SHIP...

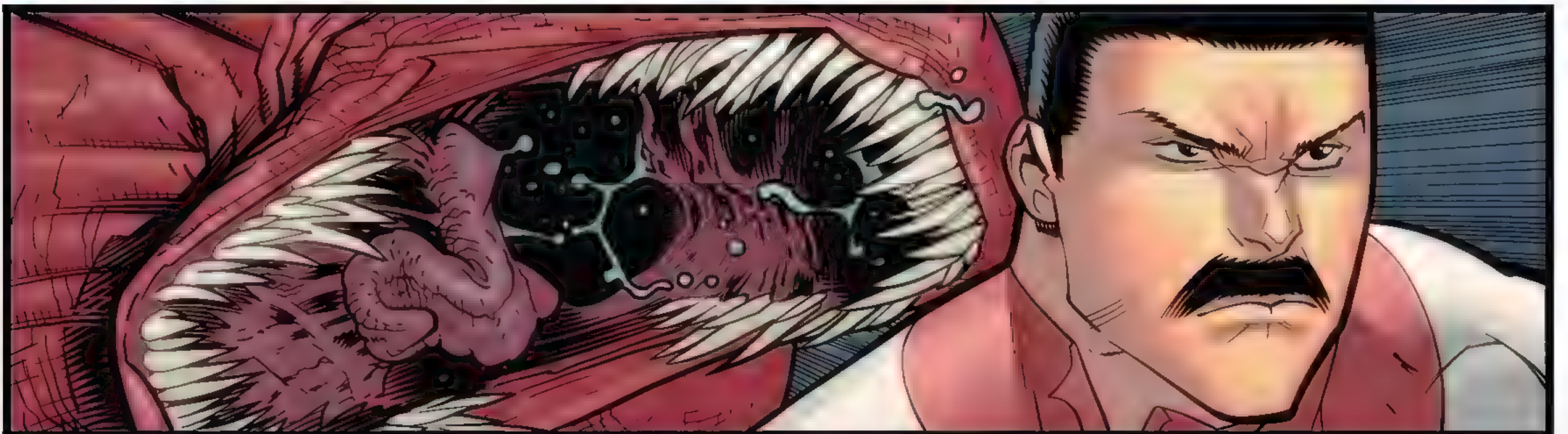
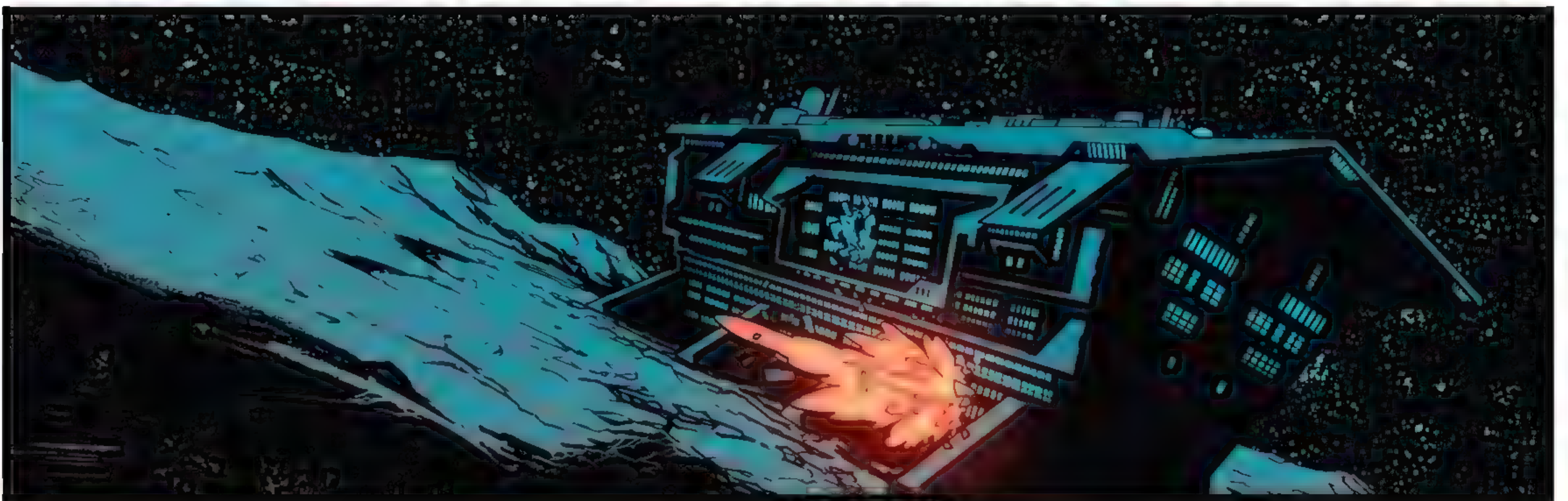


YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE--



NOT AT ALL. IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT, ONE SHOULD BE GOING OFF RIGHT... ABOUT...









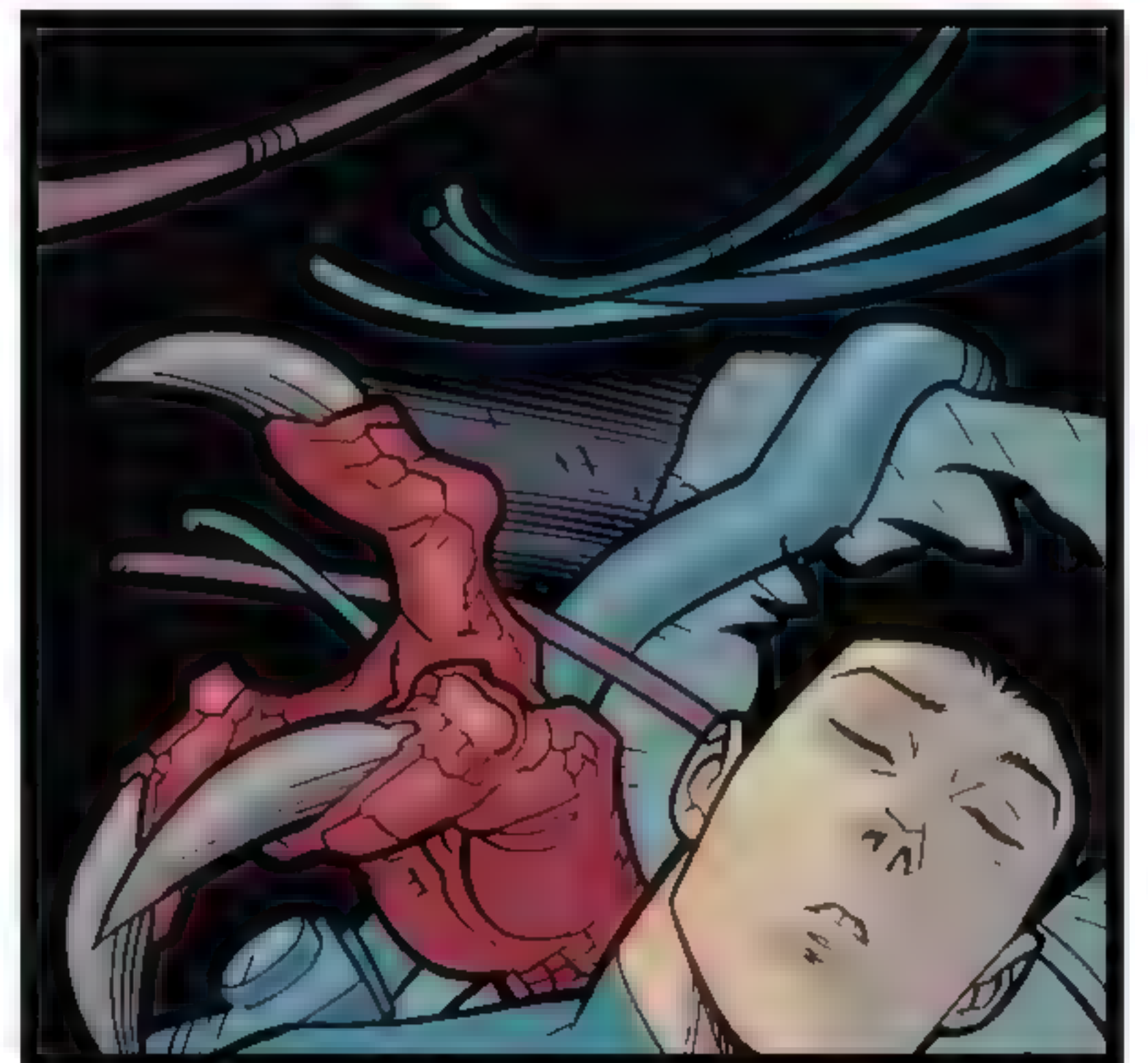
WHILE YOU'RE BUSY BLEEDING, I WILL ATTEND TO THIS. I SEE NOW THAT STOPPING YOUR HEART WOULD ONLY CAUSE MORE DAMAGE.

COLLECT YOURSELF. I'LL RETURN SHORTLY, YOU'LL WISH YOU WERE DEAD SOON ENOUGH.



KU---

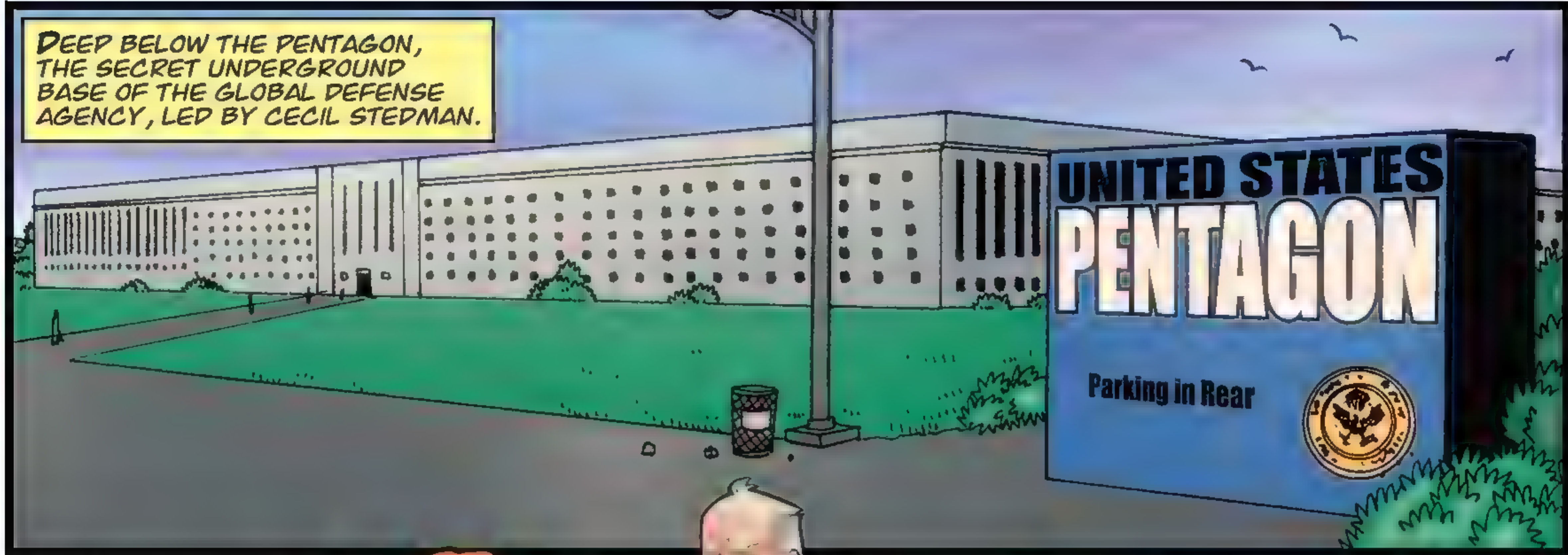
GU---



OW---

OUT.





DEEP BELOW THE PENTAGON,
THE SECRET UNDERGROUND
BASE OF THE GLOBAL DEFENSE
AGENCY, LED BY CECIL STEDMAN.



I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
I HEARD THRAGG SAY
WE COULD VISIT ANY
TIME. I KNOW IT'S
BARELY BEEN A DAY,
BUT I'D LIKE TO SEE
HIM... I'M SURE YOU
UNDERSTAND.

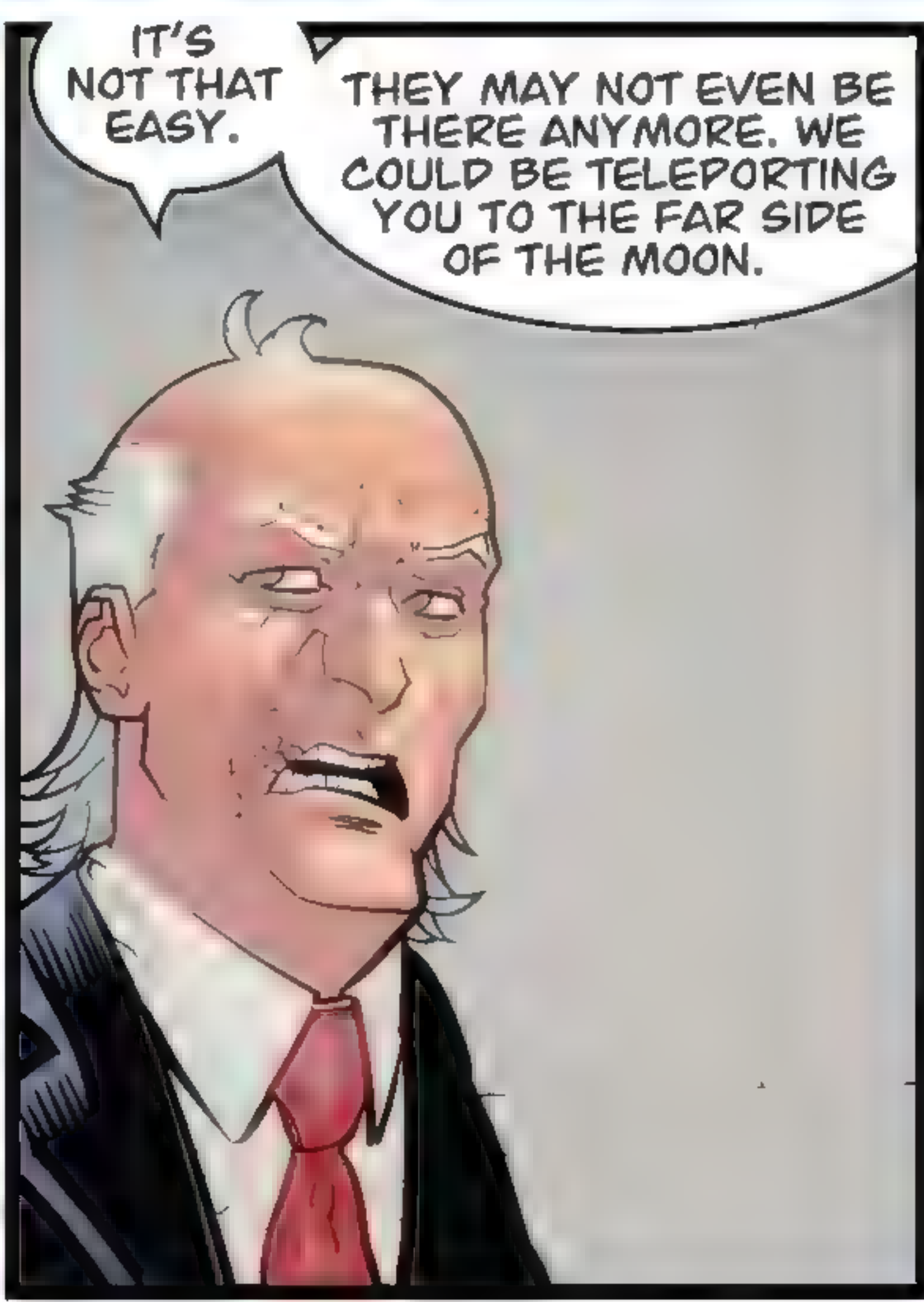
I DO, BUT IT'S NOT
AS SIMPLE AS MAKING
A PHONE CALL. WE'VE
ATTEMPTED TO
CONTACT THEM AND
WE CAN'T SEEM TO
GET THROUGH.

THEIR
COMMUNICATION
IS DOWN.

ANOTHER
CAUSE FOR
CONCERN, THE
GUARDIANS OF THE
GLOBE MOON BASE
IS REPORTING UNUSUAL
SEISMIC ACTIVITY ON
THE MOON THAT IS
ORIGINATING IN THE
REGION OF THE
VILTRUMITE
SHIP.



SEND
ME UP
NOW!



IT'S
NOT THAT
EASY.

THEY MAY NOT EVEN BE
THERE ANYMORE. WE
COULD BE TELEPORTING
YOU TO THE FAR SIDE
OF THE MOON.

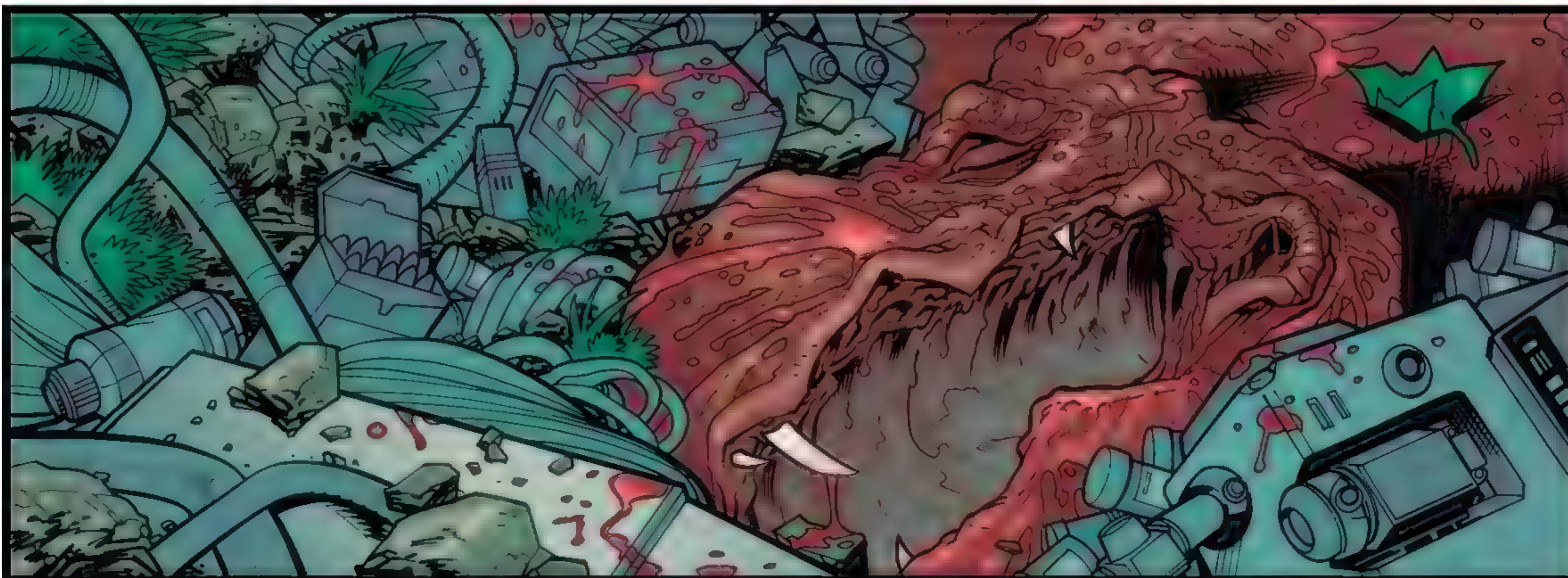
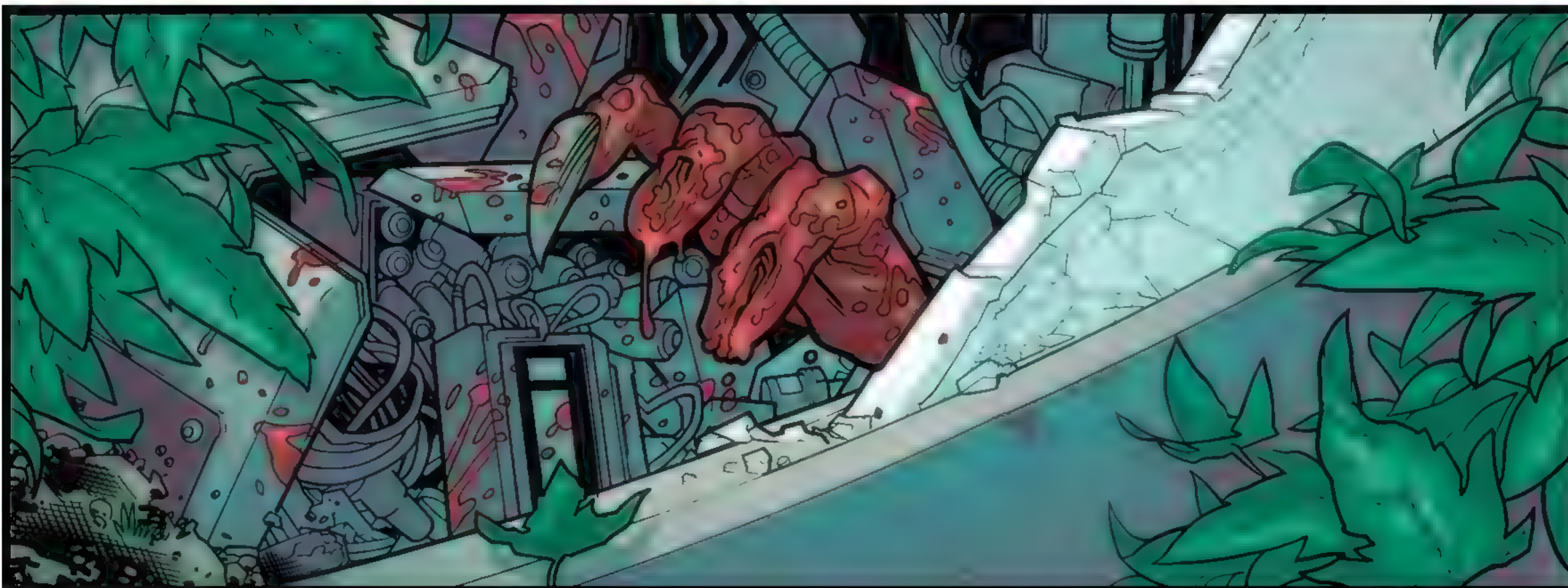
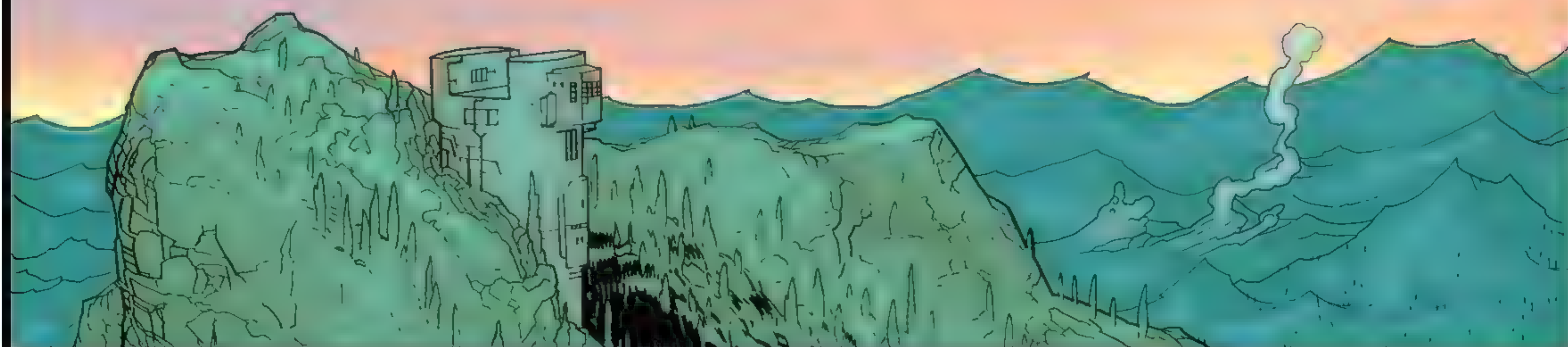


SEND ME UP TO THE
GUARDIANS' MOON
BASE--I'LL FLY OVER
FROM THERE.

I NEED TO
KNOW WHAT'S
HAPPENING--
NOW!



UNDISCLOSED LOCATION, THE
SECRET BASE OF DINOSAURUS.

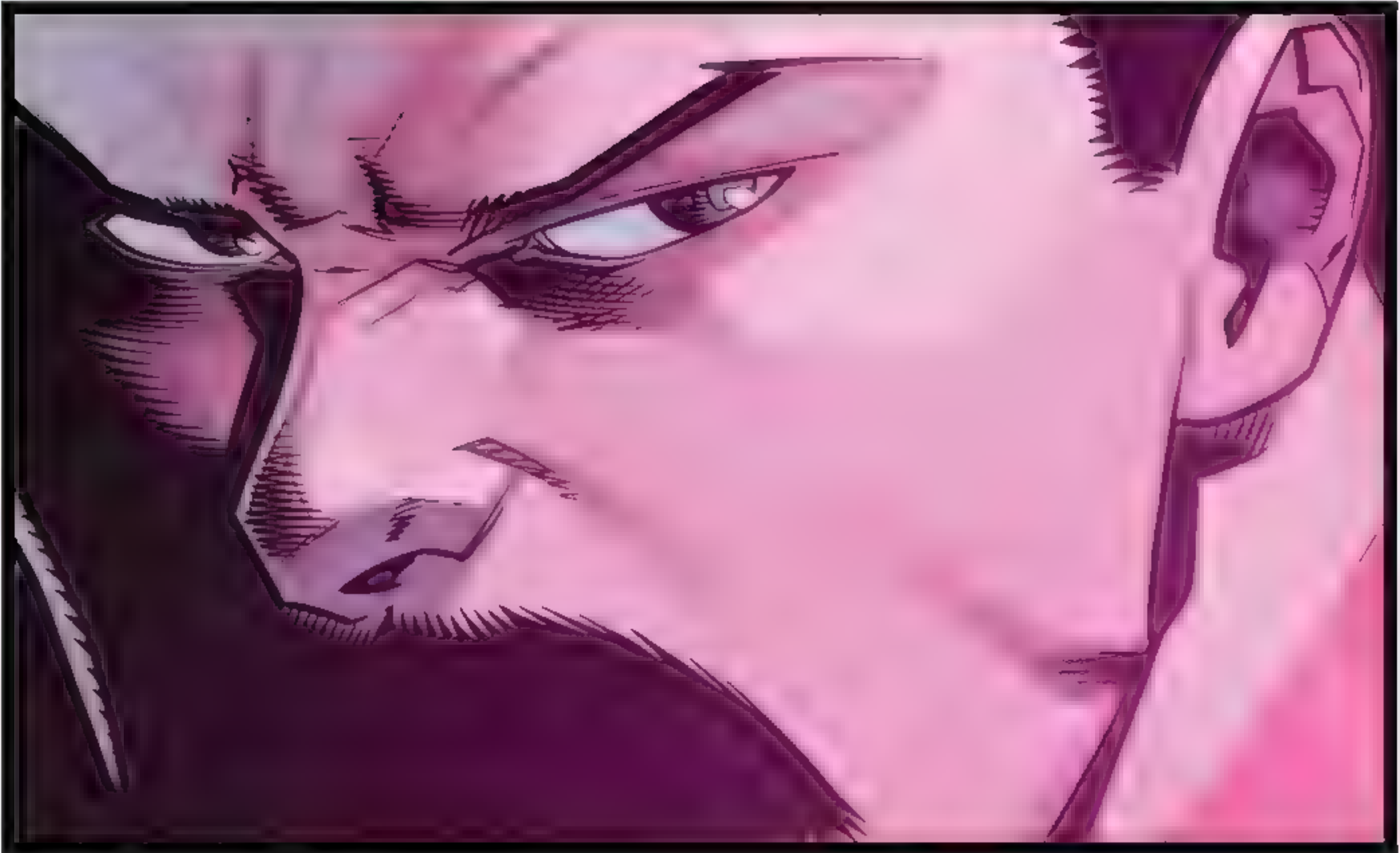
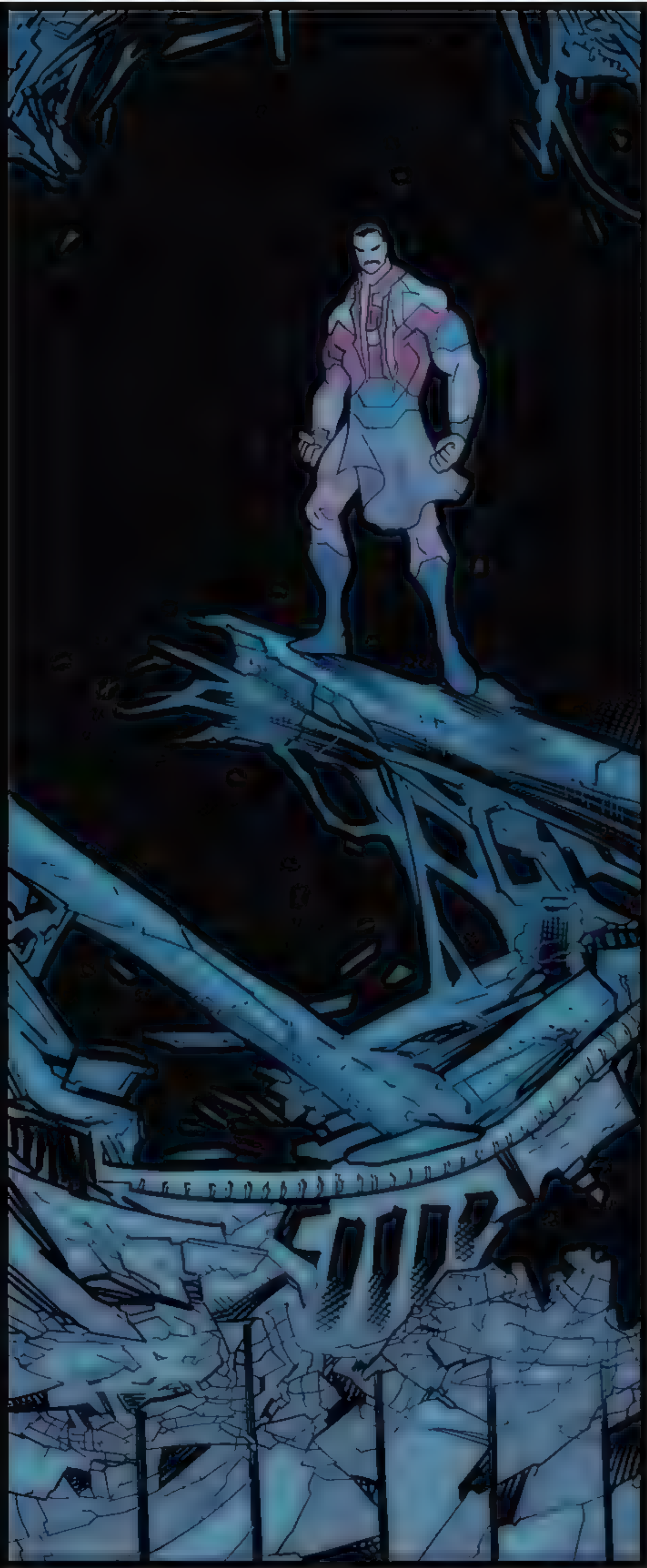
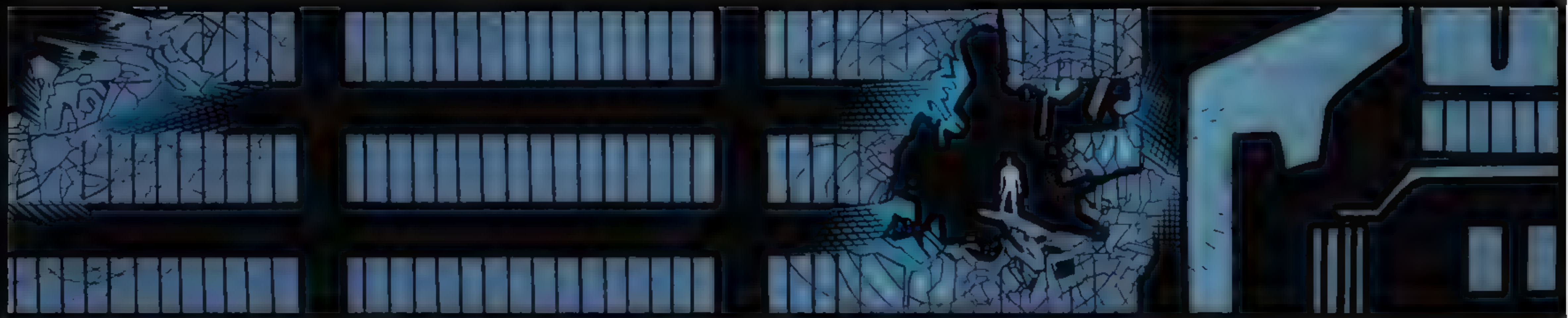


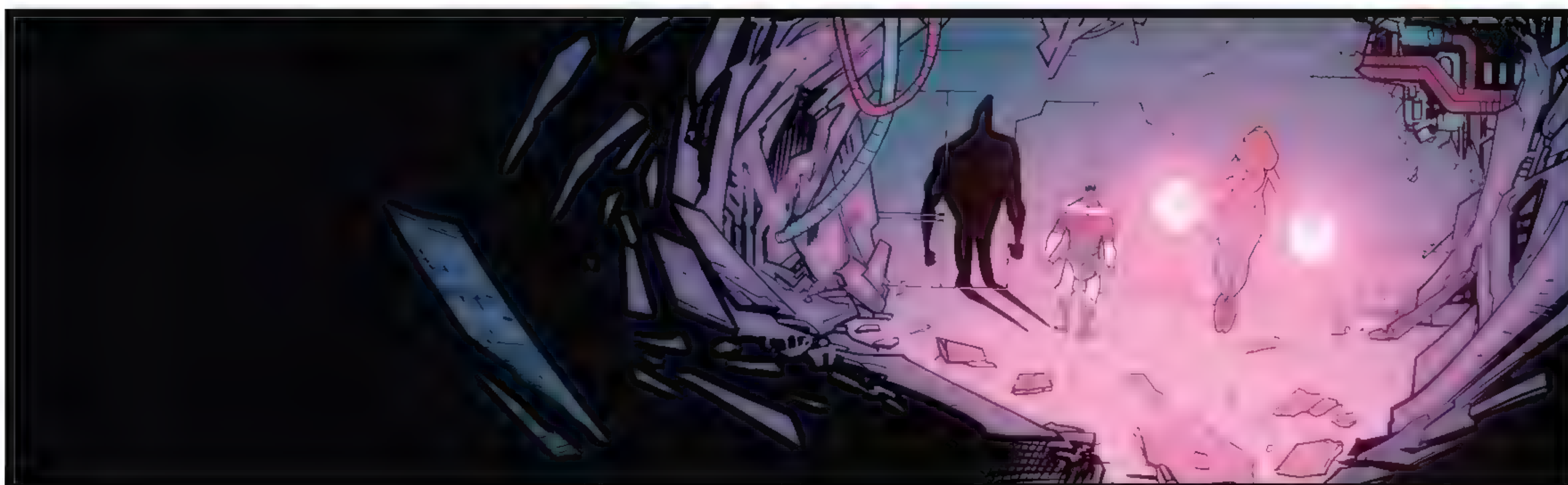
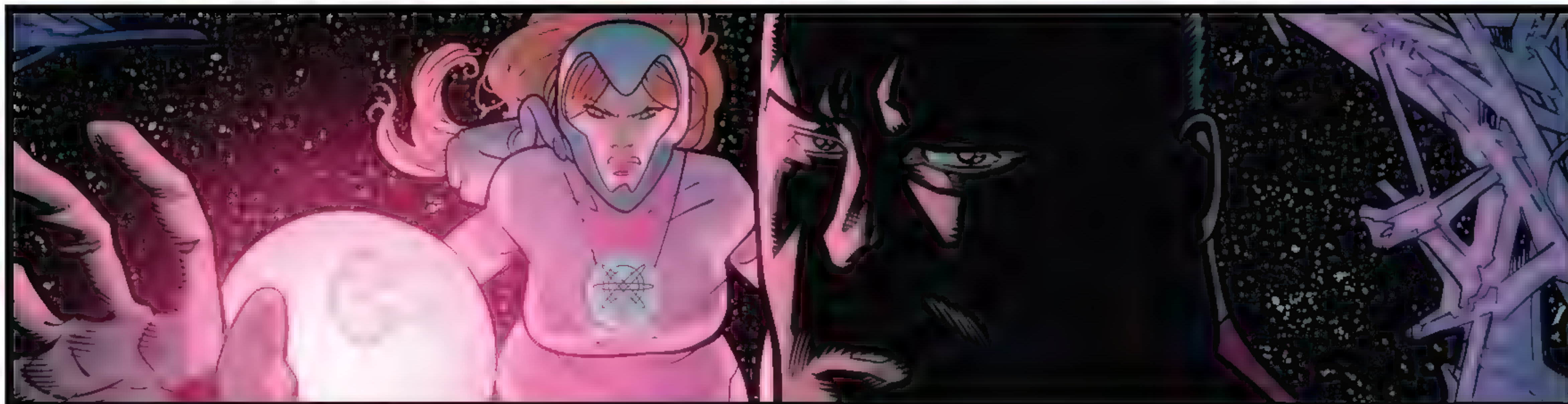


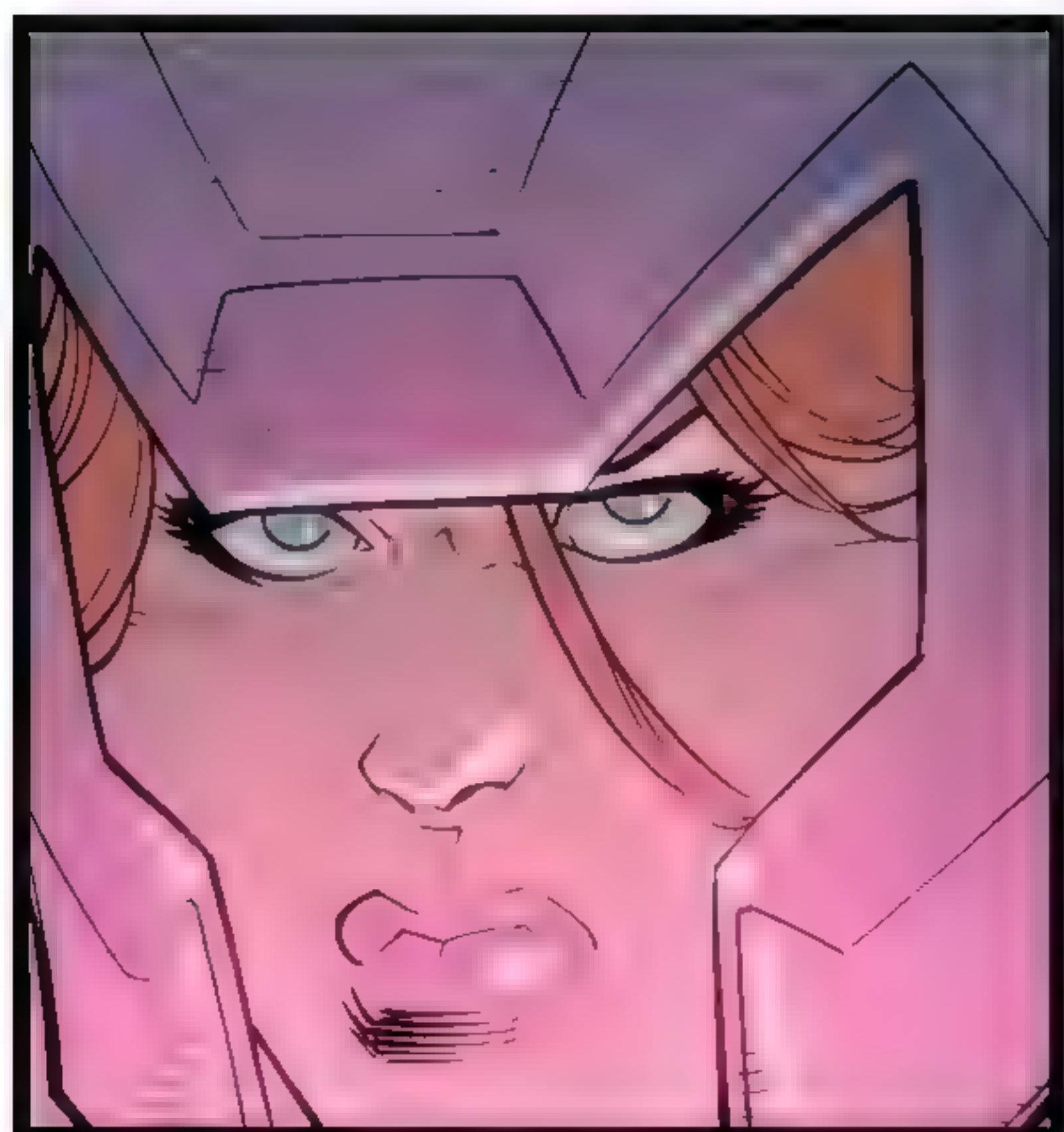


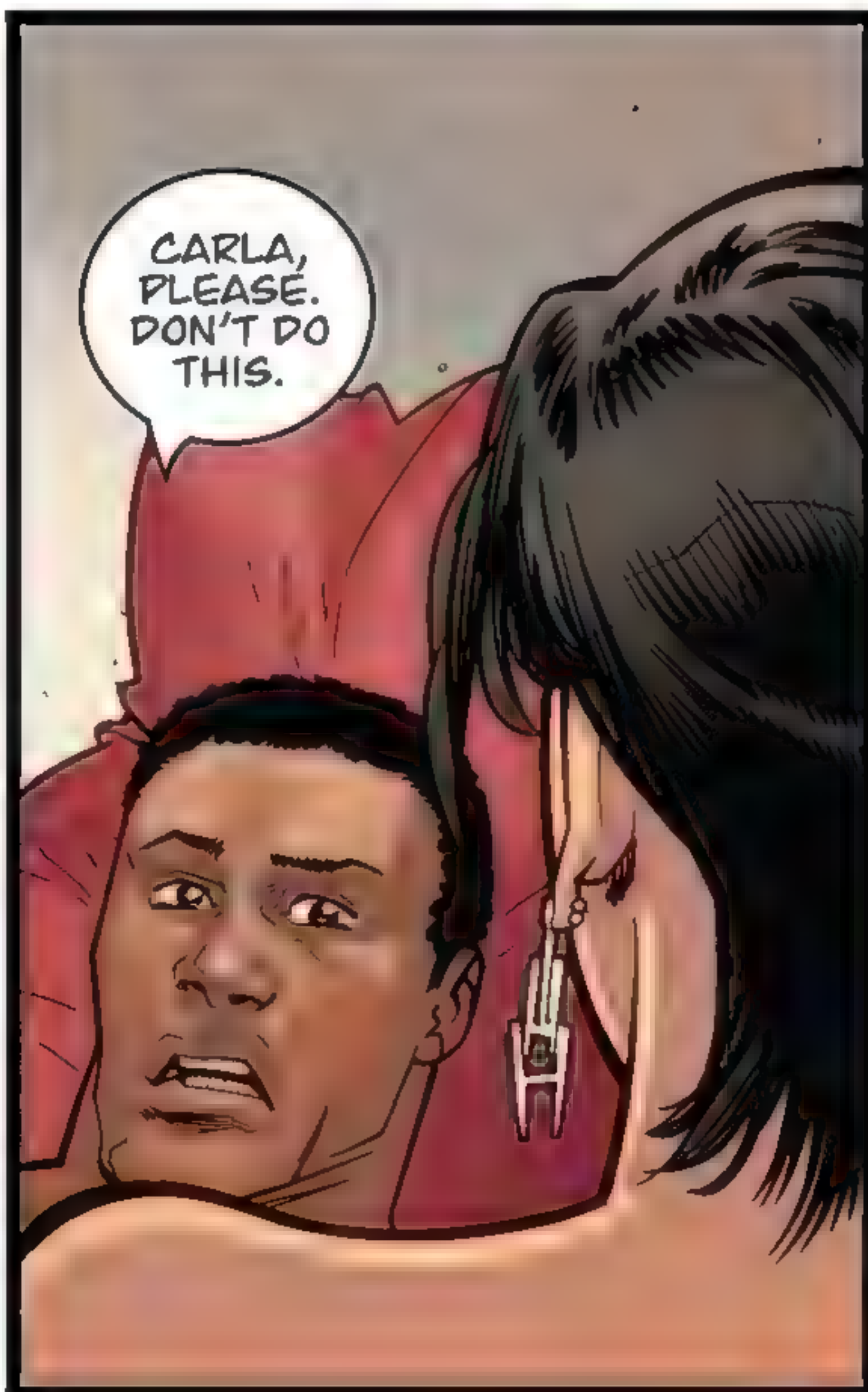
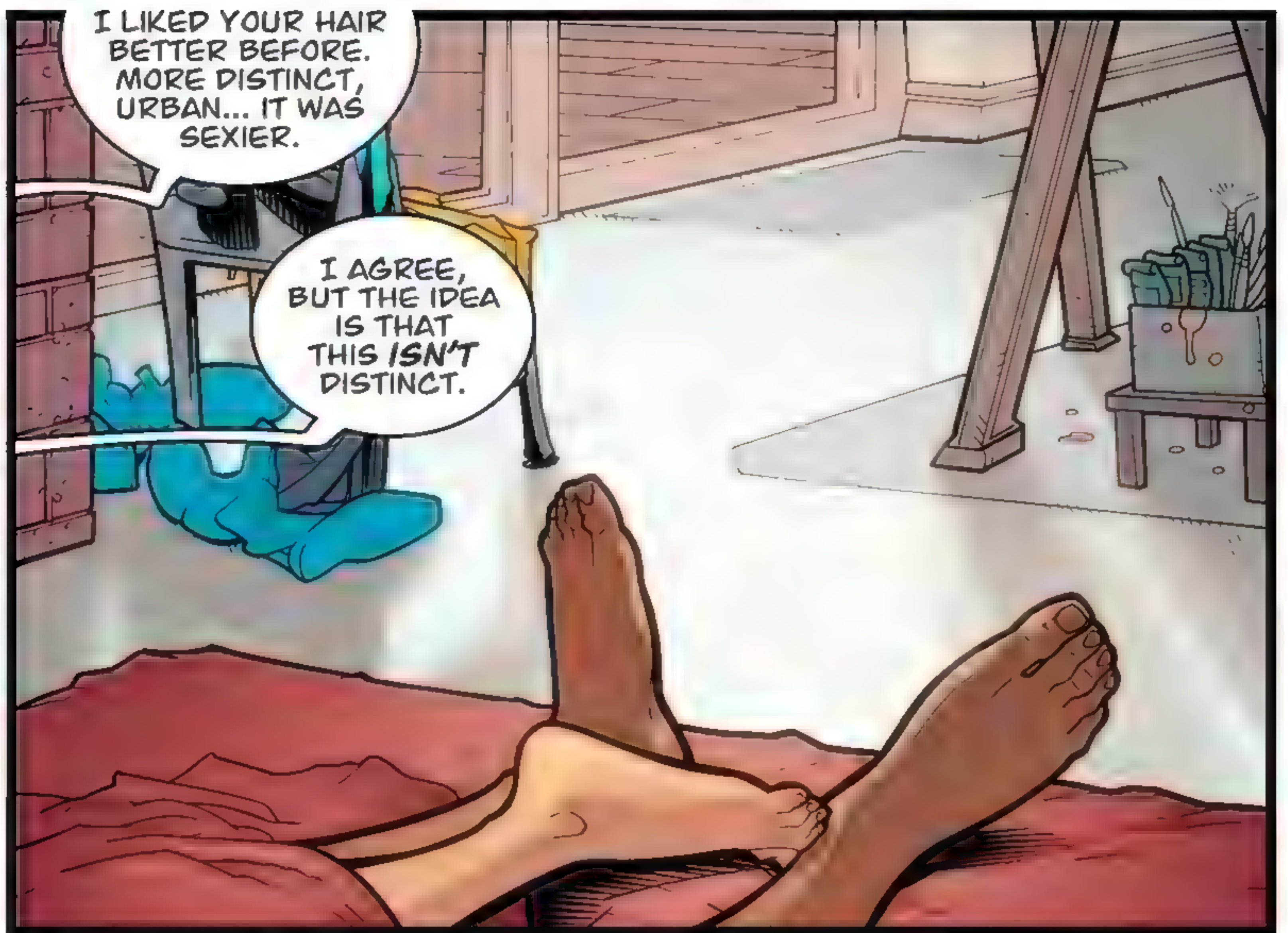
CHAPTER 91

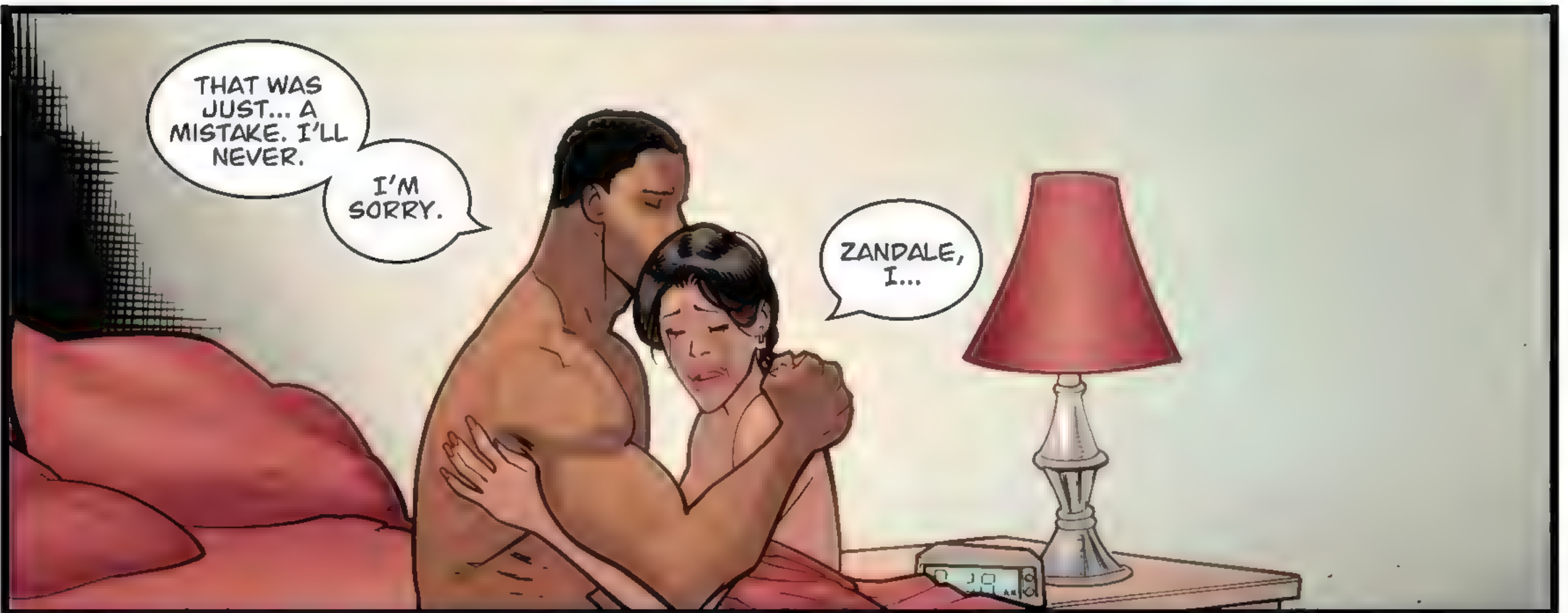
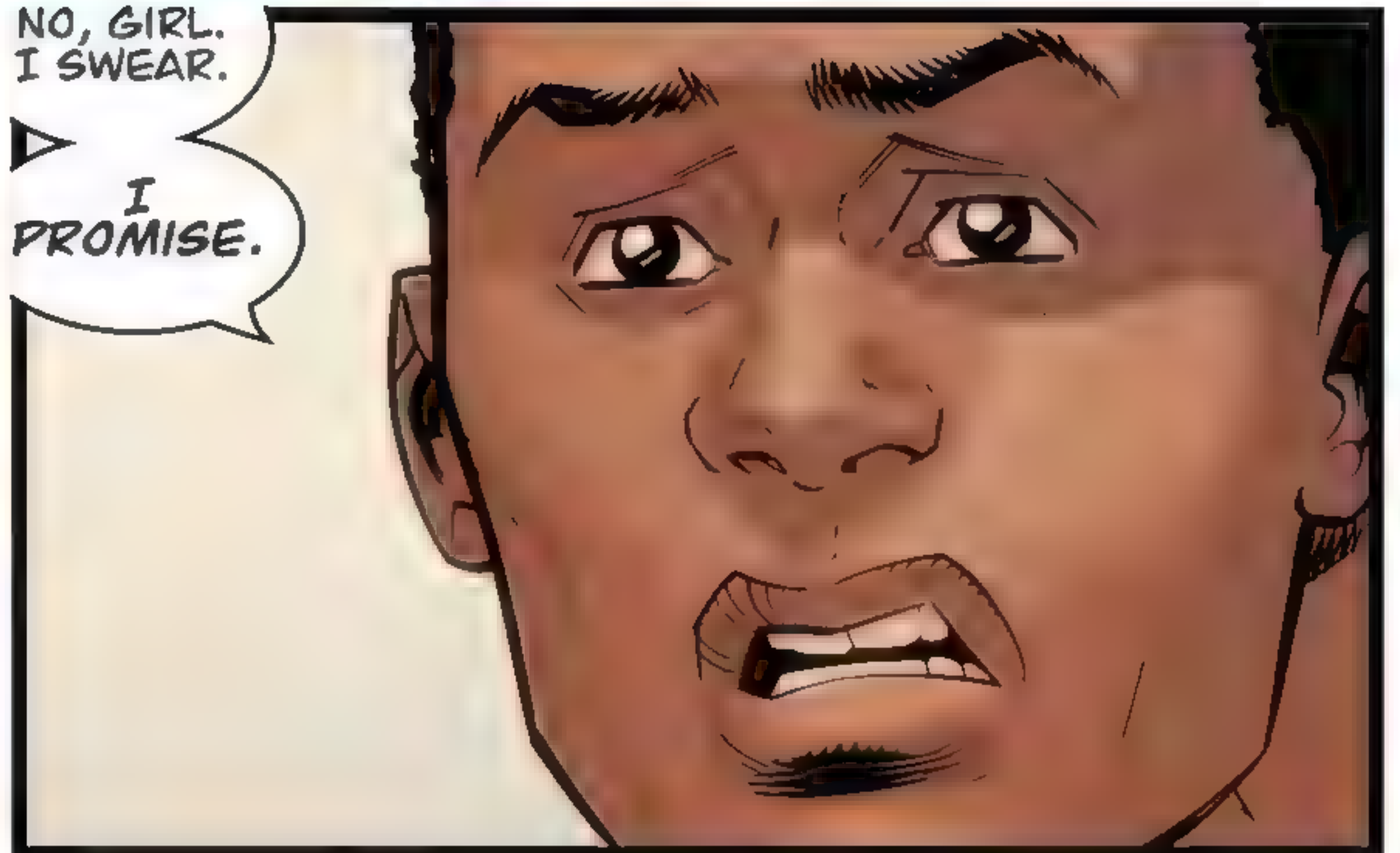
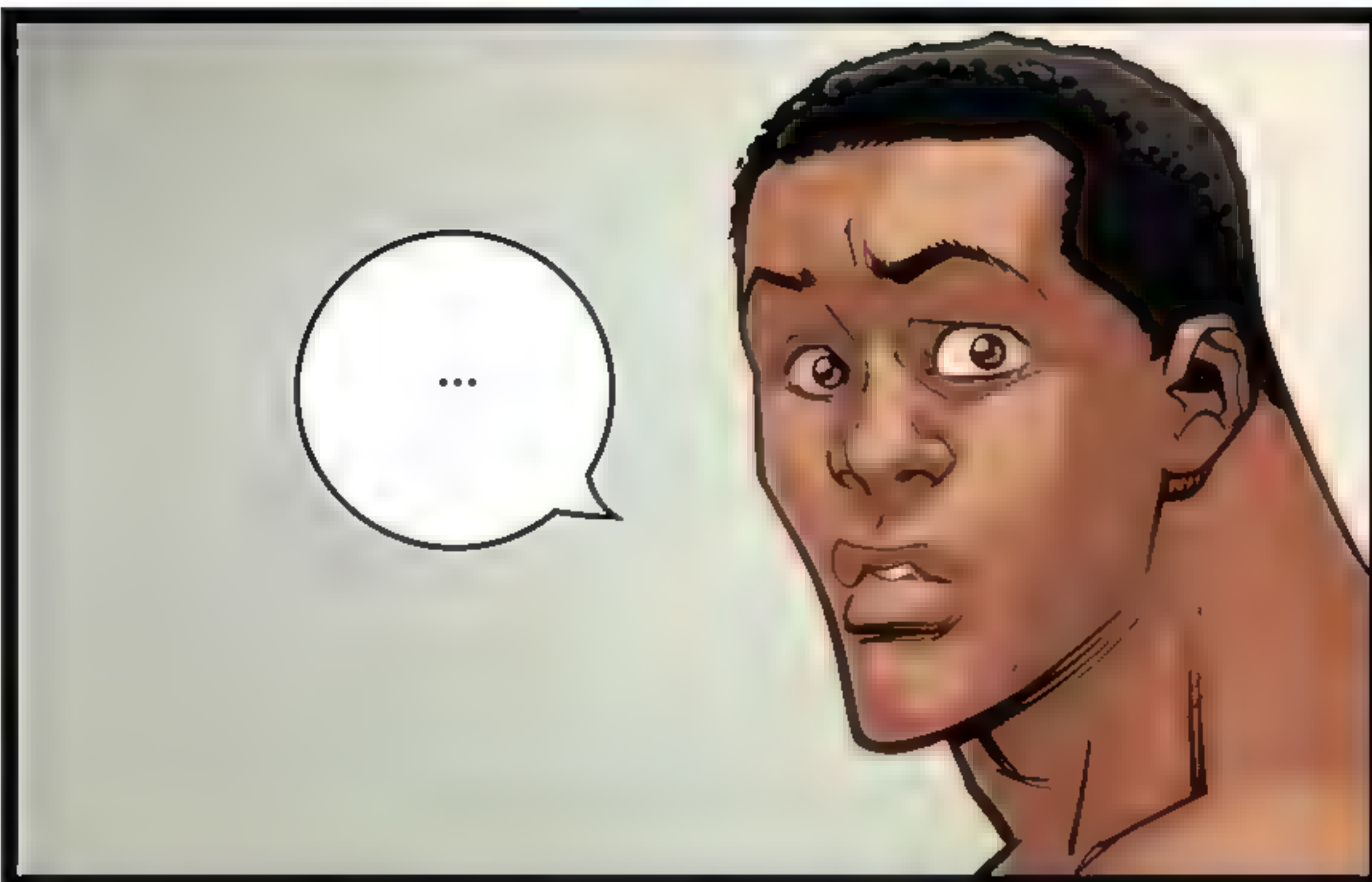
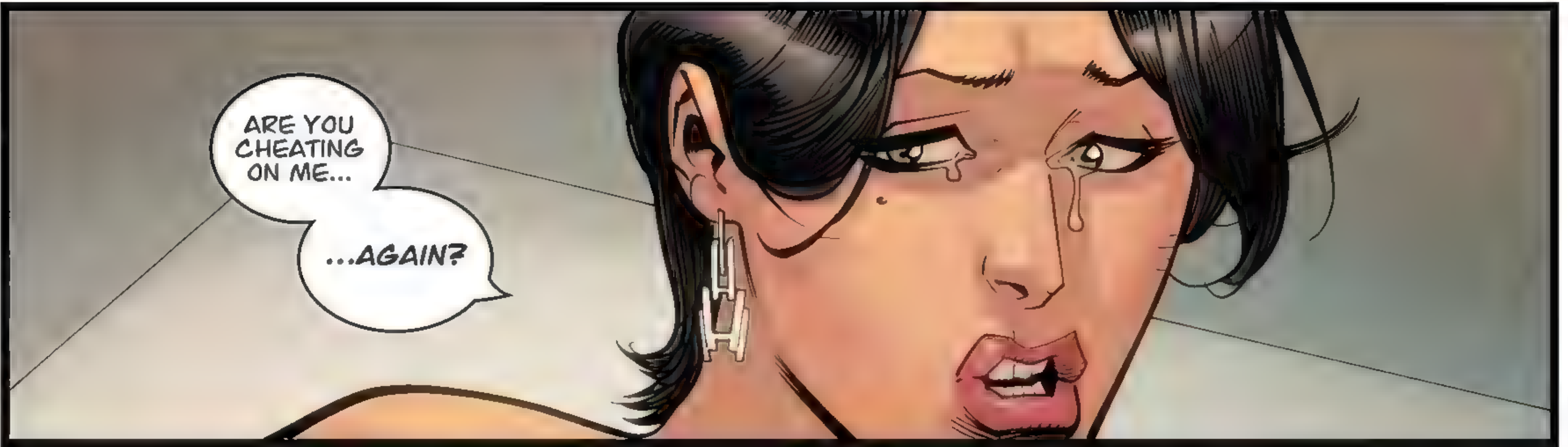




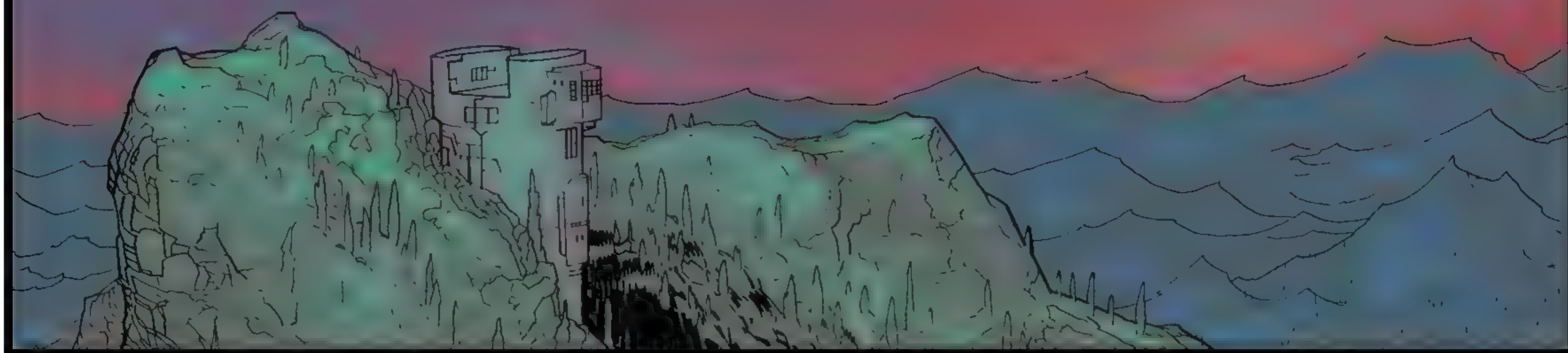








UNDISCLOSED LOCATION,
THE SECRET BASE OF
DINOSAURUS.



LIKE... WHAT
HAPPENED?

I DON'T
KNOW, I THOUGHT
YOU DIED... I
WOKE UP IN A PILE OF
WRECKAGE, YOU WERE
IN YOUR DINOSAURUS
FORM--BUT YOU WERE
ALL BEATEN UP...
REALLY BAD.

YOU
GRUNTED AT
ME, I COULDN'T
MAKE ANYTHING
OUT--THEN YOU
PASSED OUT, AND
TURNED.

I HAVE
NO IDEA WHY
WE'RE HERE,
OR WHAT
HAPPENED.



AM I DOING
BAD STUFF
AGAIN? DID
YOU STOP
ME?

NO, YOU
WEREN'T DOING
ANYTHING BAD.
I THINK THAT'S
BEHIND YOU... I'M
HELPING YOU
ACCOMPLISH
GOOD
THINGS.

A LOT
OF GOOD
THINGS... AT
LEAST I WAS,
UNTIL I GOT
SICK.



DID I MAKE
YOU SICK?
MAYBE I
TRICKED YOU,
BRO.

WHEN I'M
THE MONSTER,
I'M PURE EVIL--
THAT'S WHY I
LOOK LIKE THAT.
YOU GOTTA
WATCH OUT,
MAN.

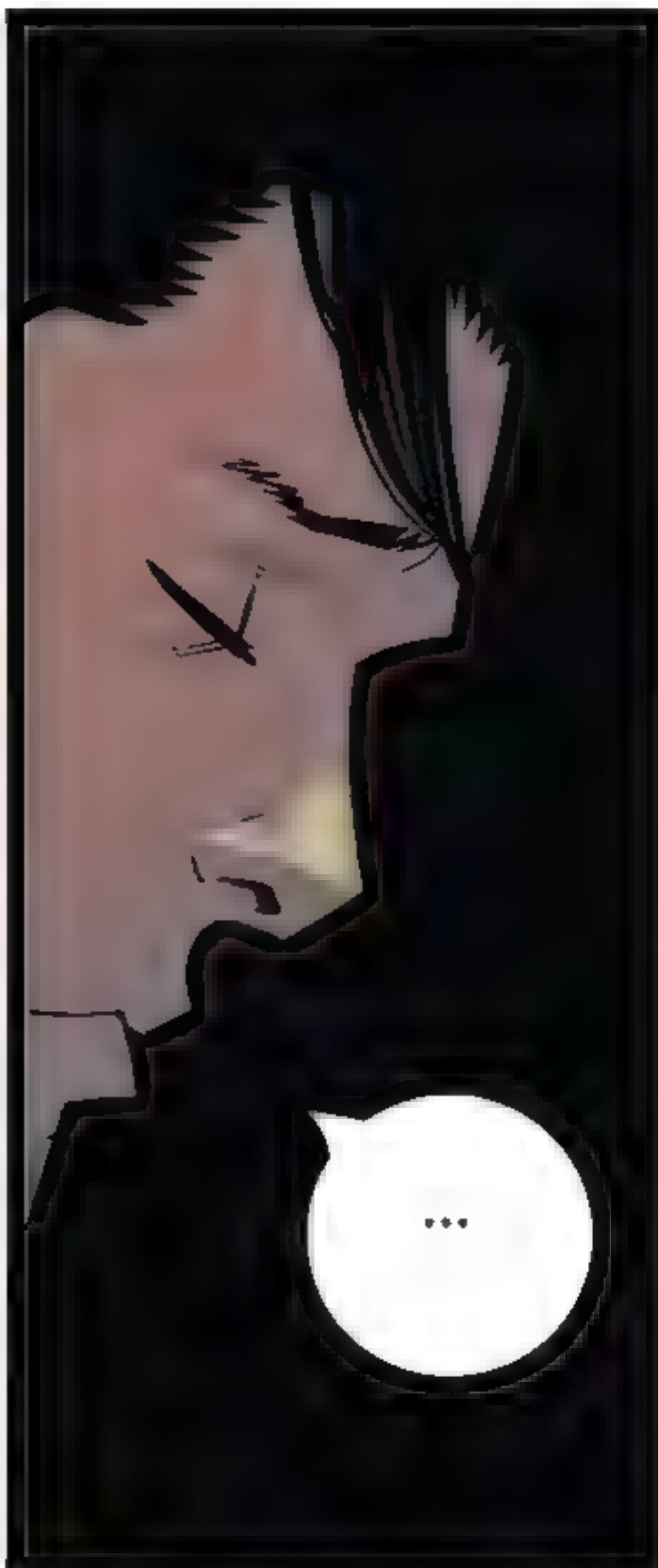




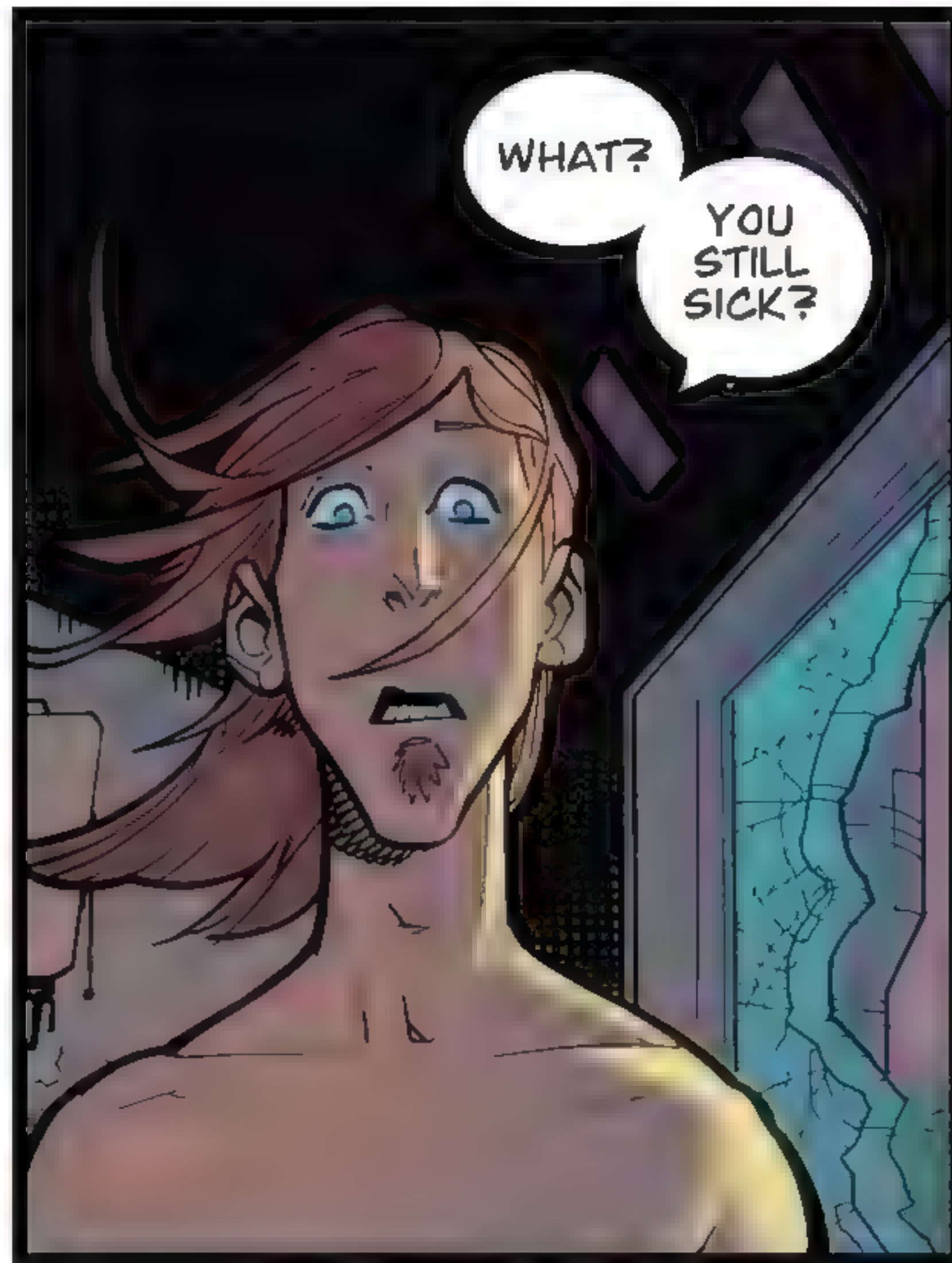
PURE EVIL?

NO. THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL.

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT, AND DINOSAURUS ISN'T REALLY EVIL... HE'S KIND OF--WELL... HE'S A BIT LIKE MY BROTHER.



...



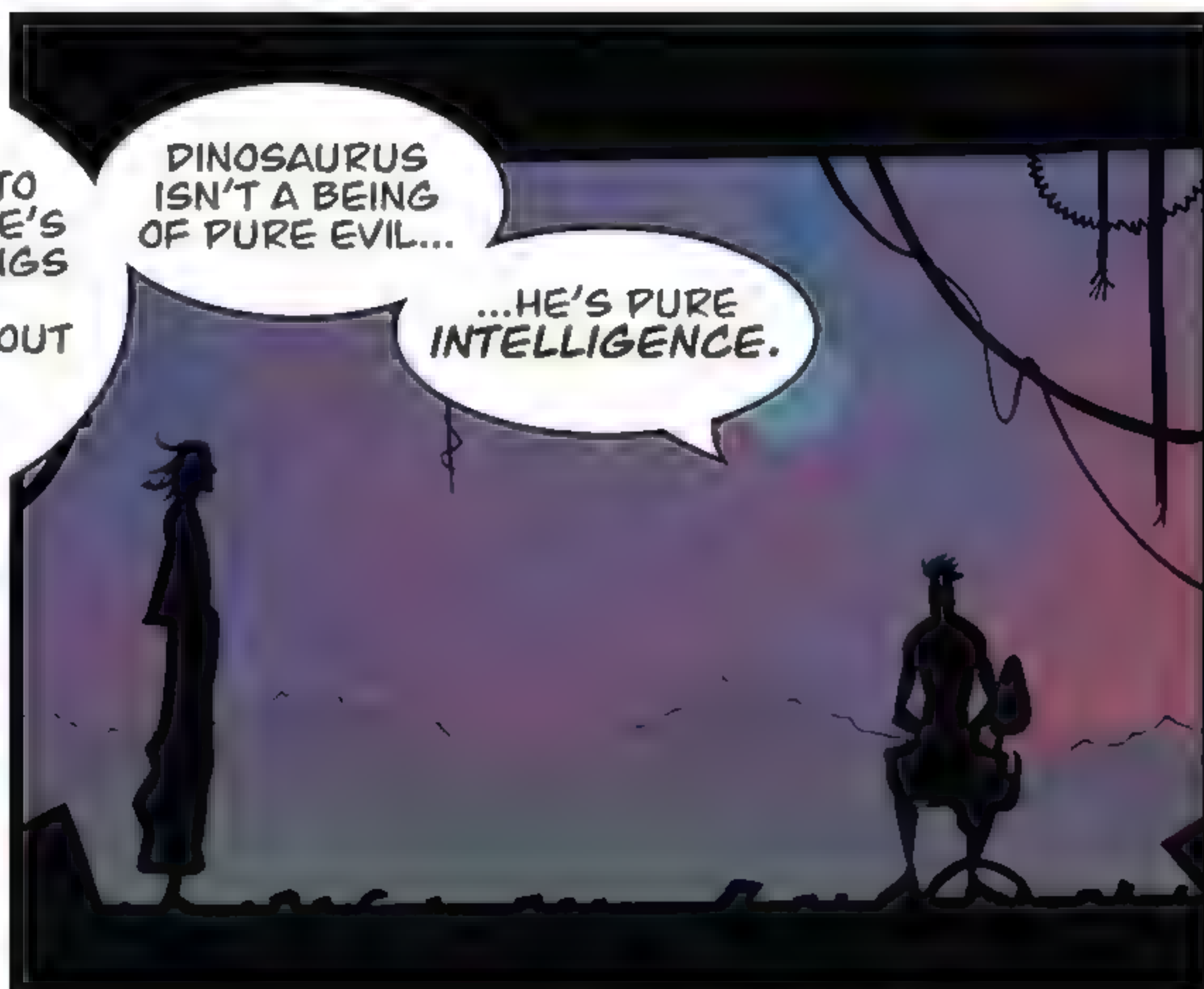
WHAT?

YOU STILL SICK?



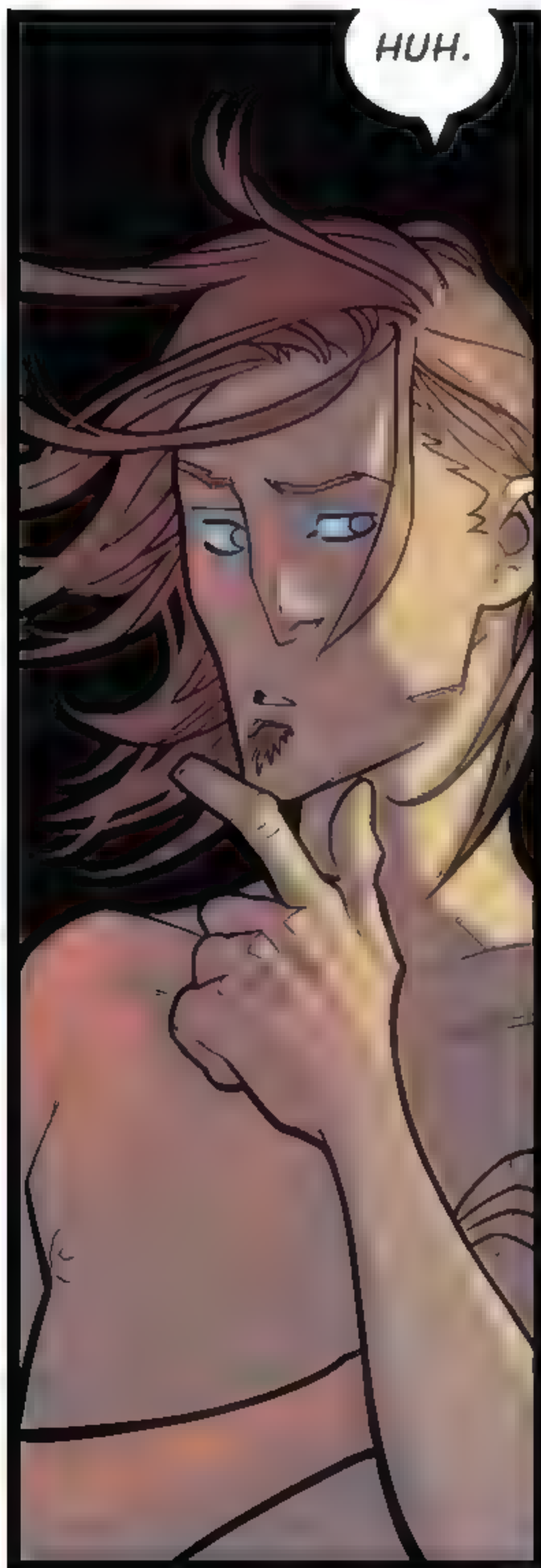
NO, IT'S... IT'S NOTHING.

MY BROTHER DOESN'T MEAN TO DO BAD THINGS, HE'S JUST... DOING THINGS HE FEELS ARE NECESSARY, WITHOUT CONCERN FOR THE... HUMAN ELEMENT.



DINOSAURUS ISN'T A BEING OF PURE EVIL...

...HE'S PURE INTELLIGENCE.



HUH.



HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU THE PRODUCTION ORDER ON A COMIC BOOK? HOW THEY'RE MADE.

YOU START WITH THE WRITER, USUALLY, UNLESS IT'S A WRITER-ARTIST SITUATION AND THEY'RE THE SAME GUY, OR SOMETIMES THE WRITER AND ARTIST WORK REALLY CLOSELY IN THE EARLY STAGES AND DEVELOP IDEAS TOGETHER.

ANYWAY, THE STORY IS WRITTEN--



HUH? WHY ARE YOU--?

OH, I SEE WHAT YOU'RE DOING...





ANY CLUE HOW TO BEAT THIS THING? I CAN'T TELL WHAT PARTS ARE HIM AND WHAT PARTS ARE HIS SUIT!

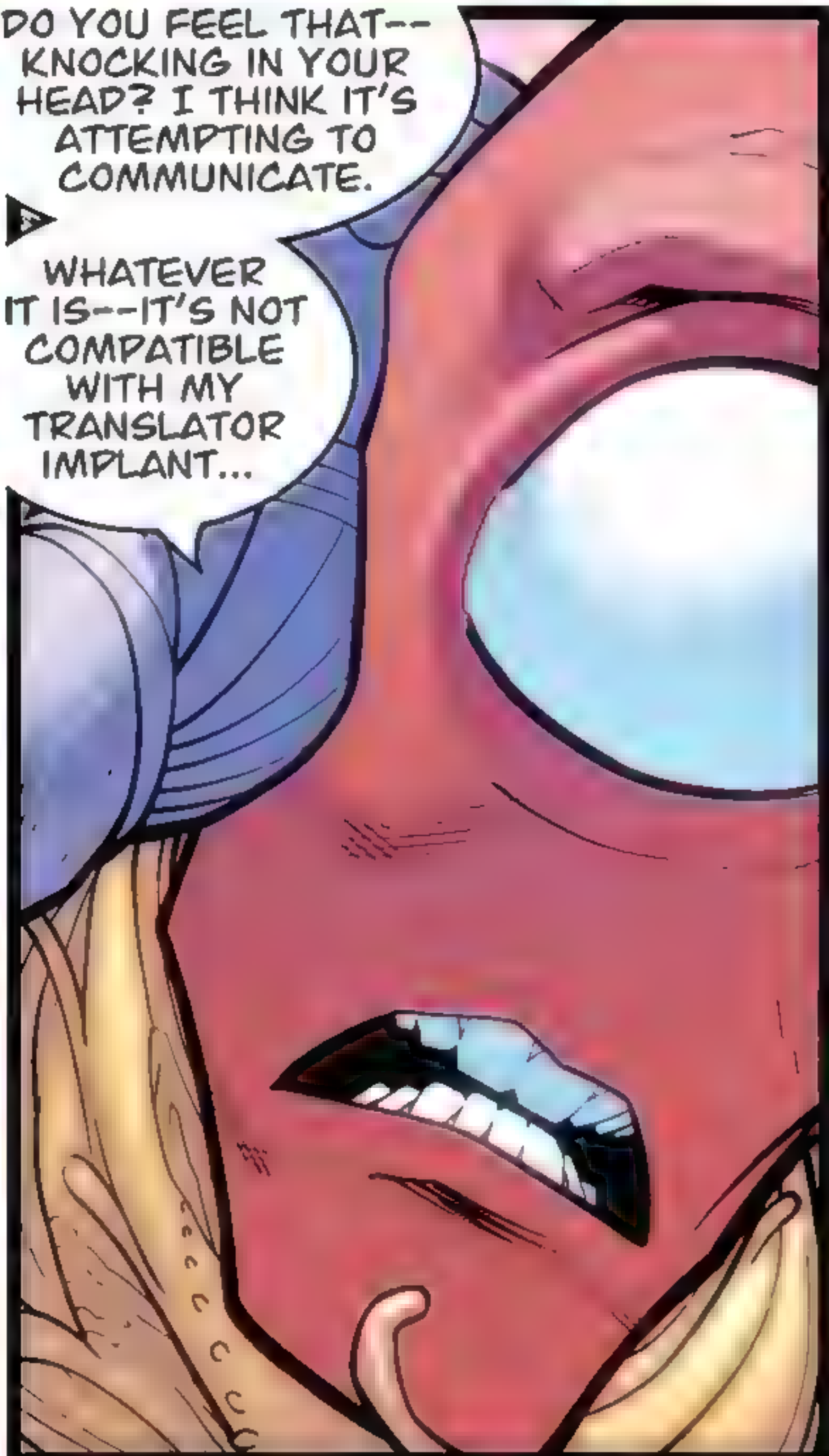
THIS IS A SUIT, RIGHT?!



I'VE NEVER FOUGHT ANYTHING LIKE THIS GUY BEFORE-- BUT IT APPEARS TO BE SOME KIND OF SYMBIOTIC ORGANISM.

WAP! WAP!

I CAN'T REALLY TELL WHO'S IN CONTROL.



DO YOU FEEL THAT-- KNOCKING IN YOUR HEAD? I THINK IT'S ATTEMPTING TO COMMUNICATE.

WHATEVER IT IS--IT'S NOT COMPATIBLE WITH MY TRANSLATOR IMPLANT...



CRAP! THIS THING IS MELTING MY TECH JACKET-- IT'S GETTING INSIDE!

HIT IT! HIT IT!

HIT IT!



I AM!

KRANKY





NO SWEAT. I'M HAPPY TO HELP OUT--DOESN'T SEEM LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE ABLE TO BREAK FREE OF MY CONSTRUCT.

I DIDN'T COME HERE TO HELP THOUGH--IT'S MARK--HE'S--



OH, GOD-- IS HE--?!



HE'S ALIVE... HE'S GOT TO BE... BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS.

ALTHOUGH, YOU DO.



WHAT?! HE'S ON THE VILTRUMITE SHIP...

...ISN'T HE?

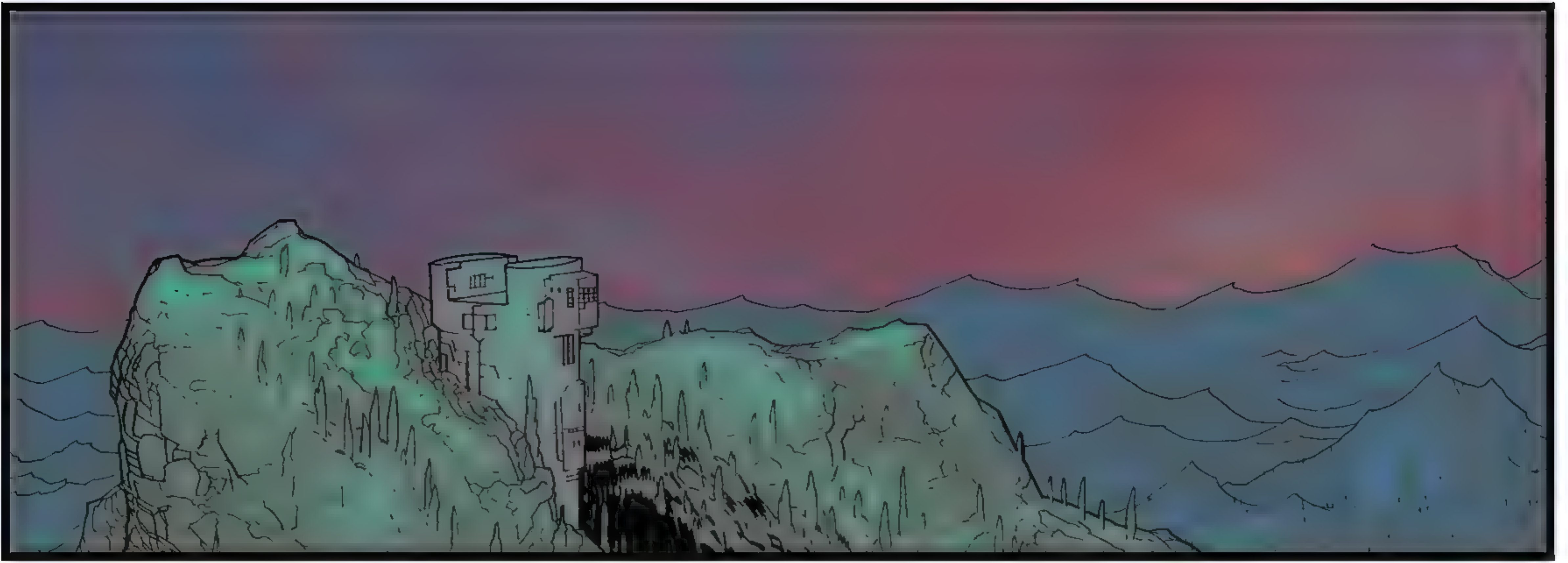


DINOSAURUS HAS HIM--AND I NEED YOUR HELP IF WE'RE GOING TO GET HIM BACK.

I CAN TAKE YOU TO THE PLACE MARK DIRECTED ME TO BEFORE... DINOSAURUS PROBABLY TOOK HIM THERE, RIGHT?

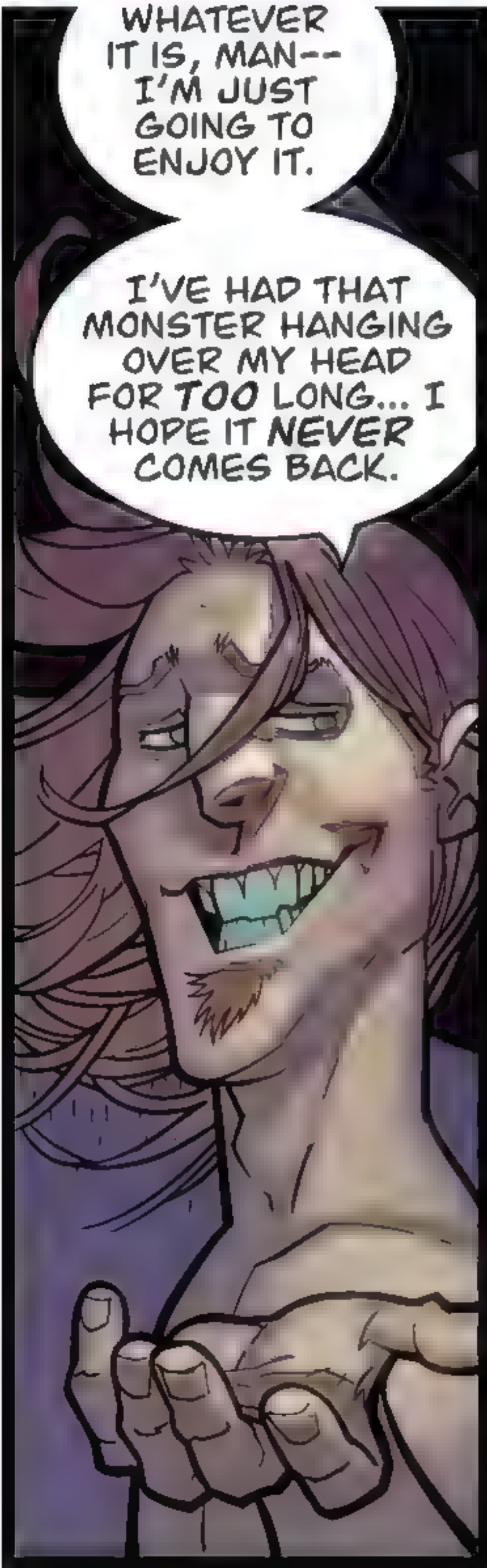
RIGHT, WE'LL NEED TO DROP THIS GUY OFF AT STRONGHOLD PENITENTIARY FOR PROCESSING FIRST, THOUGH.





I DON'T UNDERSTAND, IT'S JUST NOT WORKING. MAYBE IF I WAS BEATEN UP AS BADLY AS YOU SAY... THAT PART OF ME IS, LIKE... DEAD AND STUFF.

THAT CAN'T BE IT... MAYBE YOU'RE HEALING, I DON'T KNOW HOW YOUR TRANSFORMATION WORKS... IT COULD JUST BE "OFF" RIGHT NOW.



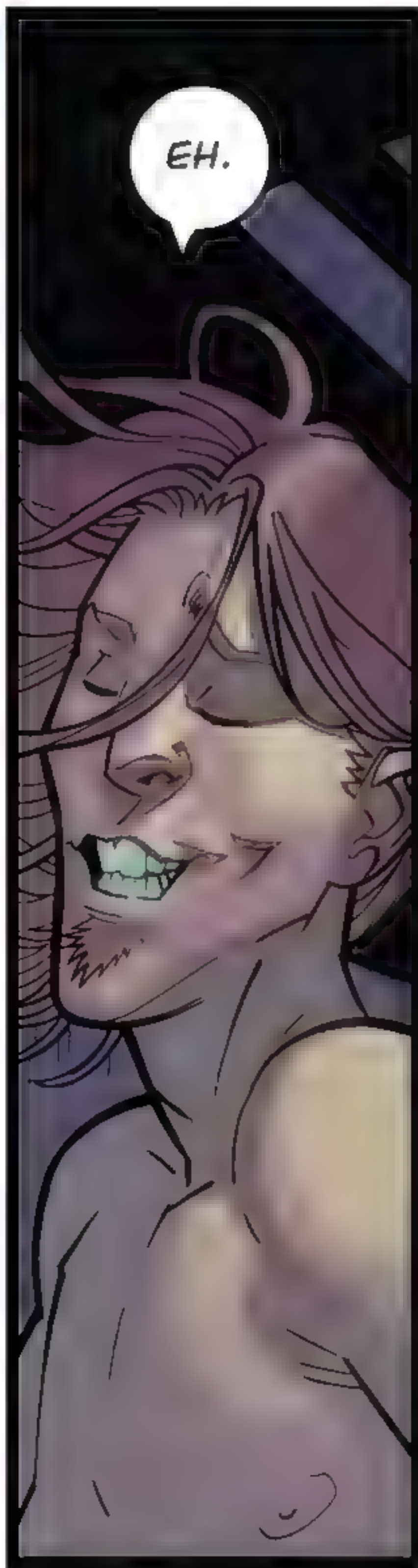
WHATEVER IT IS, MAN-- I'M JUST GOING TO ENJOY IT.

I'VE HAD THAT MONSTER HANGING OVER MY HEAD FOR TOO LONG... I HOPE IT NEVER COMES BACK.

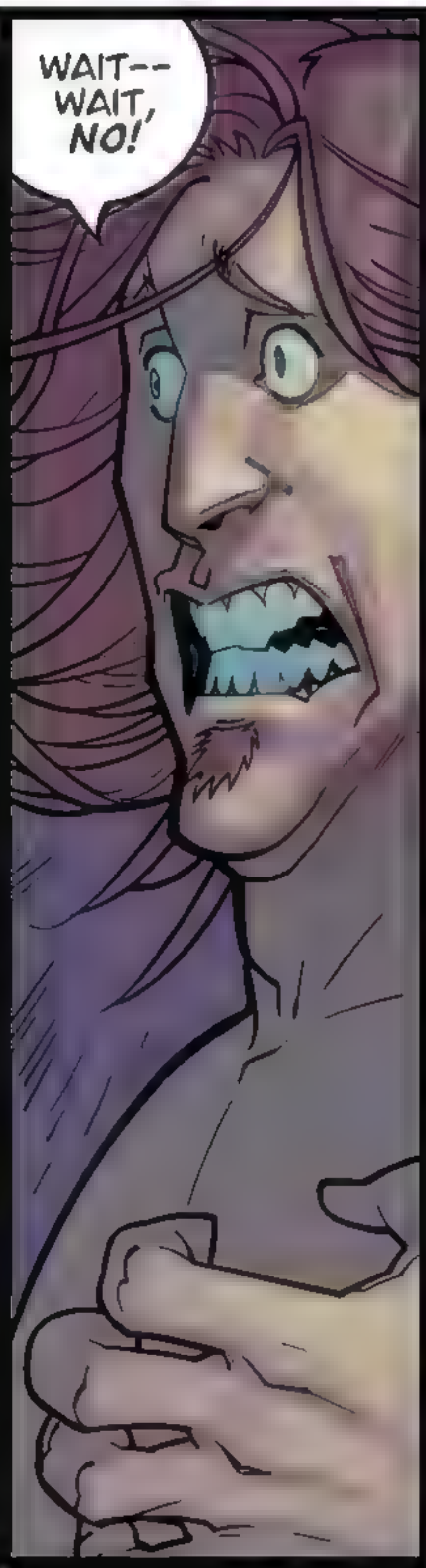


THAT WOULDN'T BE SO GREAT FOR ME. I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M HERE, OR WHY THIS BASE IS TRASHED.

FRANKLY, WHATEVER DID THIS COULD BE COMING BACK. OUR LIVES COULD BE IN DANGER.



EH.



WAIT-- WAIT, NO!



FINALLY.



YOU'RE
LOOKING
MUCH
BETTER.

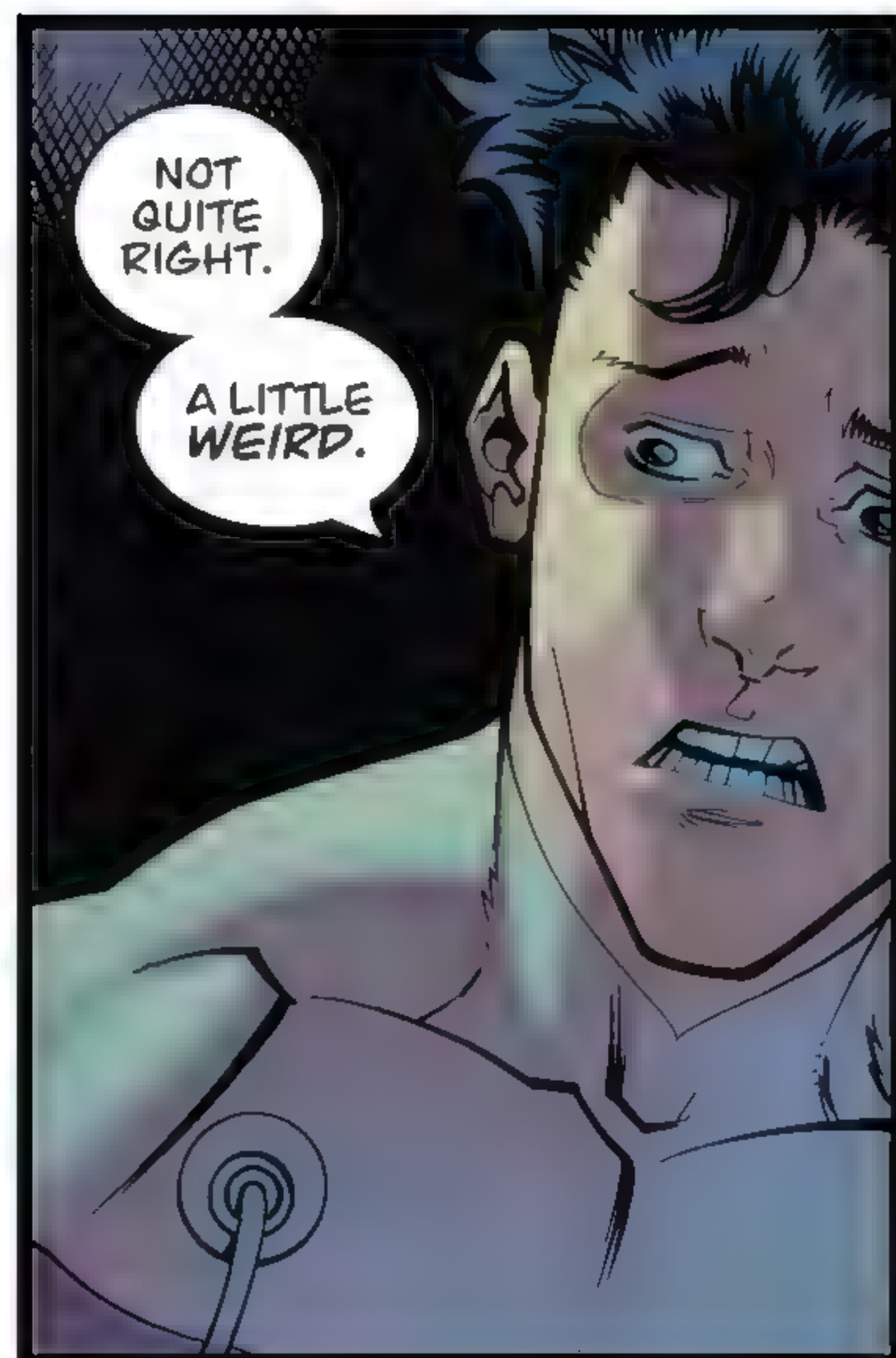
MY FORM
IS BUILT ANEW
EACH TIME I
TRANSFORM--
ARE THEY **HERE?**!
HAVE THEY
STRUCK?!

WHAT
KIND
OF TIME
DO WE
HAVE?!

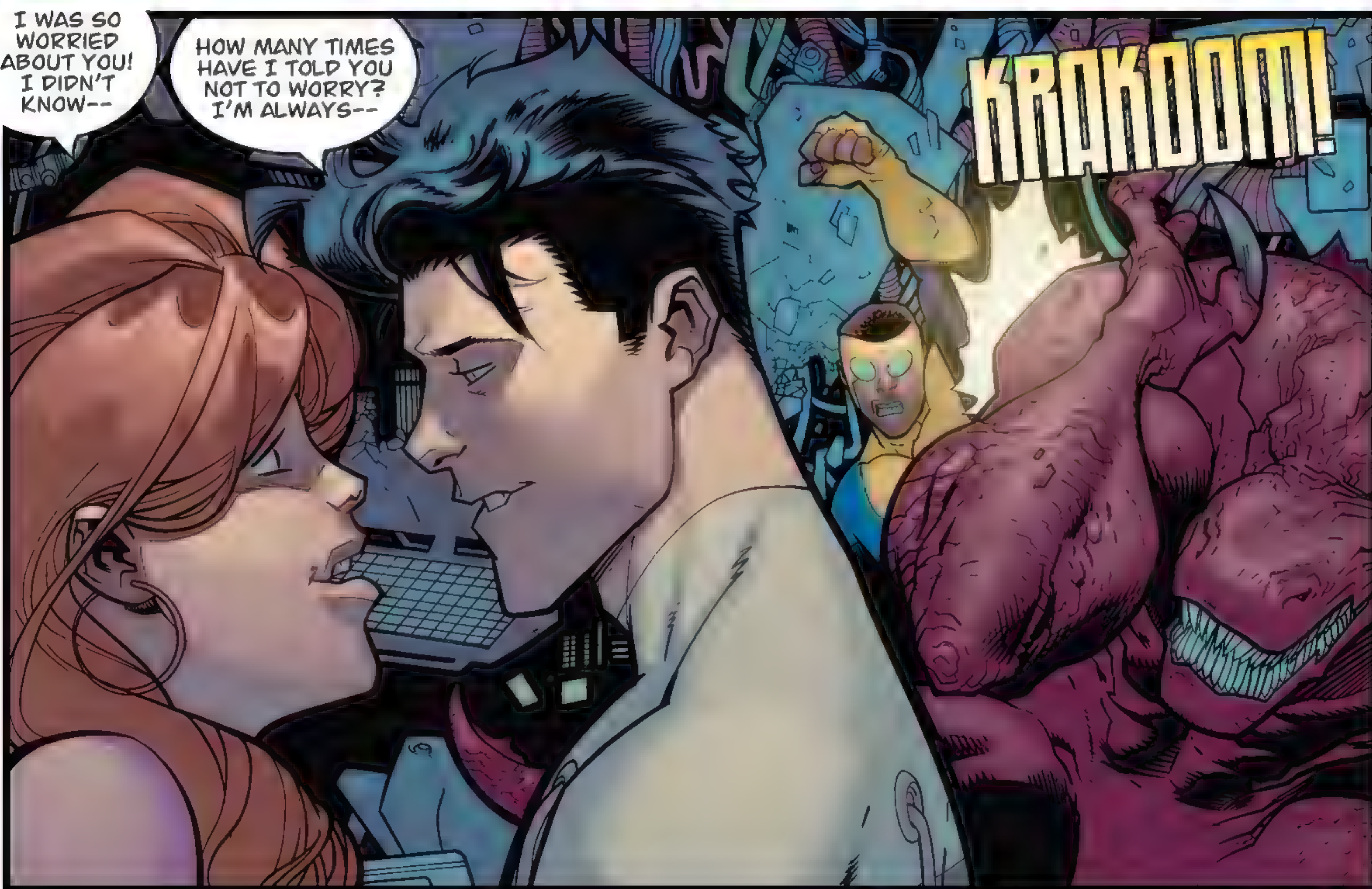
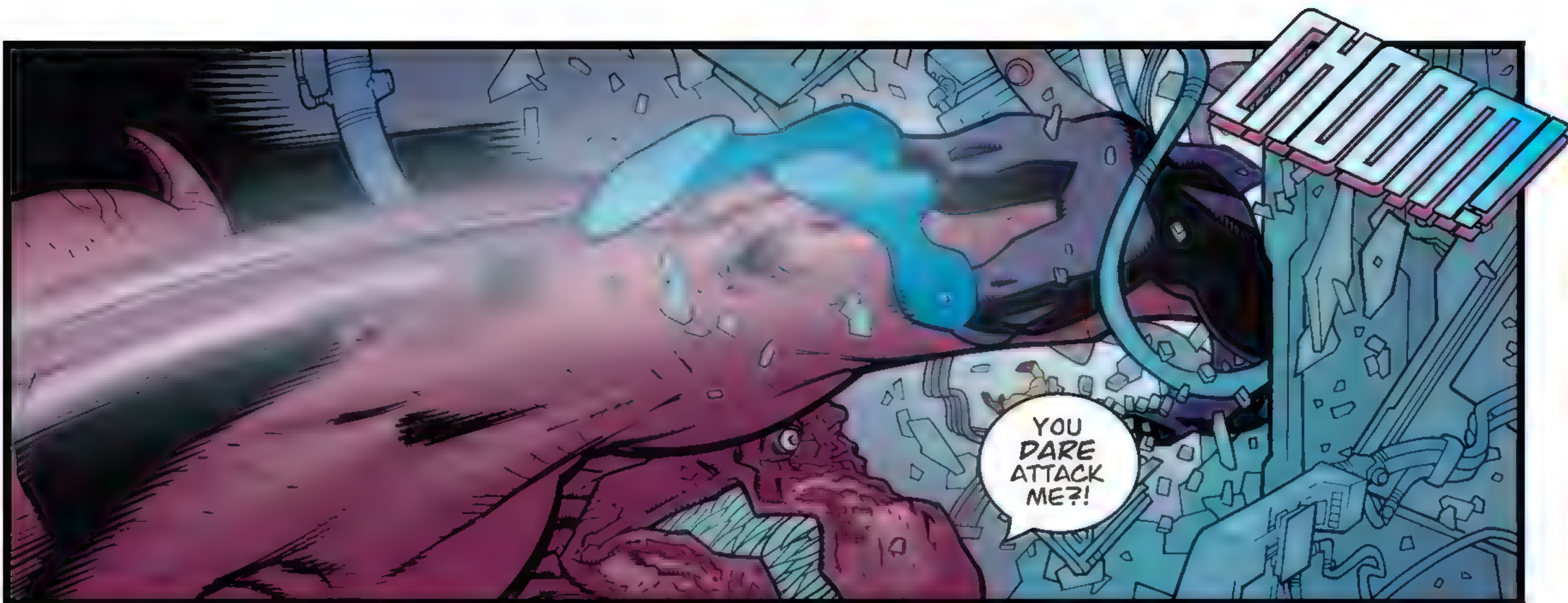


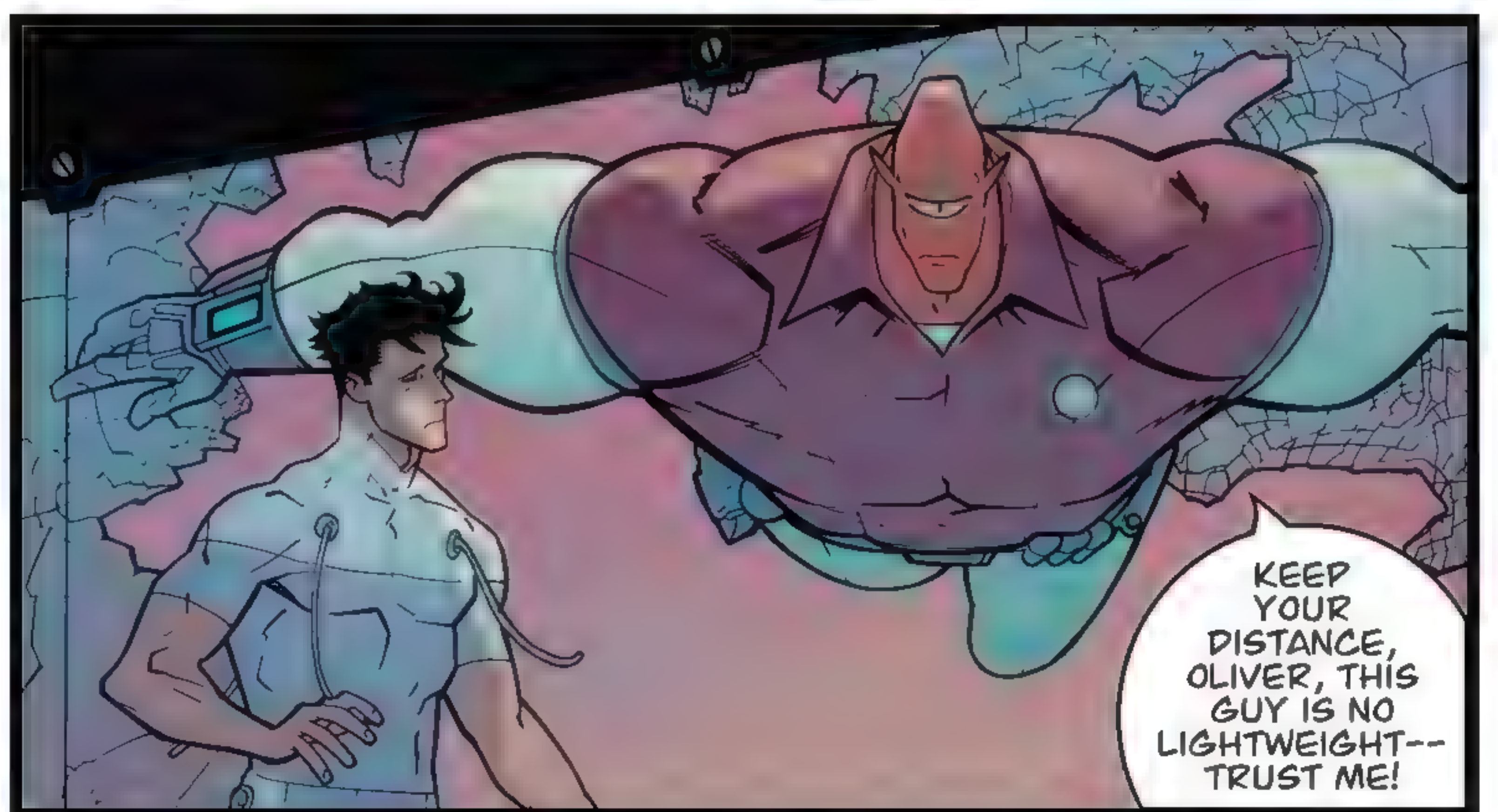
I HAVE
NO IDEA
WHAT YOU'RE
TALKING
ABOUT!

THE
VILTRUMITES--
THEY TRIED TO KILL
YOU! I ESCAPED,
RETREATED HERE--
BUT SURELY THEY
FOLLOWED US! THEY
COULD ATTACK AT
ANY MOMENT!









THE VILTRUMITES
SEND **LESSER**
AGENTS TO
CONFRONT
ME?!

I FIND
THIS ASSAULT
FROM MERE
MINIONS AN
INSULT!

WAIT!

WILL EVERYONE
JUST **CALM DOWN?**!
THIS WASN'T AN
ATTACK--AND
DINOSAURUS IS ON
OUR SIDE!

PUT OLIVER
DOWN, HE'S
MY **BROTHER**,
I CAN **EXPLAIN**
ALL THIS--!

KROOM!

YOU
HEARD
HIM, LET
THE BOY
GO!!

YOU
CAN'T--

DAMN IT--
STOP!!





CHAPTER 92



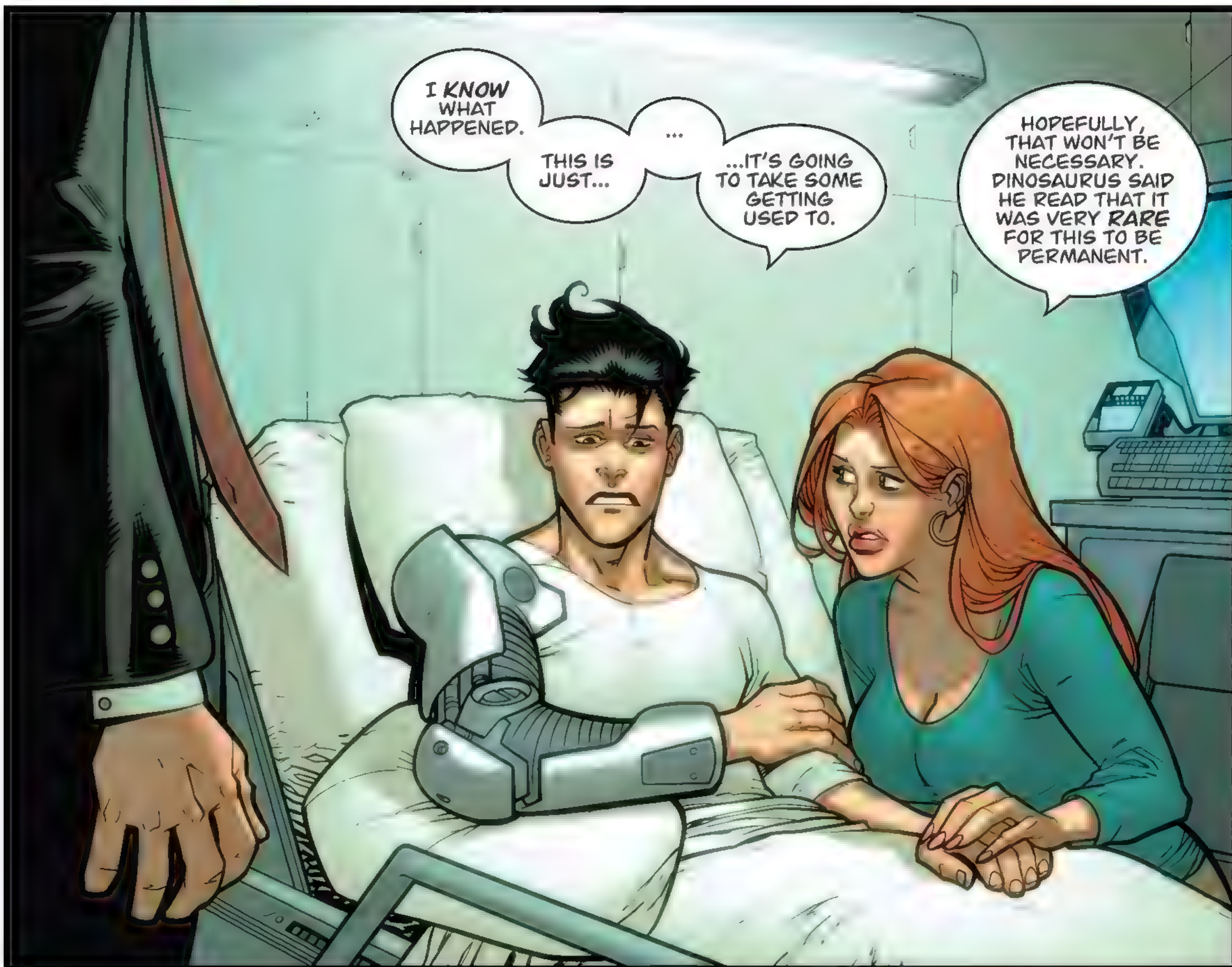


IT TOOK ELEVEN DIFFERENT SURGERIES TO RECONSTRUCT YOUR ARM SO THAT IT CAN HEAL PROPERLY.

THE SCOURGE VIRUS, AS IT'S BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME, SOMETIMES LEAVES SURVIVORS IN A PERIOD WHERE THEIR VILTRUMITE ABILITIES ARE SUSPENDED FOR A VARIABLE AMOUNT OF TIME--SOMETIMES PERMANENTLY.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT YOUR ABILITIES HAVEN'T LEFT YOU ALL AT ONCE... YOUR SUPER STRENGTH WAS STILL INTACT, YOUR INVULNERABILITY GREATLY DIMINISHED.

SO WHEN YOU HIT ALLEN--



I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.

THIS IS JUST...

...

...IT'S GOING TO TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO.

HOPEFULLY, THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. DINOSAURUS SAID HE READ THAT IT WAS VERY RARE FOR THIS TO BE PERMANENT.



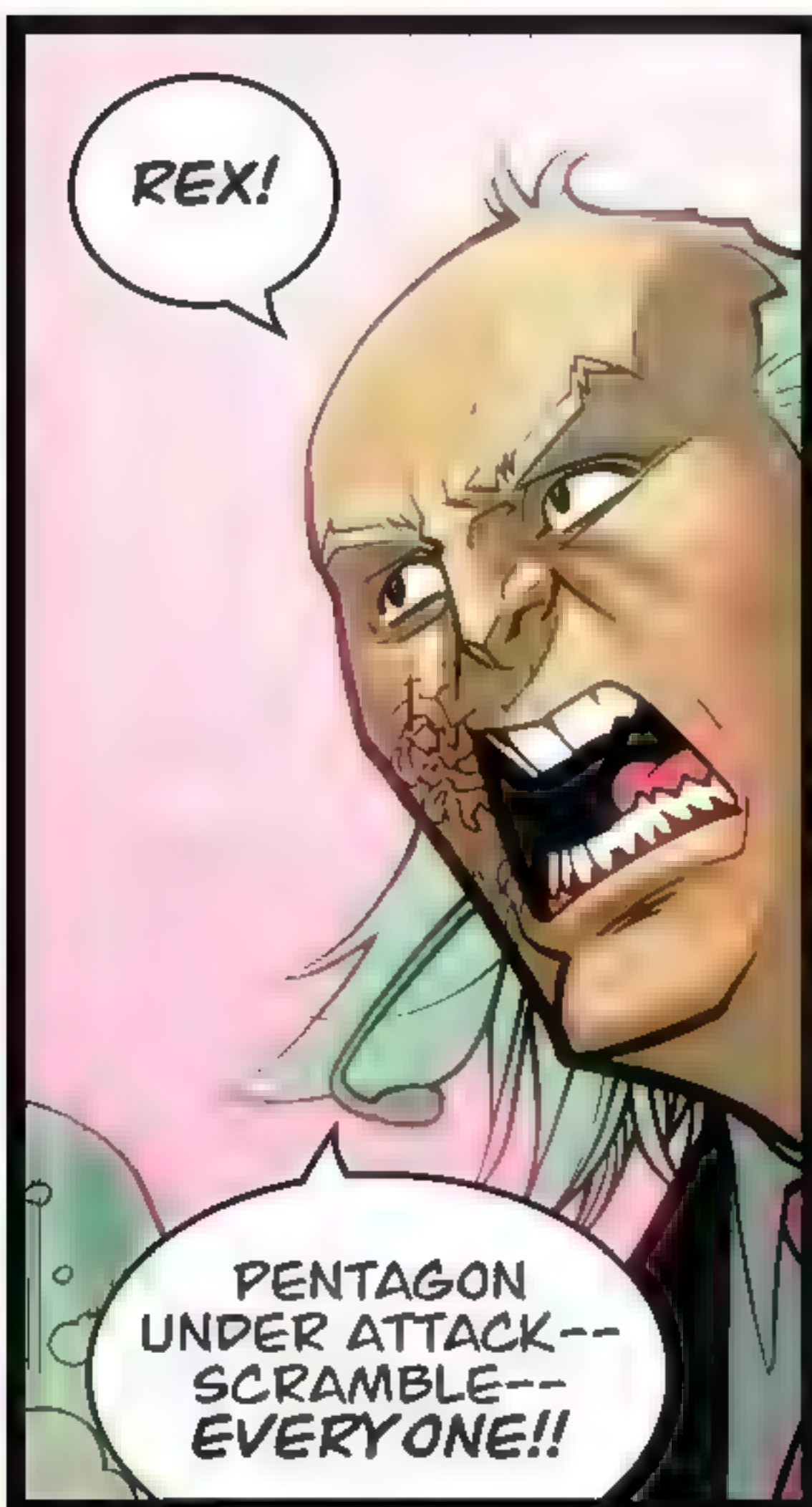
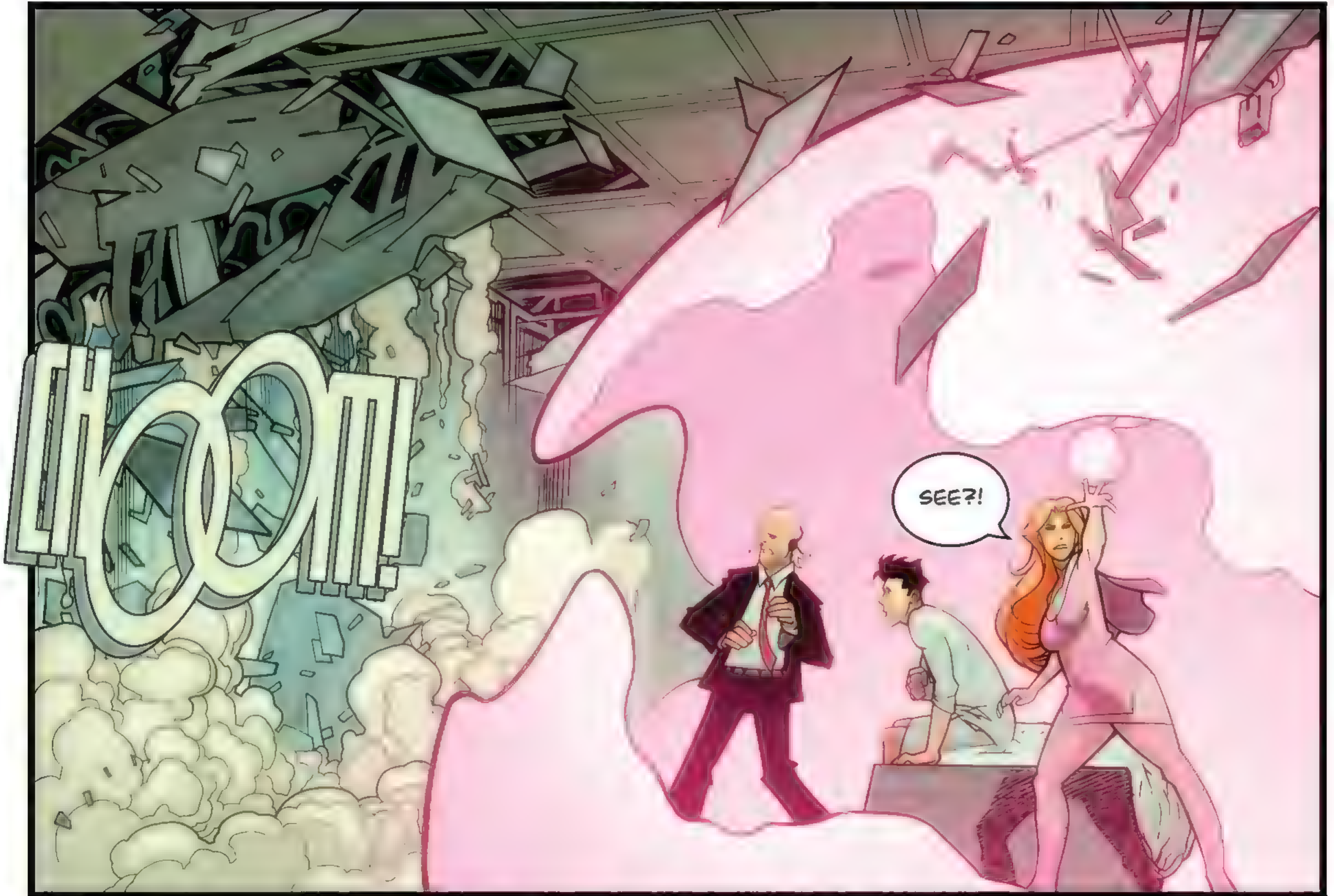
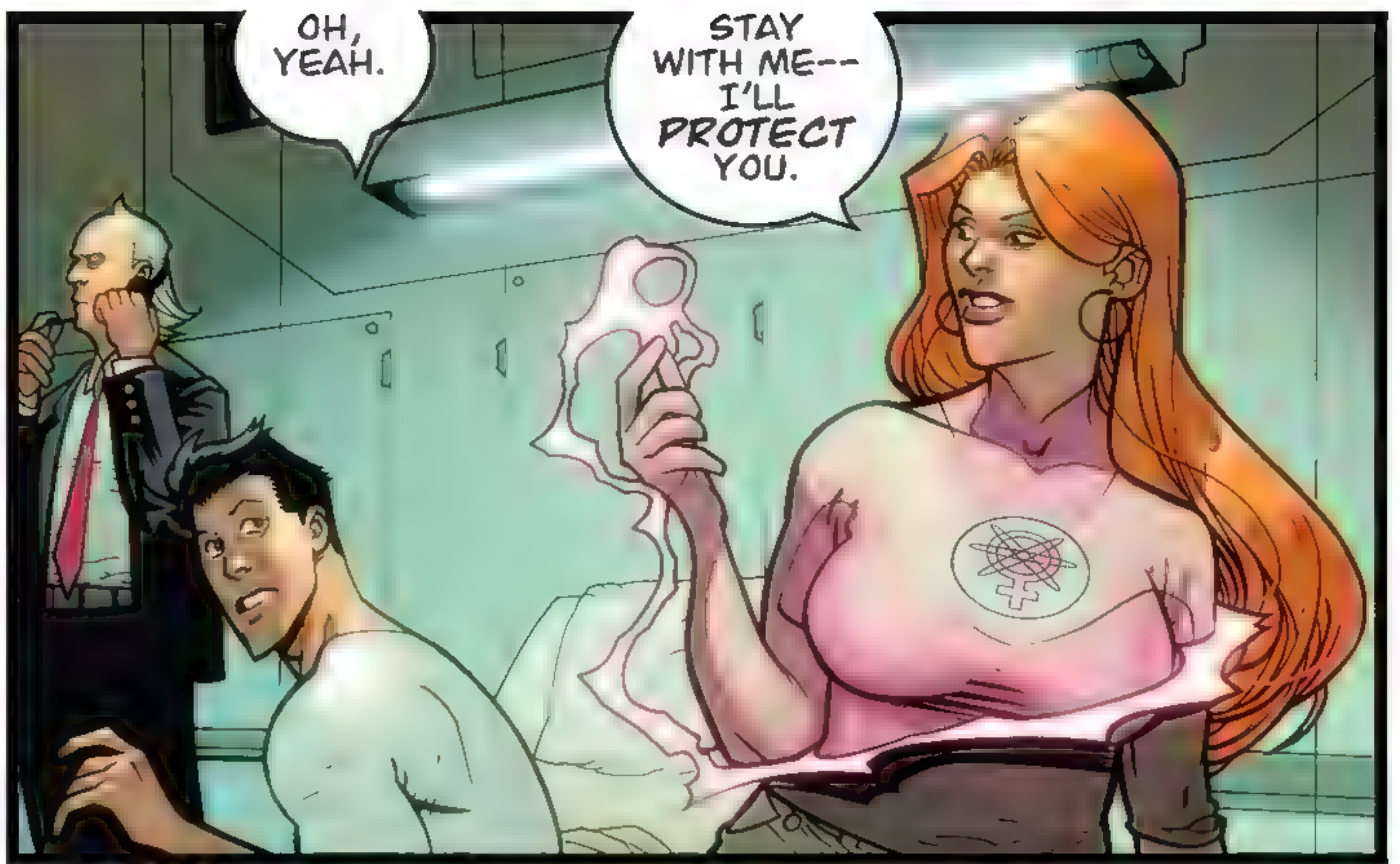
I WON'T WASTE YOUR TIME AGAIN TRYING TO GET YOU TO REVEAL HIS LOCATION. IF YOUR TRUST OF HIM ENDS UP BEING UNFOUNDED, THAT'S ON YOU.

YOU'RE TAKING A HUGE RISK THERE.

NOW, TELL ME ABOUT THRAGG, WHY DID HE SUDDENLY ATTACK--?

BOOM!!!



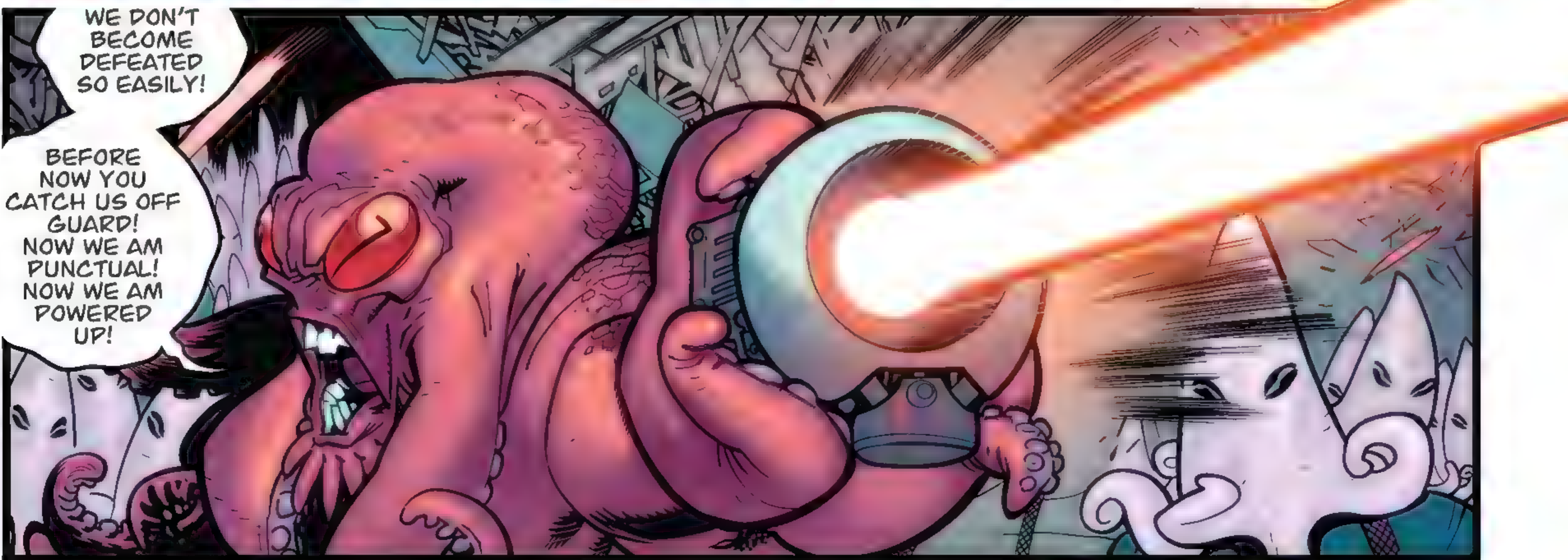




WE'VE DONE THIS BEFORE---
TAKE OUT THE BIGGEST, UGLIEST ONE---AND THE REST FALL INTO LINE!

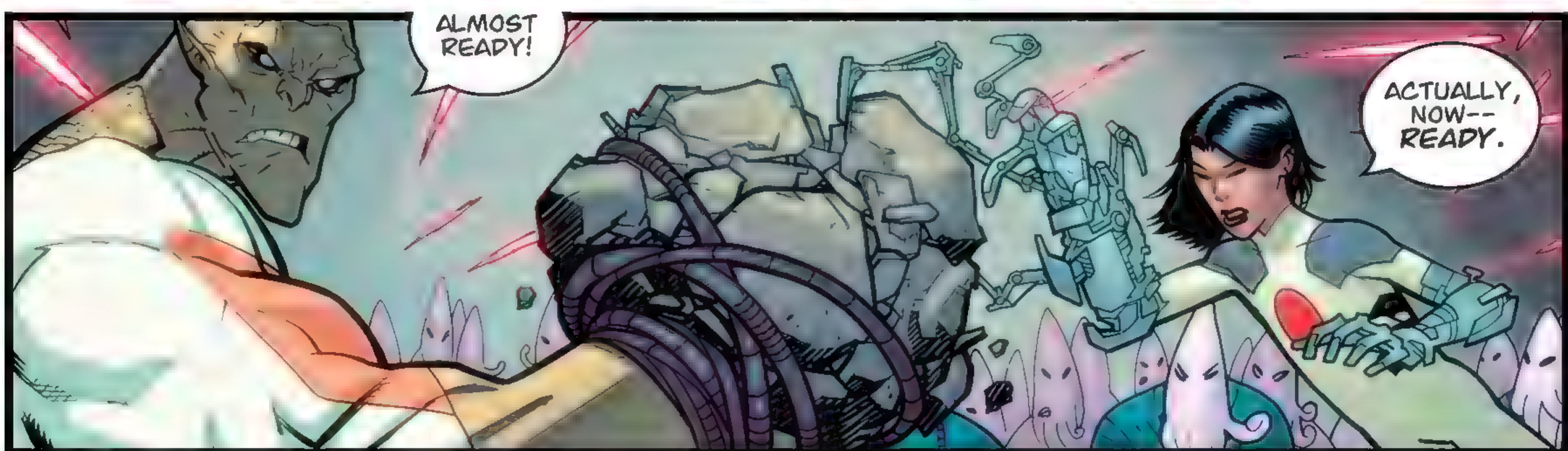
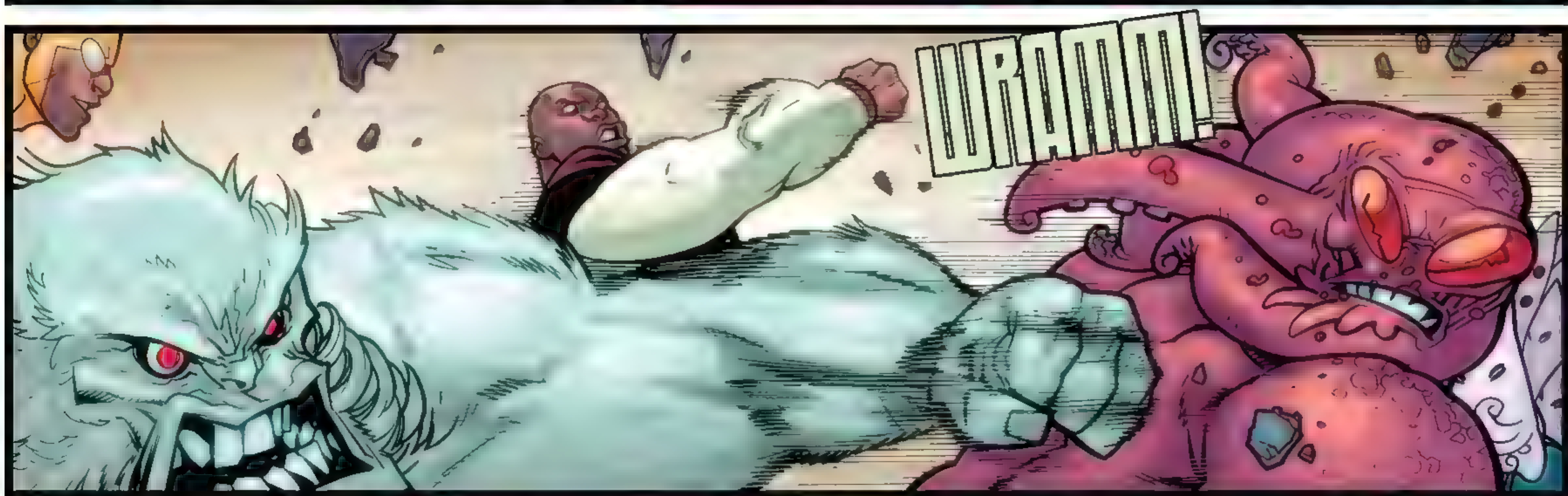
GUARDIANS---
TAKE HIM DOWN!

ON IT!!



WE DON'T BECOME DEFEATED SO EASILY!

BEFORE NOW YOU CATCH US OFF GUARD!
NOW WE AM PUNCTUAL!
NOW WE AM POWERED UP!



COMING
AT YOU!

WIRAKOO!!!



CAPES AND
WOLF C.O.R.P.S.
STAND DOWN.
THE THREAT
HAS BEEN
NEUTRALIZED.

DON'T THINK
WE EVEN
NEEDED THE FULL
GUARDIANS
ROSTER...
NICE.



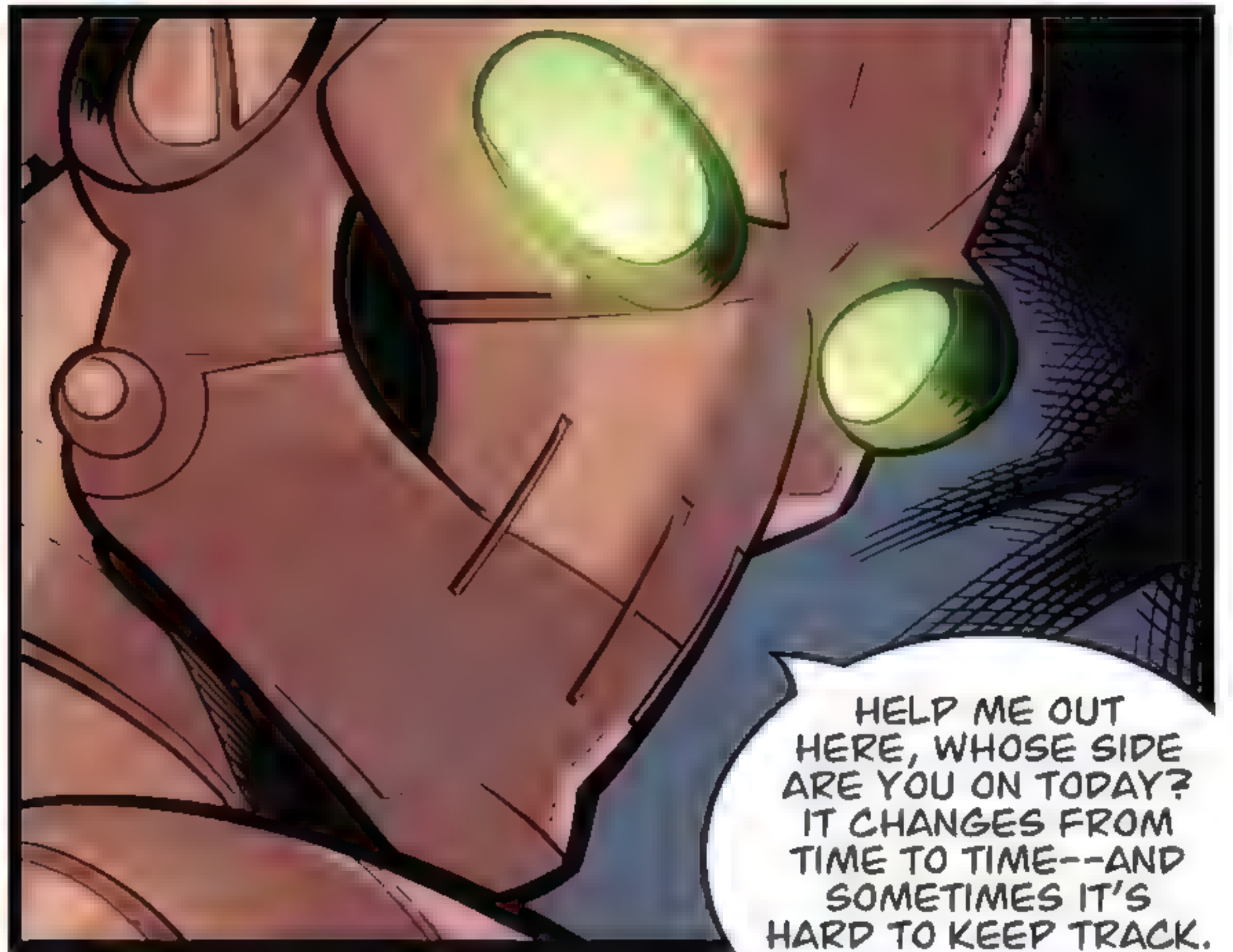
ALL TAKEN CARE OF, SIR. WE'LL HAVE ALL THE SQUIDMEN ROUNDED UP WITHIN THE HOUR.

I CAN SEE THAT. NICE JOB, BRIT.



IMPRESSIVE WORK THERE, MONSTER GIRL.

YEAH, WHERE WERE YOU? THUMBS GET SORE--OR WAS IT HARD TO CONCENTRATE OVER YOUR STUPID VIDEO GAME?



HELP ME OUT HERE, WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON TODAY? IT CHANGES FROM TIME TO TIME--AND SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO KEEP TRACK.



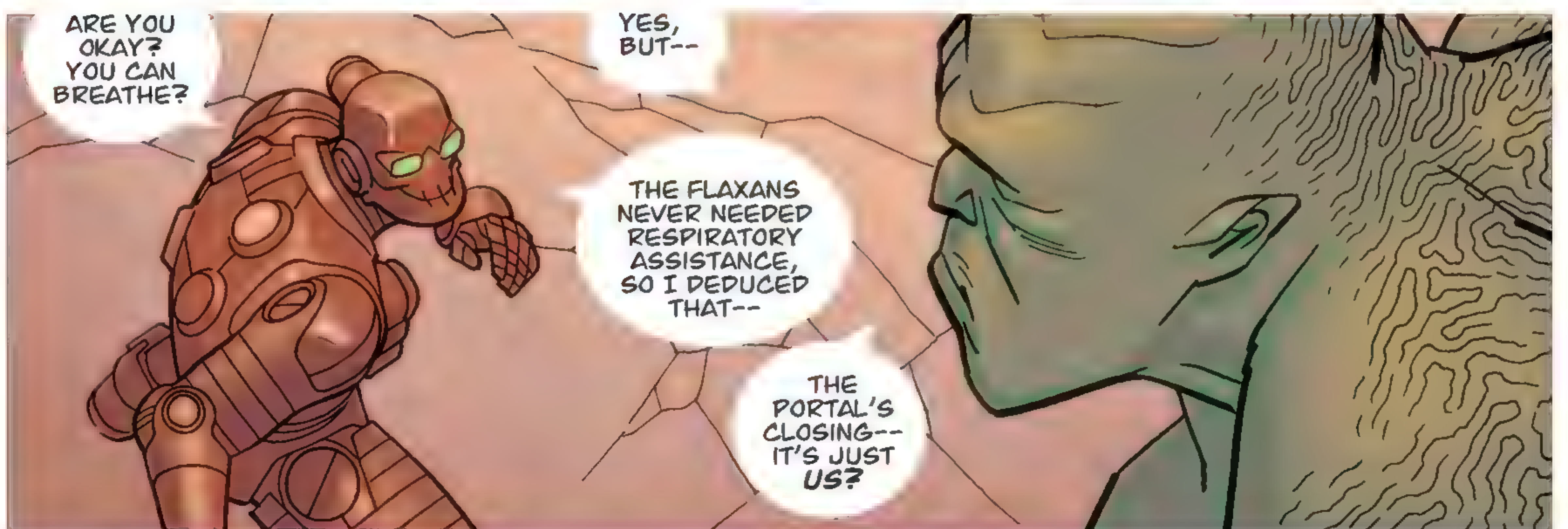
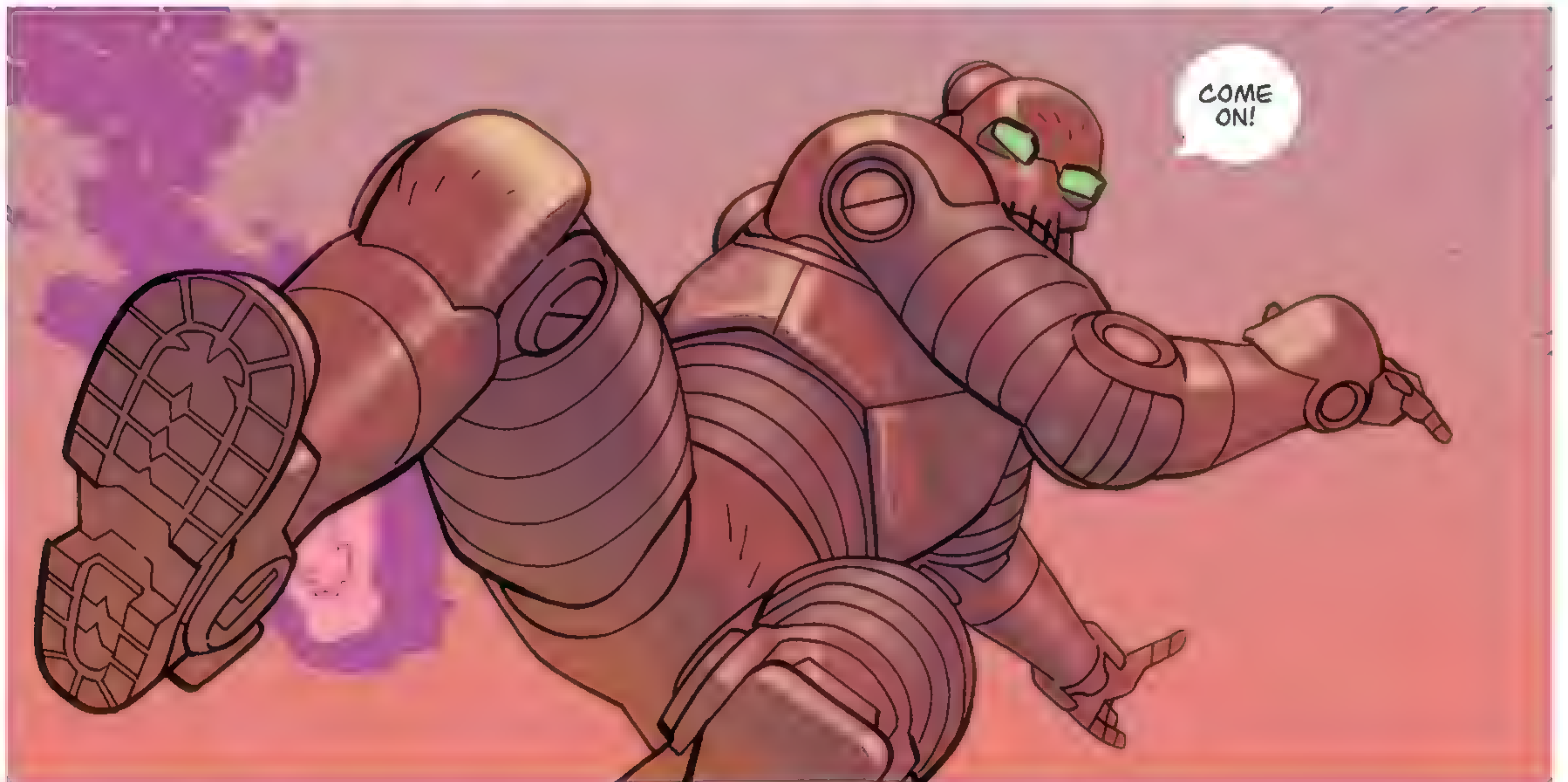
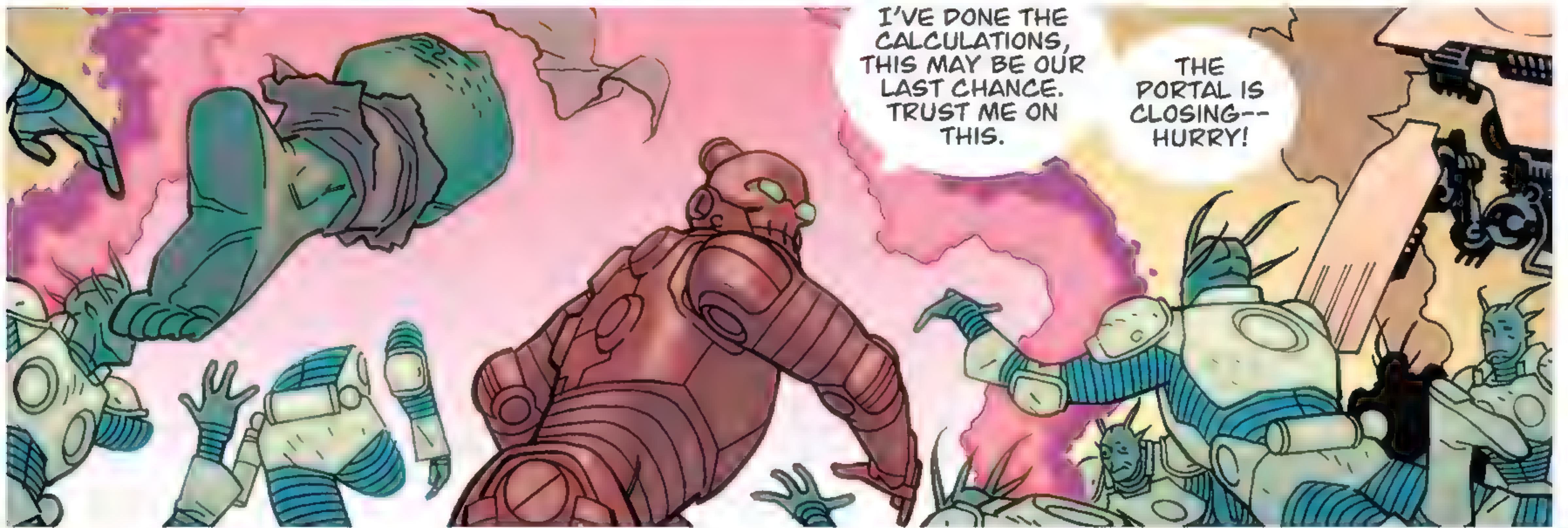
DAMN IT!

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU GUYS?!



YOU TWO USED TO BE CLOSE.

WHAT HAPPENED?





I THINK
SO. WHY--
UH...

OH.

YEAH.



YOU FIGURE
THIS PART
OUT, TOO?

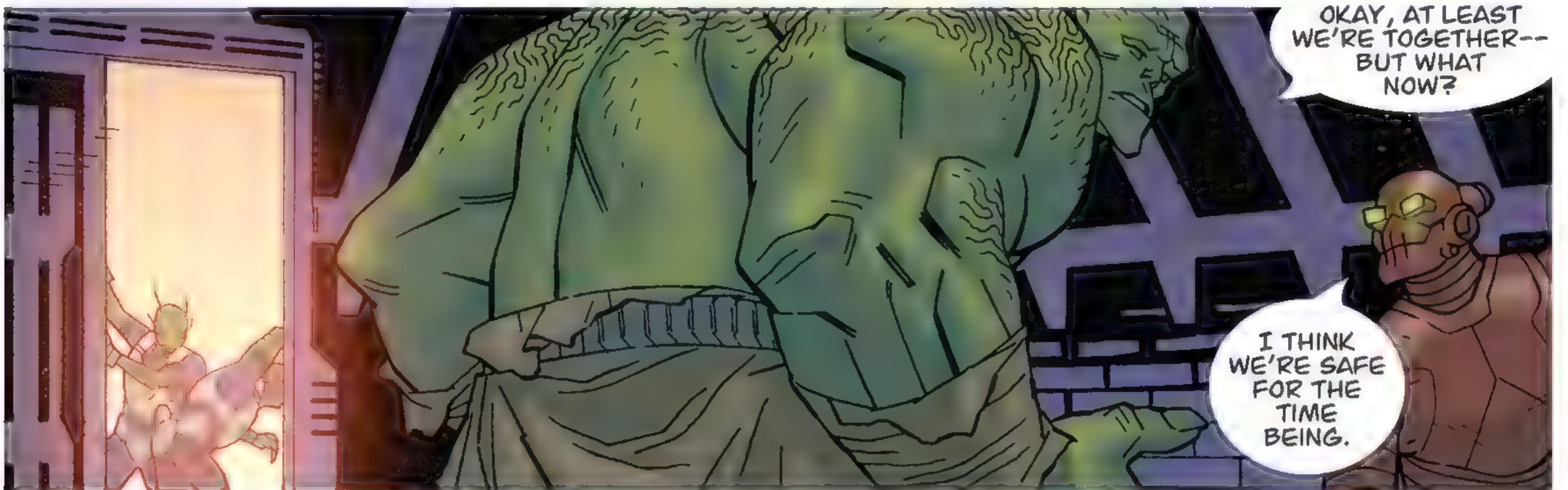
NO, I THOUGHT
THE WHOLE TEAM
WOULD COME--THEY
WERE ALREADY
RETREATING... I NEVER
CONSIDERED WHAT
TO DO IF IT WERE
JUST US.

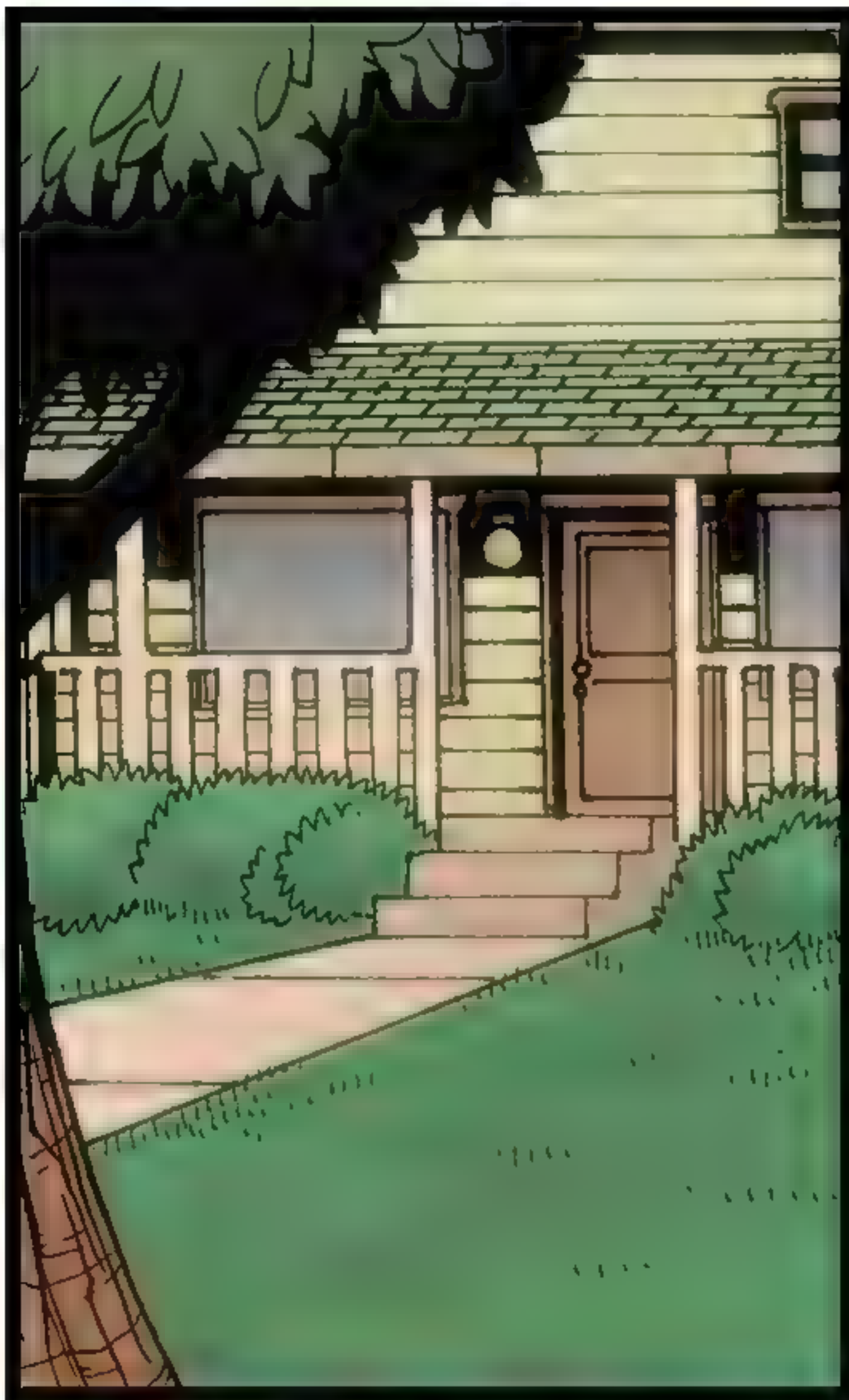
WELL?



SURRENDER.

HERE'S HOPING
THIS IS THE
UNIVERSAL SIGN
FOR "WE
GIVE UP."

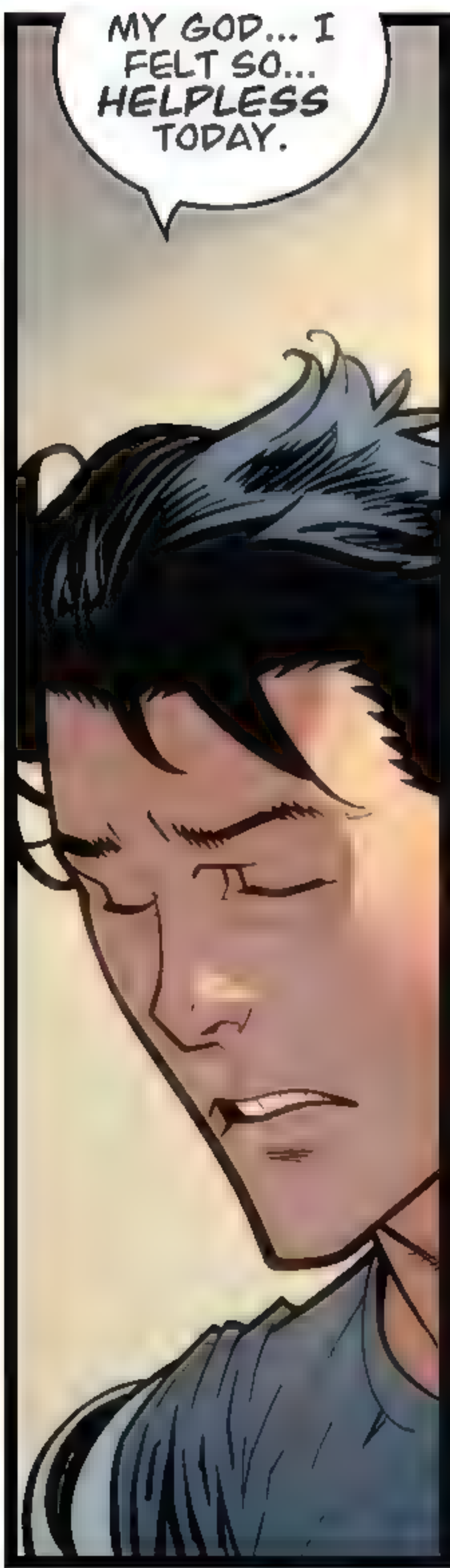




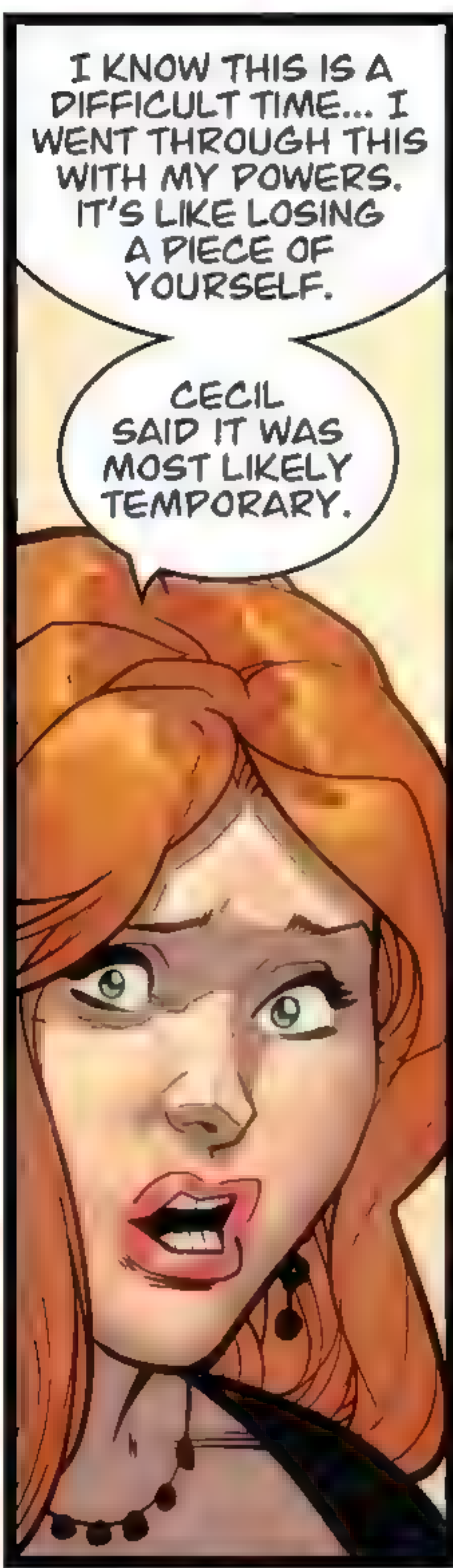
THAT TOOK FOREVER.

WELL, I CAN'T FLY AS FAST AS YOU COULD.

JUST WAIT UNTIL YOU HAVE TO DRIVE SOMEWHERE.

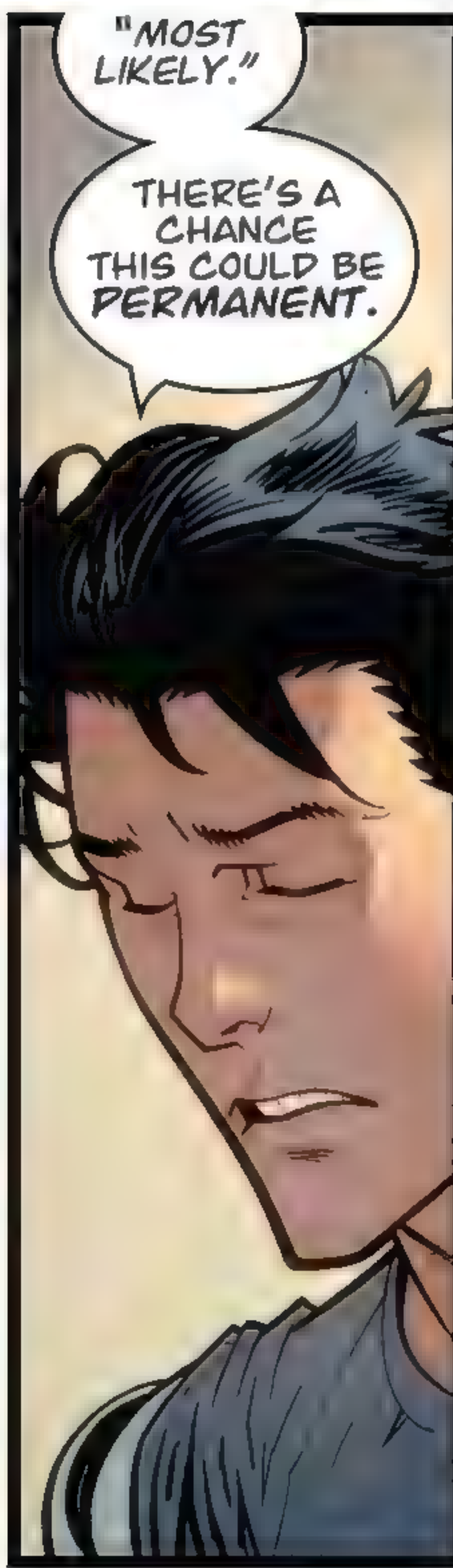


MY GOD... I FELT SO... HELPLESS TODAY.



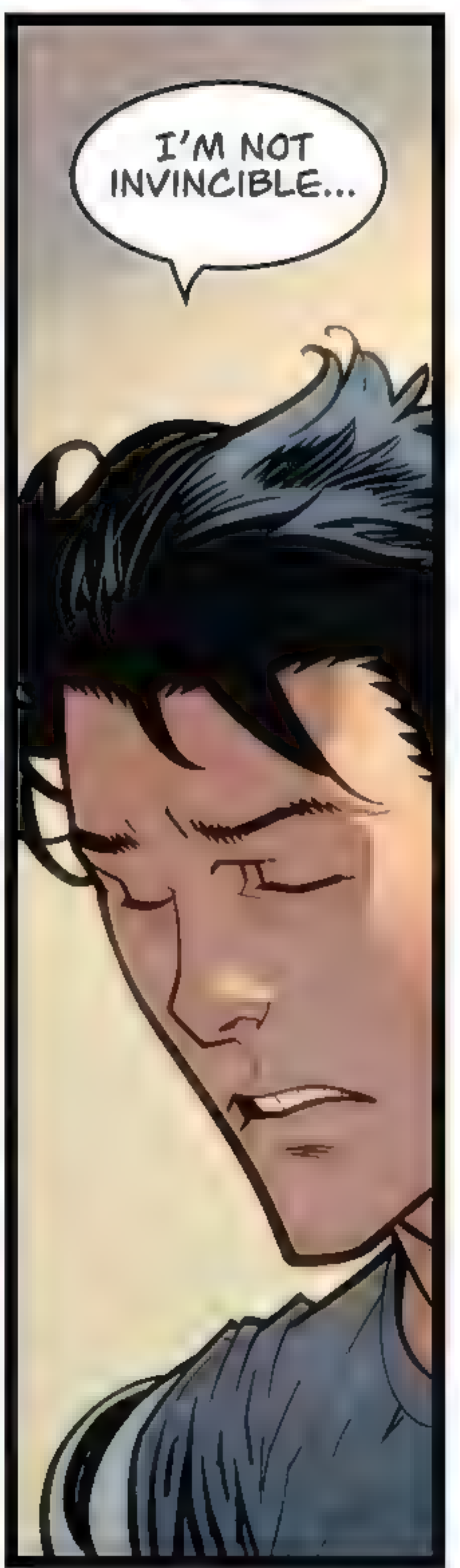
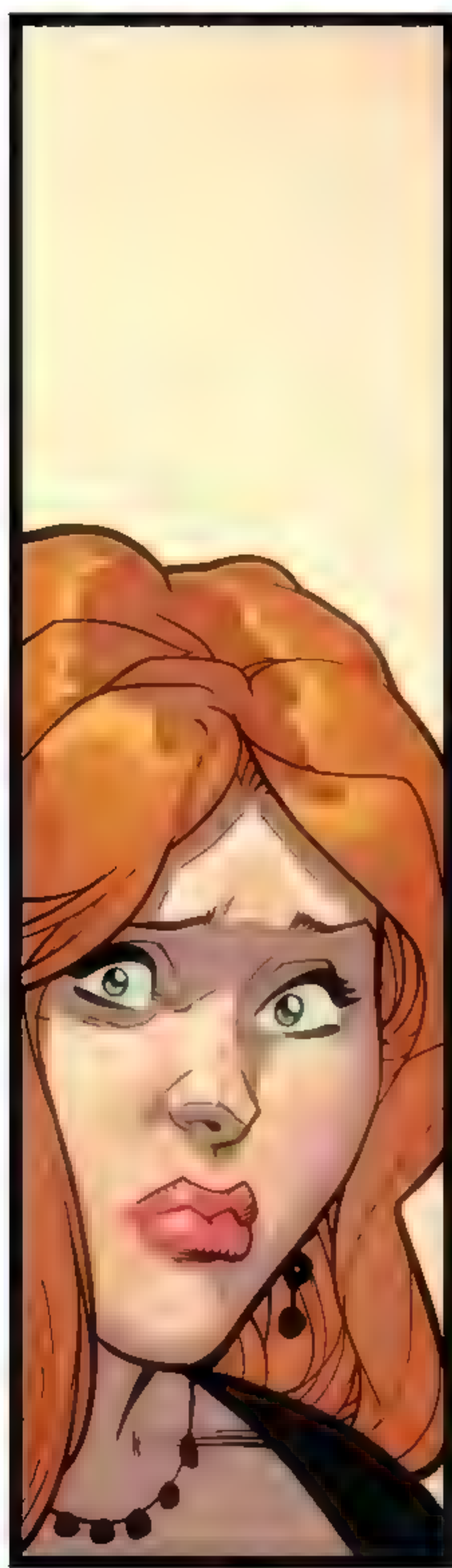
I KNOW THIS IS A DIFFICULT TIME... I WENT THROUGH THIS WITH MY POWERS. IT'S LIKE LOSING A PIECE OF YOURSELF.

CECIL SAID IT WAS MOST LIKELY TEMPORARY.



"MOST LIKELY."

THERE'S A CHANCE THIS COULD BE PERMANENT.



I'M NOT INVINCIBLE...

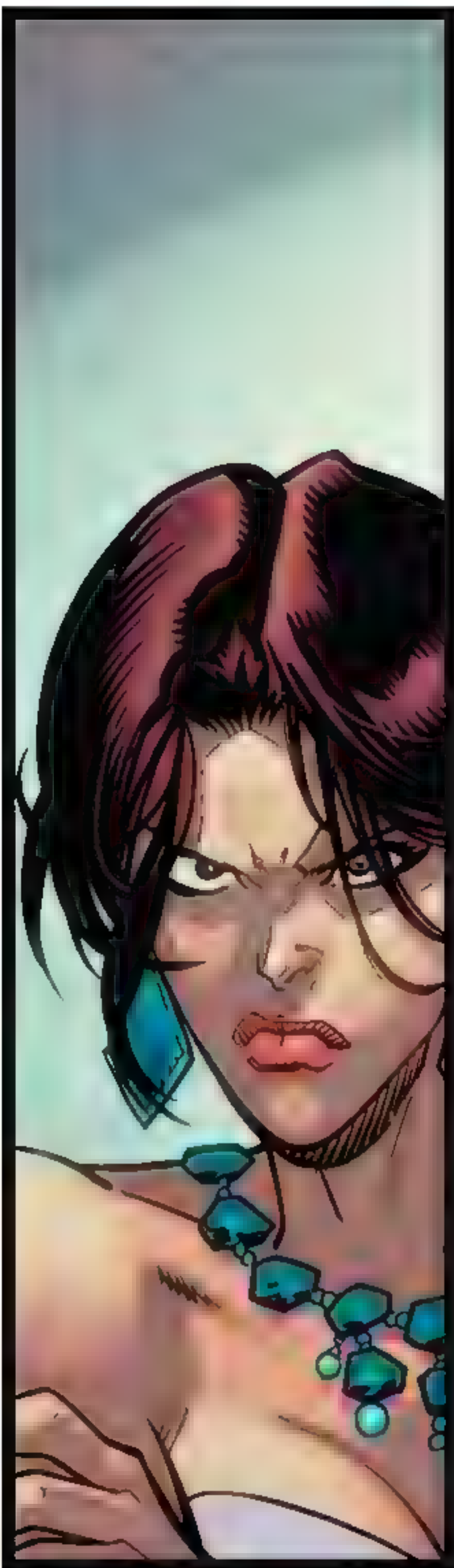


...AND I MAY NEVER BE INVINCIBLE AGAIN.

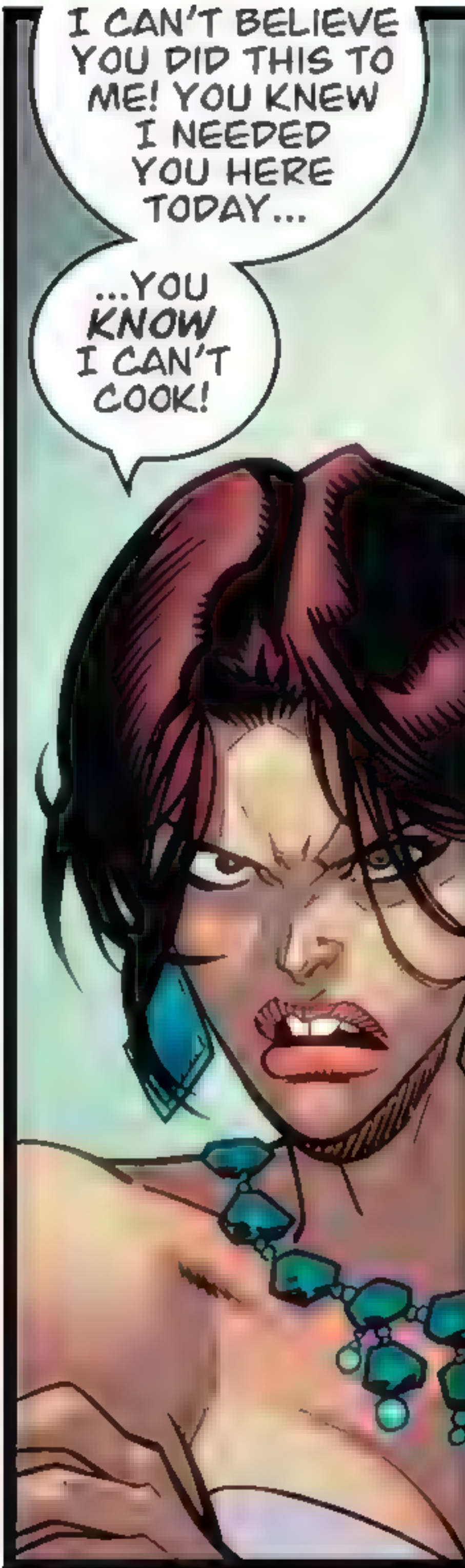
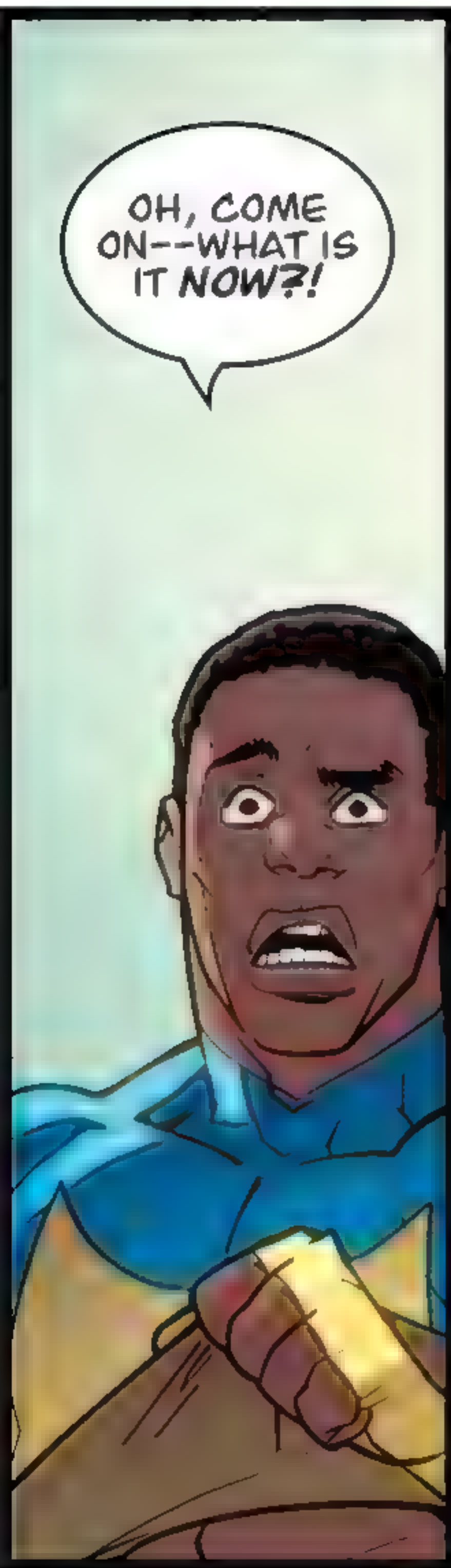


SORRY, SORRY. WE TOOK THE GUY OUT PRETTY QUICKLY, BUT WE ALL HAD TO HANG AROUND AND SUPERVISE THEM BEING TAKEN INTO CUSTODY.

Y'KNOW... TO MAKE SURE HE DIDN'T BREAK FREE AND KILL A BUNCH OF PEOPLE... IT'S IMPORTANT STUFF.

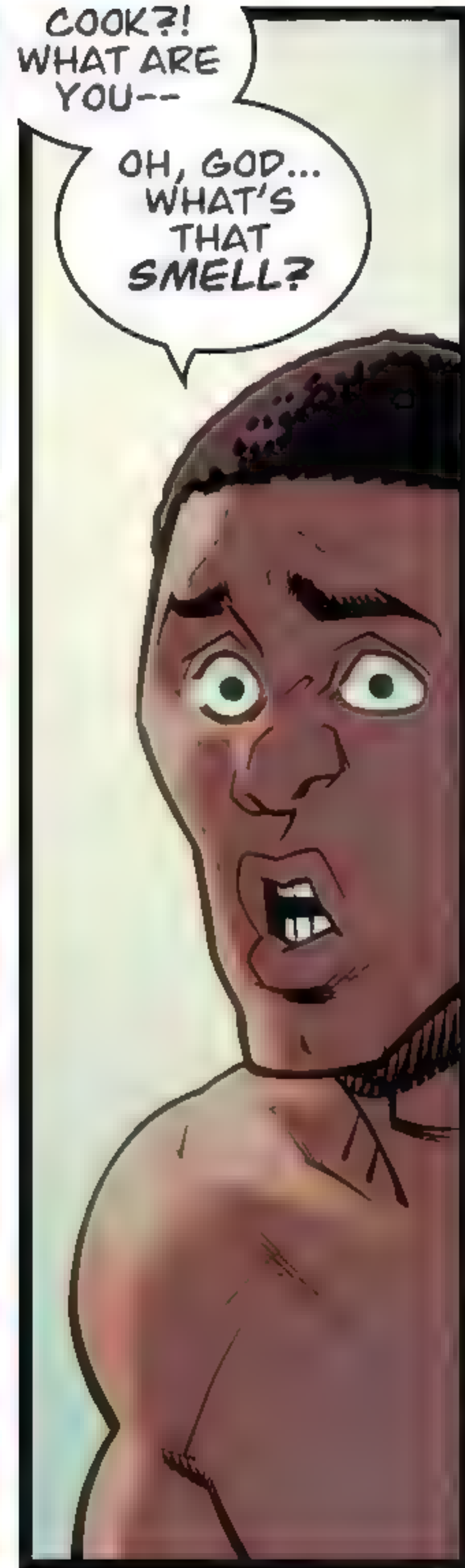


OH, COME ON--WHAT IS IT NOW?!



I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THIS TO ME! YOU KNEW I NEEDED YOU HERE TODAY...

...YOU KNOW I CAN'T COOK!



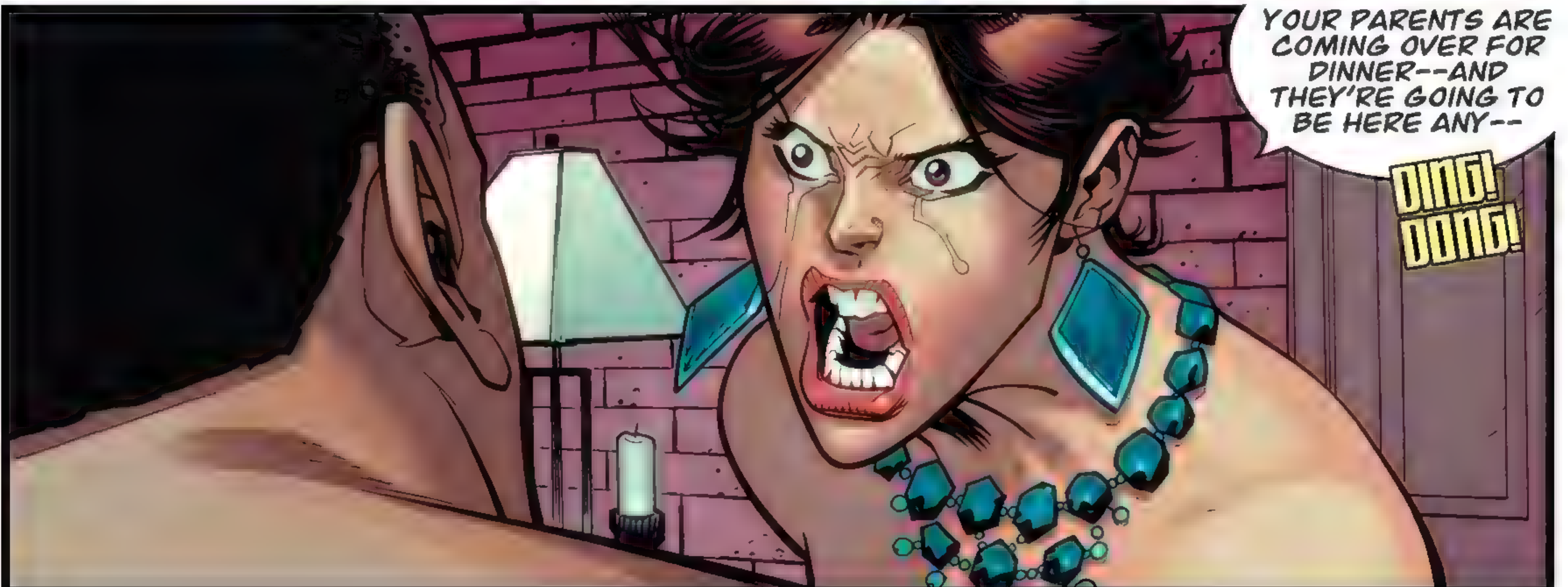
COOK?! WHAT ARE YOU--

OH, GOD... WHAT'S THAT SMELL?



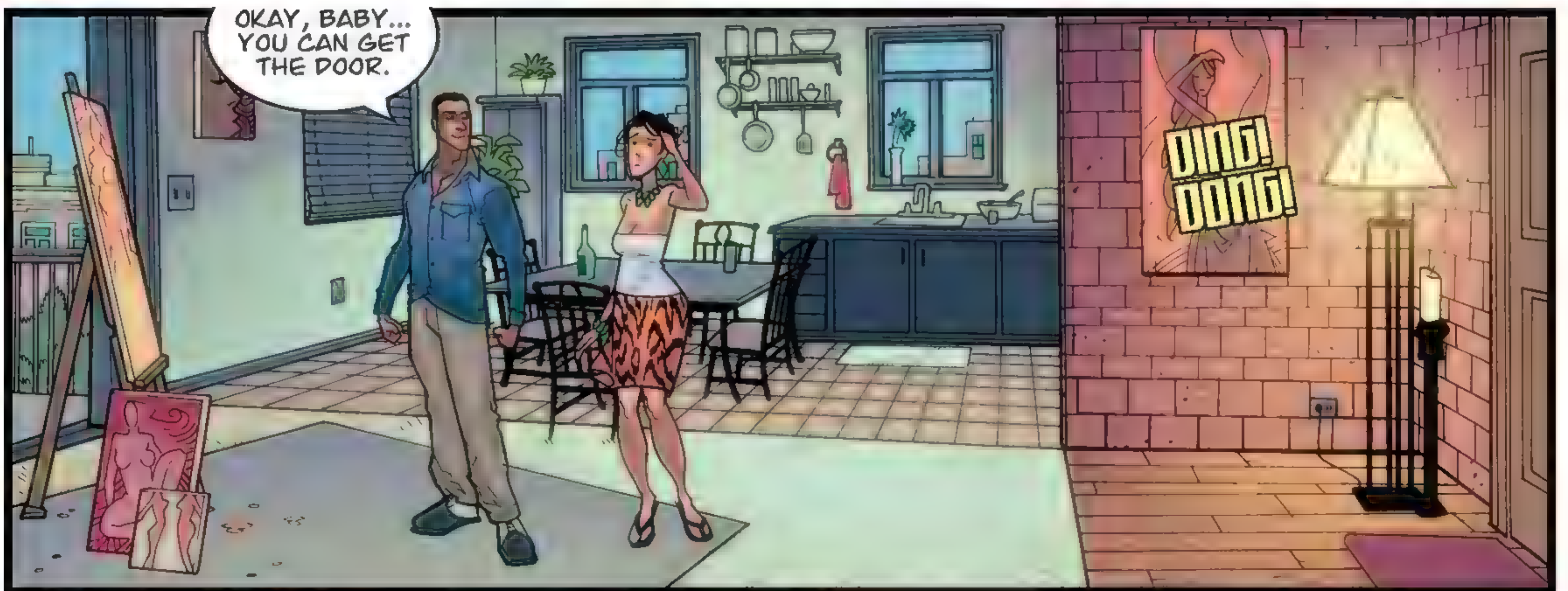
NOT BEING HERE BECAUSE YOU'RE FIGHTING SOME JERK IS ONE THING-- BUT YOU TOTALLY FORGOT?!

YOU DON'T REMEMBER WHY I NEEDED YOU TODAY?! WHY I MADE YOU PROMISE YOU'D BE HERE?!

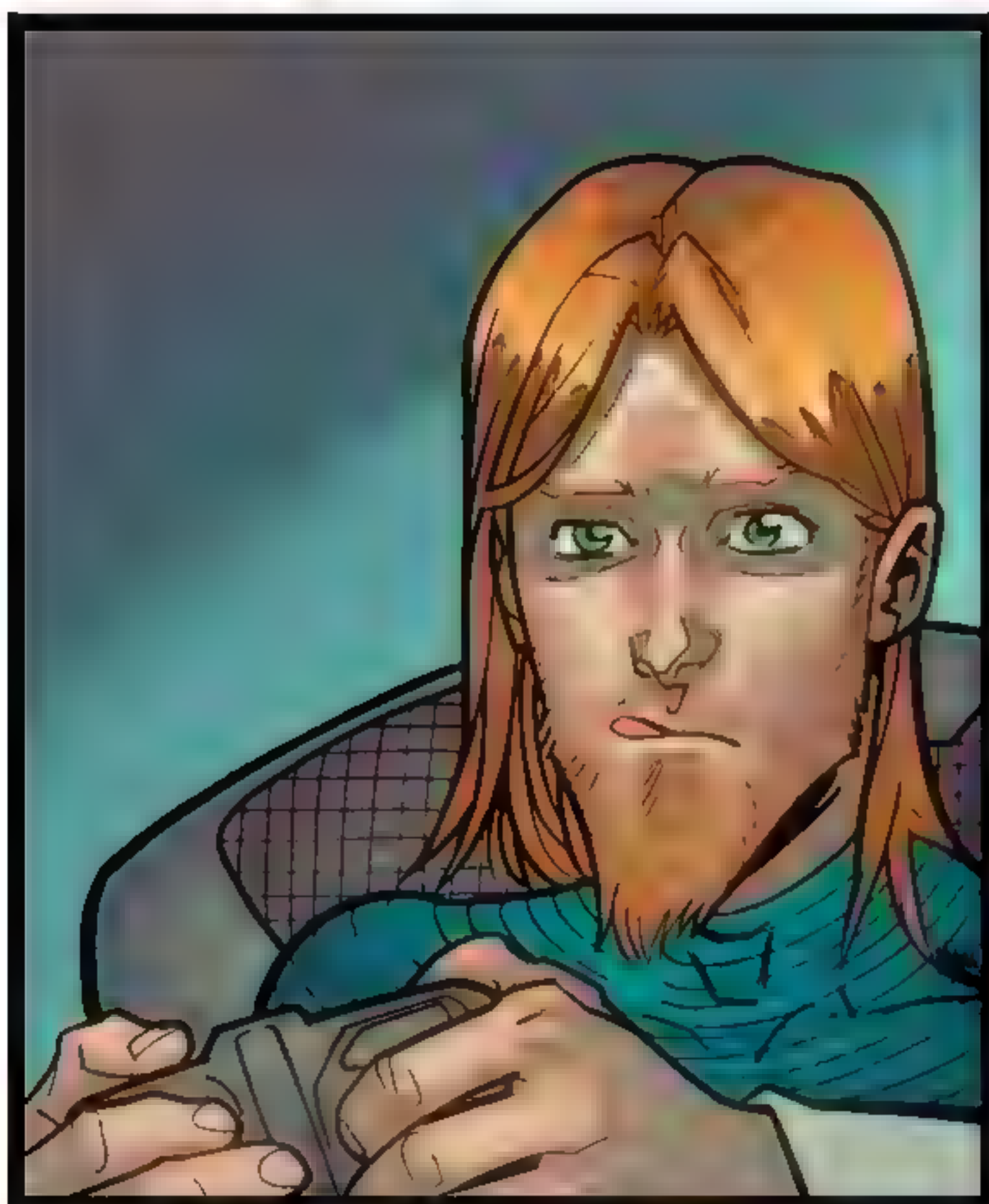


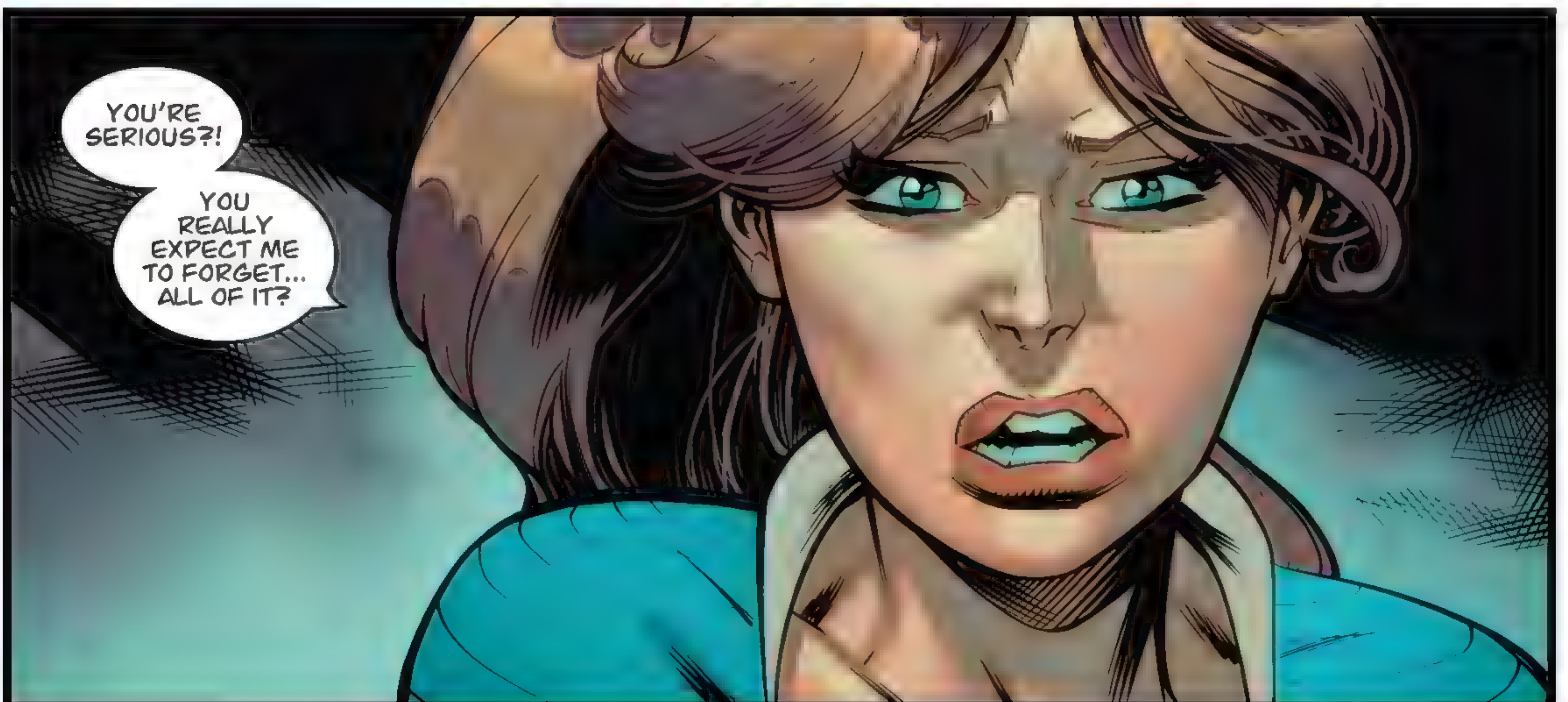
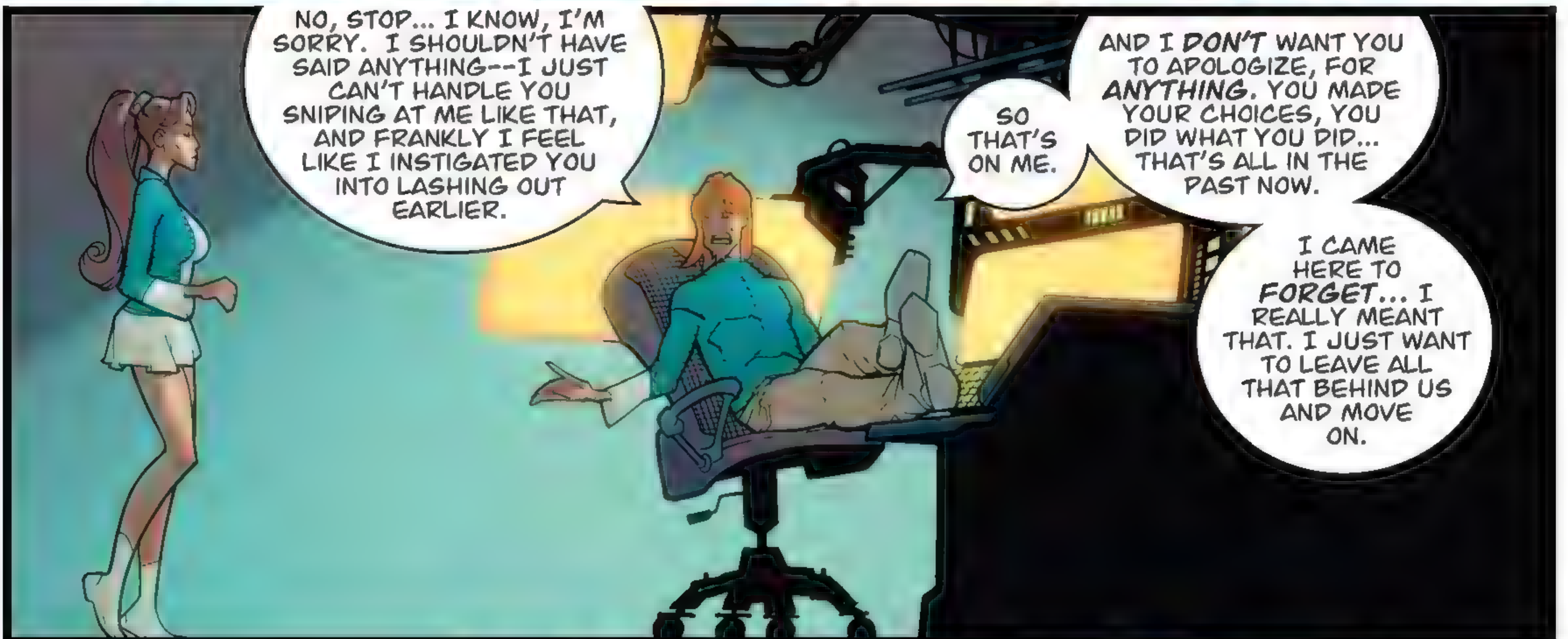
YOUR PARENTS ARE COMING OVER FOR DINNER--AND THEY'RE GOING TO BE HERE ANY--

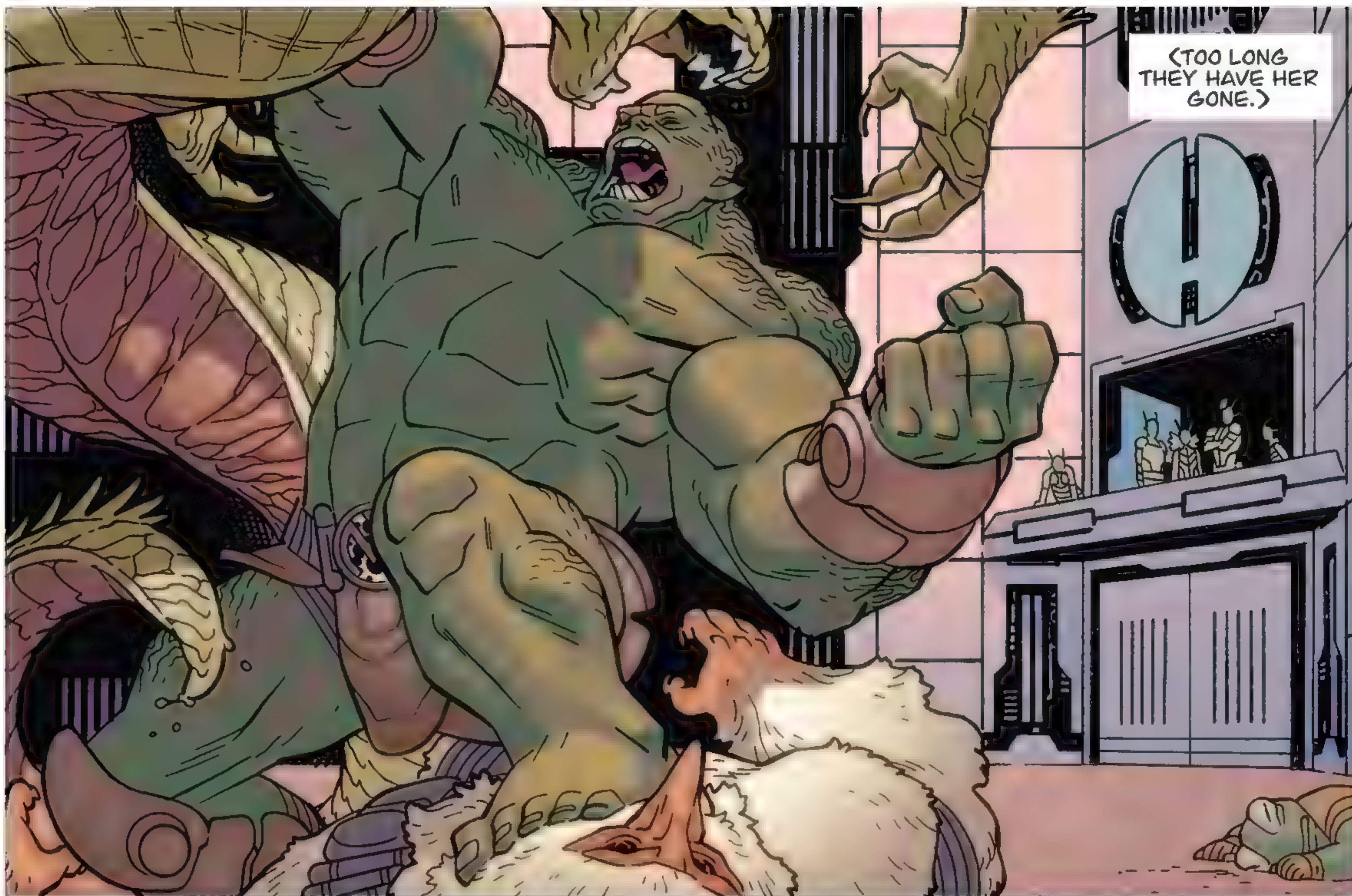
DING!
DONG!











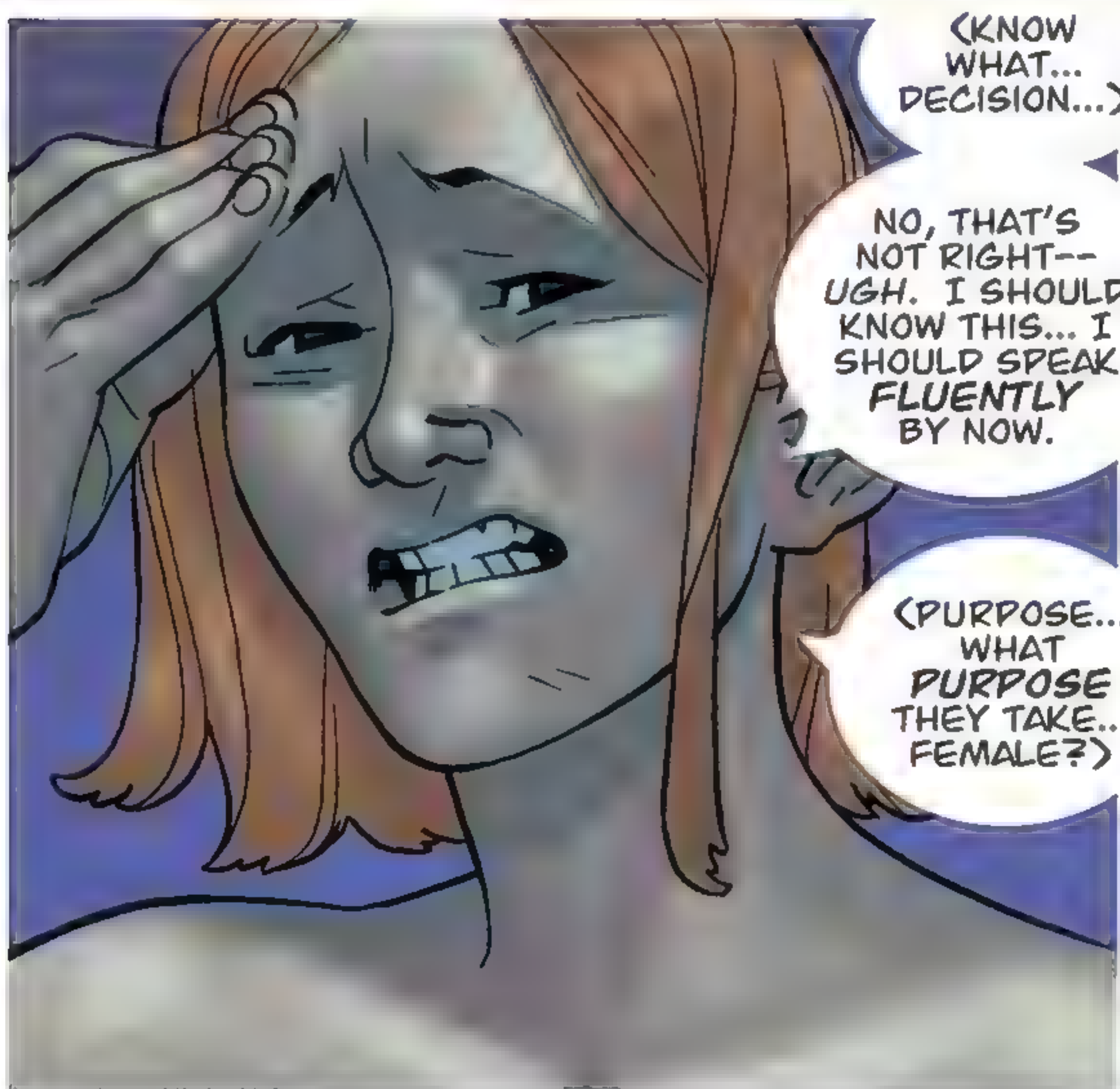
(TOO LONG
THEY HAVE HER
GONE.)



(DO NOT WORRY.
SHE IS STRONG.
SHE WILL RETURN.
SHE ALWAYS
DOES.)

(I CANNOT
CONFORM.)

(YOU MEAN
YOU CANNOT
CONTROL YOUR
EMOTIONS, I BELIEVE.
YOUR FLAXAN TONGUE
IS BETTER. BUT
THERE IS STILL
MUCH TO LEARN.)



(KNOW
WHAT...
DECISION...)

NO, THAT'S
NOT RIGHT--
UGH. I SHOULD
KNOW THIS... I
SHOULD SPEAK
FLUENTLY
BY NOW.

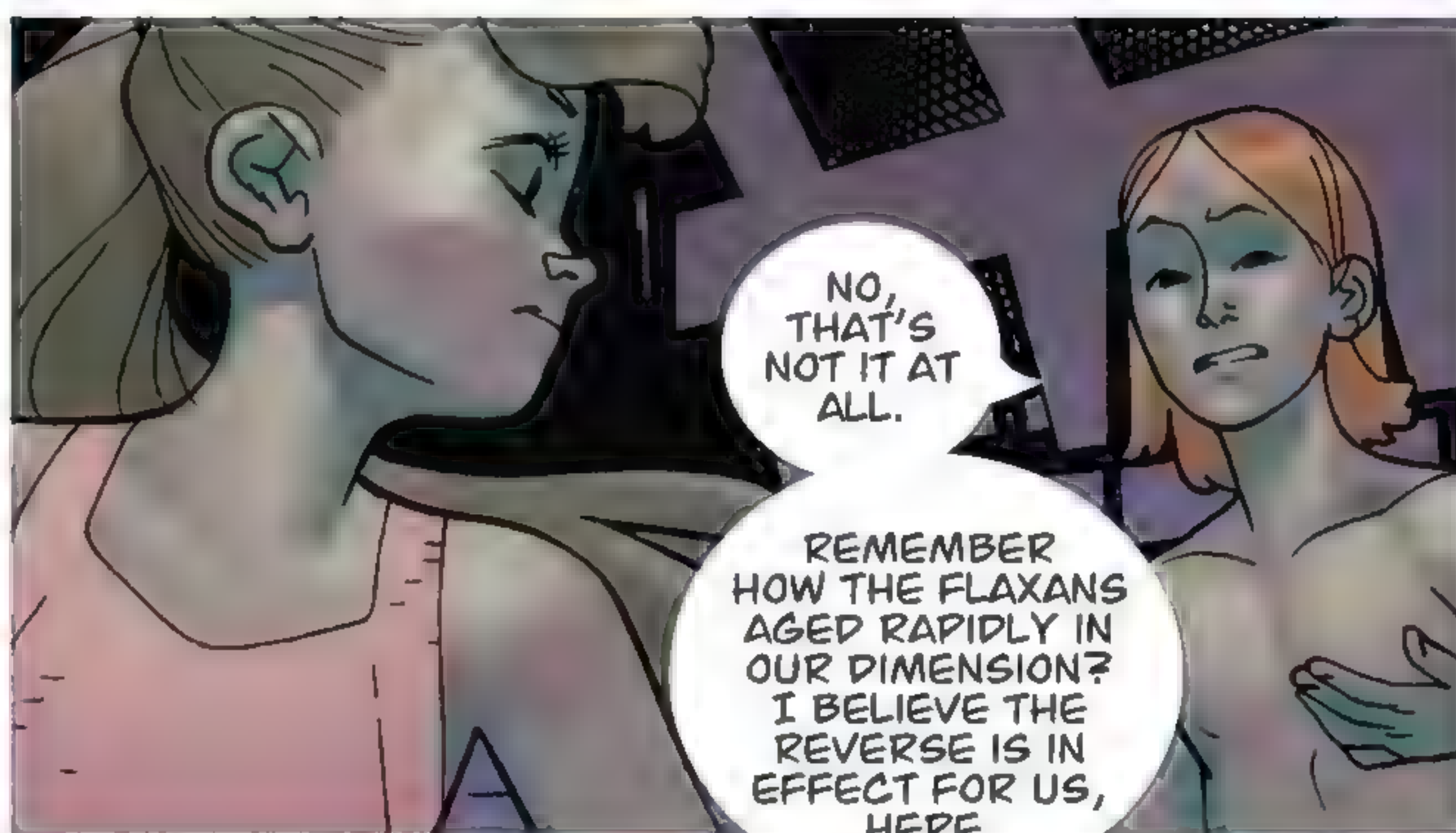
(PURPOSE...
WHAT
PURPOSE
THEY TAKE...
FEMALE?)



(THEY SPOKE
OF TRIALS. I
BELIEVE OUR
CHANCELLOR CHOSE
HER TO BE HIS
CHAMPION. OTHER
CHANCELLORS
TRAVEL WITH THEIR
CHAMPION FOR
COMPETITION.)

(BATTLES
ARE FOUGHT
TO THE DEATH.
BUT I AM SURE
SHE WILL BEST
THEM. I'VE
NEVER SEEN
ANYTHING
LIKE--)

(THEY
RETURN--
HIDE!)





SEVEN-
HUNDRED
YEARS
WE LIVED
TOGETHER!

I KNEW YOU
BETTER THAN
ANYONE ON EARTH
HAS EVER KNOWN
ANYONE! I LOVED
YOU MORE THAN
ANYONE HAS
EVER LOVED
ANYONE!

AND YOU
THREW IT
AWAY--ALL
OF IT--AFTER
ONE SINGLE
MISTAKE!

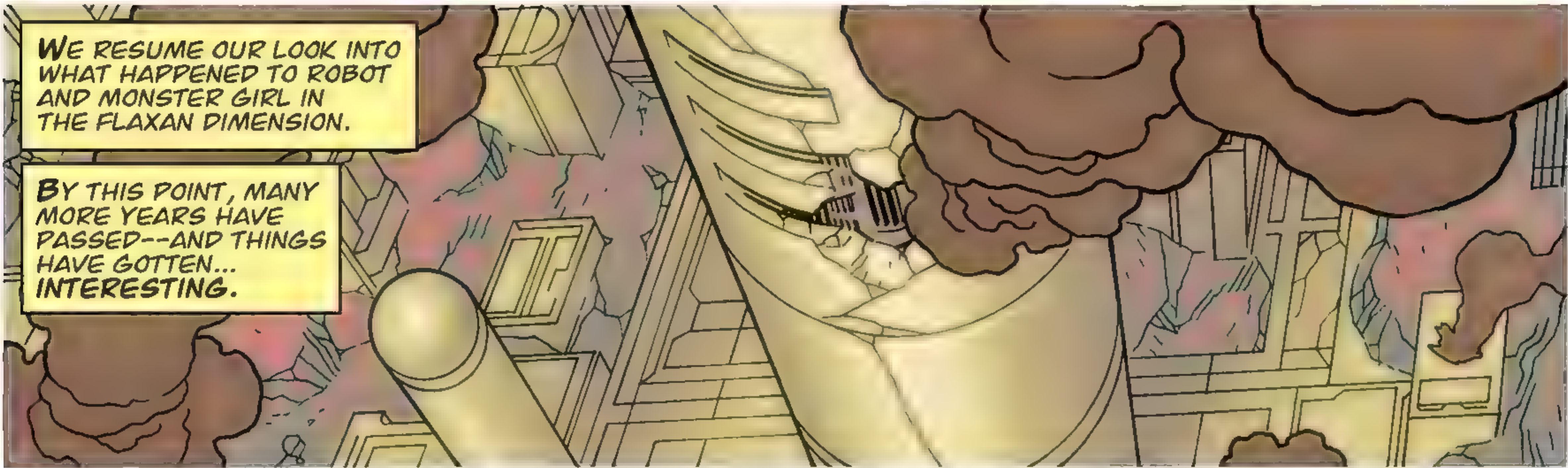


I'LL
NEVER
FORGET
THAT!



CHAPTER 93





WE RESUME OUR LOOK INTO WHAT HAPPENED TO ROBOT AND MONSTER GIRL IN THE FLAXAN DIMENSION.

BY THIS POINT, MANY MORE YEARS HAVE PASSED--AND THINGS HAVE GOTTEN... INTERESTING.



(YOU HAVE DISRUPTED MY ROYAL CHAMBERS, DAMAGED THE GREAT HALLS OF TRUNG AND CORRUPTED A CHAMPION OF OUR ARENA THAT HAS ENTERTAINED ME SINCE I WAS A BOY.)

(I HAVE A SPECIAL PUNISHMENT SET ASIDE JUST FOR YOU--EARTH MAN!)

ZZZAK!



WELL...

...THIS COULD HAVE GONE BETTER.



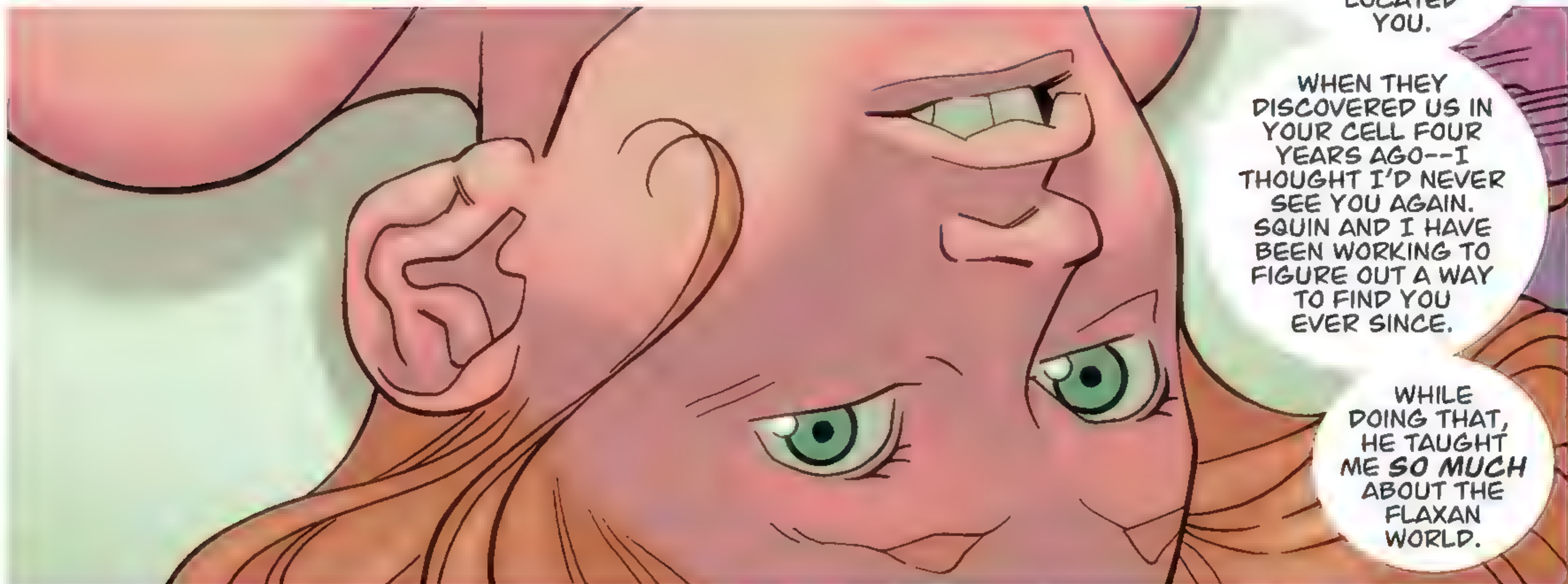
THAT PLAN TOOK
TWENTY YEARS,
REX. SQUIN LOST HIS
LIFE WORKING TO
HELP US GAIN
ACCESS TO
THE THRONE
ROOM.

THAT WAS
SUPPOSED TO
WORK... AND
YOU DON'T
EVEN SEEM
UPSET.

THE PLAN IS
STILL WORKING,
SQUIN FREELY
GAVE HIS LIFE FOR
THIS CAUSE--AND
HIS SACRIFICE
WILL **NOT** BE
IN VAIN.

THAT ATTACK
ON THE EMPEROR
WAS ONLY THE
BEGINNING.

I'M SORRY
I COULDN'T
COMMUNICATE THE
INTRICACIES OF MY
PLAN--OUR ATTACK
HAD TO HAPPEN
IMMEDIATELY
AFTER I'D
LOCATED
YOU.



WHEN THEY
DISCOVERED US IN
YOUR CELL FOUR
YEARS AGO--I
THOUGHT I'D NEVER
SEE YOU AGAIN.
SQUIN AND I HAVE
BEEN WORKING TO
FIGURE OUT A WAY
TO FIND YOU
EVER SINCE.

WHILE
DOING THAT,
HE TAUGHT
ME **SO MUCH**
ABOUT THE
FLAXAN
WORLD.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY DO?
WHY THEY INVADE SO MANY
OTHER DIMENSIONS--LIKE HOW
THEY'VE REPEATEDLY
ATTEMPTED TO INVADE OURS?

THEY'RE HARVESTING
SLAVES. IT'S HARD FOR
US TO RECOGNIZE, BUT ALL
THE VARIOUS LIFE-FORMS
WE'VE SEEN--THEY'RE FROM
OTHER DIMENSIONS.

THE FLAXANS ARE A
WARRIOR RACE, THEY
HAVE ONLY SOLDIERS.
ALL OTHER TASKS
ARE PERFORMED
BY SLAVES.

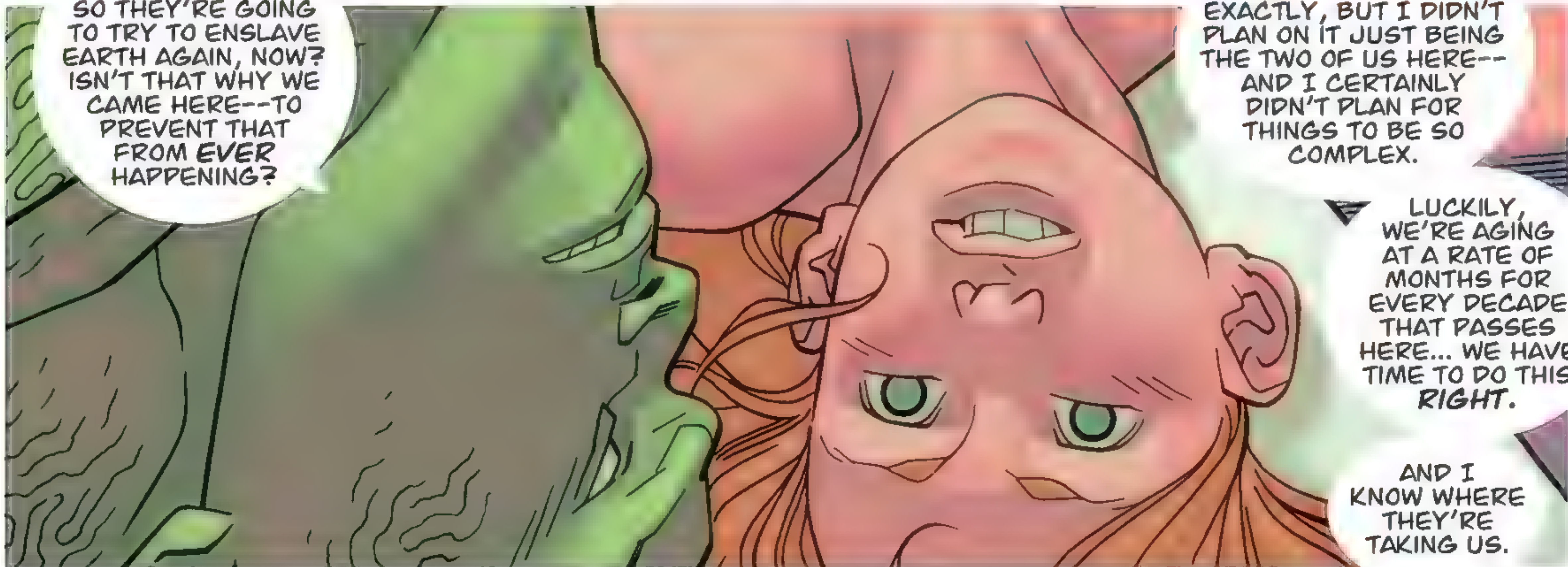


SO THEY'RE GOING
TO TRY TO ENSLAVE
EARTH AGAIN, NOW?
ISN'T THAT WHY WE
CAME HERE--TO
PREVENT THAT
FROM EVER
HAPPENING?

EXACTLY, BUT I DIDN'T
PLAN ON IT JUST BEING
THE TWO OF US HERE--
AND I CERTAINLY
DIDN'T PLAN FOR
THINGS TO BE SO
COMPLEX.

LUCKILY,
WE'RE AGING
AT A RATE OF
MONTHS FOR
EVERY DECADE
THAT PASSES
HERE... WE HAVE
TIME TO DO THIS
RIGHT.

AND I
KNOW WHERE
THEY'RE
TAKING US.



WHEN THEY HARVEST SLAVES FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION, IT IS USUALLY DONE WITH THE SET PURPOSE THAT THE SLAVES WILL BE USED FOR ALREADY IN MIND.

THE VERY FIRST TIME THEY INVADED OUR DIMENSION, AND WERE THWARTED, THEY NEEDED THE POPULATION OF EARTH TO WORK IN THEIR MINERAL MINES.

WHEN THEY WERE STOPPED, IT WAS THE WORK OF ONE INDIVIDUAL, INVINCIBLE'S FATHER, **OMNI-MAN**. A PLAN WAS CONCEIVED AND CARRIED OUT TO BRING HIM INTO THE FLAXAN DIMENSION, TO REMOVE HIM FROM THE EQUATION.*

HERE HE IS KNOWN AS **THE DESTROYER**.

*ISSUE 3.

HE WAS HELD CAPTIVE FOR A TIME. THEY'D DEVISED SOME WAY TO INHIBIT HIS NATURAL ABILITIES. BUT HIS CAPTIVITY DID NOT LAST.

TO SAY THEIR PLAN BACKFIRED ON THEM WOULD BE A MASSIVE UNDERSTATEMENT.

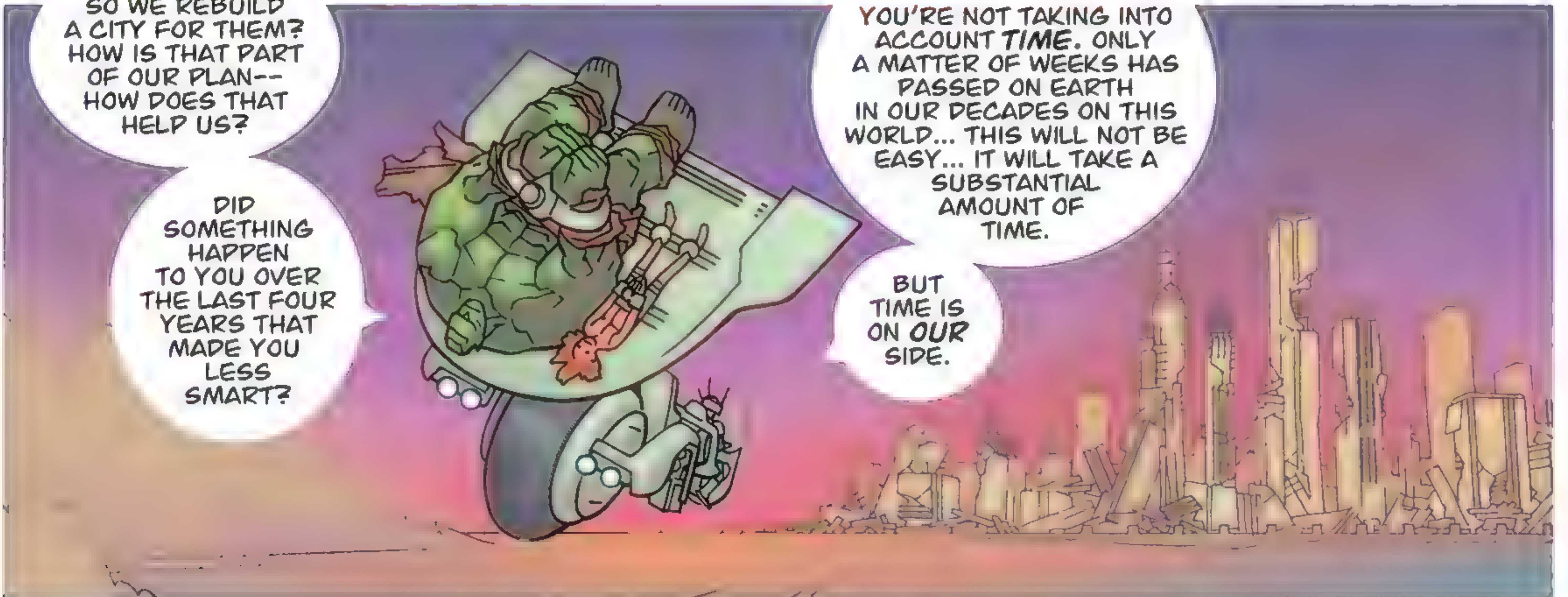
IN THE END, THE WAR THEY FOUGHT AGAINST ONE MAN LASTED NEARLY A YEAR IN THIS DIMENSION.

AS A RESULT, THE FLAXANS' EMPIRE WAS IN SHAMBLES, AND KLAXIA, THE CROWN CITY OF THEIR CIVILIZATION, WAS DESTROYED.



IT TOOK THEM GENERATIONS TO PREPARE FOR THEIR NEXT ASSAULT ON EARTH. WHICH WAS DONE WITH THE INTENTION OF CHARGING THE HUMAN POPULATION WITH REBUILDING THEIR BELOVED CITY, KLAXIA.

WHICH IS WHERE THEY ARE TAKING US NOW. AS WE ARE FROM EARTH, IT WILL BE OUR TASK, AND OUR TASK ALONE TO REBUILD A CITY THAT HAS LAID IN WASTE FOR CENTURIES.

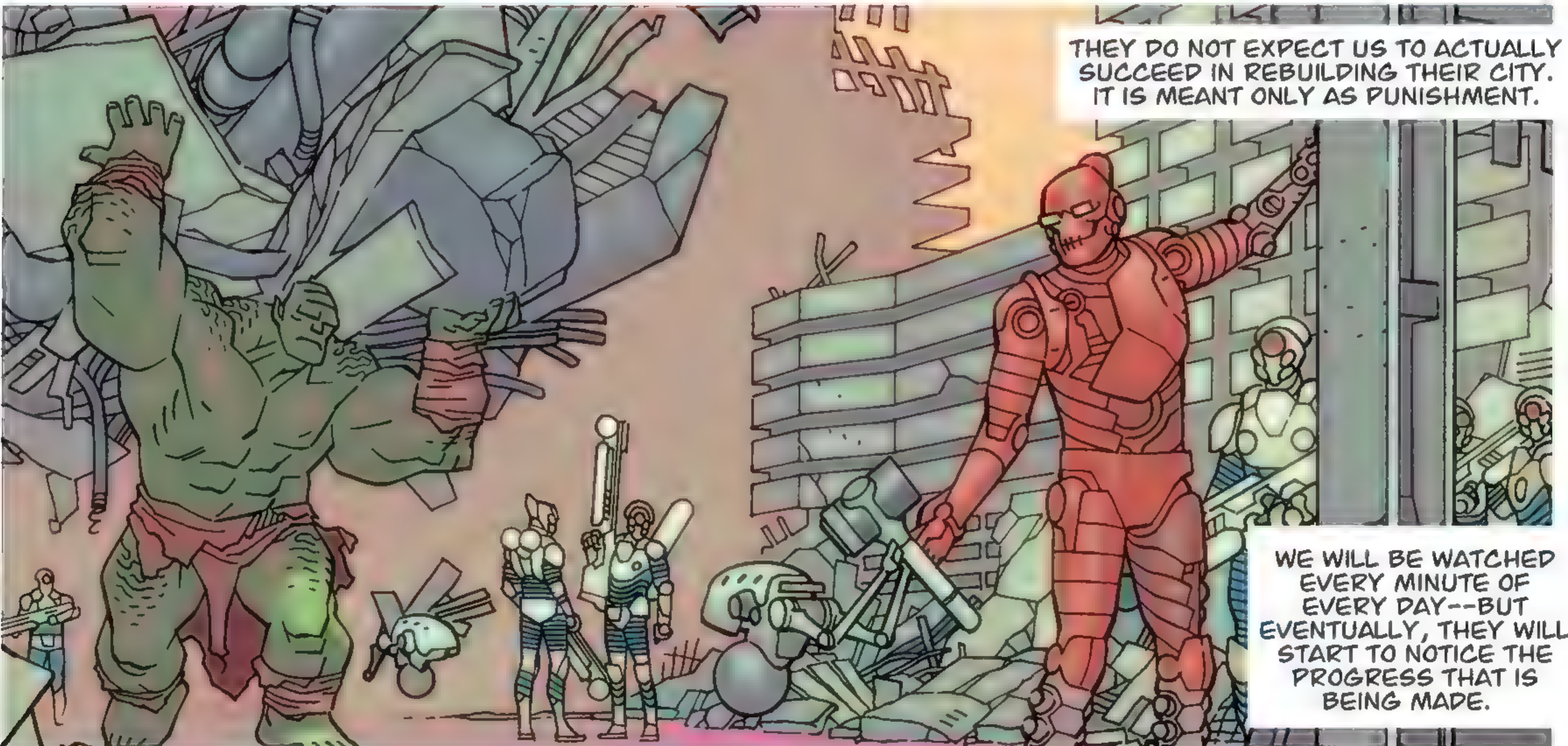


SO WE REBUILD A CITY FOR THEM? HOW IS THAT PART OF OUR PLAN-- HOW DOES THAT HELP US?

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO YOU OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS THAT MADE YOU LESS SMART?

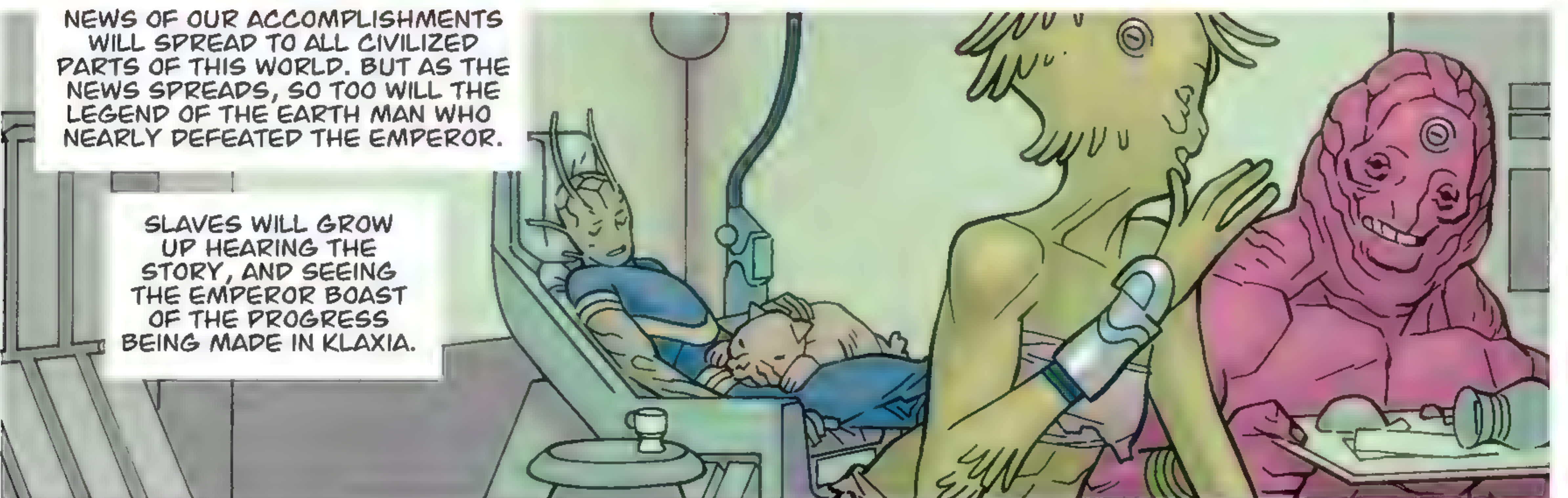
YOU'RE NOT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT TIME. ONLY A MATTER OF WEEKS HAS PASSED ON EARTH IN OUR DECADES ON THIS WORLD... THIS WILL NOT BE EASY... IT WILL TAKE A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF TIME.

BUT TIME IS ON OUR SIDE.



THEY DO NOT EXPECT US TO ACTUALLY SUCCEED IN REBUILDING THEIR CITY. IT IS MEANT ONLY AS PUNISHMENT.

WE WILL BE WATCHED EVERY MINUTE OF EVERY DAY--BUT EVENTUALLY, THEY WILL START TO NOTICE THE PROGRESS THAT IS BEING MADE.



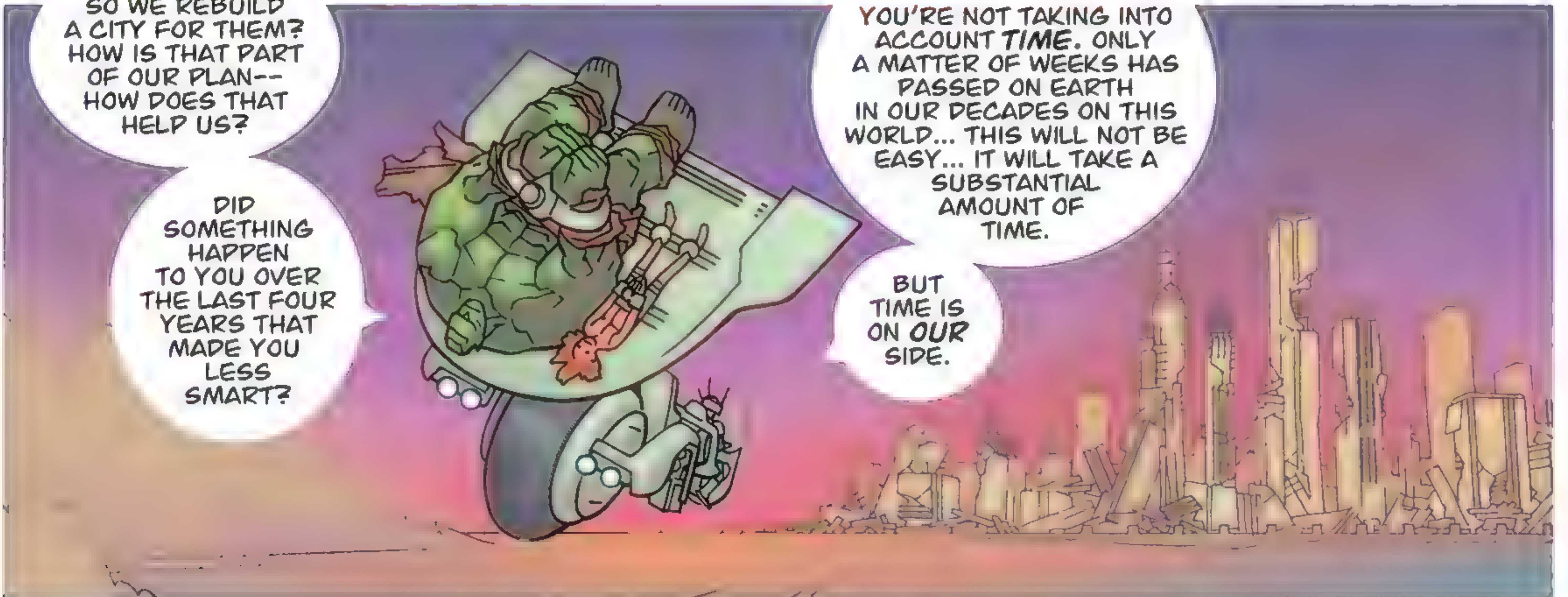
NEWS OF OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WILL SPREAD TO ALL CIVILIZED PARTS OF THIS WORLD. BUT AS THE NEWS SPREADS, SO TOO WILL THE LEGEND OF THE EARTH MAN WHO NEARLY DEFEATED THE EMPEROR.

SLAVES WILL GROW UP HEARING THE STORY, AND SEEING THE EMPEROR BOAST OF THE PROGRESS BEING MADE IN KLAXIA.



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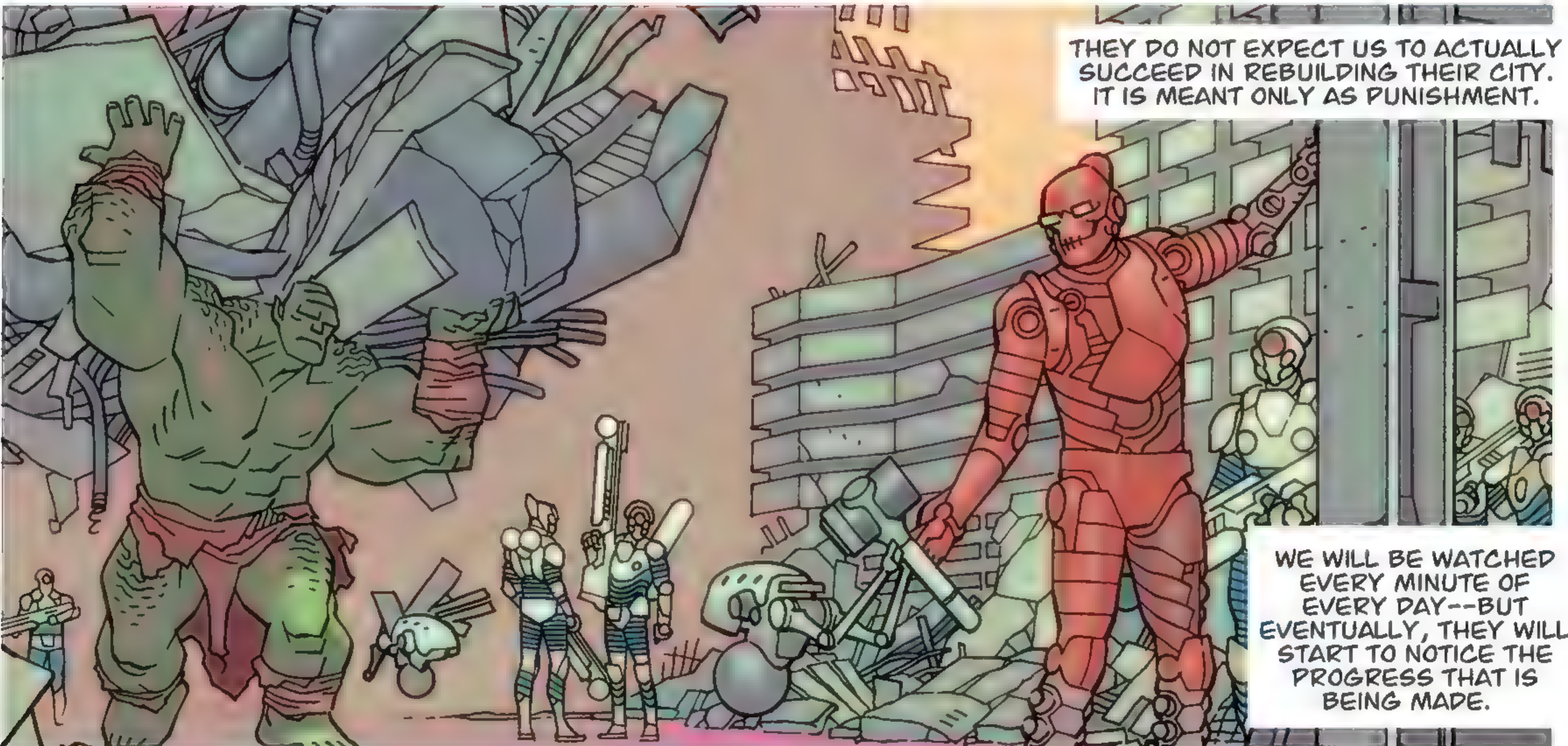


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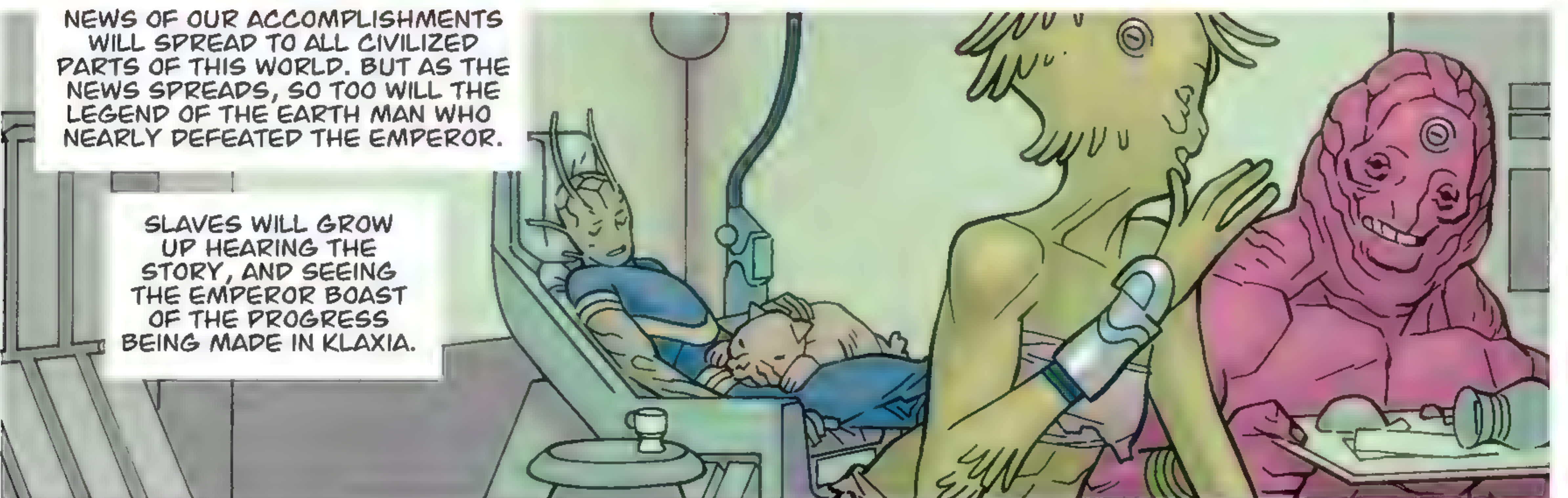
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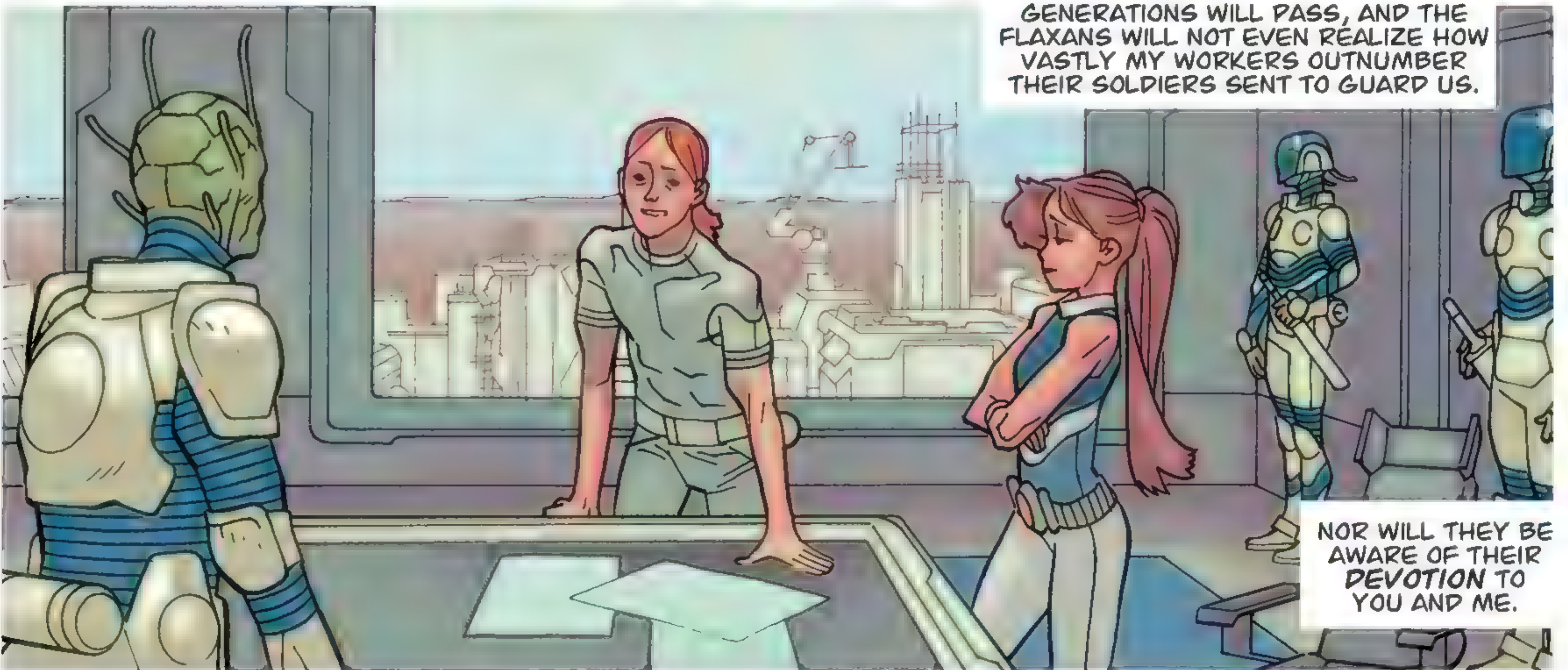
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IT WILL ONLY BE A MATTER OF YEARS BEFORE THE PROJECT IS ACTUALLY TAKEN SERIOUSLY, AND WE'RE SENT HUNDREDS OF WORKERS TO AID IN OUR TASK.

WORKERS THAT KNOW OF OUR FEAT, STORMING THE EMPEROR'S THRONE ROOM. WORKERS WITH NO LOVE FOR THE FLAXAN EMPIRE.



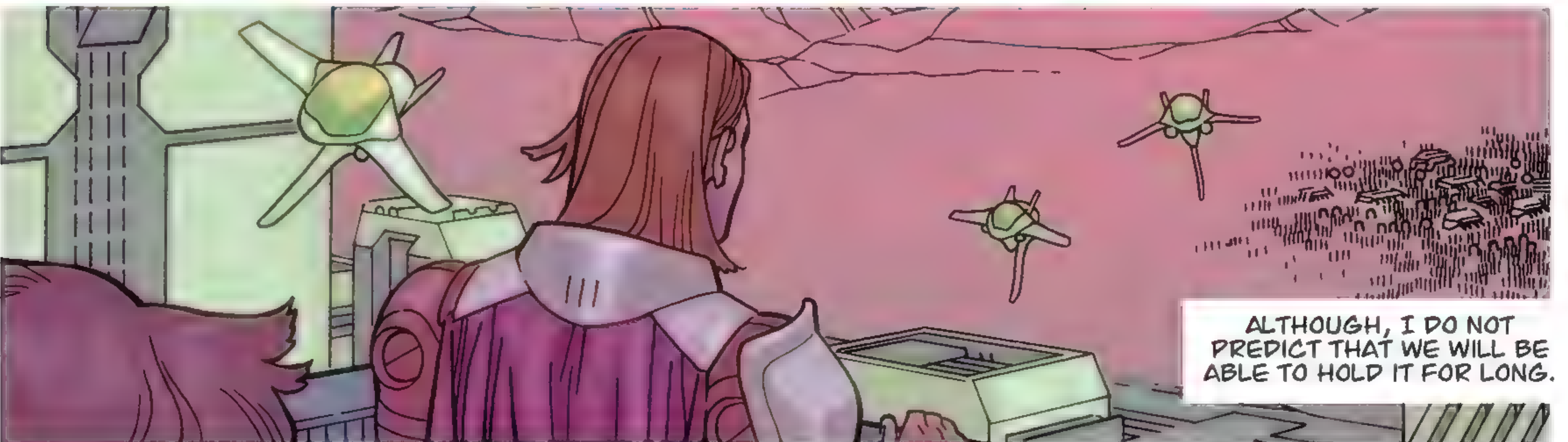
GENERATIONS WILL PASS, AND THE FLAXANS WILL NOT EVEN REALIZE HOW VASTLY MY WORKERS OUTNUMBER THEIR SOLDIERS SENT TO GUARD US.

NOR WILL THEY BE AWARE OF THEIR DEVOTION TO YOU AND ME.



THE REVOLT WILL BE SWIFT.

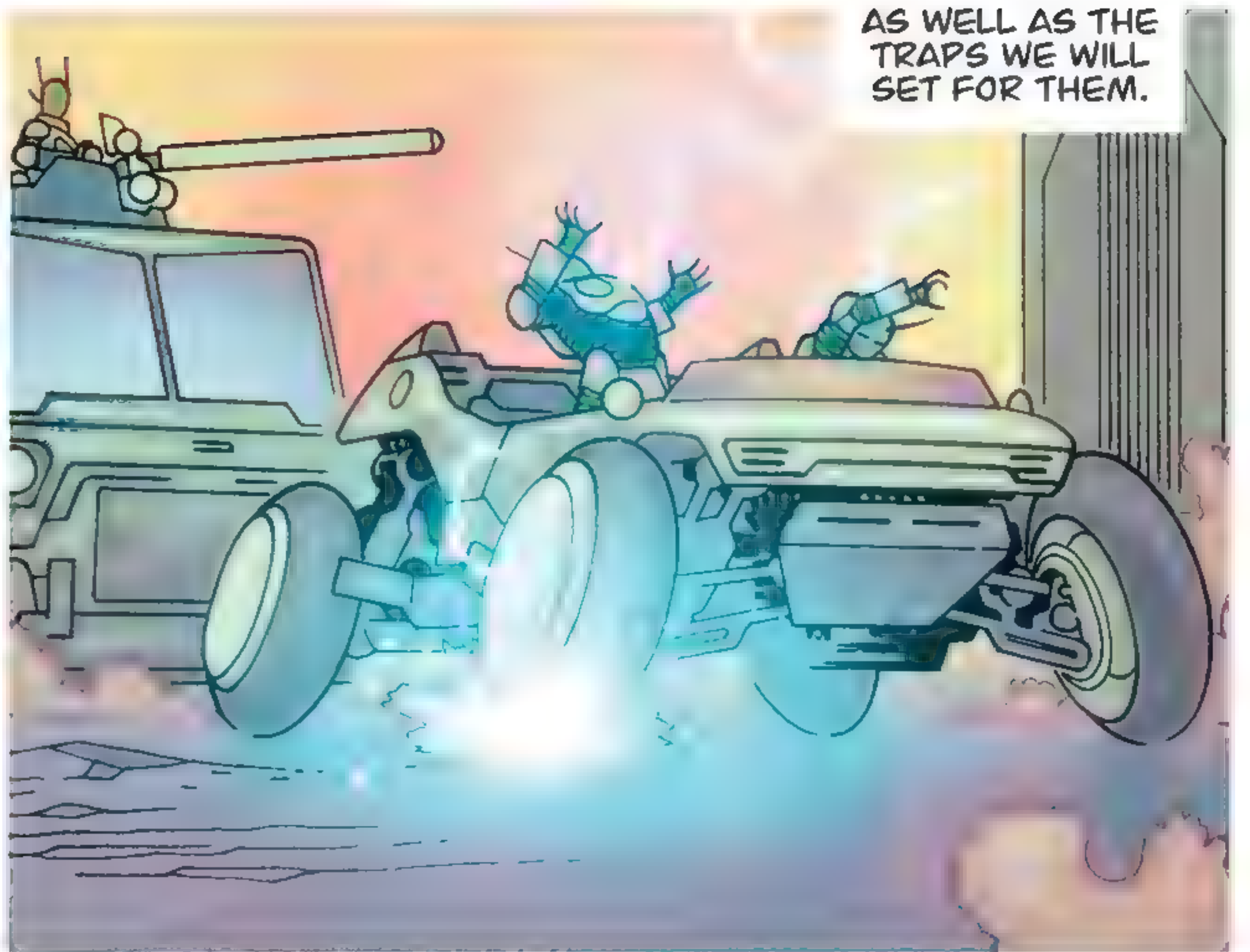
ON THE EVE OF THE COMPLETE RESTORATION OF KLAXIA-- WE WILL CONTROL THE CITY.



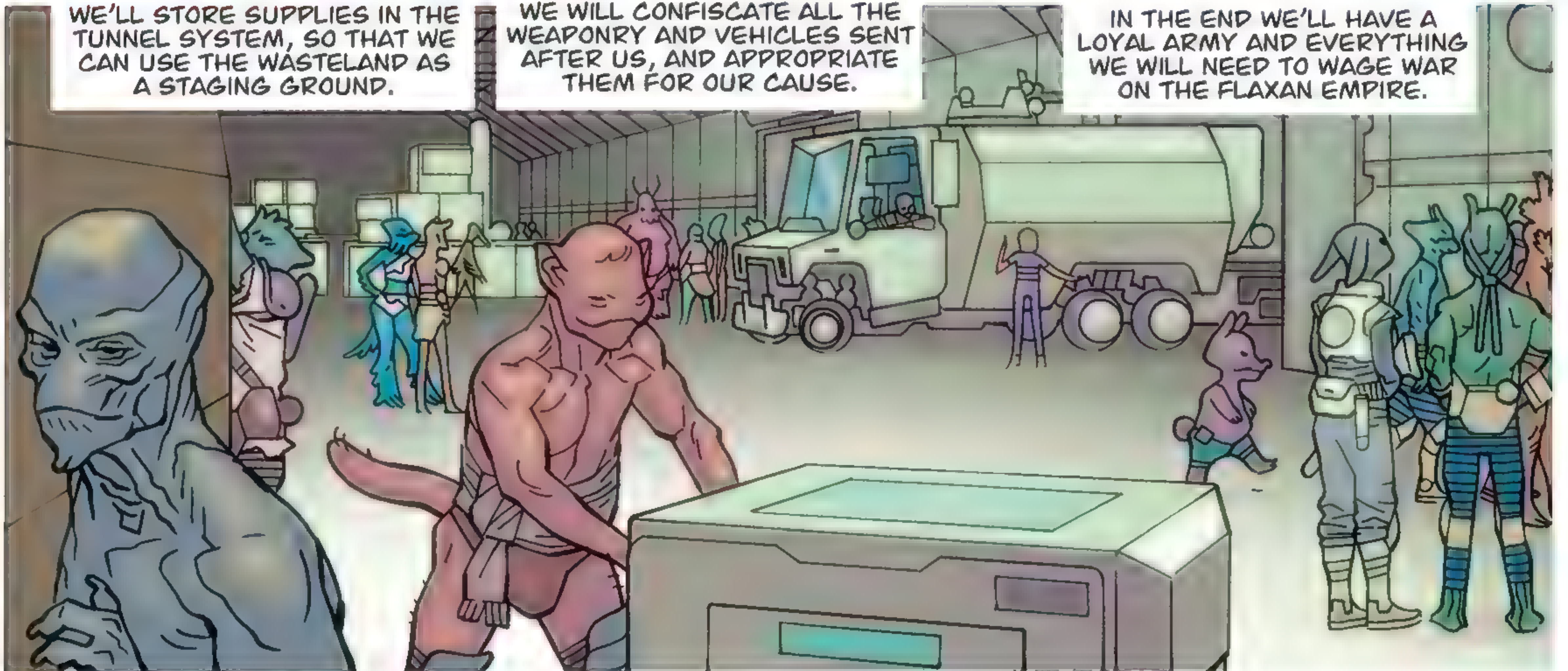
ALTHOUGH, I DO NOT PREDICT THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO HOLD IT FOR LONG.



BUT THE FLAXAN ARMY
WILL BE UNAWARE OF
THE TUNNEL SYSTEM WE
WILL HAVE BUILT
UNDER THE CITY.



AS WELL AS THE
TRAPS WE WILL
SET FOR THEM.



WE'LL STORE SUPPLIES IN THE
TUNNEL SYSTEM, SO THAT WE
CAN USE THE WASTELAND AS
A STAGING GROUND.

WE WILL CONFISCATE ALL THE
WEAPONRY AND VEHICLES SENT
AFTER US, AND APPROPRIATE
THEM FOR OUR CAUSE.

IN THE END WE'LL HAVE A
LOYAL ARMY AND EVERYTHING
WE WILL NEED TO WAGE WAR
ON THE FLAXAN EMPIRE.



IT MAY TAKE US NEARLY A **CENTURY** TO
PUT ALL THE PIECES IN PLACE FOR THIS
PLAN TO COME TOGETHER... BUT ONCE
WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED ALL THIS WE'LL BE
WITHIN GRASP OF OUR ULTIMATE GOAL...

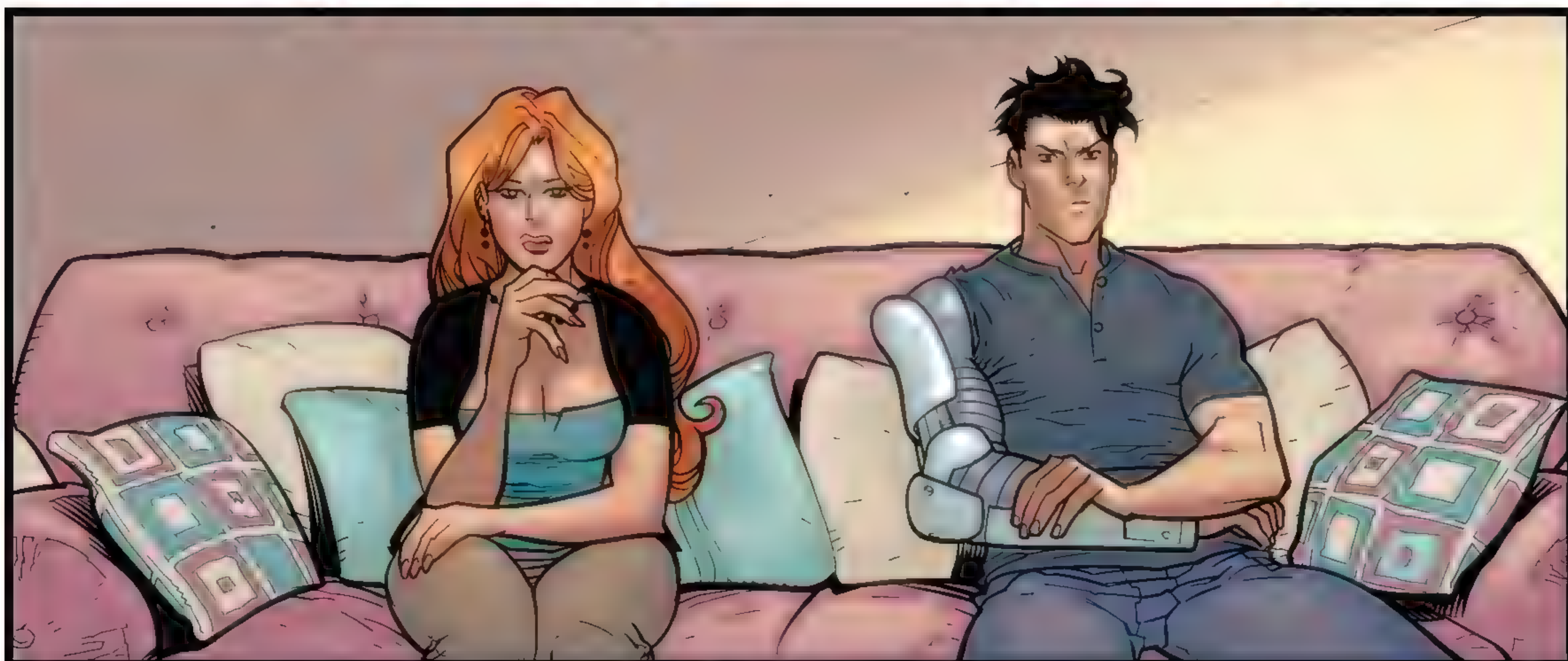
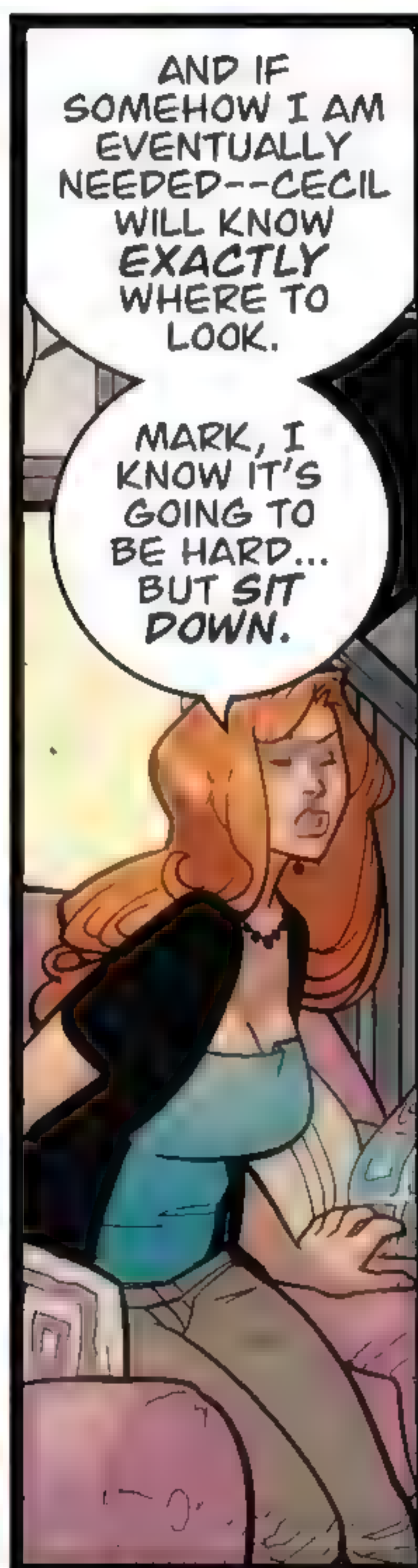
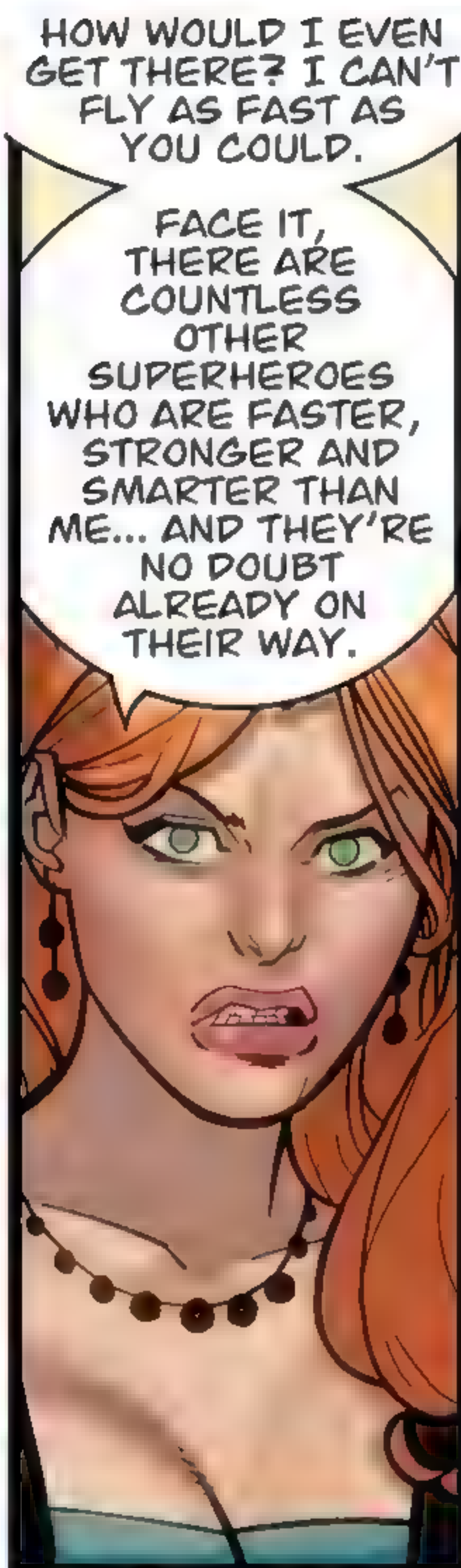
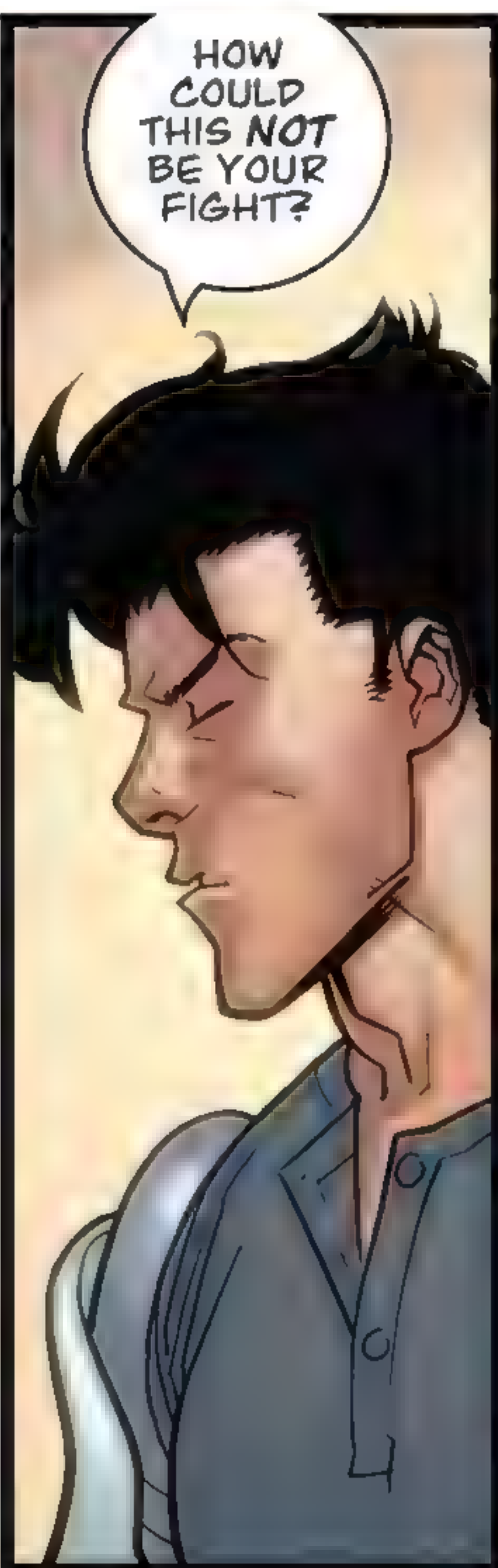
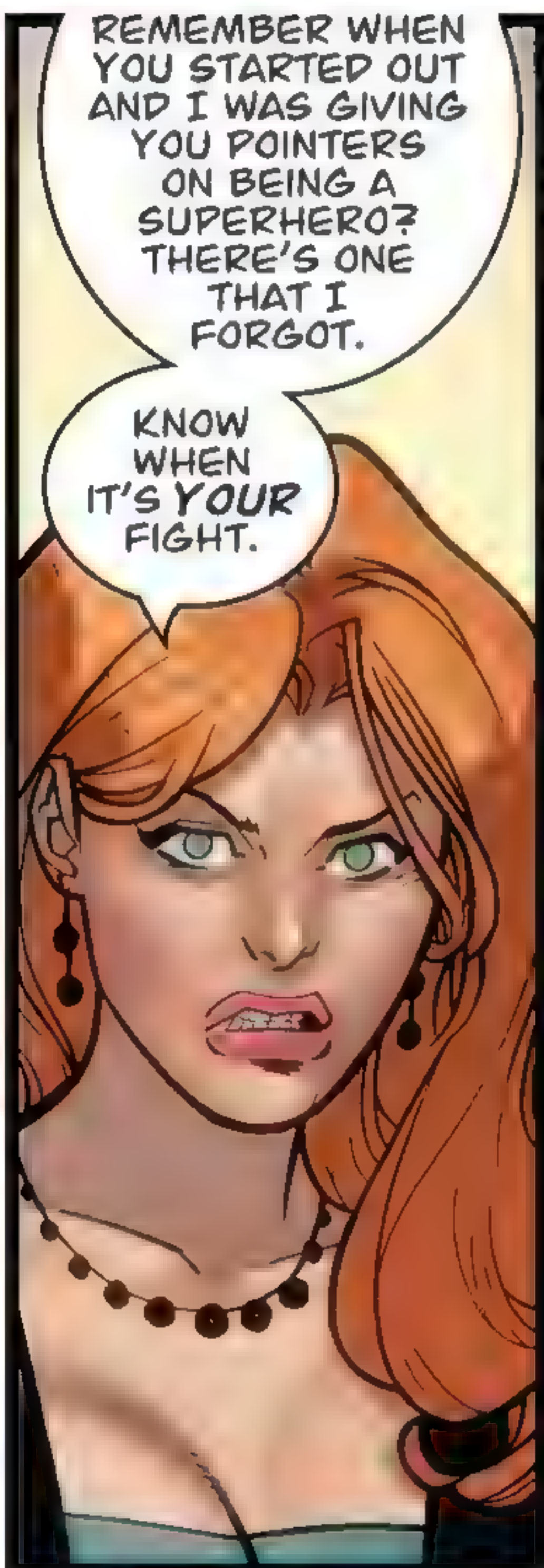
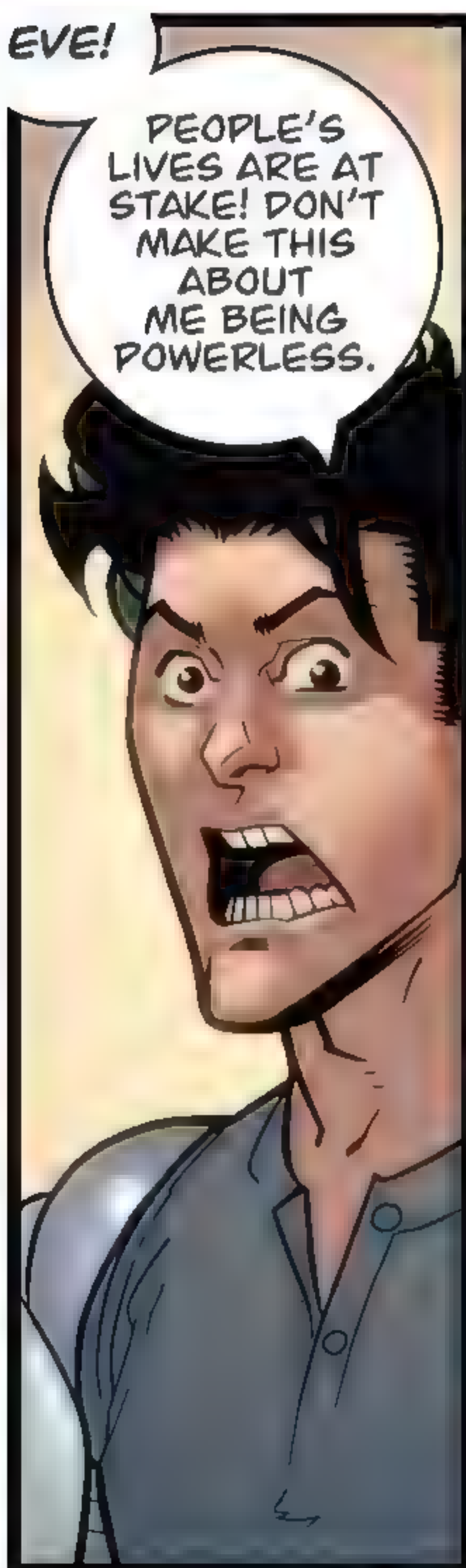
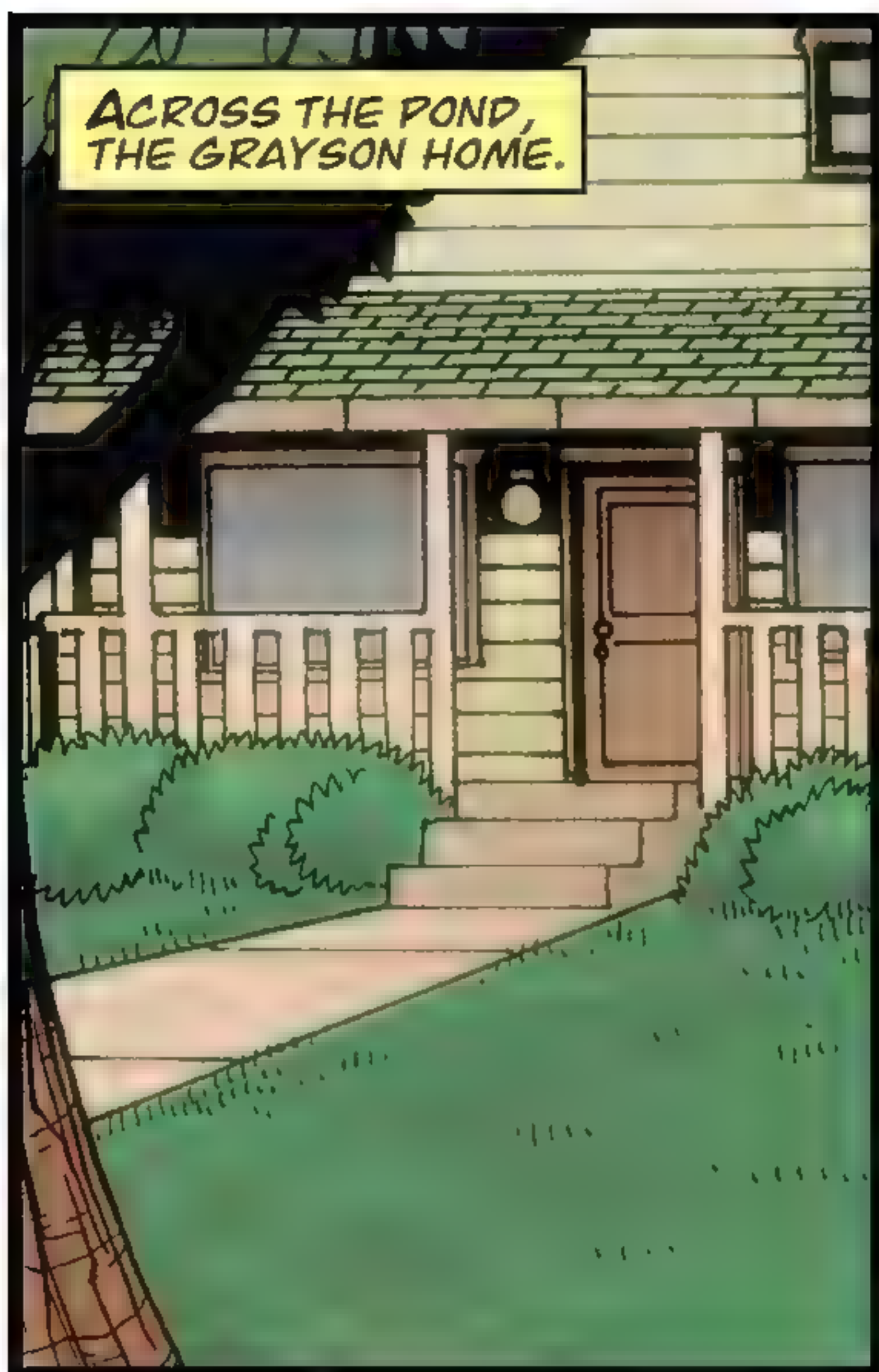


...ENDING
THE THREAT
OF THE FLAXAN
EMPIRE TO ALL
DIMENSIONS--

--FOREVER!





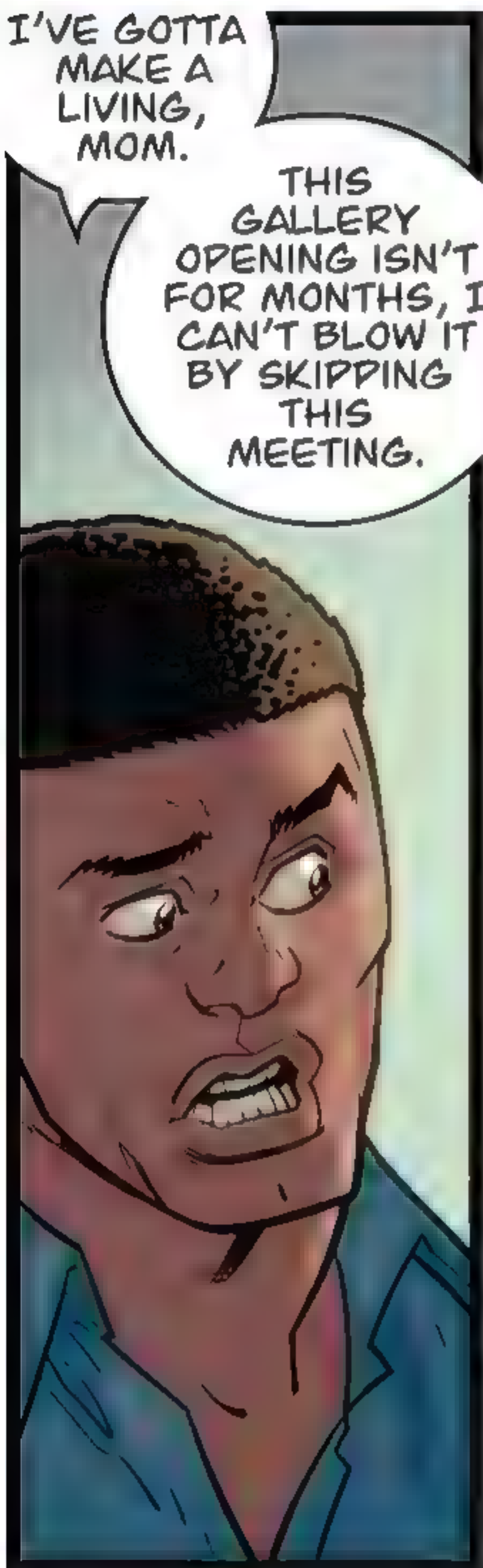




I'M SORRY, GUYS... I'VE GOT A MEETING AT THIS GALLERY AND I, UM... NEED TO GO.

ARE YOU **SERIOUS?! WITH WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LONDON? YOU'RE JUST GOING TO GO?**

WE'LL PROBABLY SEE YOUR BROTHER ON TV! CANCEL IT.



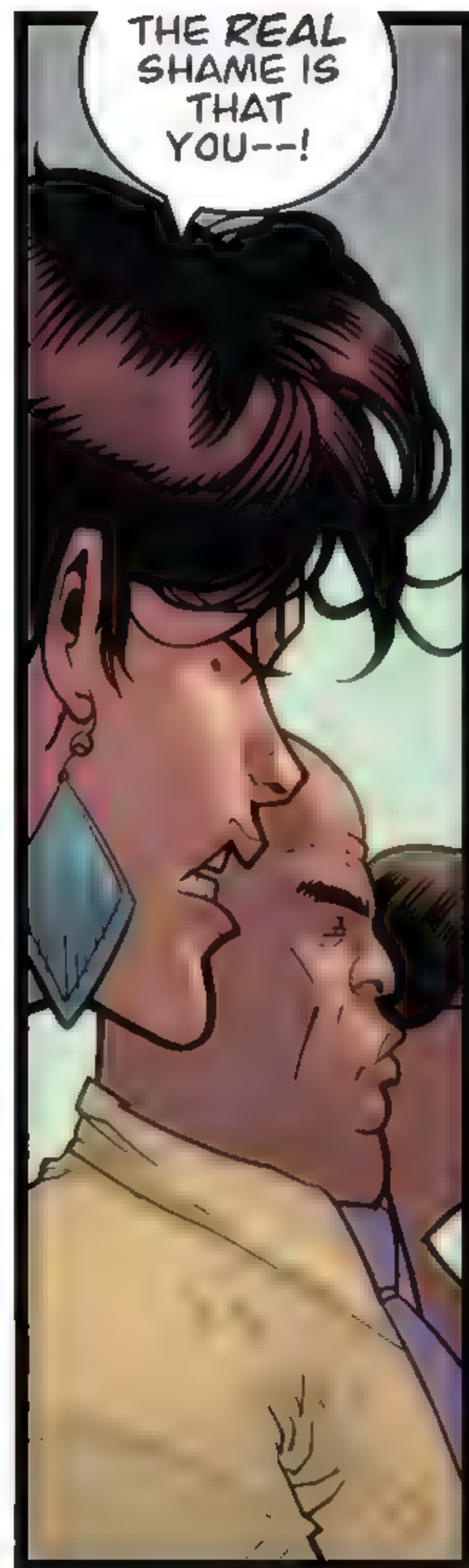
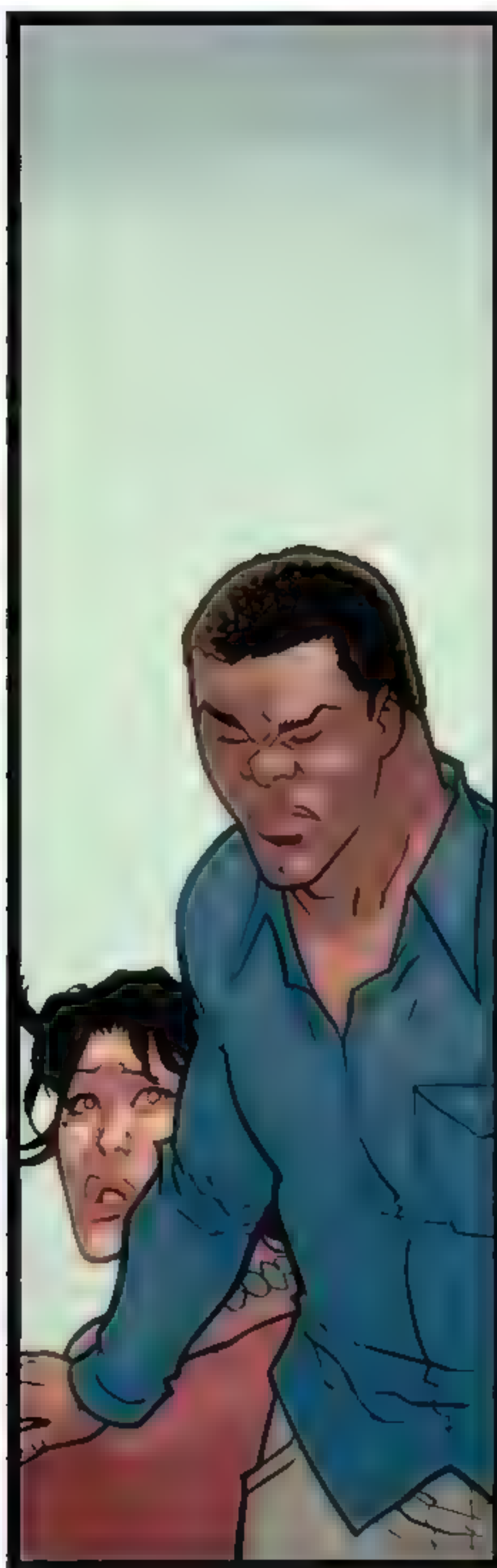
I'VE GOTTA MAKE A LIVING, MOM.

THIS GALLERY OPENING ISN'T FOR MONTHS, I CAN'T BLOW IT BY SKIPPING THIS MEETING.



HOW DID YOU AND YOUR BROTHER END UP SO DIFFERENT?

IT'S A DAMN SHAME.



THE REAL SHAME IS THAT YOU--!

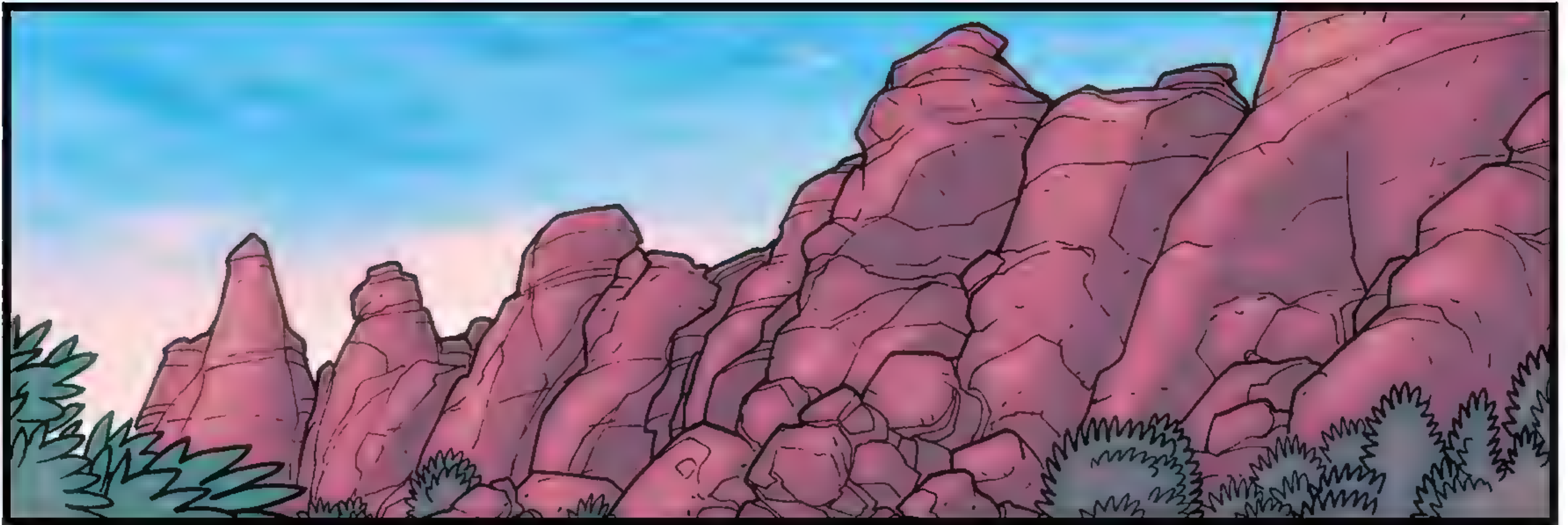


OKAY, I NEED TO BE GOING NOW. DON'T GET TOO WORRIED ABOUT WHAT'S ON THE TV, IT'S HALF A WORLD AWAY.

I HEAR **TYRONE** HAS A NEW COSTUME, KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR IT.

BYE.



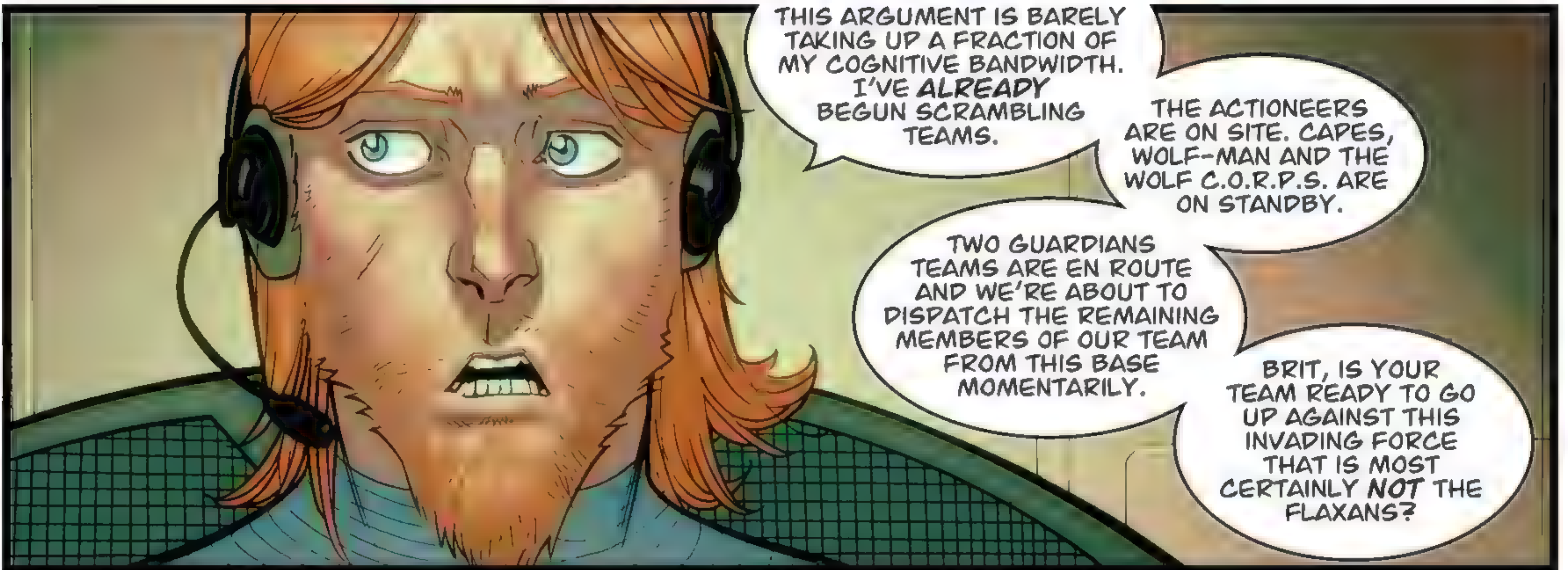


IT'S NOT THE FLAXANS. THERE IS NO WAY. THAT'S JUST NOT POSSIBLE.

IT'S SOMEONE ELSE. ANOTHER FORCE FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION, USING SIMILAR ARMOR... IT CAN'T BE THE FLAXANS.



WELL, IT SURE AS HELL LOOKS LIKE IT'S THEM! SO STOP ARGUING WITH ME AND START SCRAMBLING TEAMS!



THIS ARGUMENT IS BARELY TAKING UP A FRACTION OF MY COGNITIVE BANDWIDTH. I'VE ALREADY BEGUN SCRAMBLING TEAMS.

THE ACTIONEERS ARE ON SITE. CAPES, WOLF-MAN AND THE WOLF C.O.R.P.S. ARE ON STANDBY.

TWO GUARDIANS TEAMS ARE EN ROUTE AND WE'RE ABOUT TO DISPATCH THE REMAINING MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM FROM THIS BASE MOMENTARILY.

BRIT, IS YOUR TEAM READY TO GO UP AGAINST THIS INVADING FORCE THAT IS MOST CERTAINLY NOT THE FLAXANS?



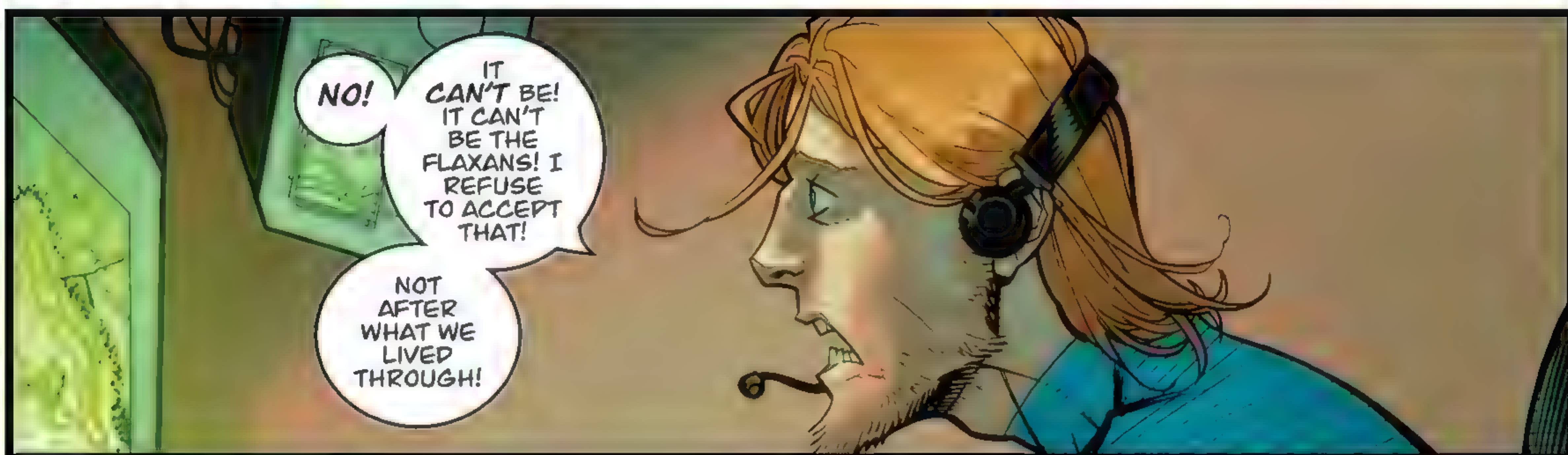
AFFIRMATIVE.

SEND US IN, ROBOT.



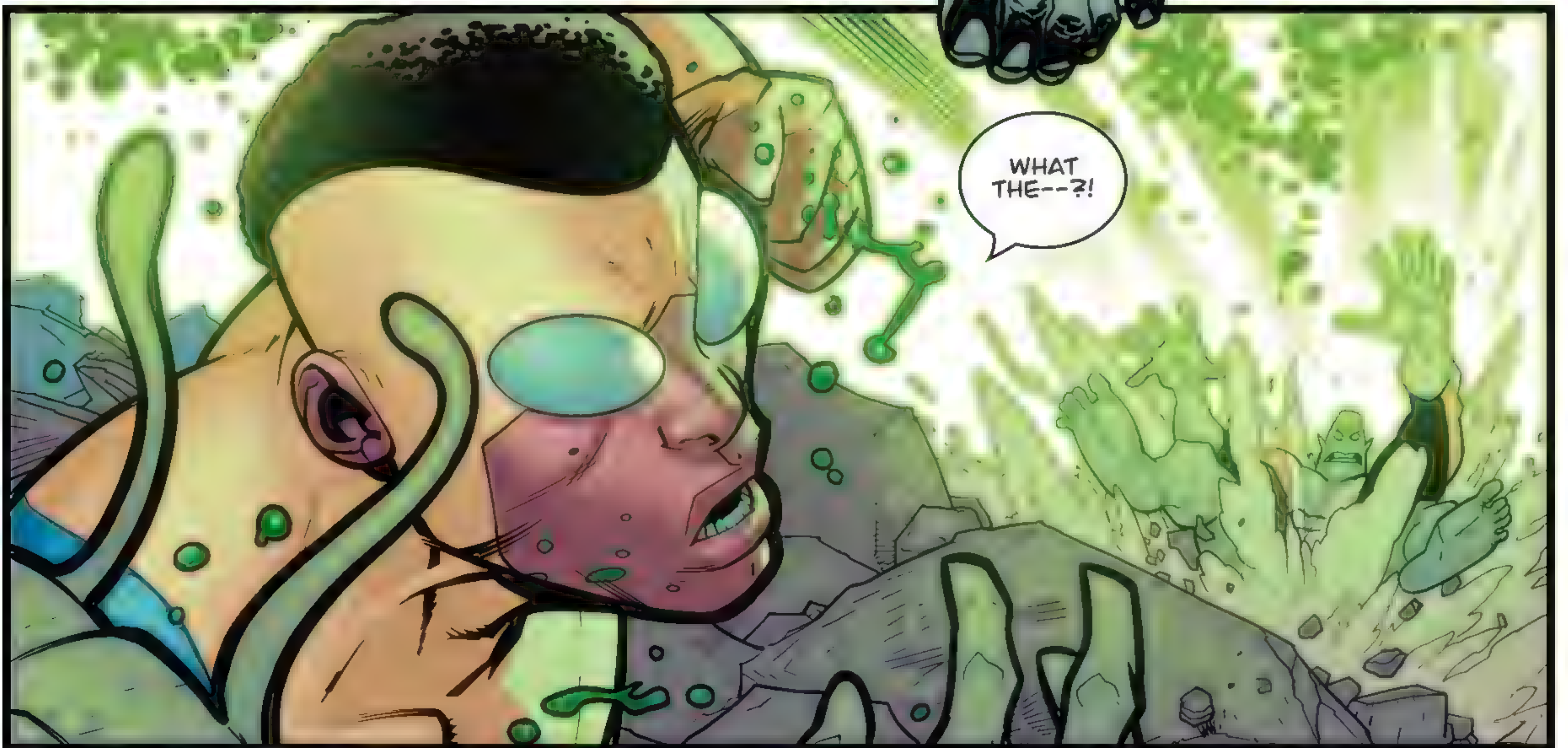
WE NOW
JOIN SHEER
PANDEMONIUM
ALREADY IN
PROGRESS!

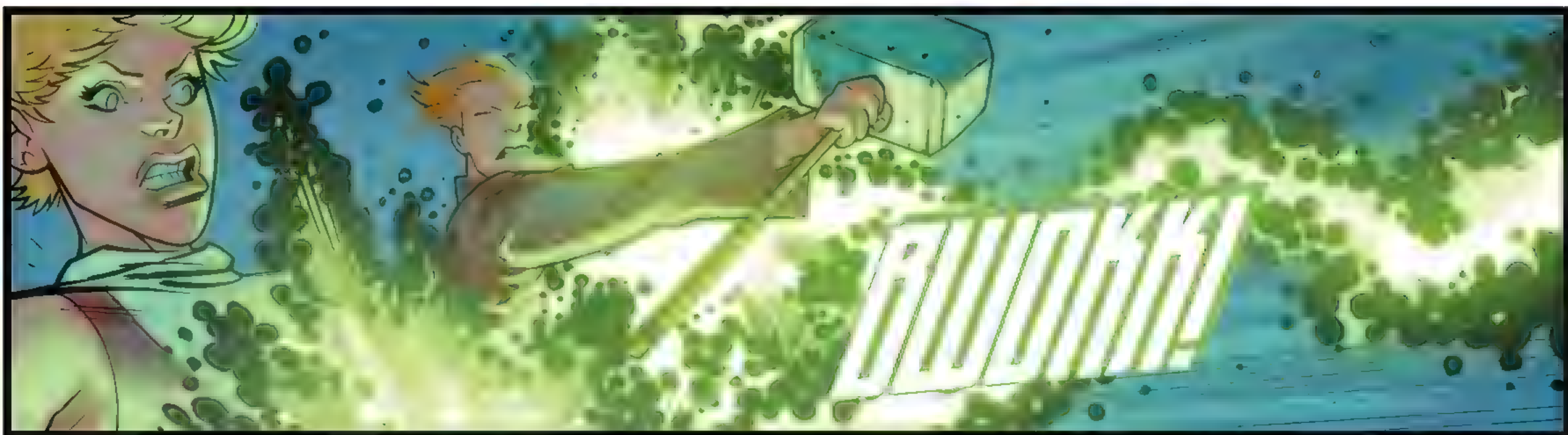
WOW!







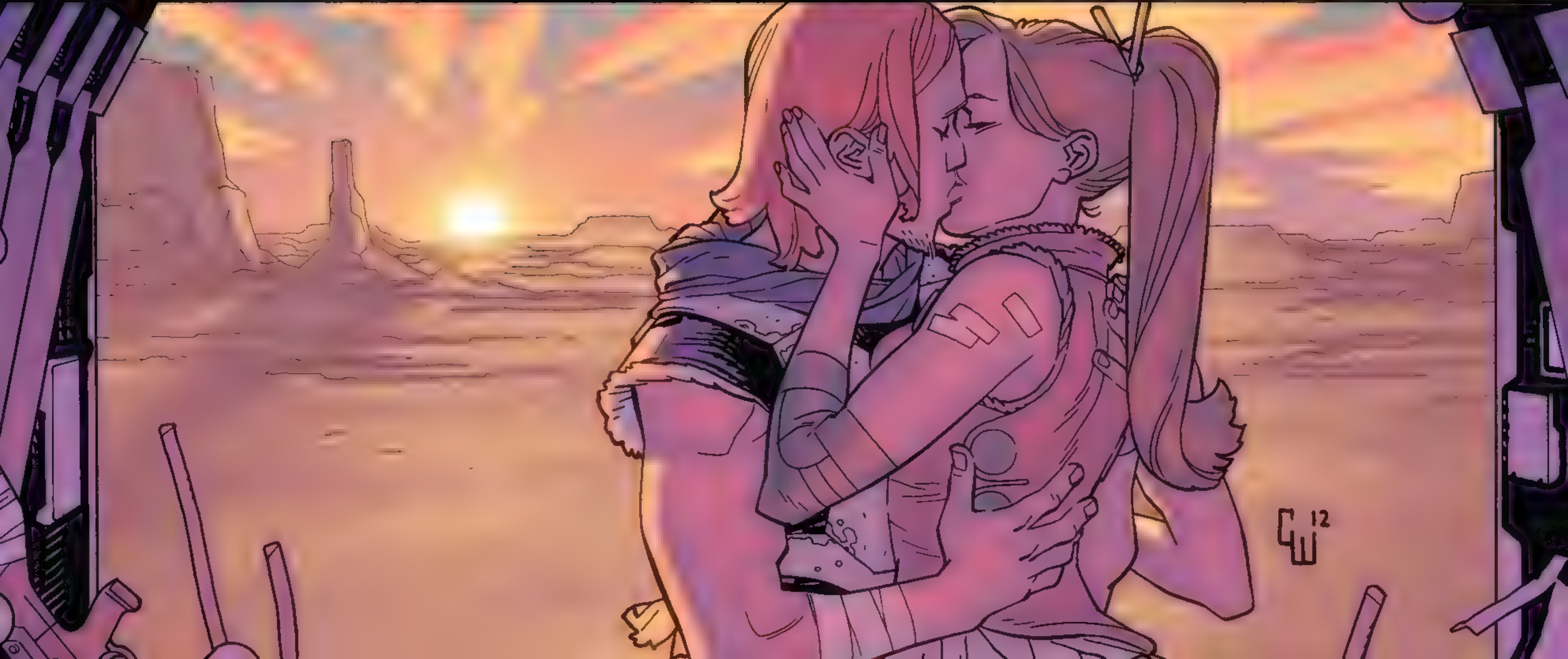


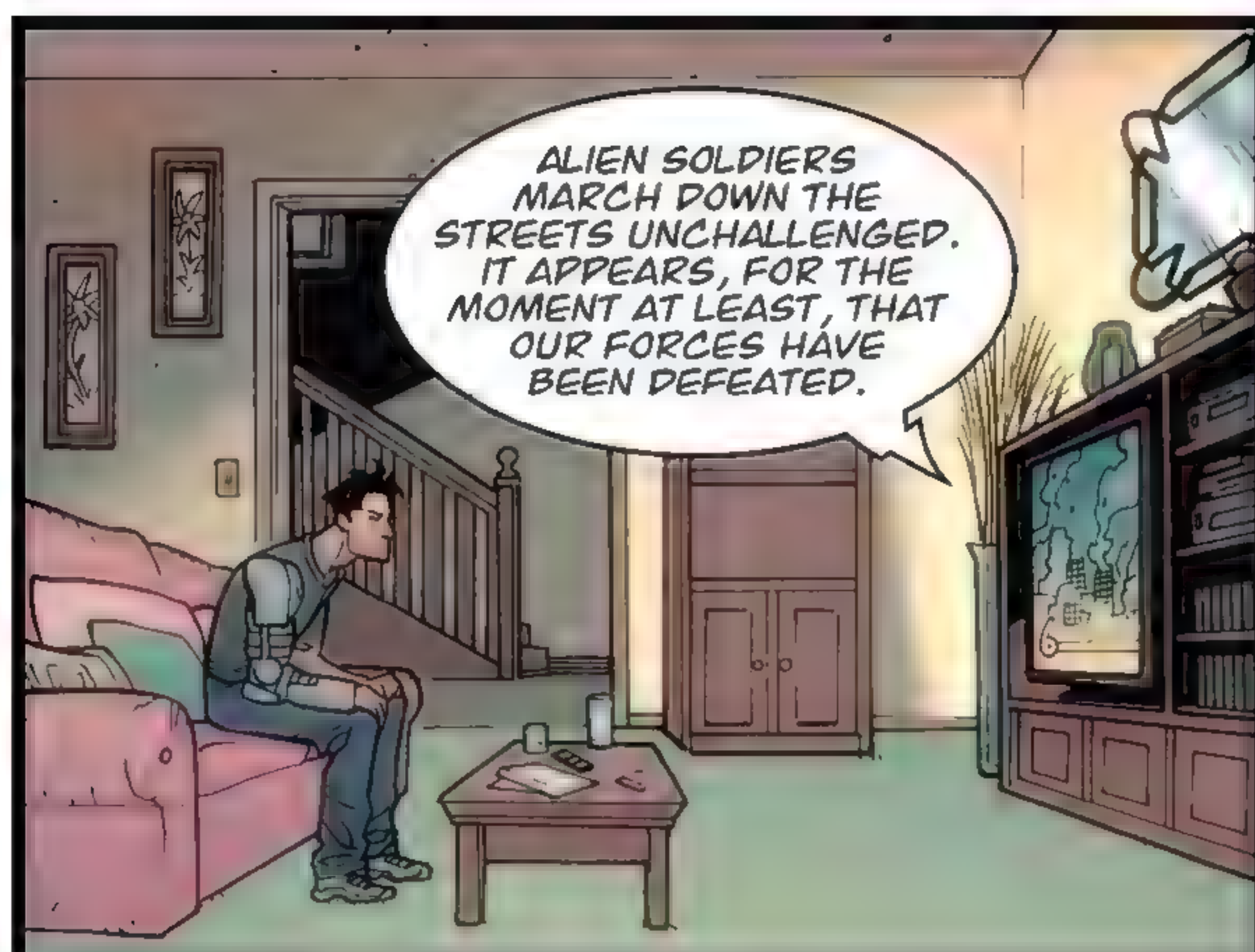
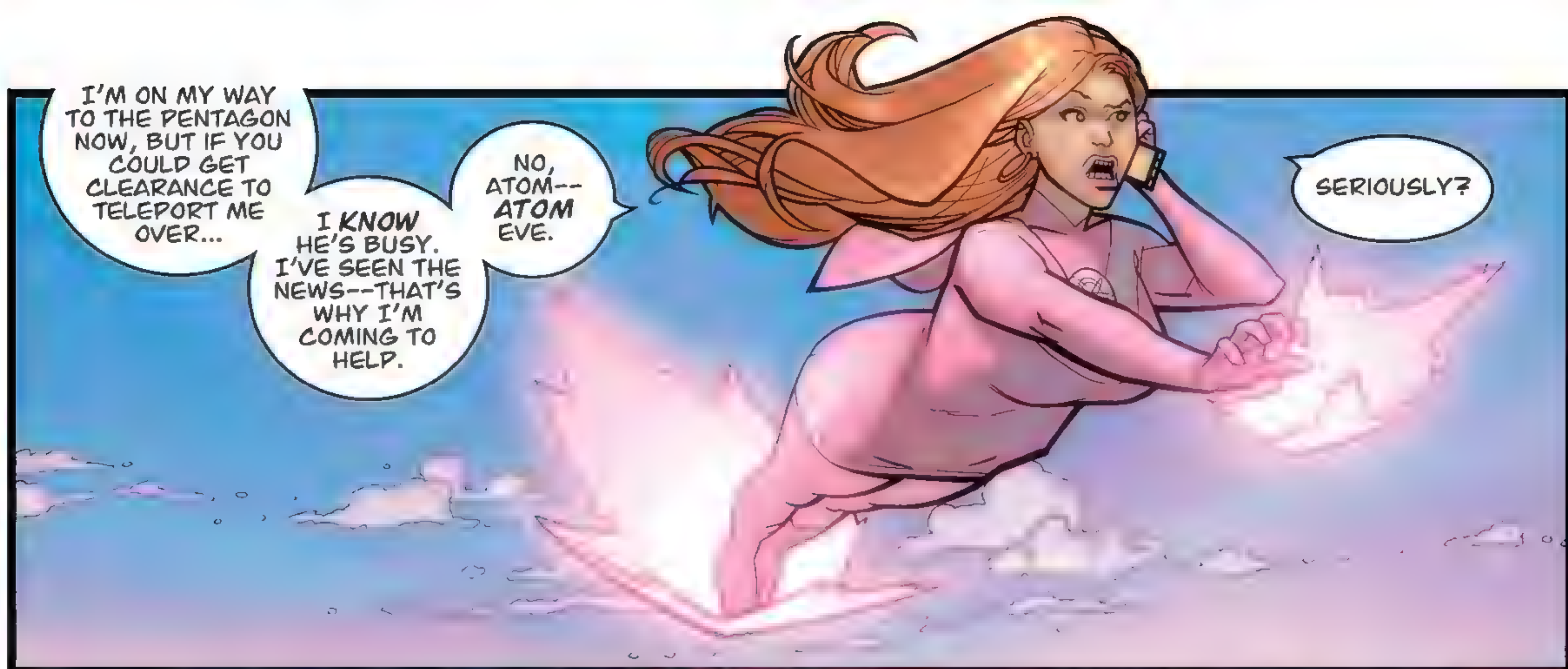




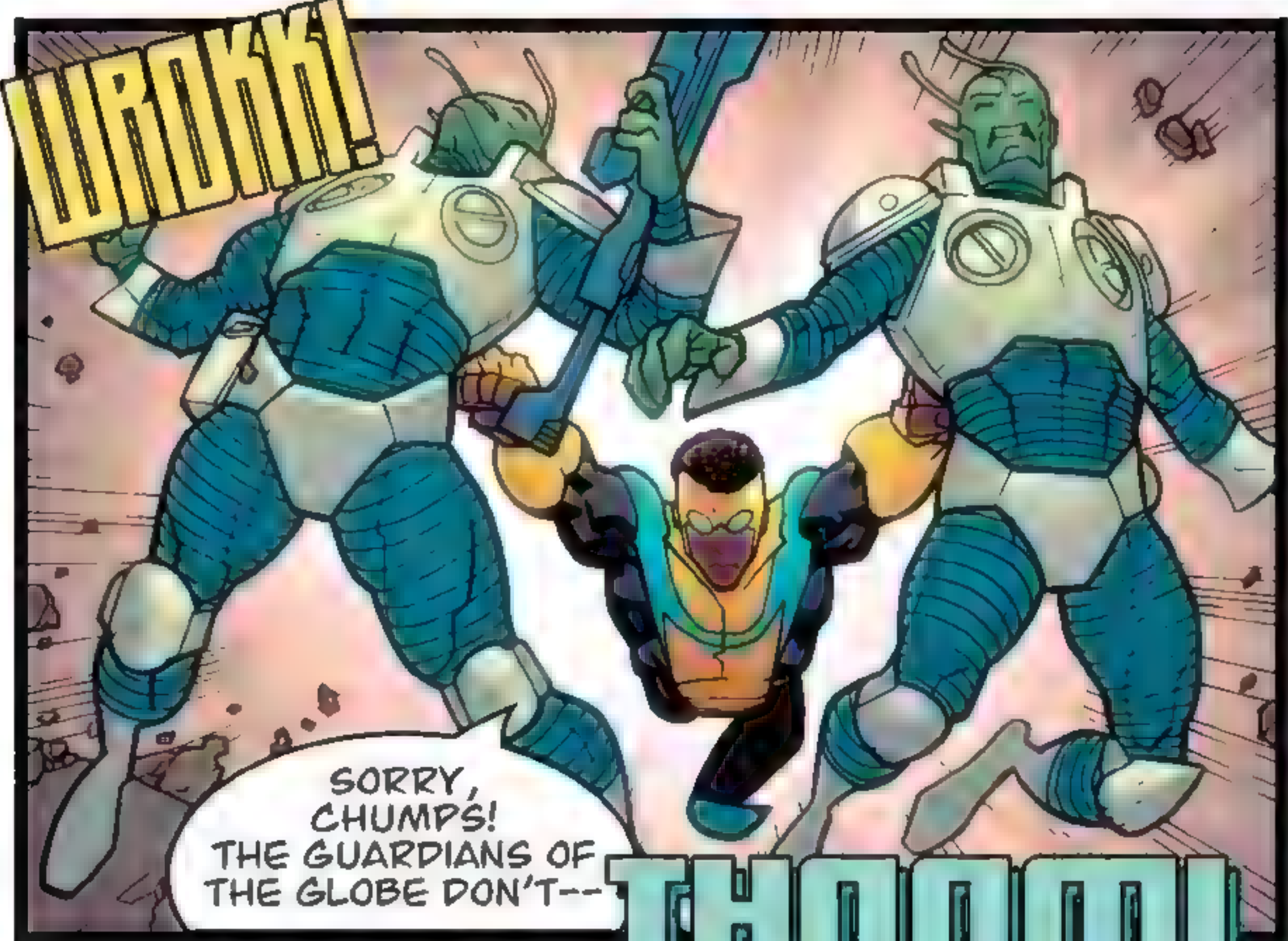


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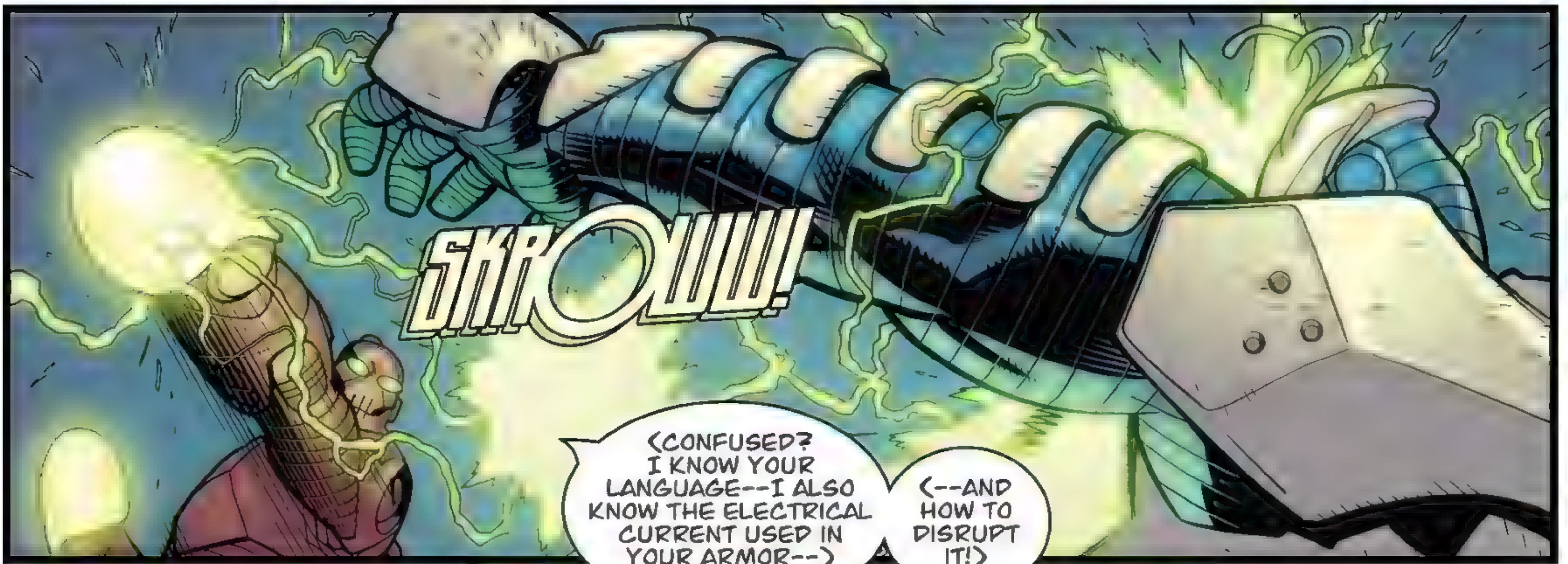


FOR THE
RECORD, I
WAS GOING TO
BREAK FREE
ON MY OWN!

I BELIEVE
YOU--NOW
HELP MY
DRONES
WITH THE
SOLDIERS--

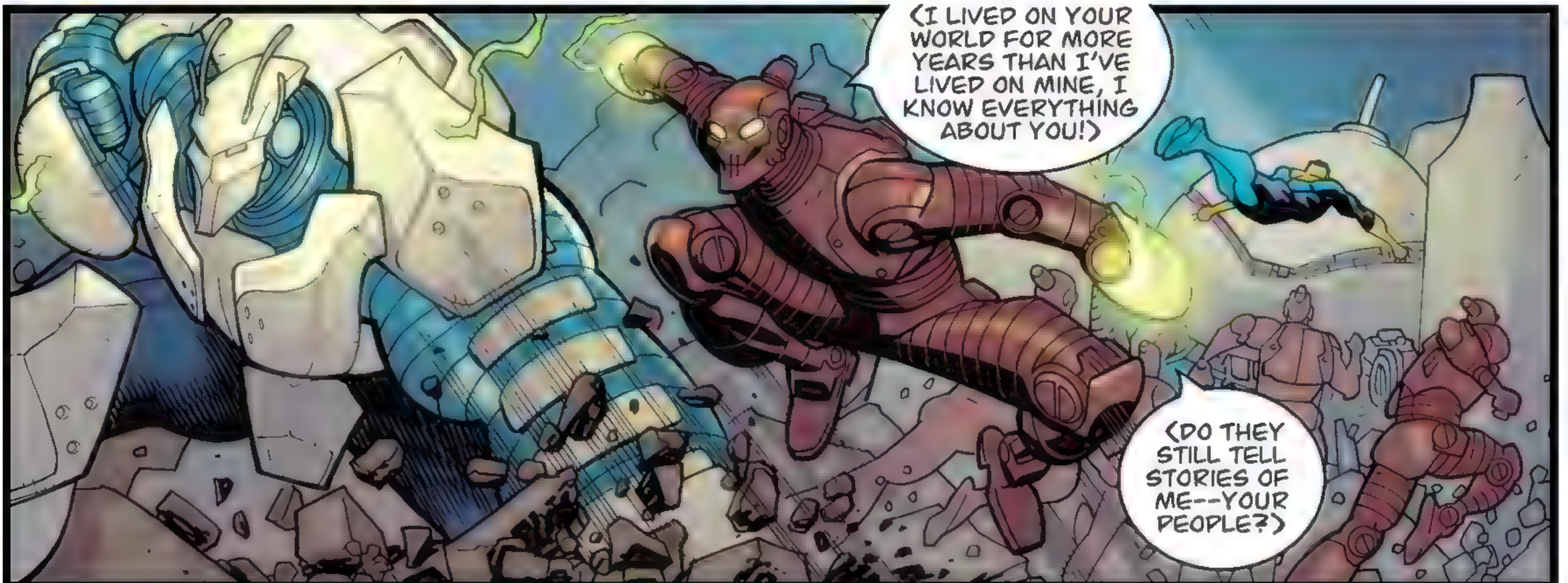
THIS
ONE IS
MINE!





(CONFUSED?
I KNOW YOUR
LANGUAGE--I ALSO
KNOW THE ELECTRICAL
CURRENT USED IN
YOUR ARMOR--)

(--AND
HOW TO DISRUPT
IT!)



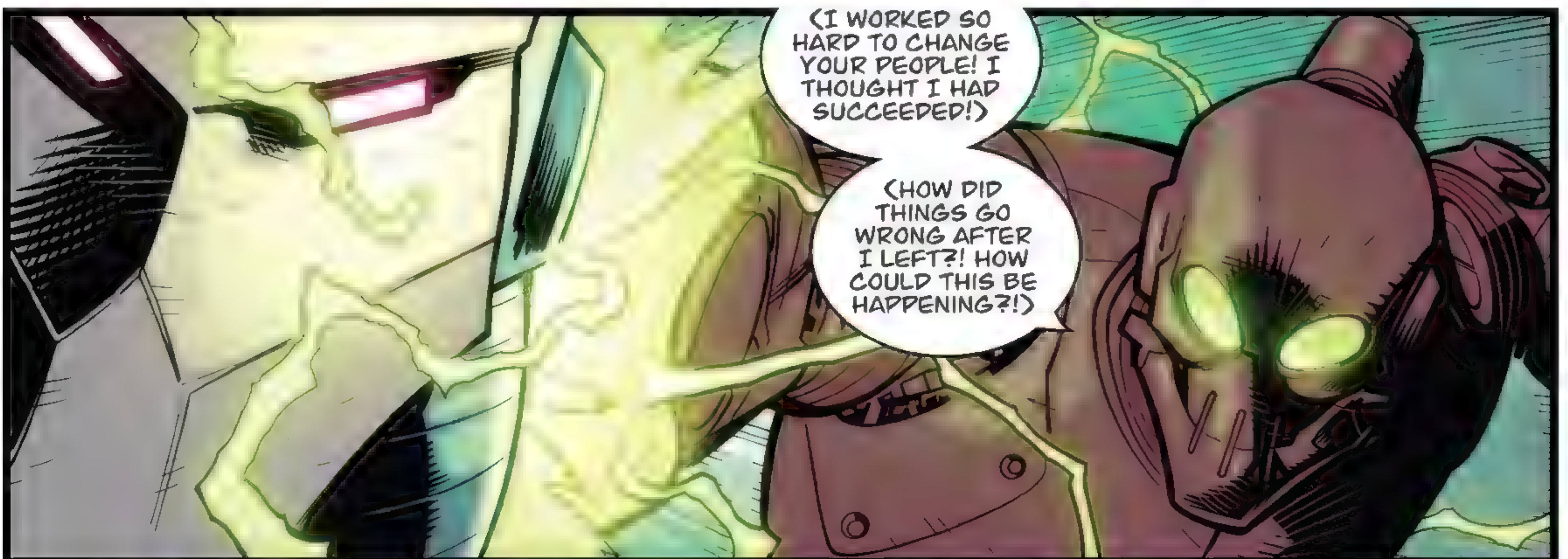
(I LIVED ON YOUR
WORLD FOR MORE
YEARS THAN I'VE
LIVED ON MINE, I
KNOW EVERYTHING
ABOUT YOU!)

(DO THEY
STILL TELL
STORIES OF
ME--YOUR
PEOPLE?)



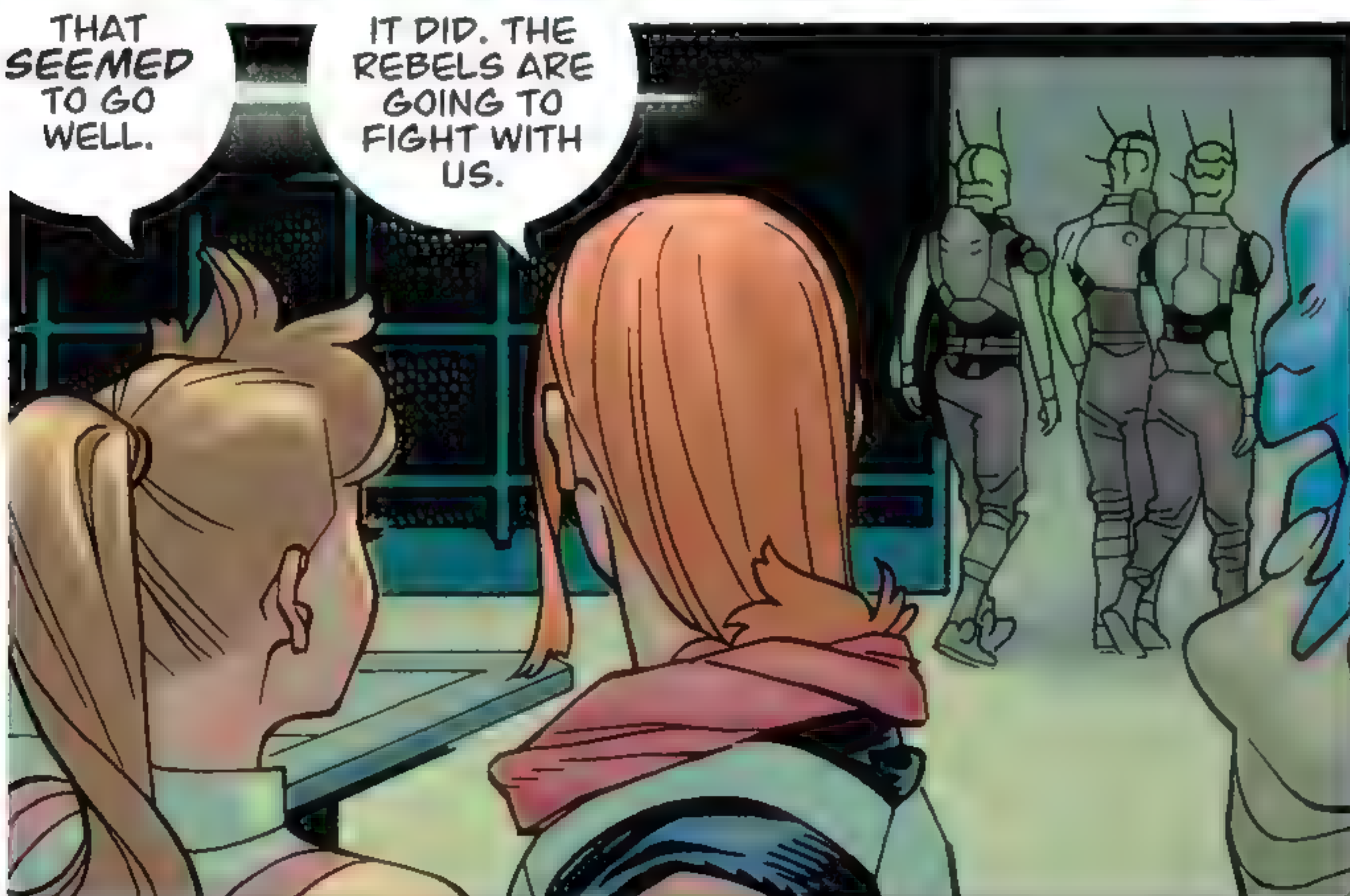
(I CHANGED THE
COURSE OF YOUR
CIVILIZATION, YOU
KNOW... OR AT
LEAST--I THOUGHT
I DID...)

(DID YOU
TAKE COMMAND
BY FORCE? FIGHT
TO RETURN THE
FLAXANS TO THE
OLD WAYS--
THE WARRING
WAYS?!)



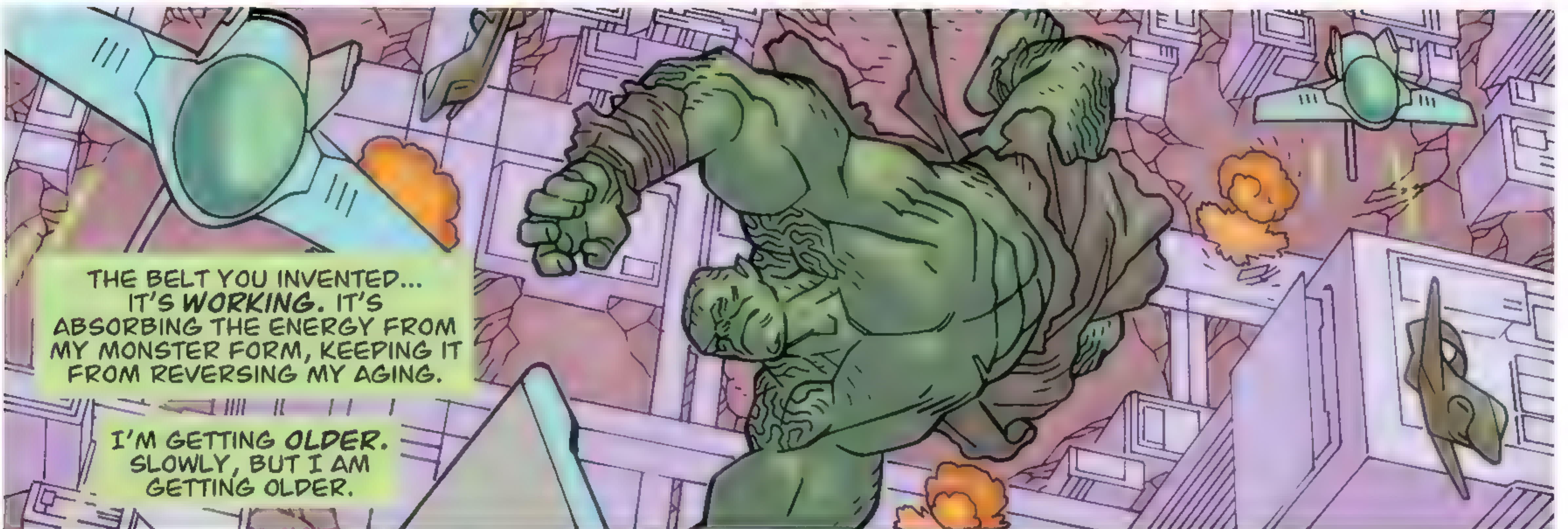
(I WORKED SO
HARD TO CHANGE
YOUR PEOPLE! I
THOUGHT I HAD
SUCCEEDED!)

(HOW DID
THINGS GO
WRONG AFTER
I LEFT?! HOW
COULD THIS BE
HAPPENING?!)





WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S
WRONG, AMANDA?



THE BELT YOU INVENTED...
IT'S **WORKING**. IT'S
ABSORBING THE ENERGY FROM
MY MONSTER FORM, KEEPING IT
FROM REVERSING MY AGING.

I'M GETTING OLDER.
SLOWLY, BUT I AM
GETTING OLDER.

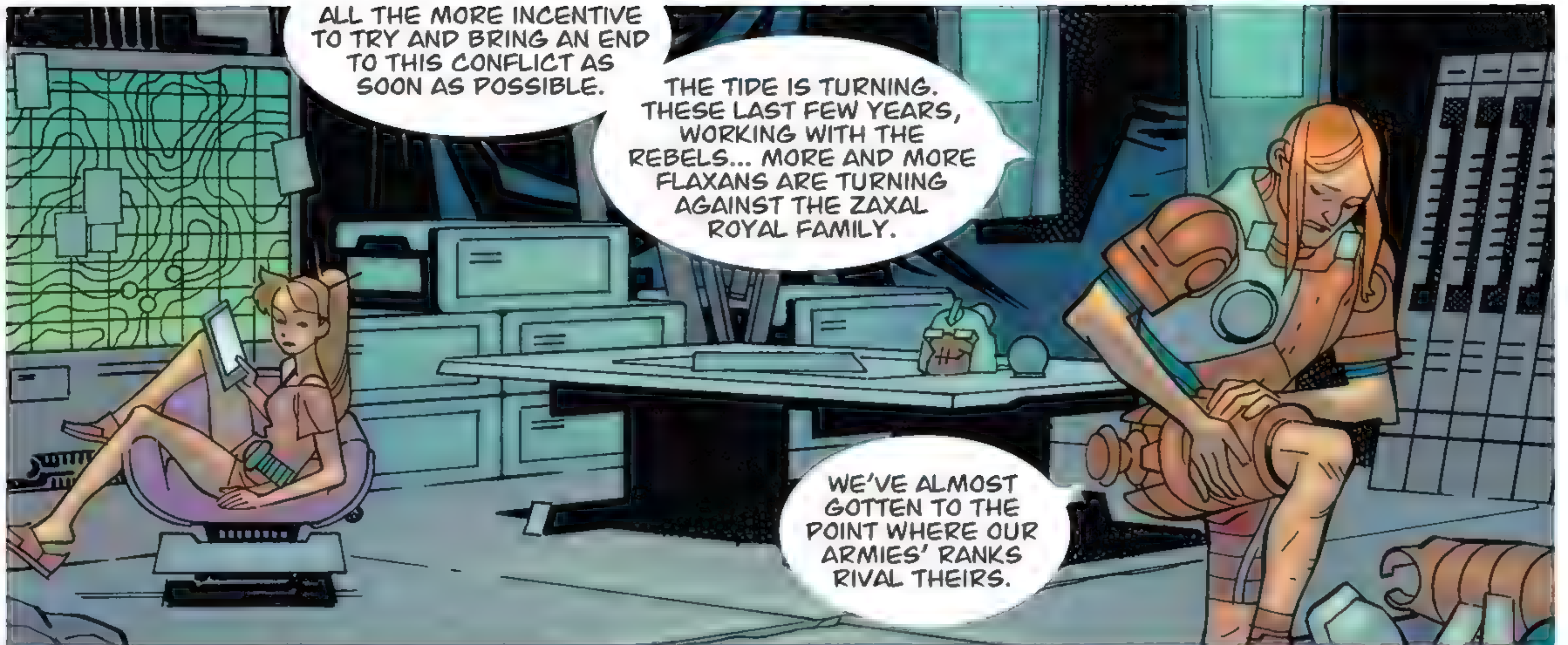


THAT'S GREAT.
THAT'S WHAT YOU
WANTED, RIGHT?

YES, BUT...



IF THIS WAR RAGES ON... AND I KNOW
I'M RIGHT WHEN I SAY THERE'S NO
END IN SIGHT... IT WILL EVENTUALLY
GET TO A POINT WHEN I'M **USELESS**
IN BATTLE.



ALL THE MORE INCENTIVE TO TRY AND BRING AN END TO THIS CONFLICT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THE TIDE IS TURNING. THESE LAST FEW YEARS, WORKING WITH THE REBELS... MORE AND MORE FLAXANS ARE TURNING AGAINST THE ZAXAL ROYAL FAMILY.

WE'VE ALMOST GOTTEN TO THE POINT WHERE OUR ARMIES' RANKS RIVAL THEIRS.

FANTASTIC, SO... WE'RE ALMOST EVENLY MATCHED?

HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO BE HERE? THIS WORLD, I... WE'VE ALREADY LIVED HERE FAR LONGER THAN WE EVER LIVED ON EARTH, BUT I STILL FEEL LIKE WE DON'T BELONG.

CAN'T WE ATTACK ONE OF THEIR DIMENSIONAL HUBS, GO BACK FOR JUST A LITTLE BIT?



ONLY A MATTER OF MONTHS HAVE PASSED ON EARTH-- IT WILL BE THERE WAITING FOR US WHEN WE'RE READY, I PROMISE.

WERE WE TO GO THERE FOR EVEN A WEEK, WHEN WE RETURNED SO MUCH TIME WOULD HAVE PASSED THAT ALL OUR WORK WOULD BE UNDONE.

WE HAVE TO SEE THIS THROUGH.

I'M SORRY, BUT... IF YOU COULD JUST...

...LEARN THE LANGUAGE. I THINK YOU'D HAVE AN EASIER TIME IF YOU COULD COMMUNICATE WITH SOMEONE OTHER THAN ME.



YOU THINK I HAVEN'T TRIED? I'M NOT A GENIUS LIKE YOU. THEIR LANGUAGE HAS SOUNDS I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO MAKE!

I'VE BEEN TRYING FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS!

IT'S JUST TOO COMPLICATED.

AND WHEN YOU TRY TO HELP ME YOU JUST MAKE THINGS SEEM MORE COMPLICATED!

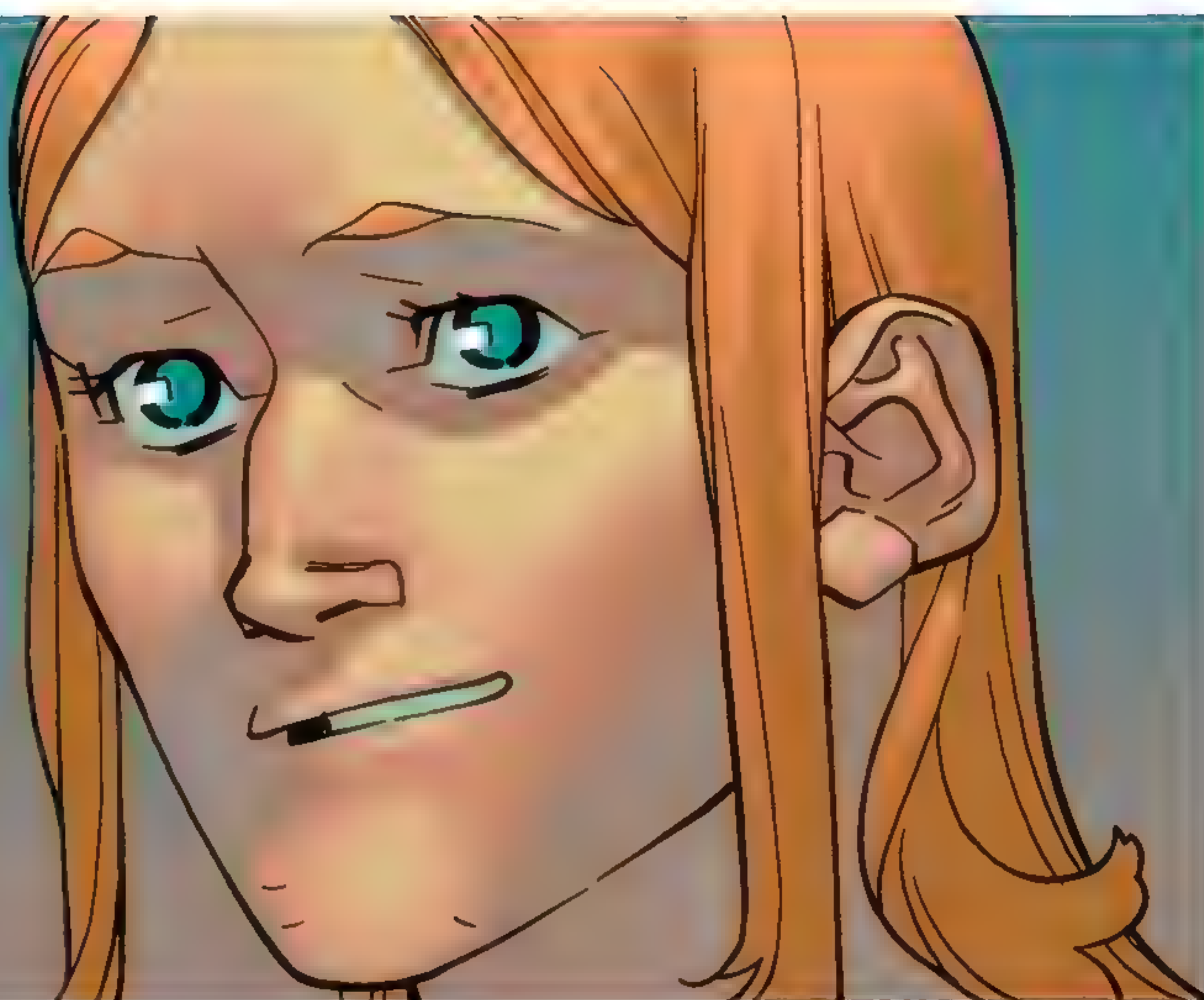
I'M SORRY. I KNOW IT'S NOT EASY, IT TOOK ME DECADES TO MASTER THE FLAXAN TONGUE.

I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO UPSET YOU. I KNOW THIS ISN'T EASY FOR YOU. ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT WHAT WE'RE DOING IS NOTHING LESS THAN SAVING OUR WORLD.

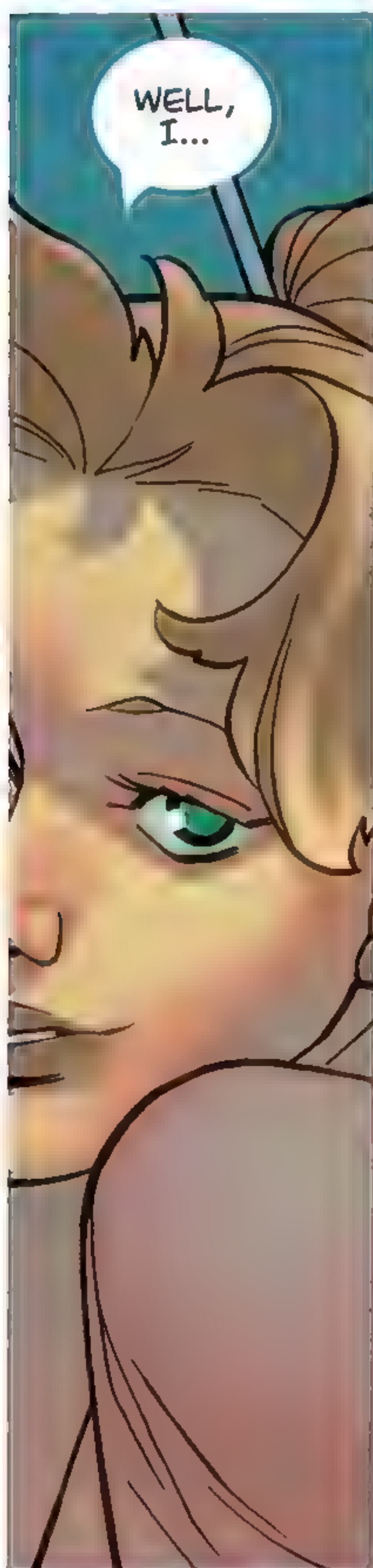
AND WHILE IT WILL MOST DEFINITELY BE THE LONGEST STRETCH OF TIME ANY HUMAN HAS EVER EXPERIENCED, ASIDE FROM MAYBE THE IMMORTAL... IT WILL BE TEMPORARY.

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH... IF I COULD HAVE CHOSEN ANYONE TO ACCOMPANY ME ON THIS MISSION...

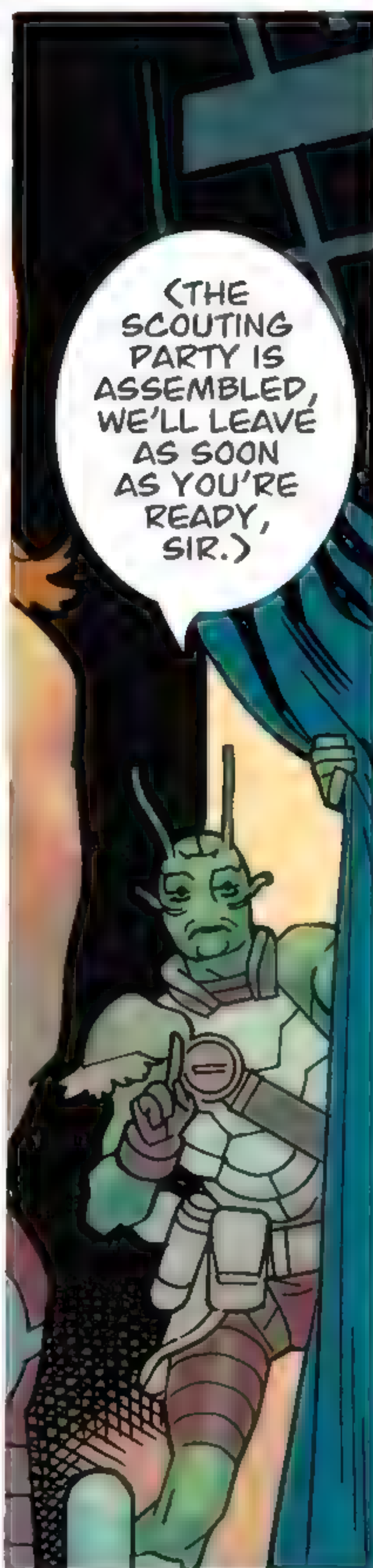
...IT WOULD HAVE BEEN YOU.



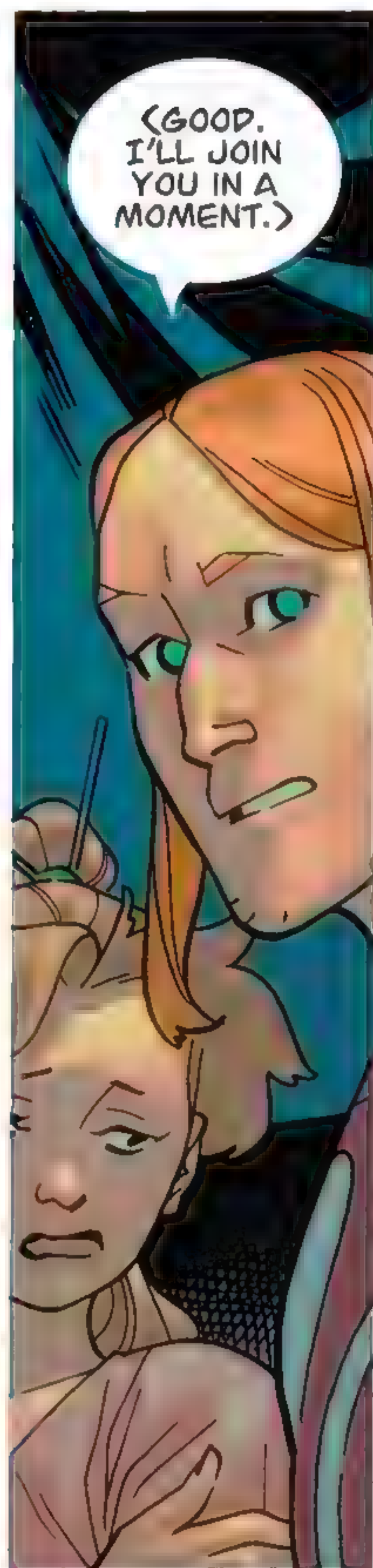
WELL, I...



(THE SCOUTING PARTY IS ASSEMBLED, WE'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS YOU'RE READY, SIR.)

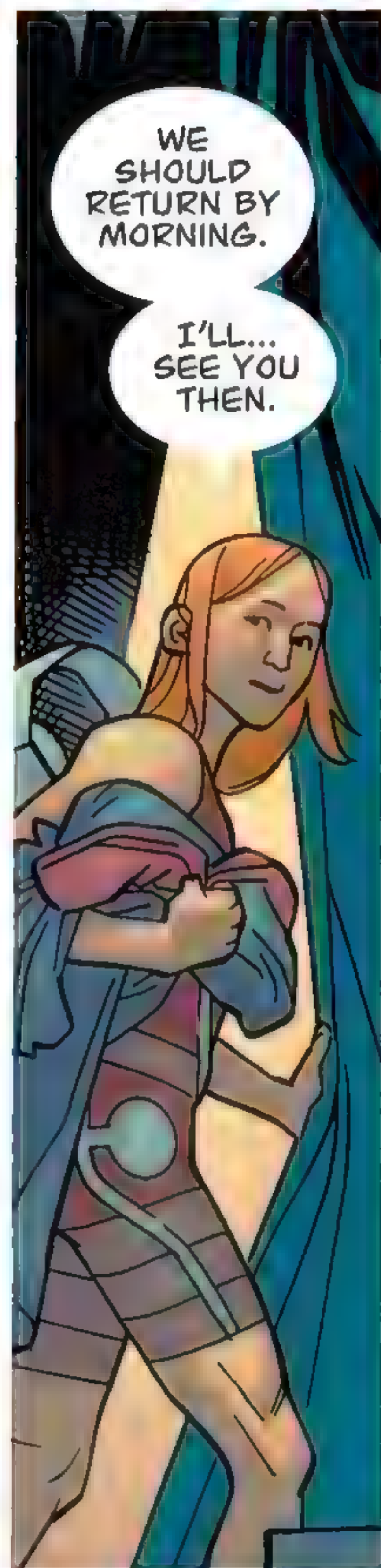


(GOOD. I'LL JOIN YOU IN A MOMENT.)



WE SHOULD RETURN BY MORNING.

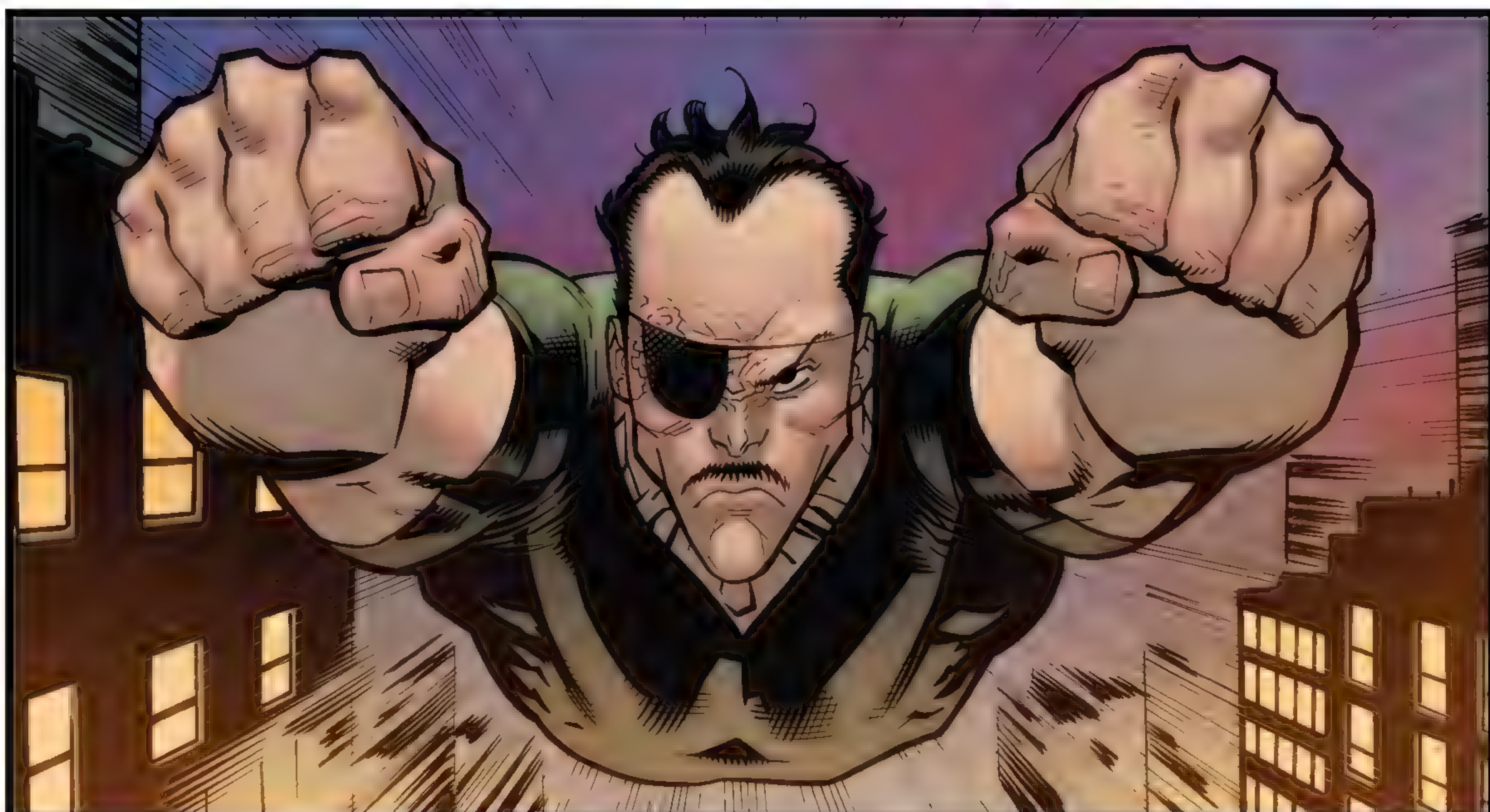
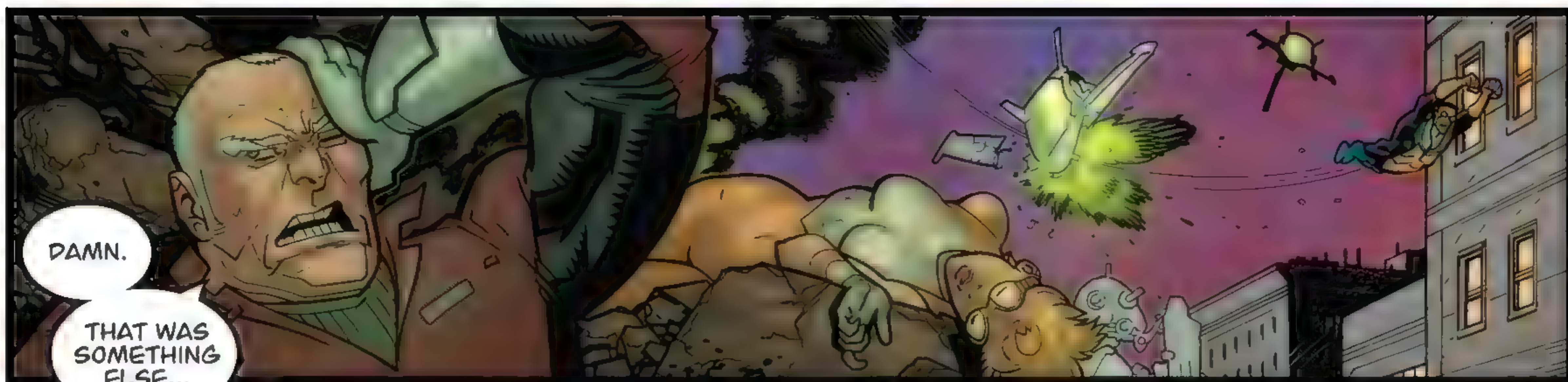
I'LL... SEE YOU THEN.

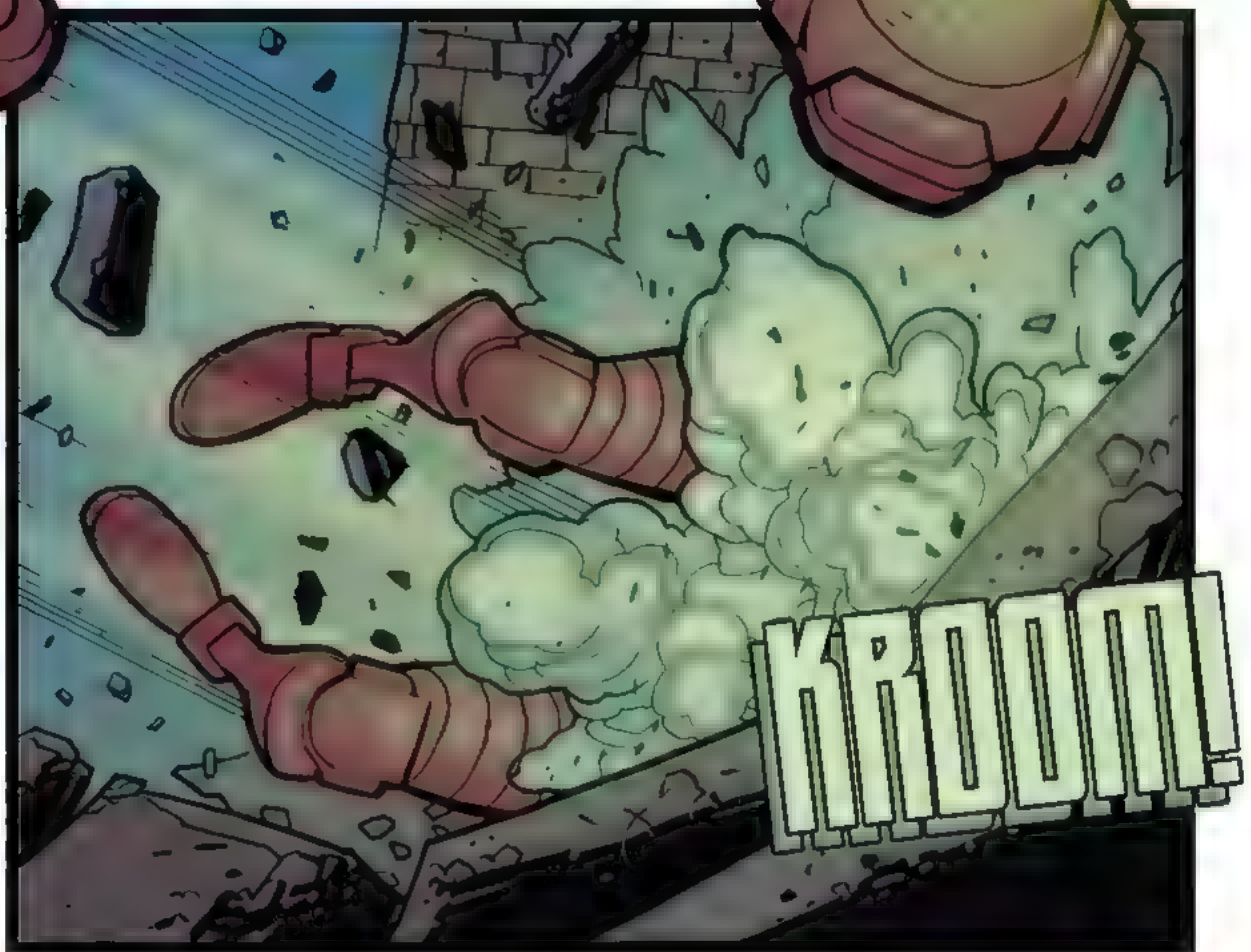
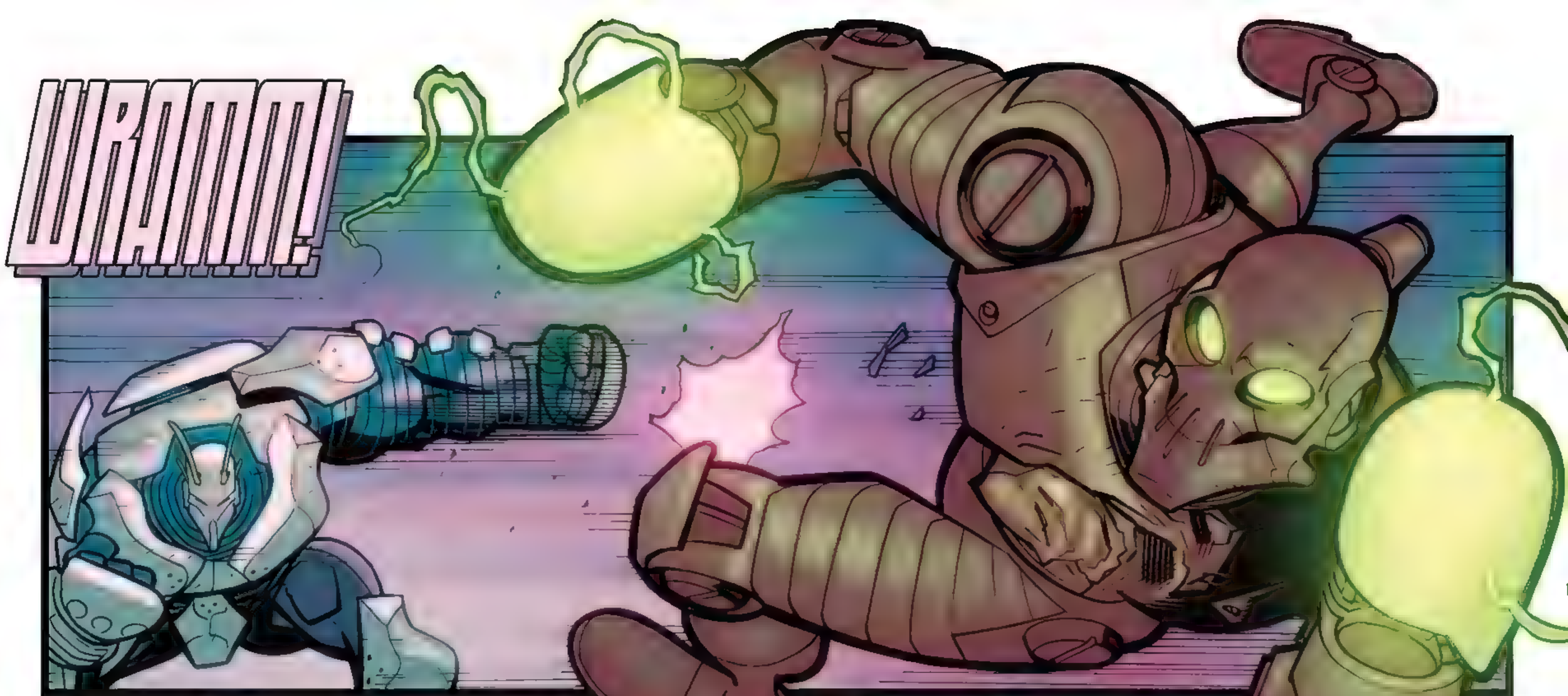


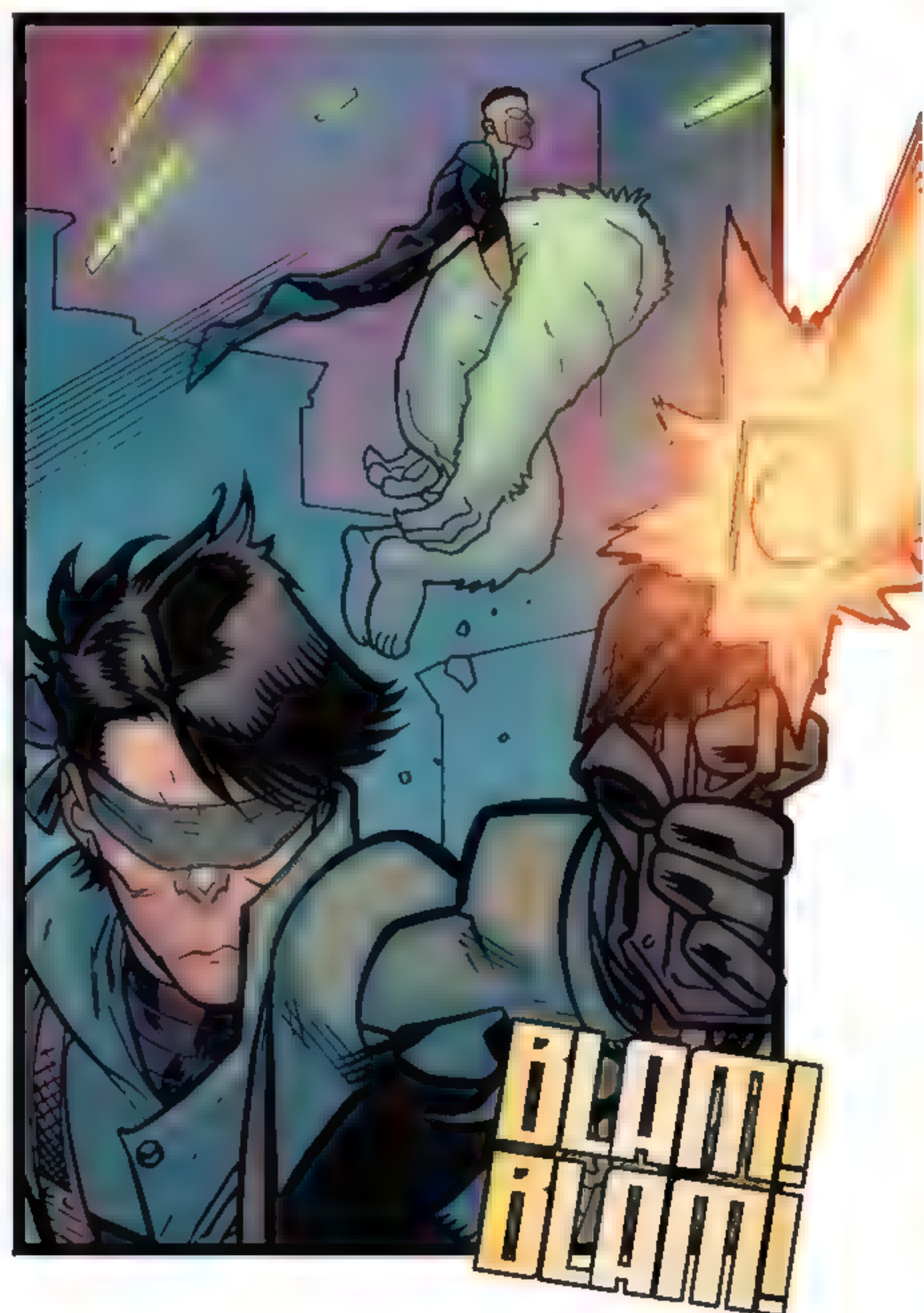
YEAH.

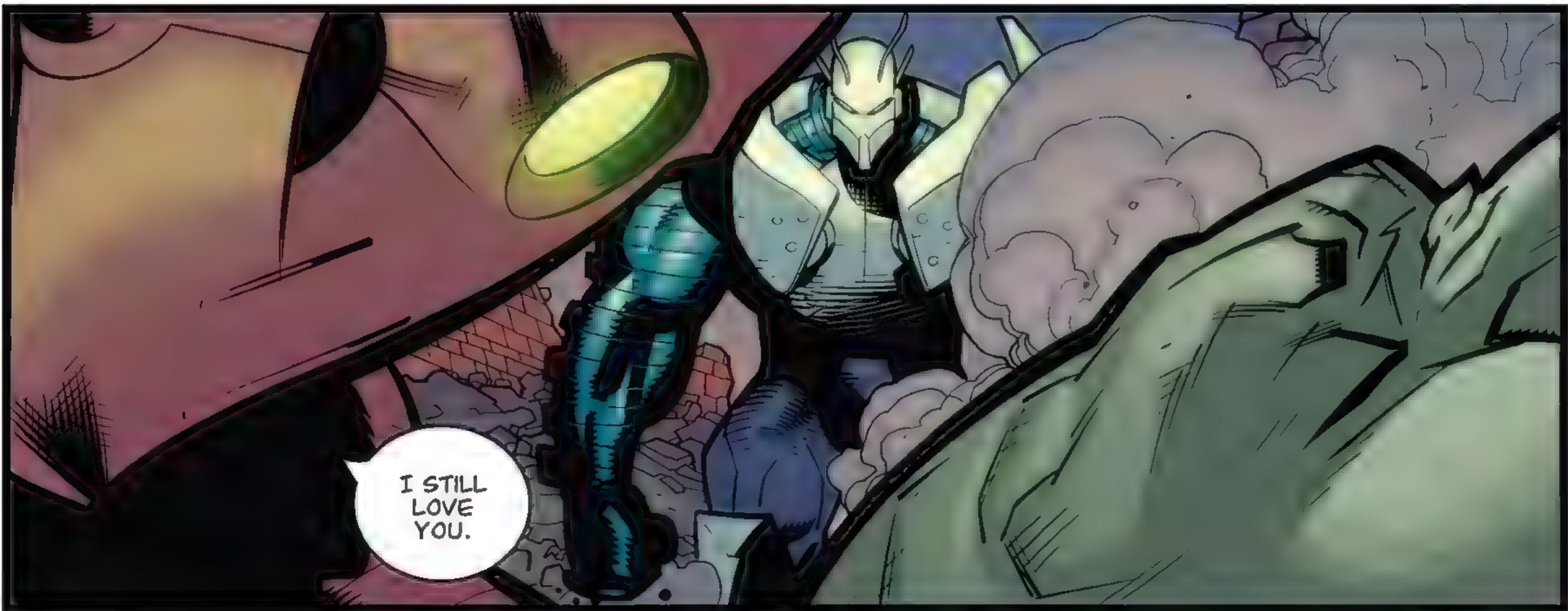
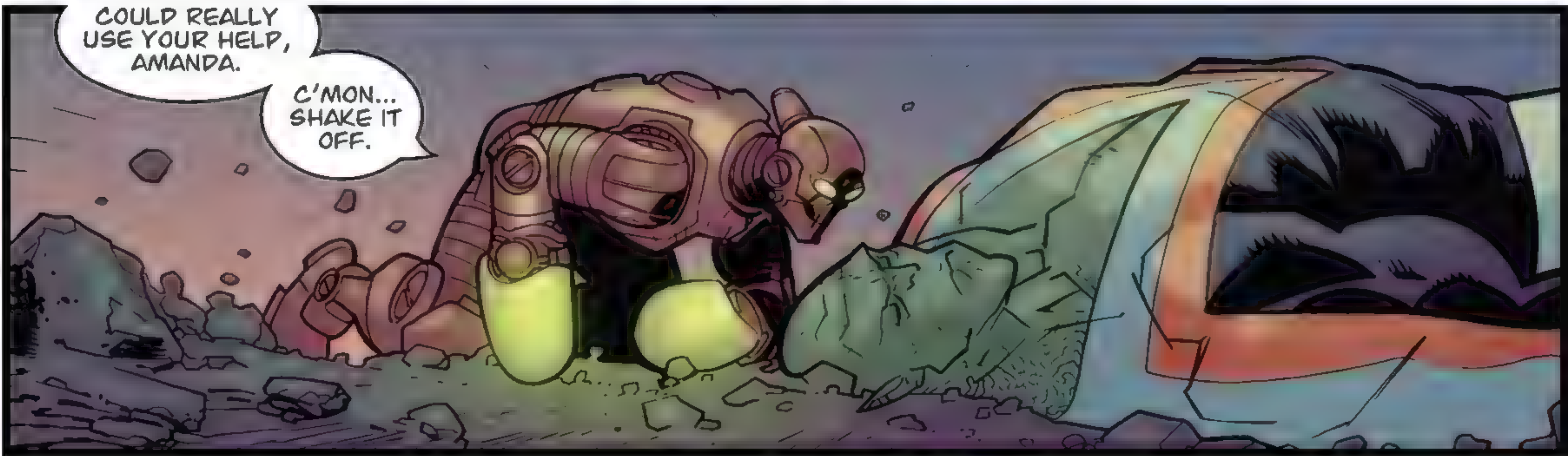
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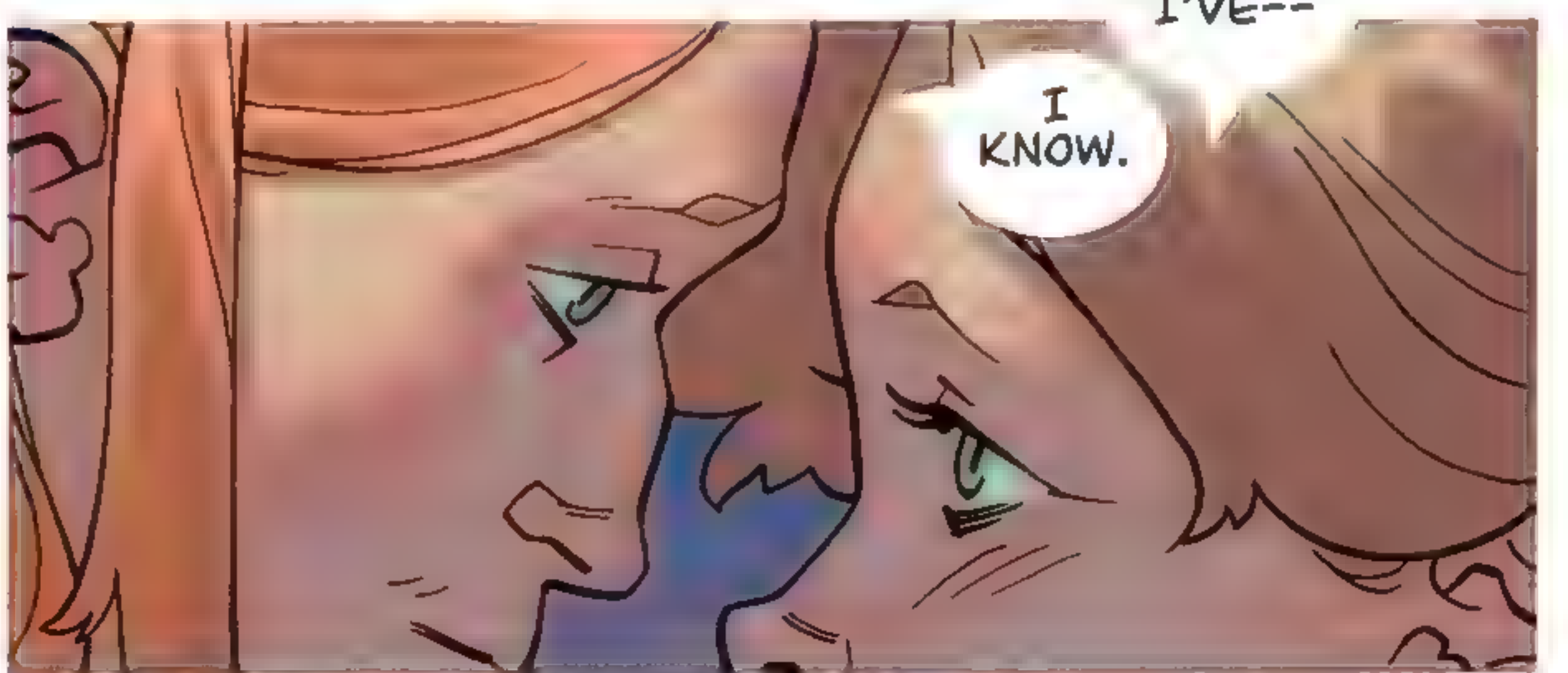
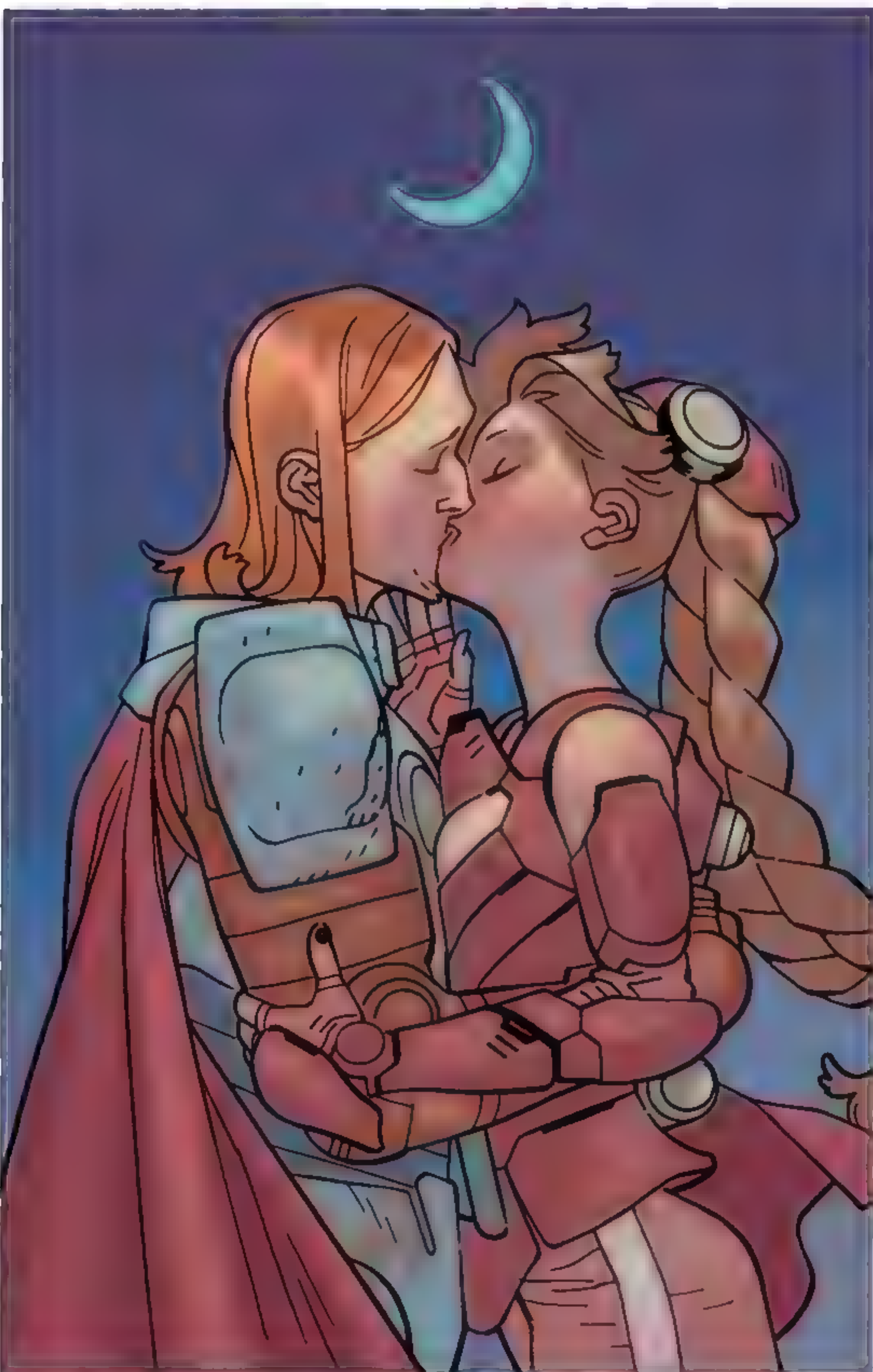


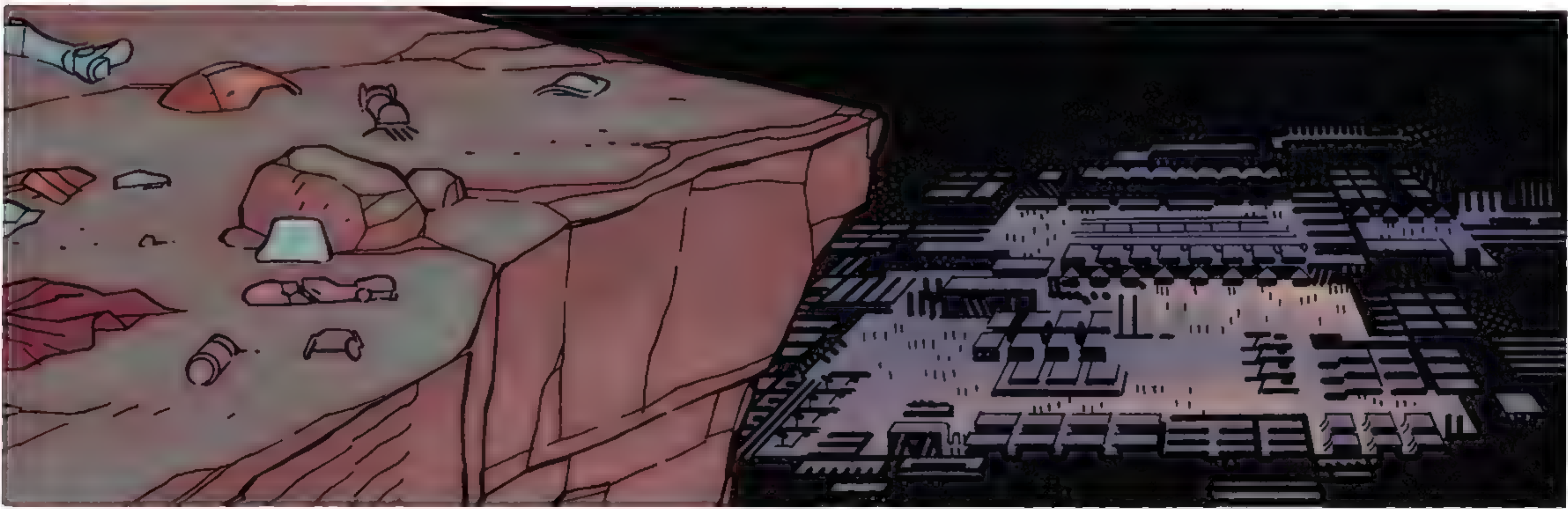
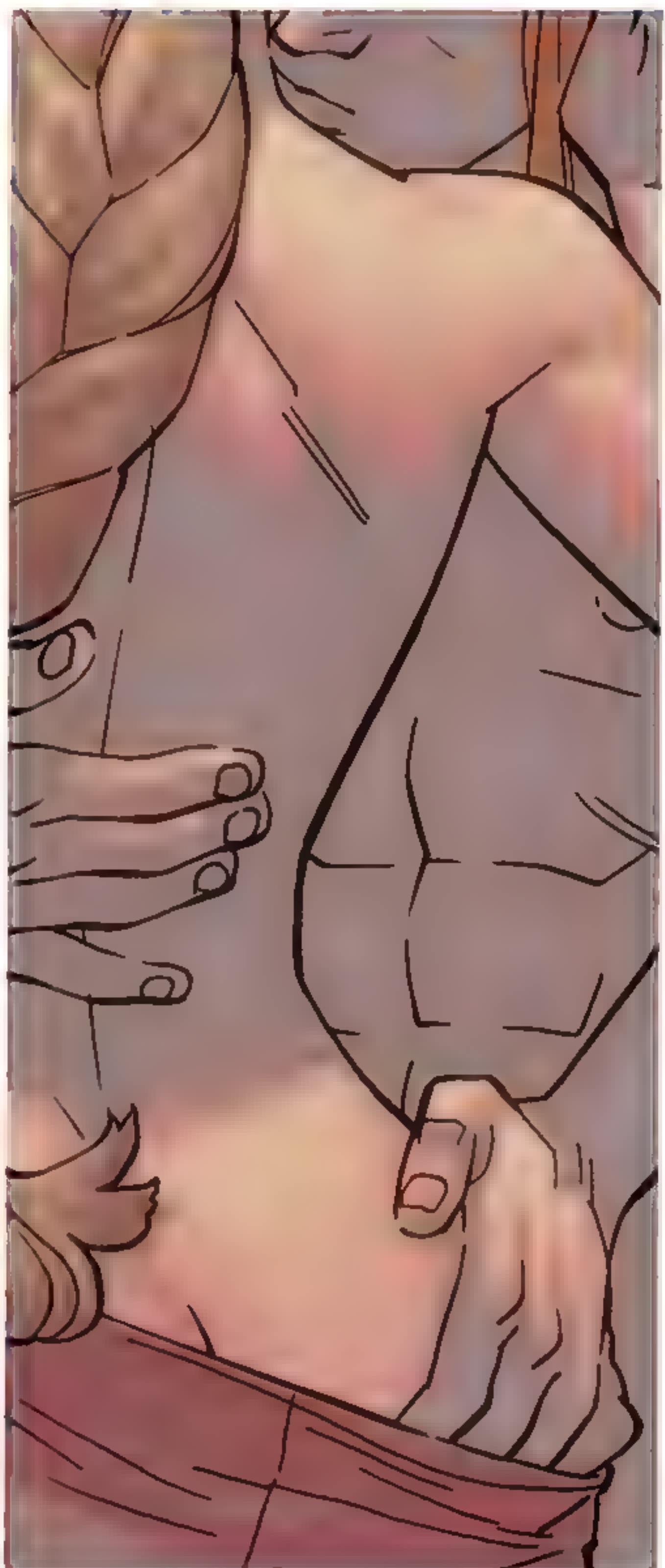
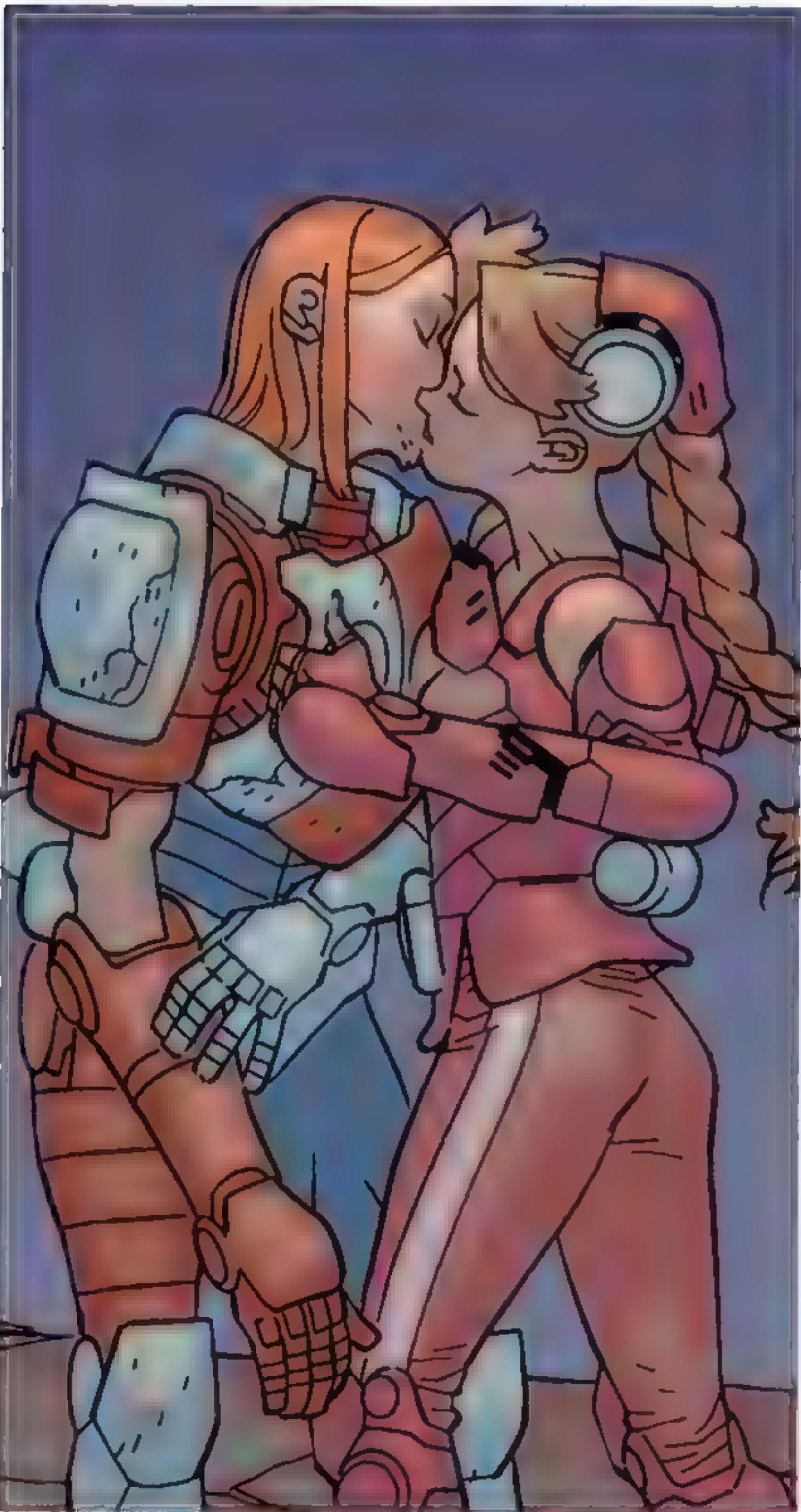








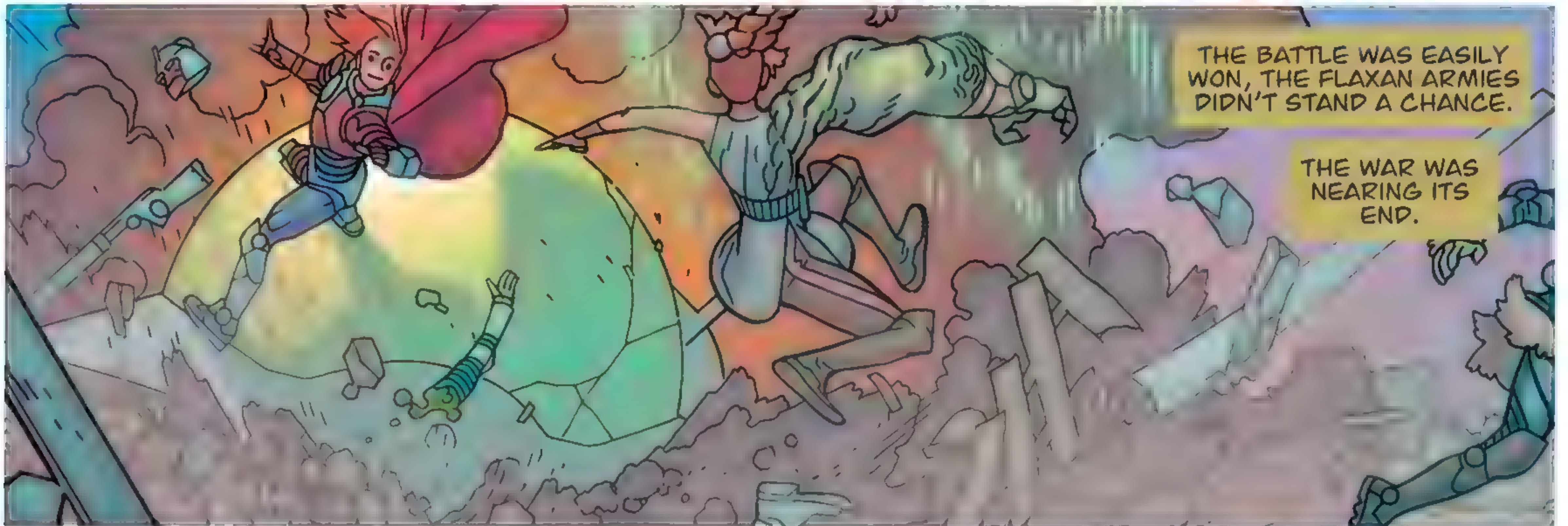






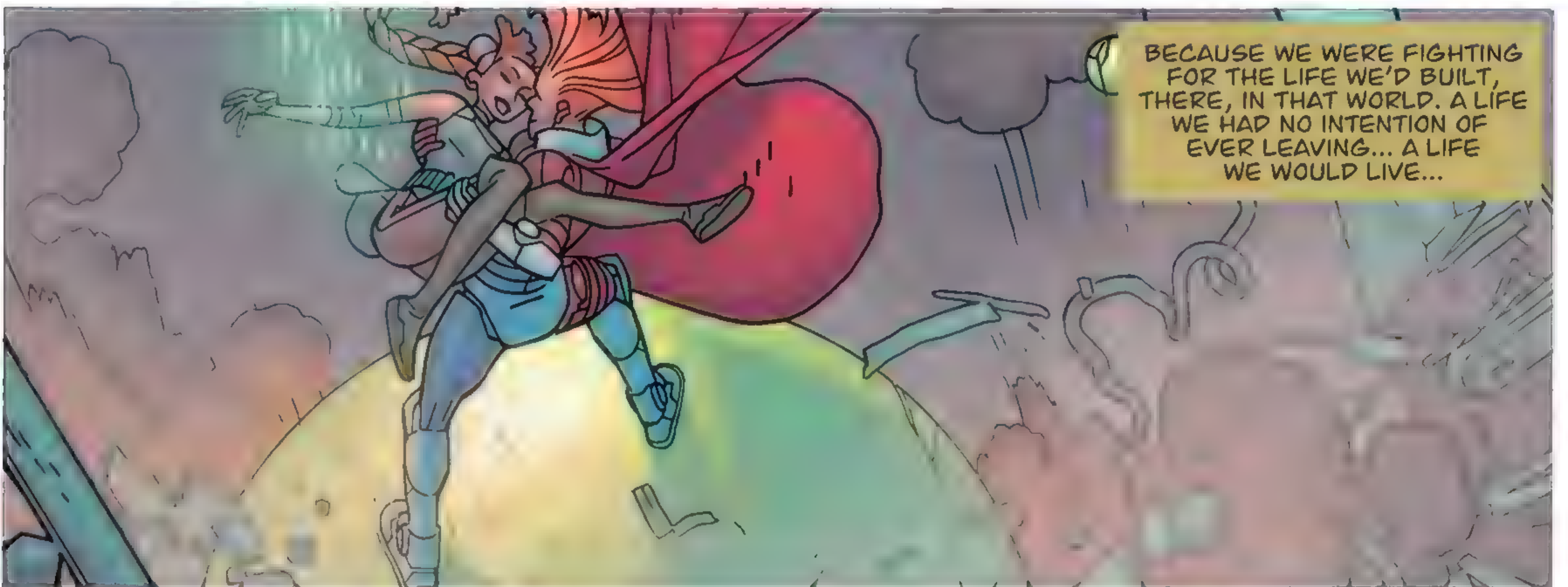
AND LIKE THAT, AFTER
SO MANY DECADES...
CENTURIES OF WAR,
WITH A SINGULAR MISSION:
END THE THREAT TO THE
WORLD WE KNEW...

WE FOUGHT
FOR A
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT
REASON.



THE BATTLE WAS EASILY
WON, THE FLAXAN ARMIES
DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE.

THE WAR WAS
NEARING ITS
END.



BECAUSE WE WERE FIGHTING
FOR THE LIFE WE'D BUILT,
THERE, IN THAT WORLD. A LIFE
WE HAD NO INTENTION OF
EVER LEAVING... A LIFE
WE WOULD LIVE...



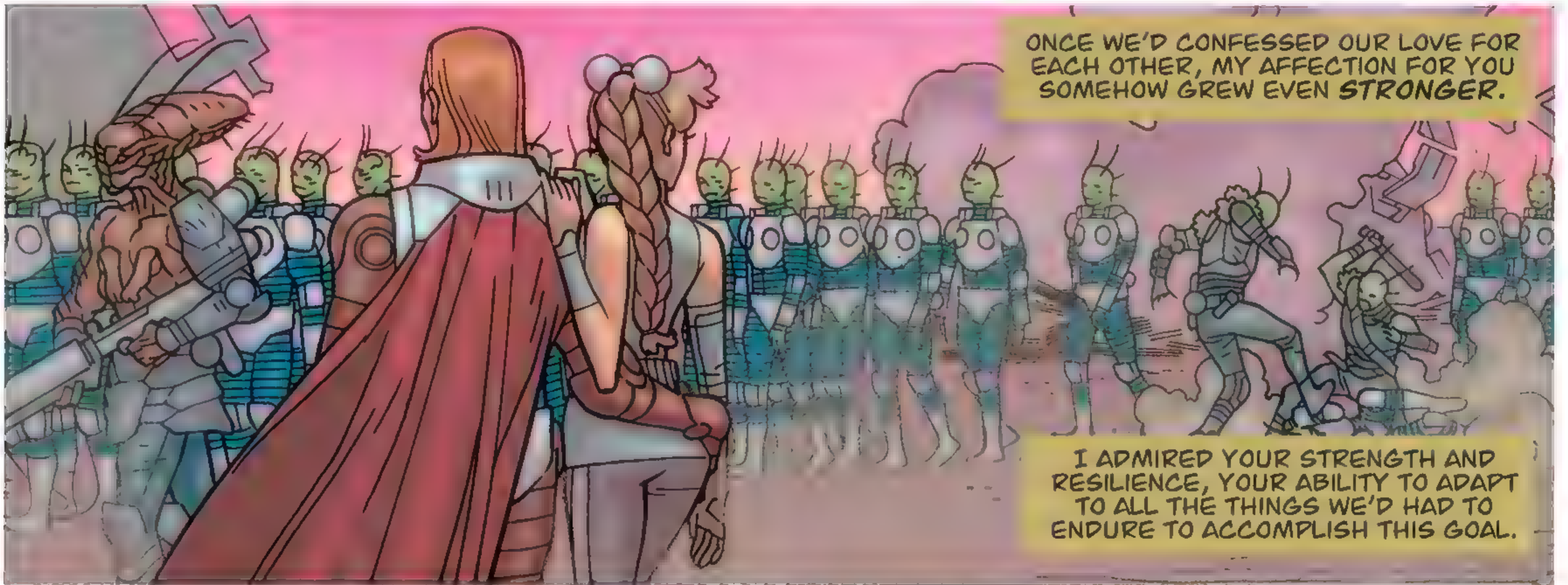
...TOGETHER.

FOREVER.



THE WAR WAS OVER.

ALL THE SLAVE RACES WERE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOME DIMENSIONS. MOST CHOSE NOT TO, AS THEY'D BEEN HERE FOR GENERATIONS.



ONCE WE'D CONFESSED OUR LOVE FOR EACH OTHER, MY AFFECTION FOR YOU SOMEHOW GREW EVEN **STRONGER**.

I ADMIRERD YOUR STRENGTH AND RESILIENCE, YOUR ABILITY TO ADAPT TO ALL THE THINGS WE'D HAD TO ENDURE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL.



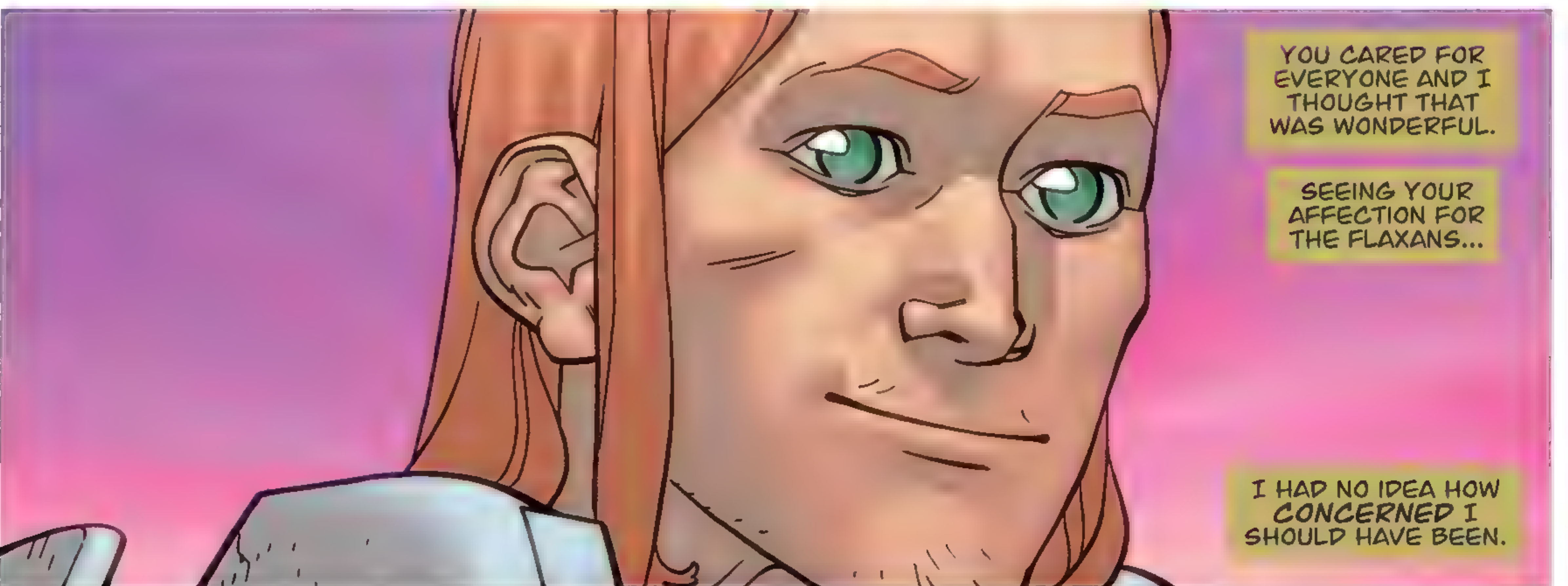
YOUR COMPASSION MOVED ME.

YOU CARED FOR ALL PEOPLE, EVEN OUR ENEMIES.



IT WAS EXTRAORDINARY.

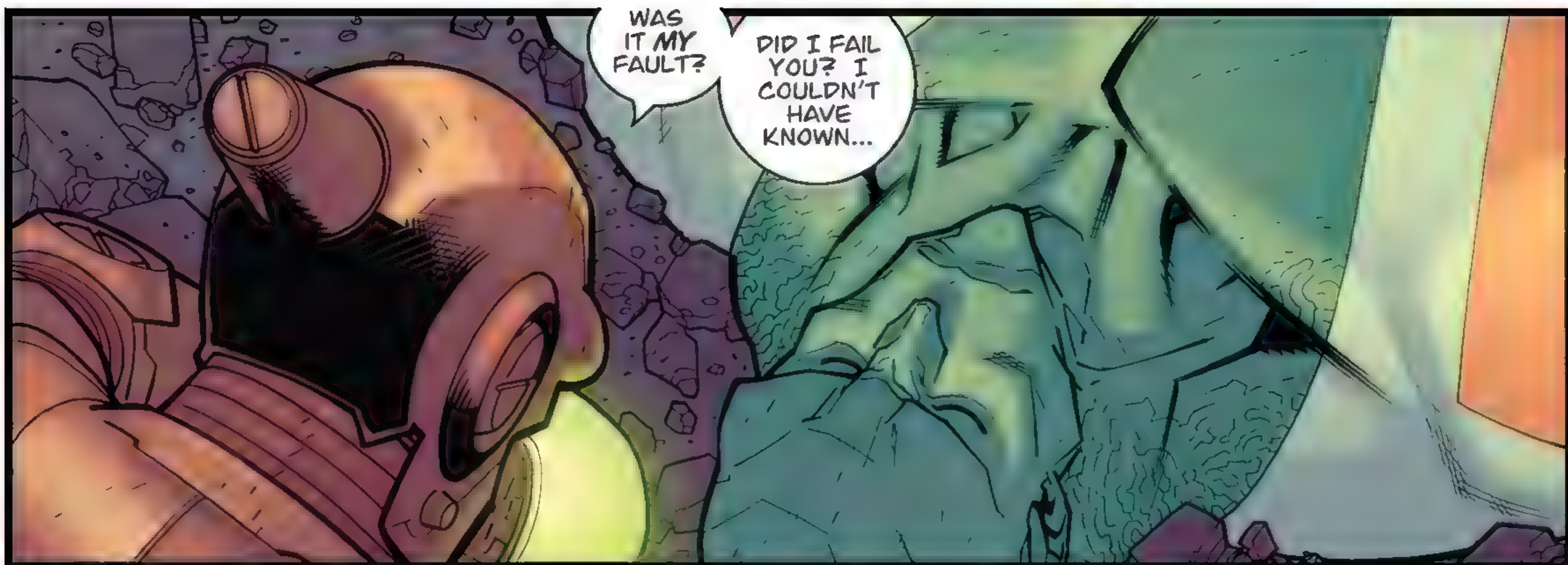
I FELT DEEPER IN LOVE WITH YOU IN EVERY MOMENT.

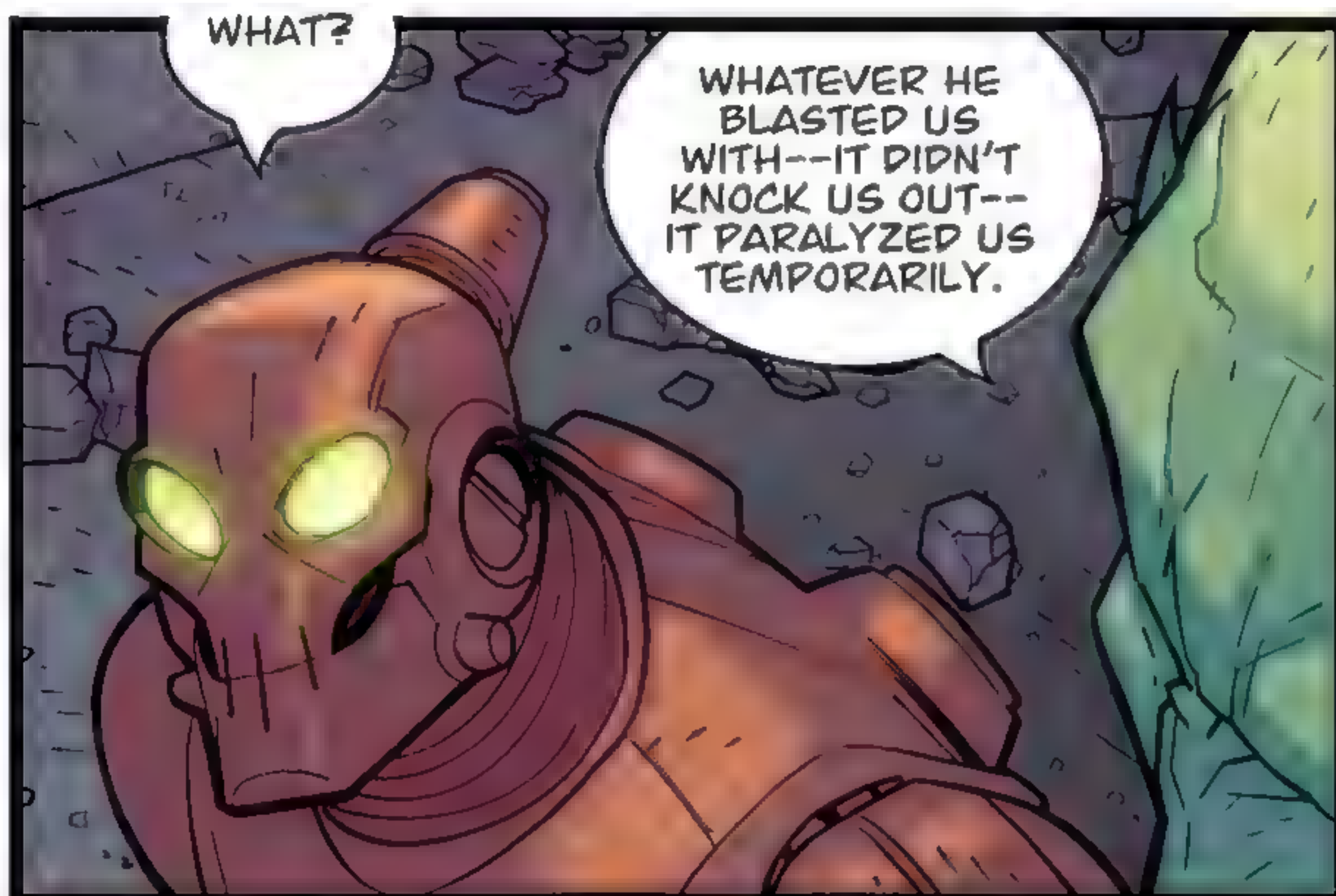


YOU CARED FOR EVERYONE AND I THOUGHT THAT WAS WONDERFUL.

SEEING YOUR AFFECTION FOR THE FLAXANS...

I HAD NO IDEA HOW **CONCERNED** I SHOULD HAVE BEEN.



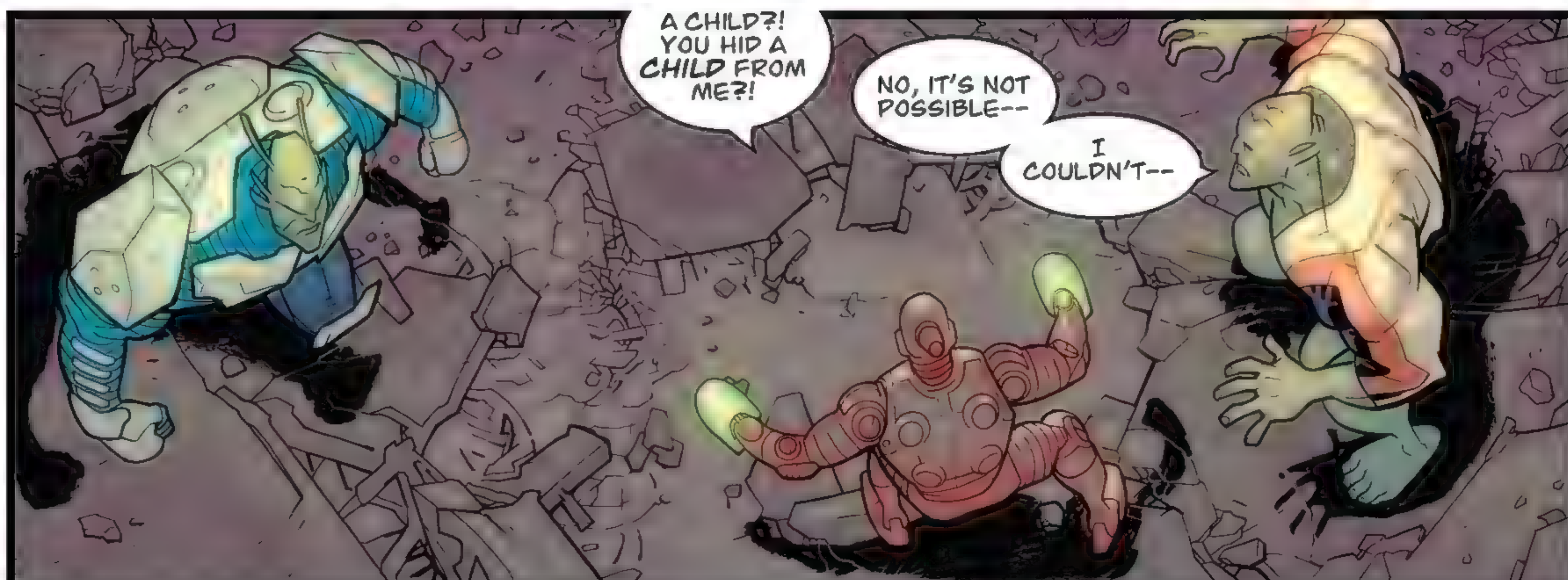






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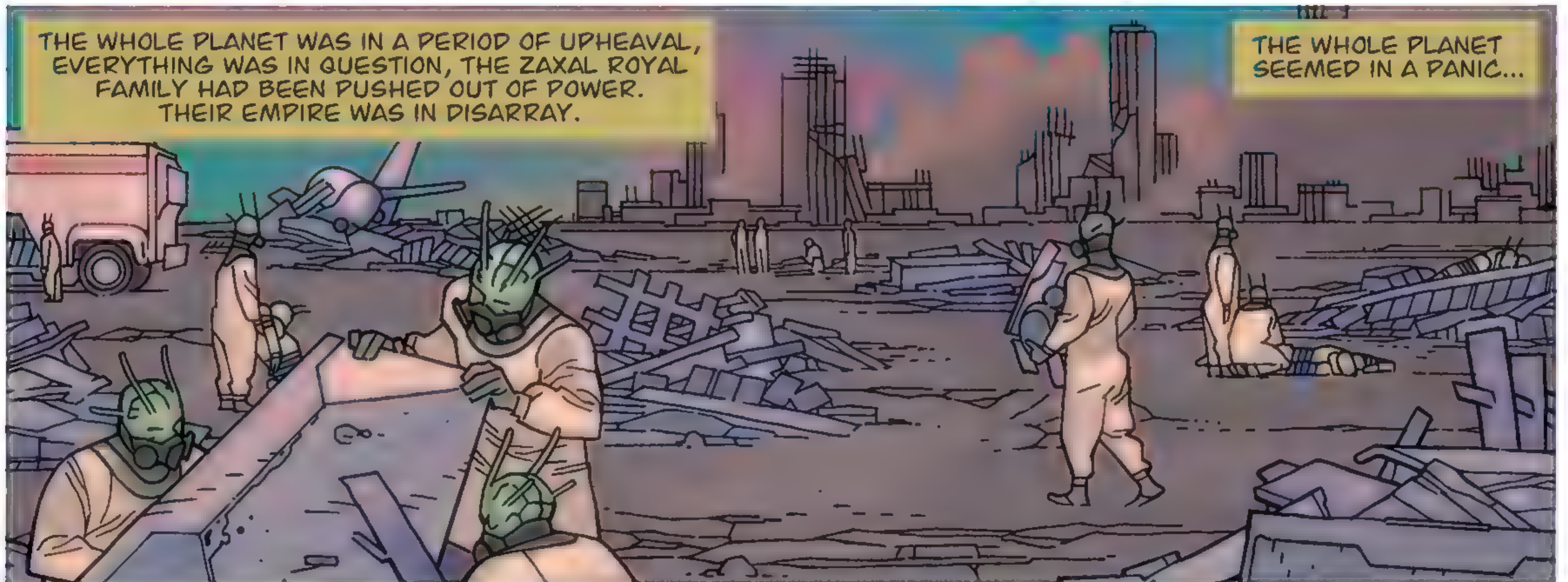






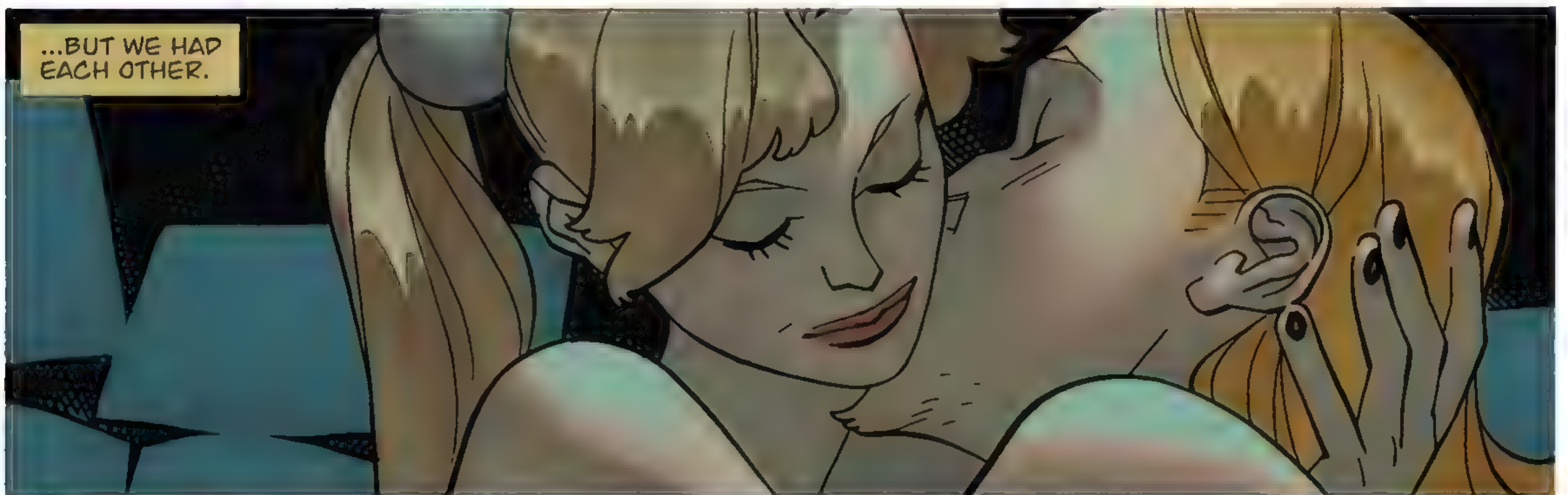
DEAREST AMANDA, I
REMEMBER THE DAYS
FOLLOWING THE END
OF THE GREAT WAR OF
INDEPENDENCE...

...HOW HAPPY
WE WERE.

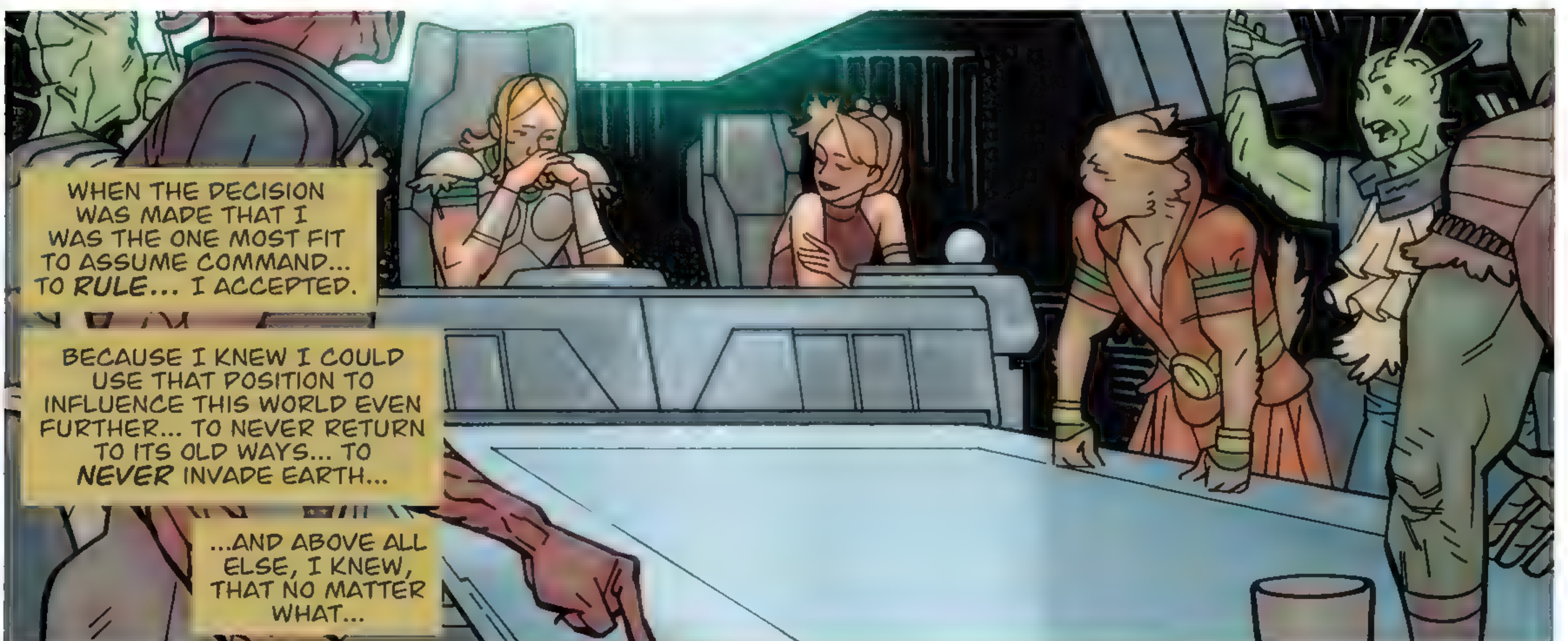


THE WHOLE PLANET WAS IN A PERIOD OF UPHEAVAL,
EVERYTHING WAS IN QUESTION, THE ZAXAL ROYAL
FAMILY HAD BEEN PUSHED OUT OF POWER.
THEIR EMPIRE WAS IN DISARRAY.

THE WHOLE PLANET
SEEMED IN A PANIC...



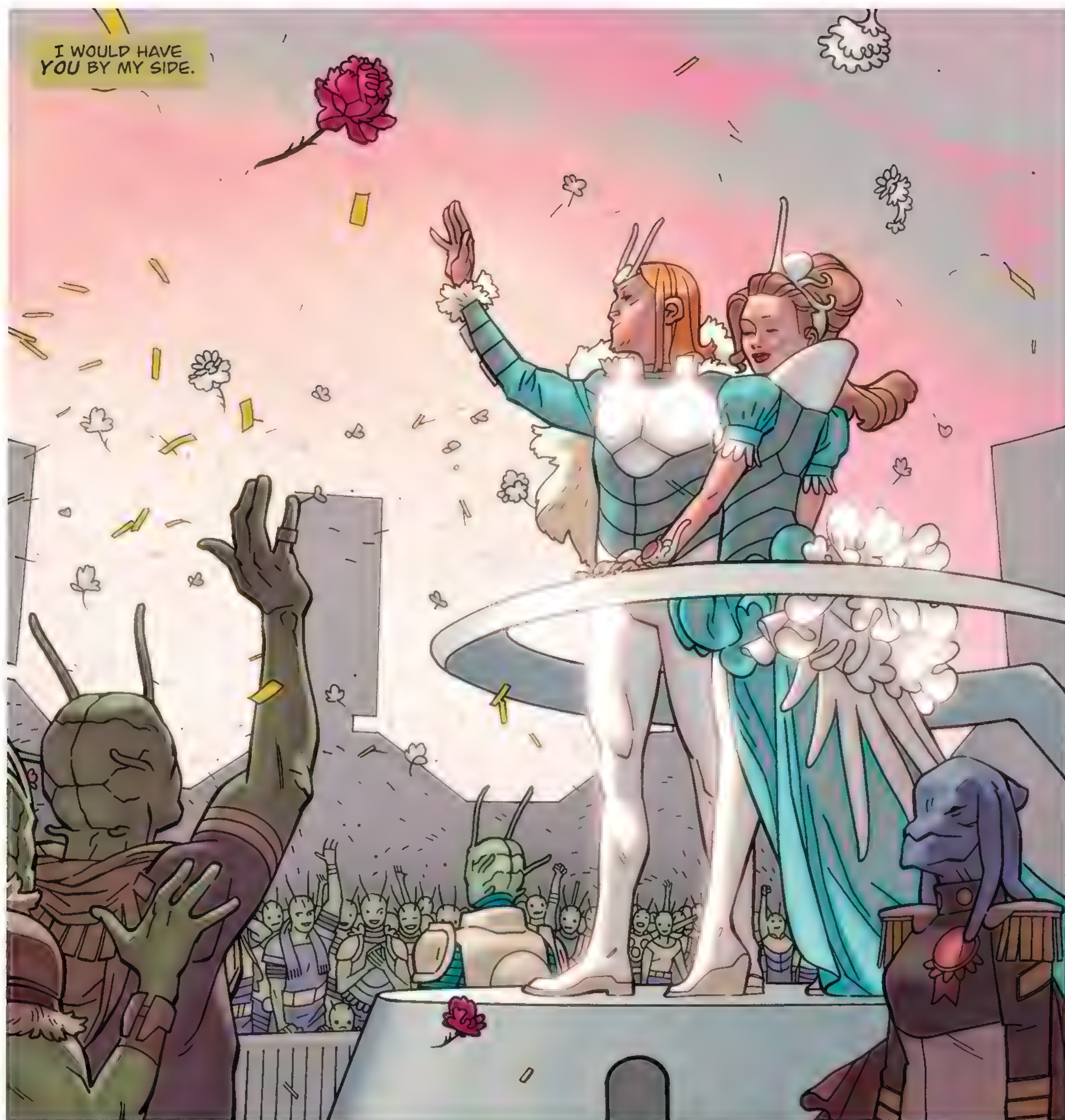
...BUT WE HAD
EACH OTHER.



WHEN THE DECISION
WAS MADE THAT I
WAS THE ONE MOST FIT
TO ASSUME COMMAND...
TO RULE... I ACCEPTED.

BECAUSE I KNEW I COULD
USE THAT POSITION TO
INFLUENCE THIS WORLD EVEN
FURTHER... TO NEVER RETURN
TO ITS OLD WAYS... TO
NEVER INVADE EARTH...

...AND ABOVE ALL
ELSE, I KNEW,
THAT NO MATTER
WHAT...





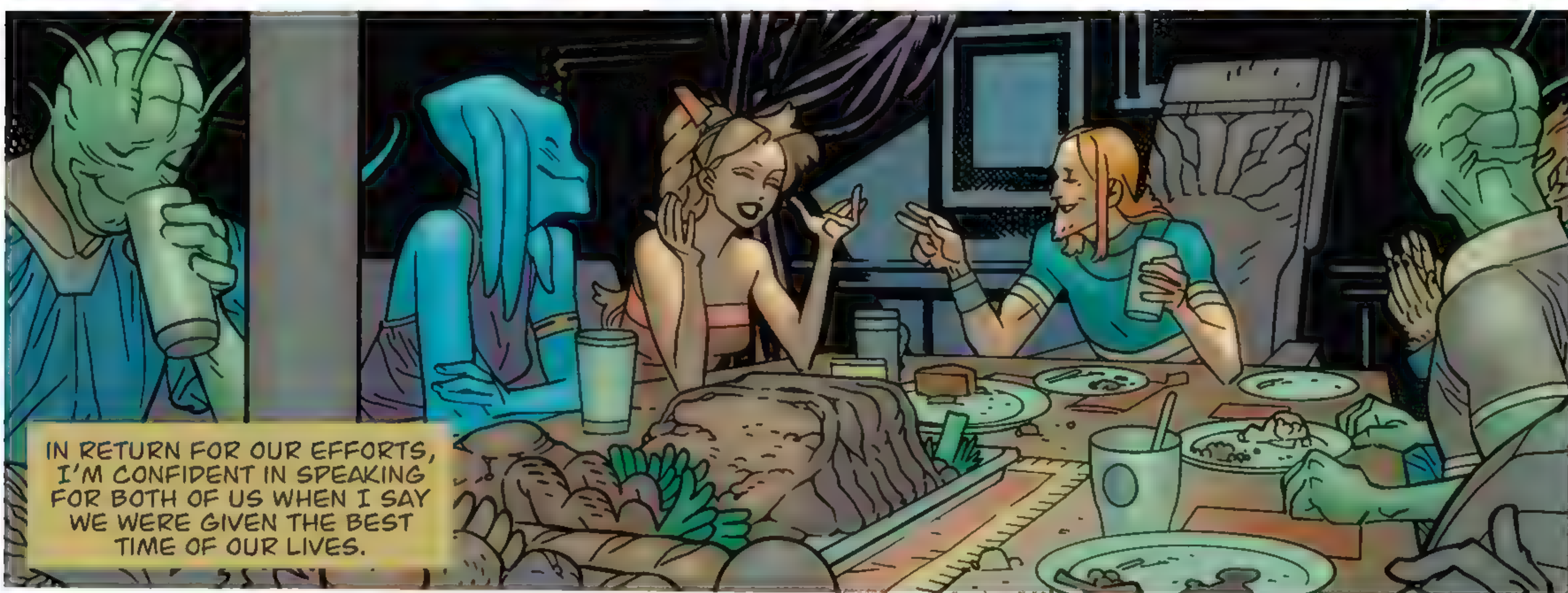
I RECALL HOW QUICKLY ALL
FLAXAN PEOPLE, EVEN THE
MILITARY WHO OPPOSED US,
BEGAN TO RALLY BEHIND US.

THE SUPPORT WAS
OVERWHELMING.

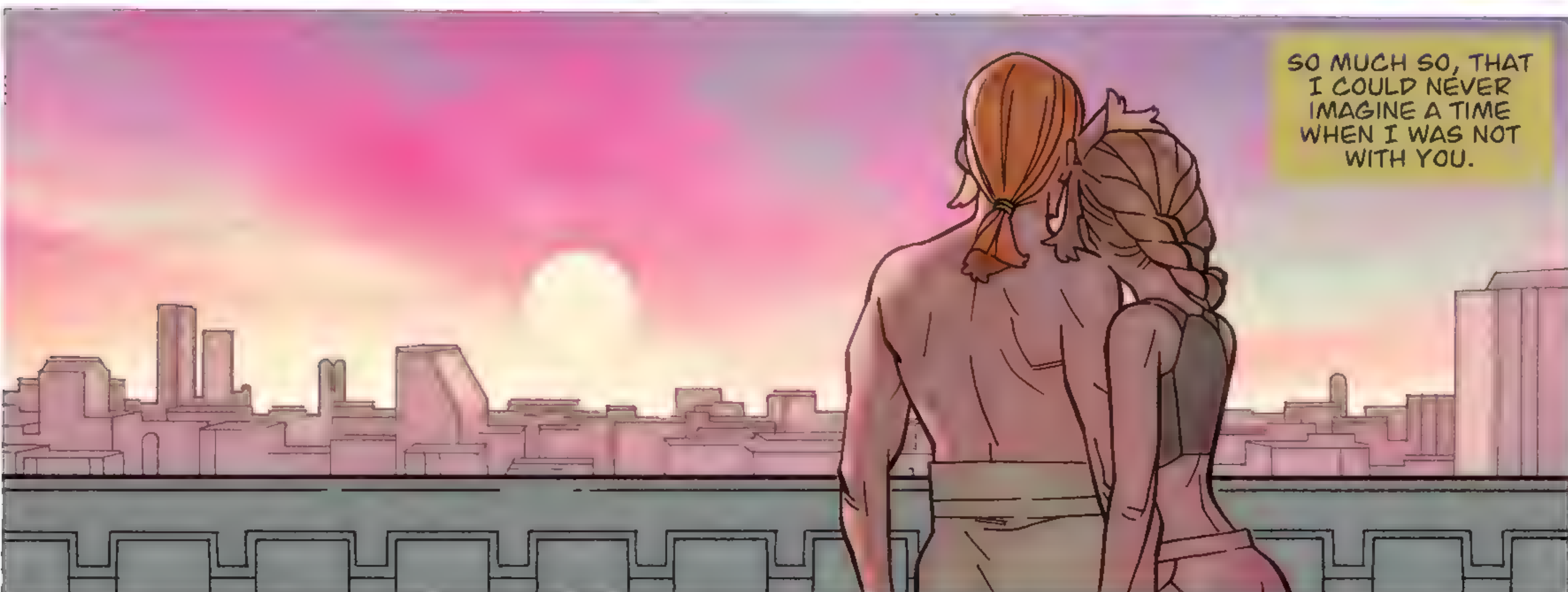


THE EFFORT TO REBUILD
THE CITIES DESTROYED IN
THE WAR WAS SWIFT,
TAKING LESS THAN A
DECADE OF FLAXAN TIME.

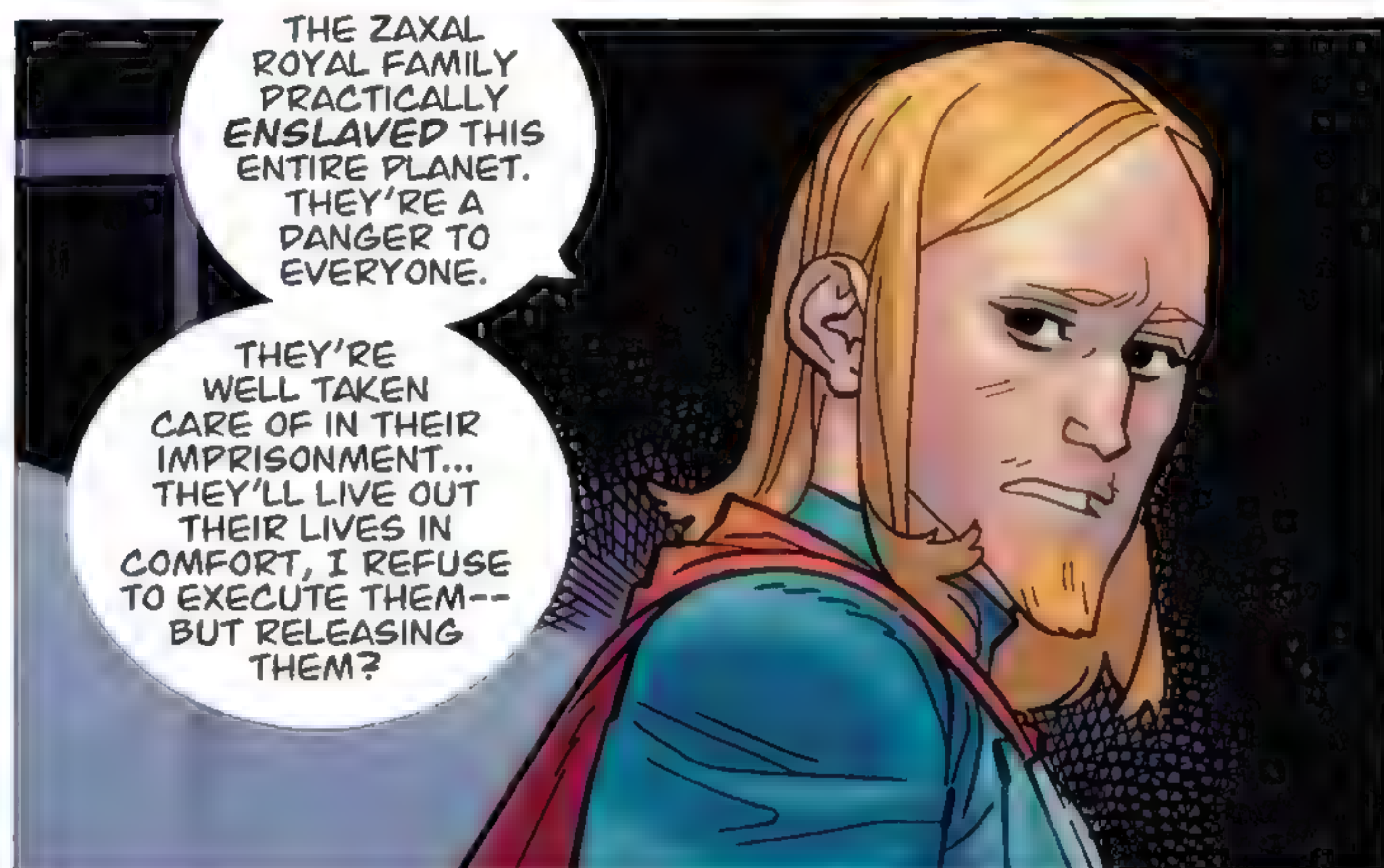
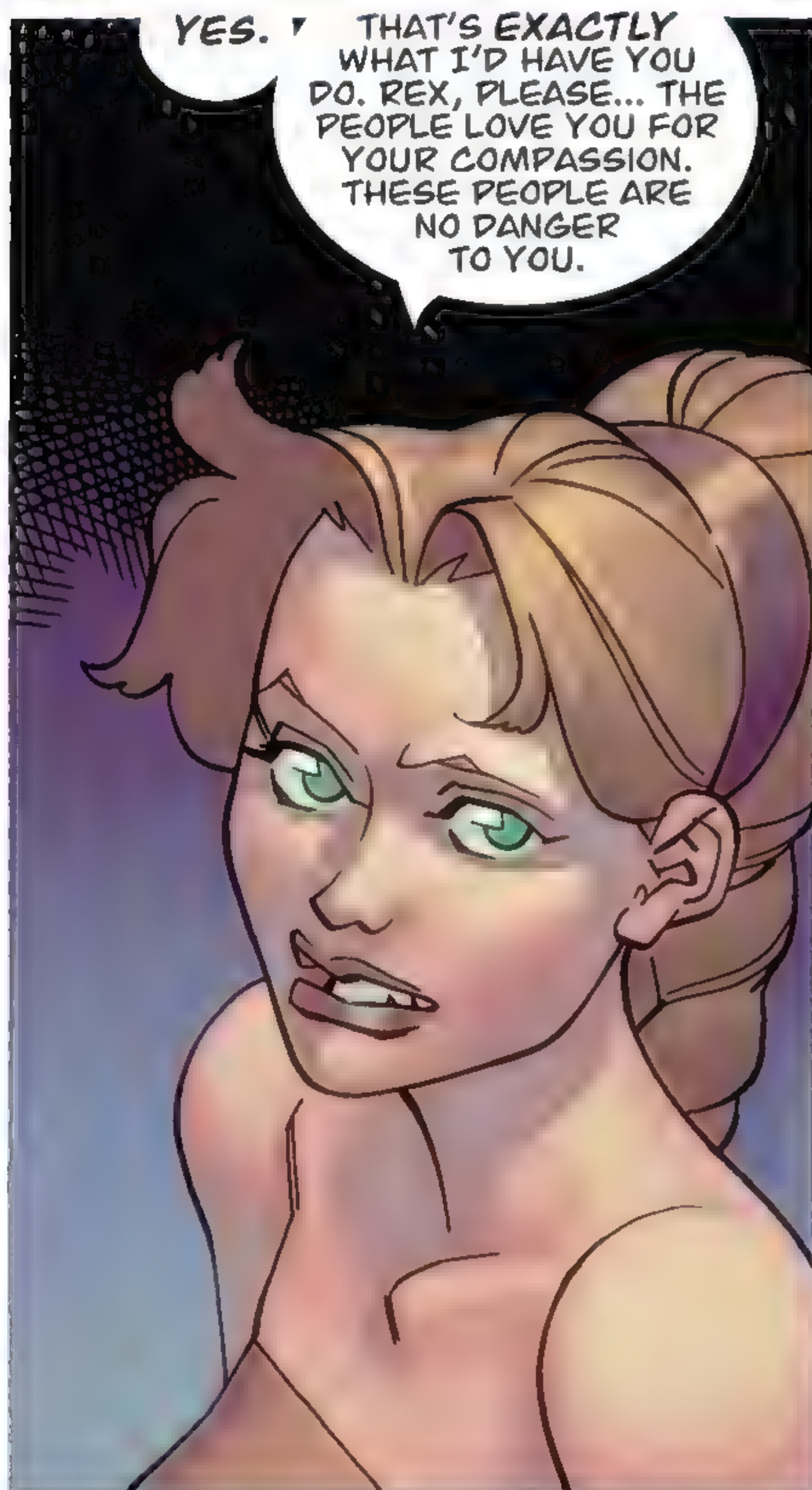
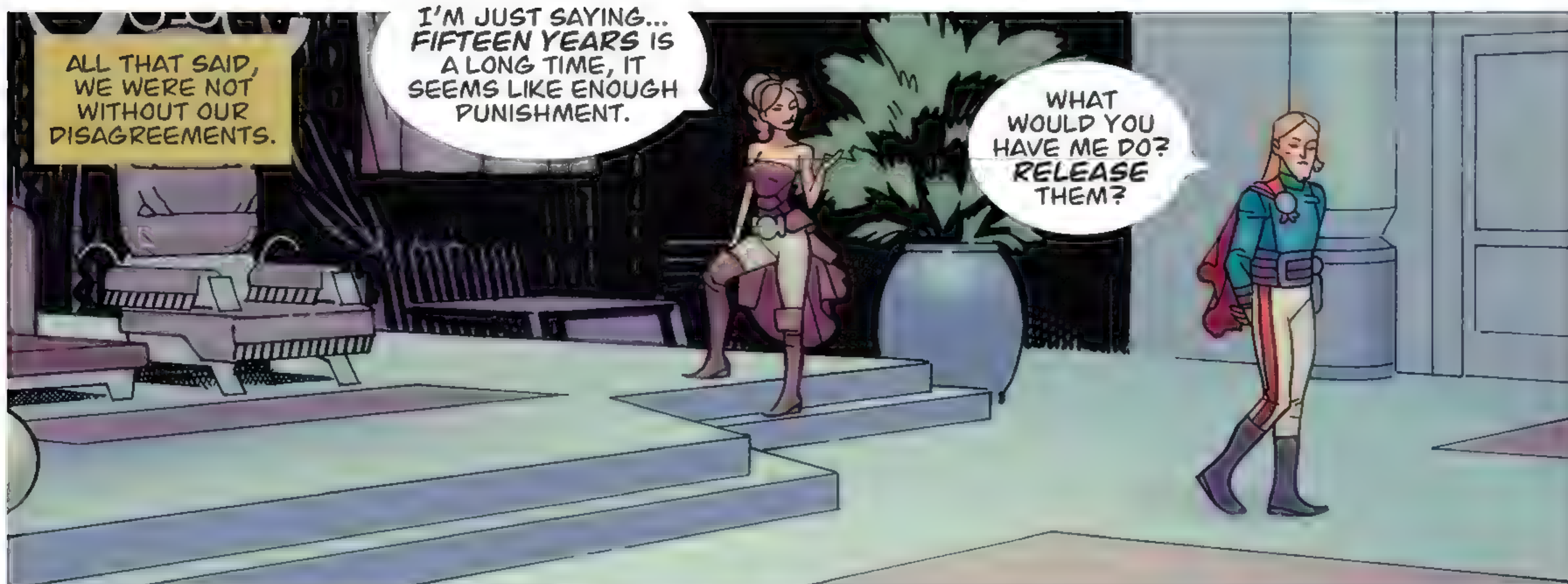
WE USHERED IN
AN ERA OF PEACE
UNPRECEDENTED IN
THIS WORLD.



IN RETURN FOR OUR EFFORTS,
I'M CONFIDENT IN SPEAKING
FOR BOTH OF US WHEN I SAY
WE WERE GIVEN THE BEST
TIME OF OUR LIVES.



SO MUCH SO, THAT
I COULD NEVER
IMAGINE A TIME
WHEN I WAS NOT
WITH YOU.







I WAS SO BUSY, I FAILED TO NOTICE WHEN YOU STARTED TO TURN AGAINST ME, THE MOMENT WHEN I LOST YOU.

AMANDA, WE'RE JUST--

MEETING, PLANNING, RUNNING AN ENTIRE CIVILIZATION--I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING! THAT'S WHY I'M HERE!

WHY DID YOU NEVER TELL ME ABOUT THE ZAXAL WORK CLASSIFICATION ACT?! I KNOW, I DON'T KNOW THE LANGUAGE, I'VE TRIED TO LEARN THE LANGUAGE... BUT THAT DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO KEEP THINGS FROM ME!

DESCENDANTS OF THE ZAXAL ROYAL FAMILY AND THEIR ALLIES ARE RESTRICTED ACCESS TO CITY CENTERS?! HOW IS THAT REMOTELY HUMANE?!

DO YOU KNOW THEY WORK IN THE MINES OF THE WASTELAND TO EARN A LIVING WAGE? THEIR CHILDREN GROW UP IN TENT CITIES! HOW HAVE YOU ALLOWED THIS TO GO ON?!



(PLEASE EXCUSE ME.)

WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD IS AN EXAGGERATION.



THEY'RE KEPT FROM THE GENERAL POPULATION FOR **SECURITY** REASONS. YOU REMEMBER THE YEARS AFTER THE WAR--HOW MANY ZAXALS WERE EXECUTED IN THE STREETS.

I COULD THINK OF NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE, IT'S FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY.

THEIR LIVING CONDITIONS ARE ADEQUATE. THE WASTELAND HAS CHANGED A GREAT DEAL OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES, DUE IN LARGE PART TO THEIR SETTLEMENT OF THE AREA.



WHY HAVEN'T WE BEEN COMBATING THIS WITH EDUCATION AND BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY?

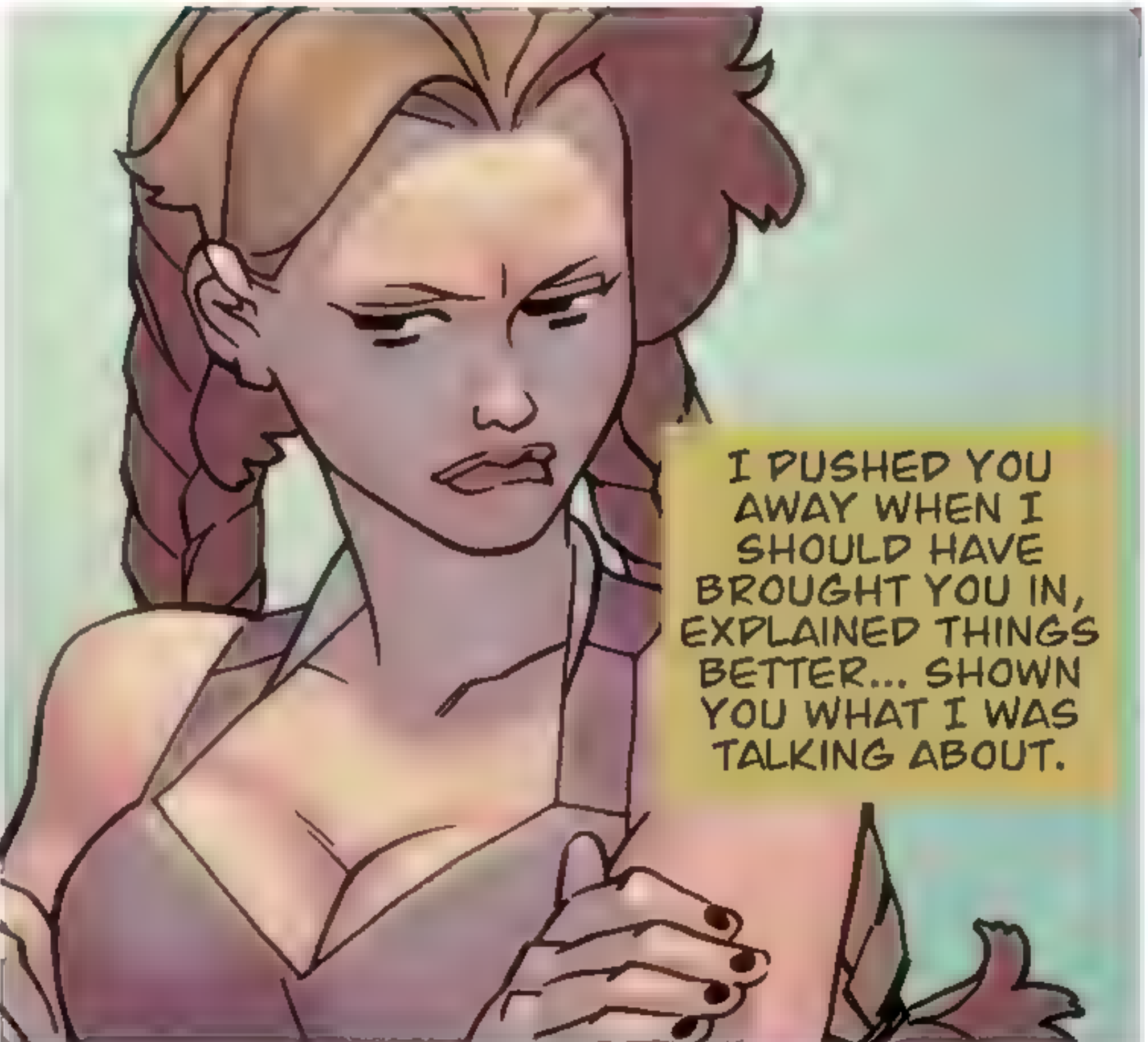
WHEN DID YOU **GIVE UP** ON INTEGRATING THEM INTO SOCIETY?!



HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE--WHAT'S AT STAKE? THERE ARE MANY WHO WOULD PREFER THINGS TO BE AS THEY WERE UNDER THE ZAXALS.

I HAVE TO OPPOSE RADICAL POLITICAL FACTIONS EVERY ELECTION--SOME HAVE EVEN PROPOSED A RETURN OF SLAVERY.

THEY'RE THE GRANDCHILDREN OF OUR ENEMY AT THIS POINT... BUT THEY'RE STILL DANGEROUS.



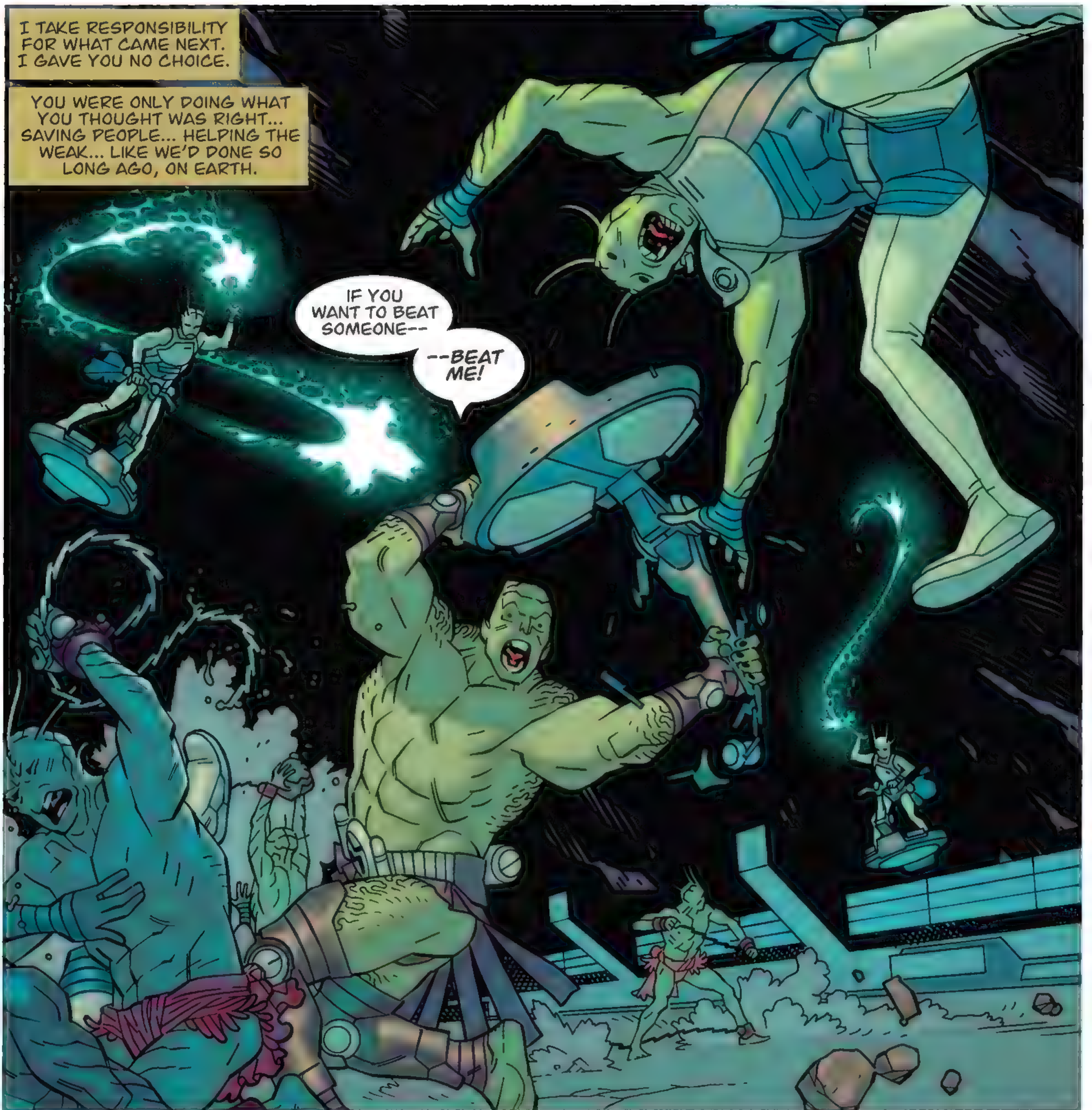
I PUSHED YOU AWAY WHEN I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT YOU IN, EXPLAINED THINGS BETTER... SHOWN YOU WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR WHAT CAME NEXT.
I GAVE YOU NO CHOICE.

YOU WERE ONLY DOING WHAT
YOU THOUGHT WAS RIGHT...
SAVING PEOPLE... HELPING THE
WEAK... LIKE WE'D DONE SO
LONG AGO, ON EARTH.

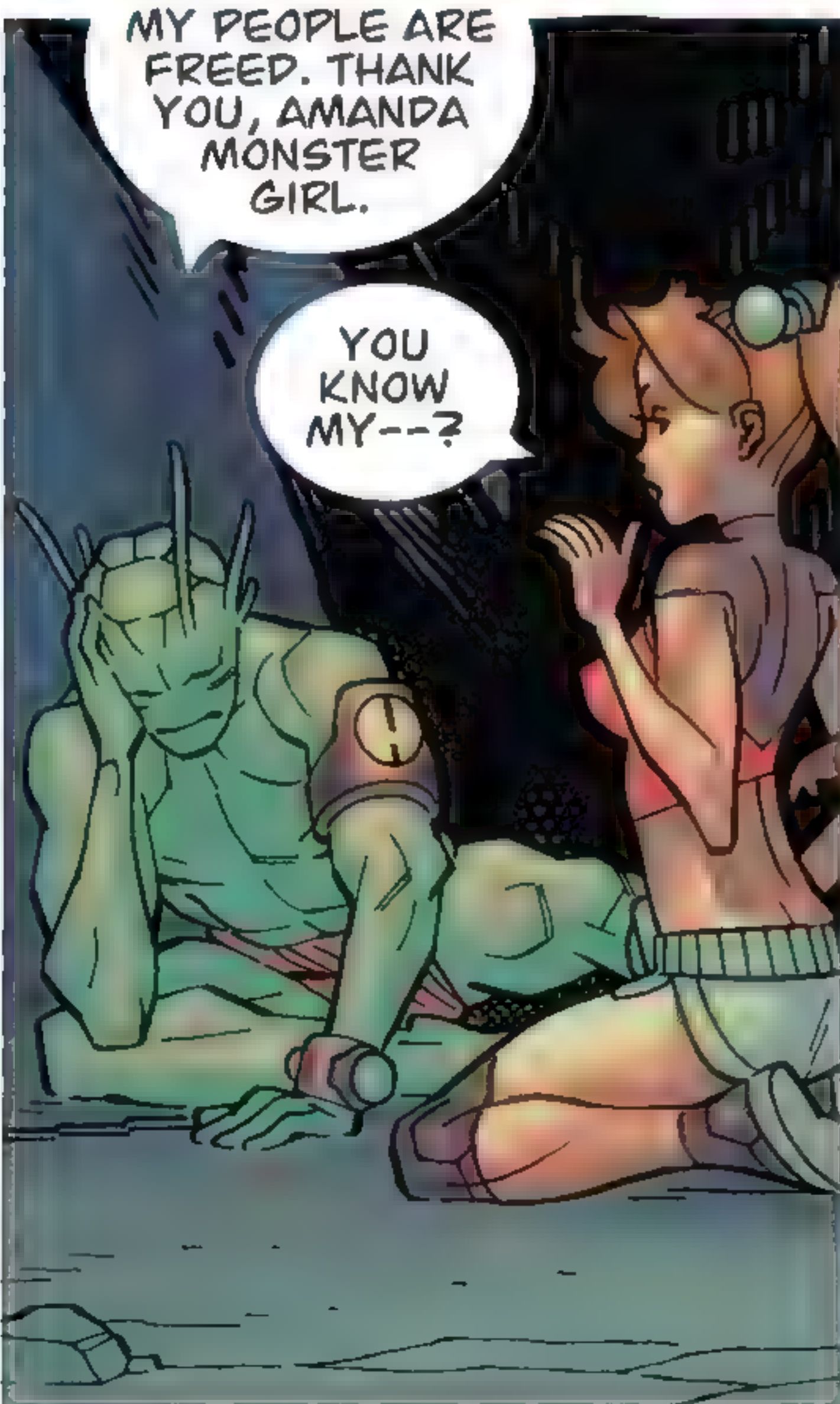
IF YOU
WANT TO BEAT
SOMEONE---

--BEAT
ME!



MY PEOPLE ARE
FREED. THANK
YOU, AMANDA
MONSTER
GIRL.

YOU
KNOW
MY---?



YOUR LANGUAGE WAS USED
AS CODE IN THE WAR. MY
PEOPLE CRACKED IT AND
WE'VE TAUGHT OUR
CHILDREN FOR
GENERATIONS.

WE USE IT
IN THE MINES
SO THE
BOSSES WON'T
UNDERSTAND
US.



WELL, YOU
WON'T HAVE
TO WORRY
ABOUT THAT
ANYMORE.

I
PROMISE.

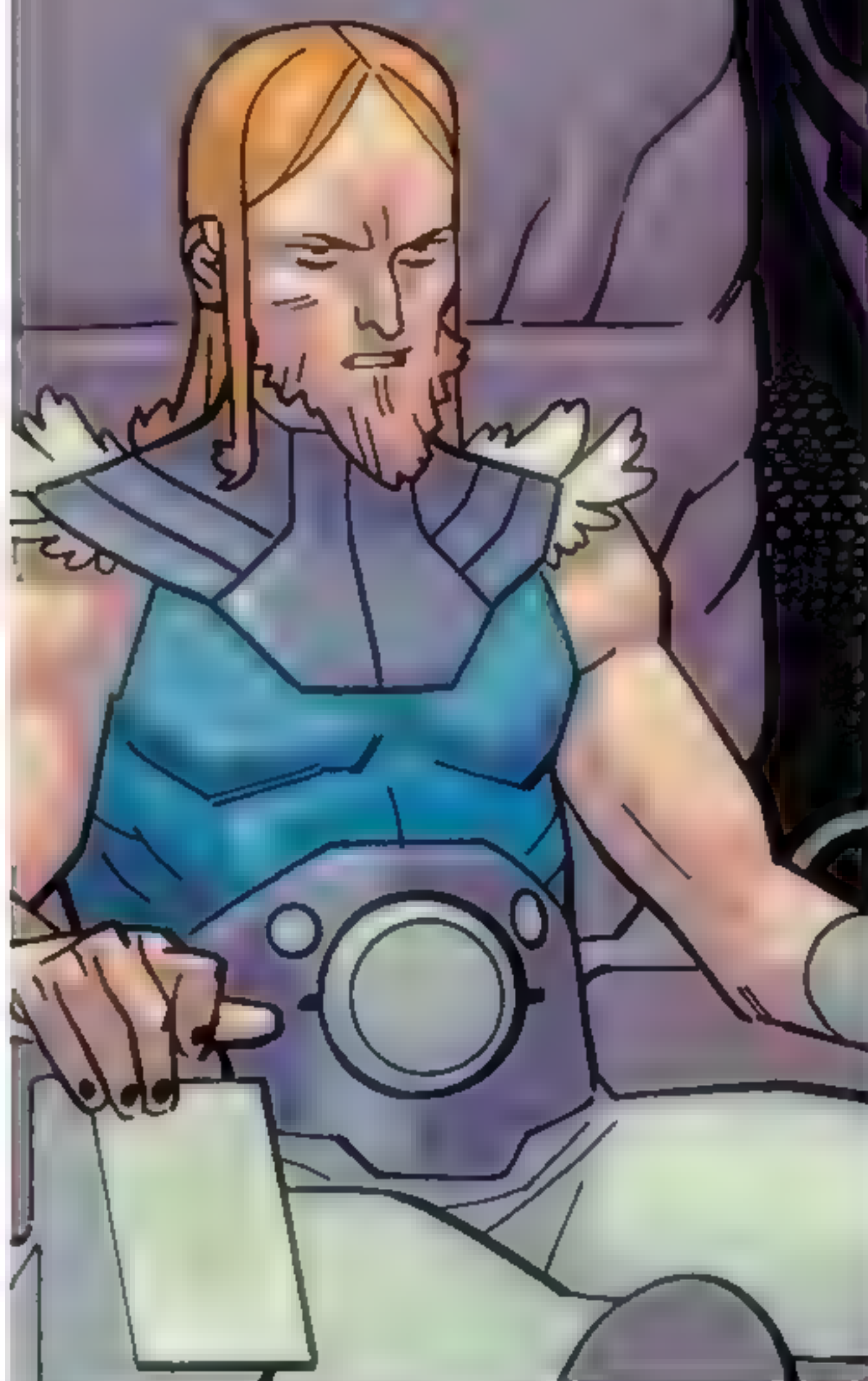


YOU MADE THEM SECOND CLASS CITIZENS, REX! PEOPLE ARE PUNISHED FOR GIVING THEM WORK-- THEY CAN'T FEED THEIR YOUNG!

THE MINES WERE THEIR ONLY MEANS OF SUPPORTING THEMSELVES-- AND THE BOSSES KNEW THAT. THEY WERE ESSENTIALLY SLAVES!



YOU DON'T EVEN REALIZE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?



I REALIZE EXACTLY WHAT I'VE DONE.

I WAS HELPING PEOPLE. REMEMBER THAT--DOING THE RIGHT THING?



YOU UNDERMINED MY AUTHORITY!

DO YOU NOT SEE WHAT A DELICATE HOLD I HAVE ON THESE PEOPLE?! ALL OF THIS COULD COME CRASHING DOWN AROUND US AT ANY MINUTE!

IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY TO HOLD IT ALL TOGETHER! MINE! THAT WEIGHT RESTS ON MY SHOULDERS.

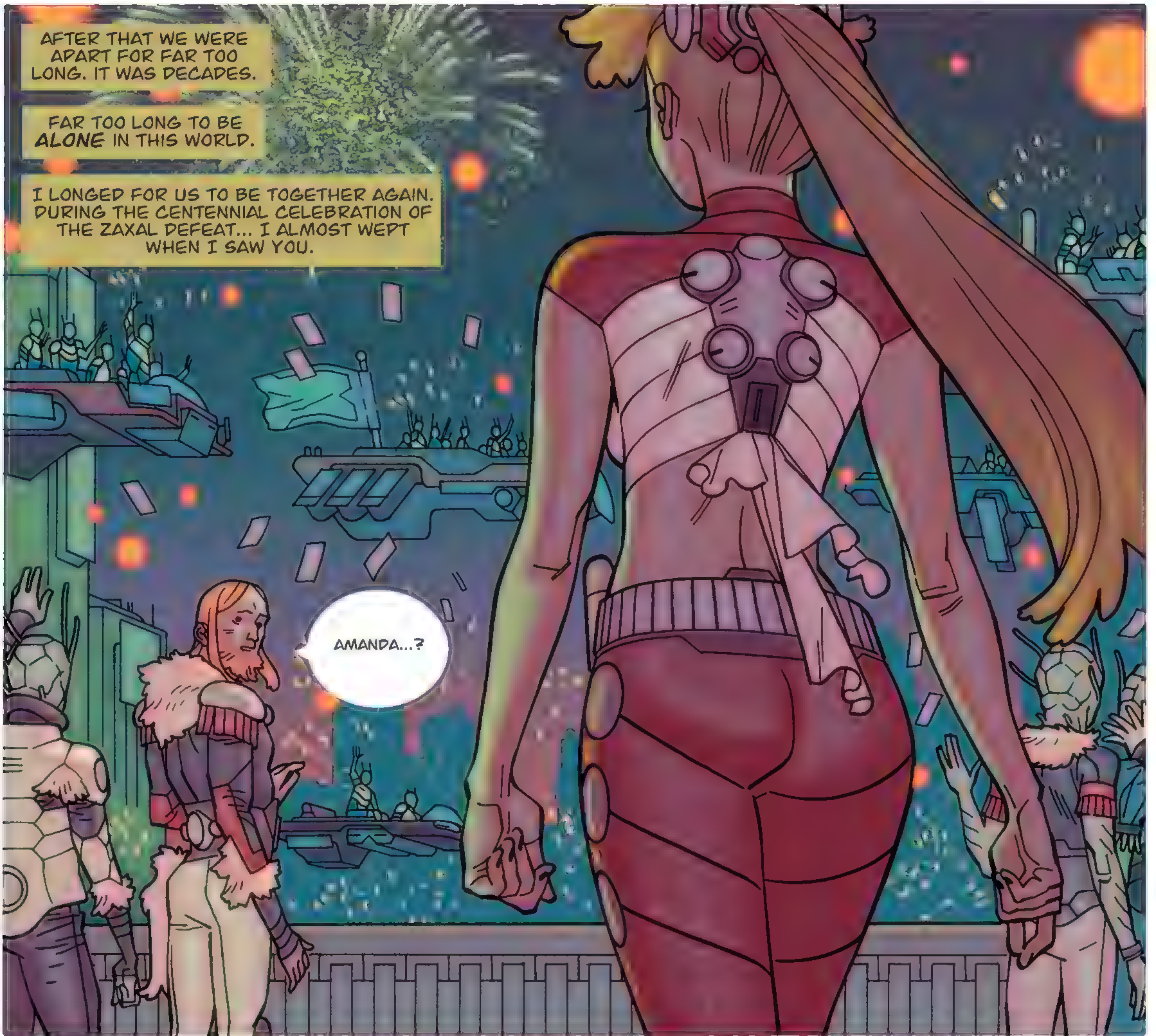
AND YOU ACTUALLY THINK YOU WERE HELPING?!



GET OUT OF MY SIGHT.

I AM SORRY THAT IT HAS TAKEN ME THIS LONG TO ADMIT THAT I WAS WRONG THAT DAY.





AFTER THAT WE WERE
APART FOR FAR TOO
LONG. IT WAS DECADES.

FAR TOO LONG TO BE
ALONE IN THIS WORLD.

I LONGED FOR US TO BE TOGETHER AGAIN.
DURING THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF
THE ZAXAL DEFEAT... I ALMOST WEPT
WHEN I SAW YOU.

AMANDA...?



IT HAD BEEN SO LONG,
AND I COULD SEE YOU
MISSED ME AS MUCH
AS I HAD YOU...

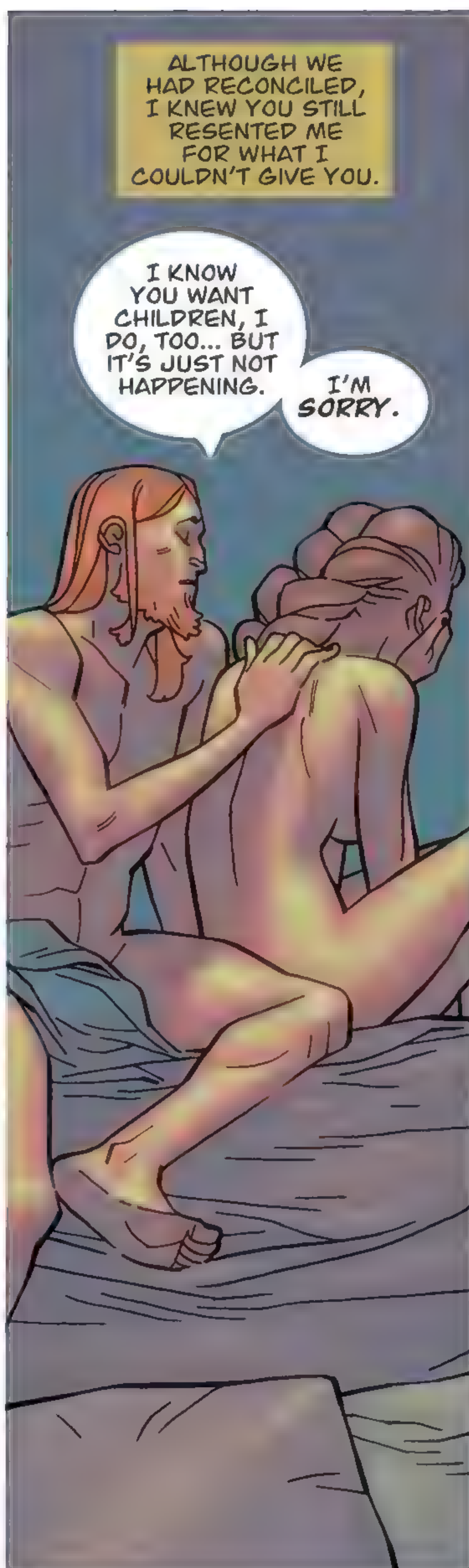
I THOUGHT WE'D
PUT IT ALL BEHIND US.





DURING YOUR TIME AWAY, I NEVER KNEW WHERE YOU'D GONE--BUT NOW, IT'S CLEAR TO ME, YOU WERE WITH THE ZAXAL REFUGEES.

THEY'RE JUST ADORABLE. YOUR FATHER WOULD BE SO PROUD.



ALTHOUGH WE HAD RECONCILED, I KNEW YOU STILL RESENTED ME FOR WHAT I COULDN'T GIVE YOU.

I KNOW YOU WANT CHILDREN, I DO, TOO... BUT IT'S JUST NOT HAPPENING.

I'M SORRY.



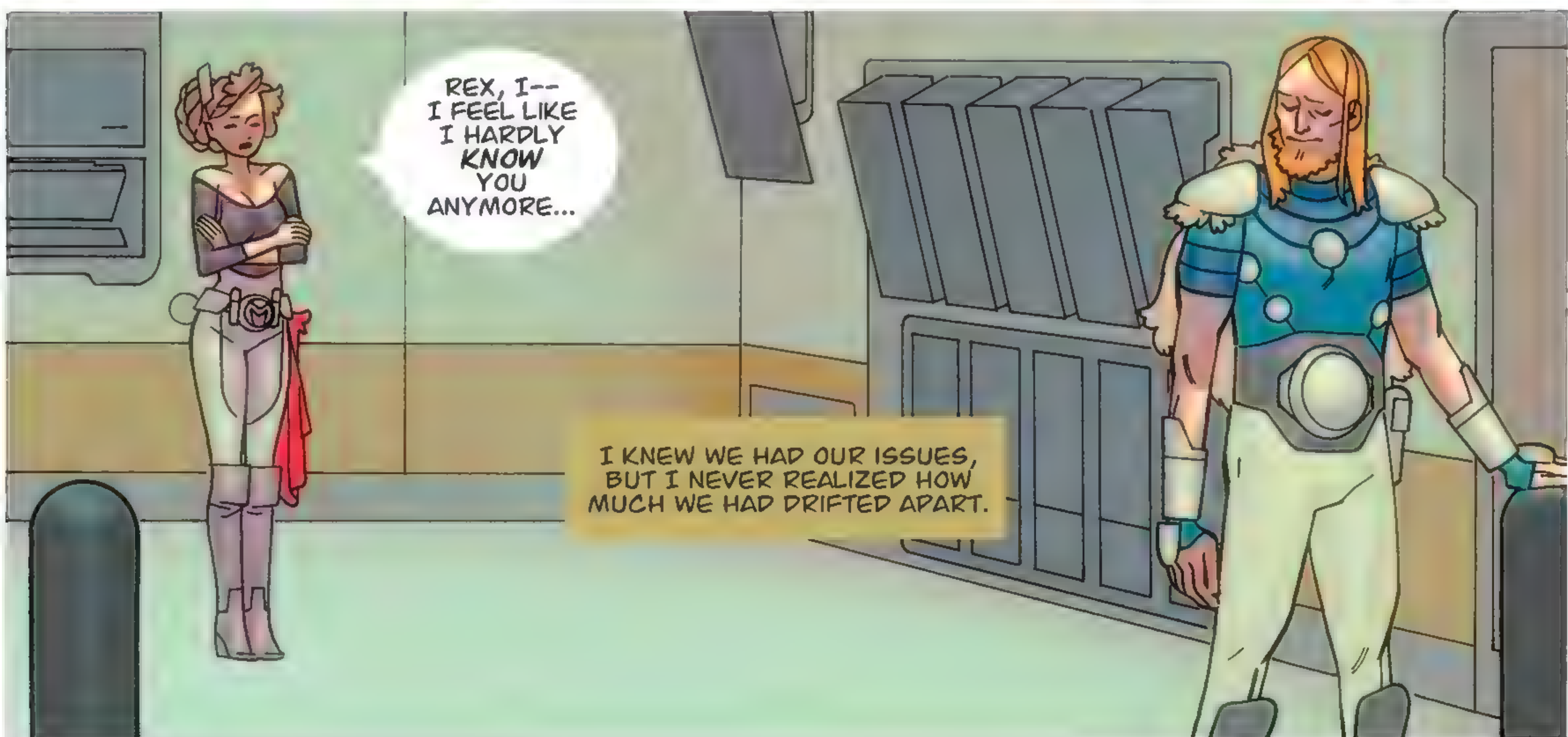
I'M WILLING TO ADMIT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN OTHER THINGS THAT DROVE A WEDGE BETWEEN US.

DON'T BE SO NAIVE! THAT WOULD NEVER WORK! IT WILL ONLY LEAD TO MORE PROBLEMS!

I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING! WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO QUESTION ME?!

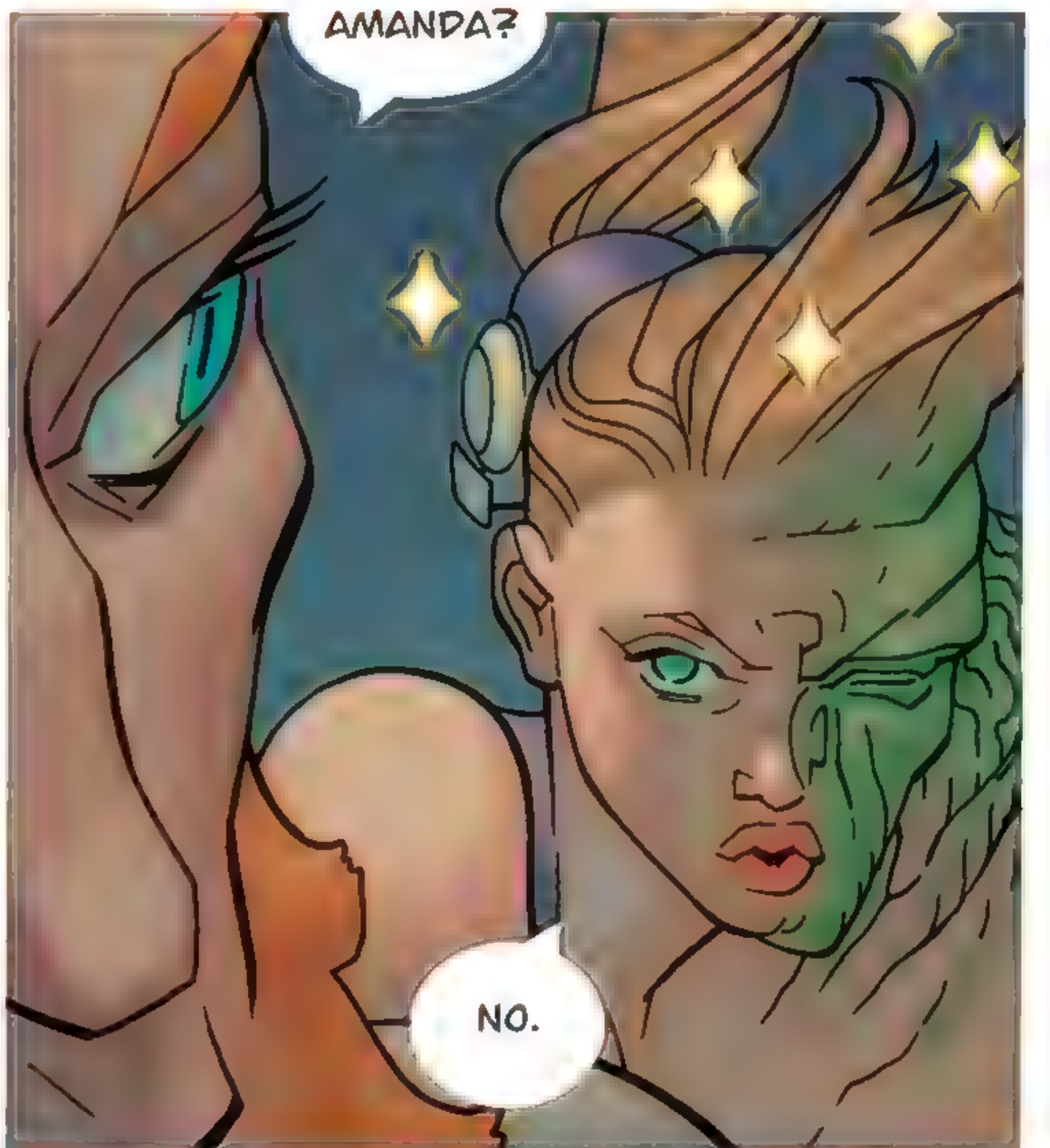
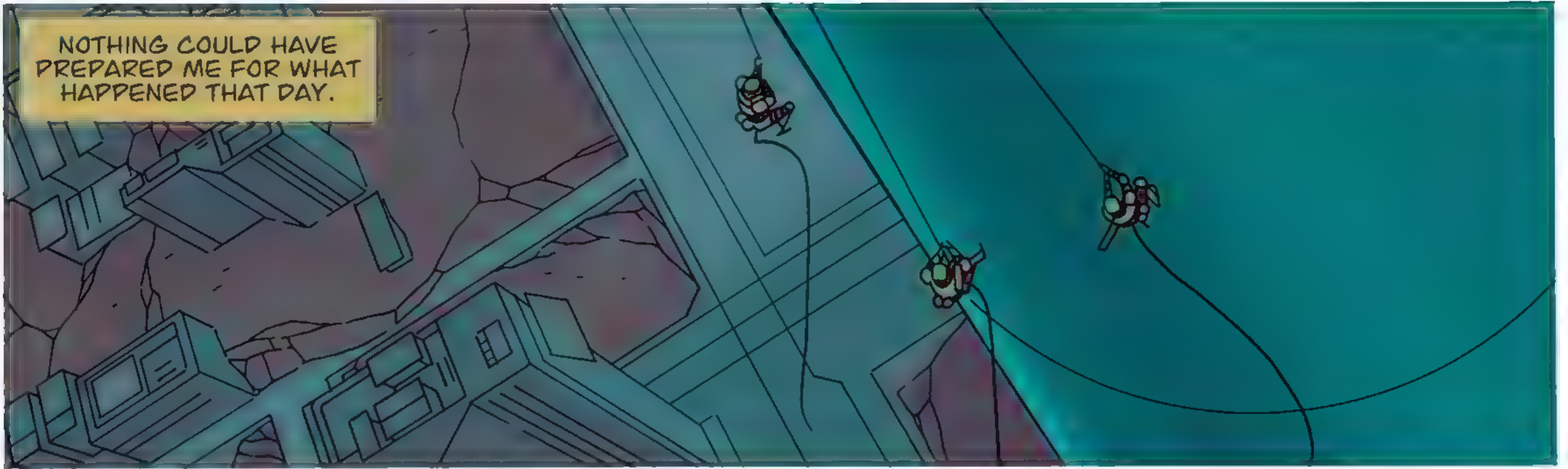
BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE STARVING AND DYING OUT THERE! BECAUSE YOUR WAY OF DOING THINGS ISN'T WORKING! THERE'S PEACE, YES--BUT OUR RESOURCES ARE LOW AND YOU DON'T SEEM TO CARE!

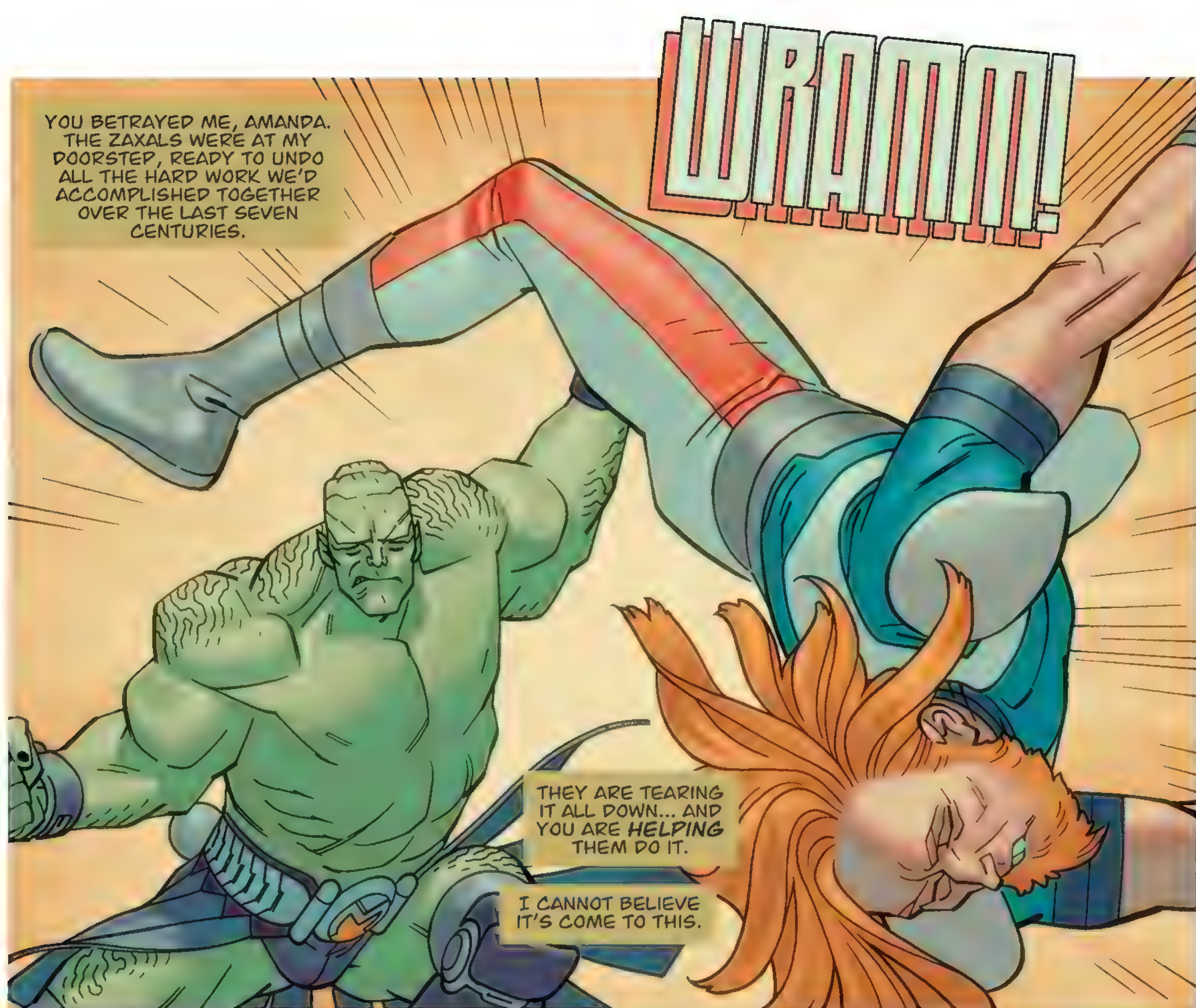
THE ZAXAL ROYAL FAMILY WENT ABOUT THINGS THE WRONG WAY, BUT THEY KNEW WE NEEDED RESOURCES FROM OTHER WORLDS TO SUSTAIN THIS POPULATION! WE DON'T HAVE TO GO TO WAR FOR IT--BUT THOSE PORTALS NEED TO BE USED! YOU ARE LOSING THE PEOPLE.



REX, I-- I FEEL LIKE I HARDLY KNOW YOU ANYMORE...

I KNEW WE HAD OUR ISSUES, BUT I NEVER REALIZED HOW MUCH WE HAD DRIFTED APART.





YOU BETRAYED ME, AMANDA.
THE ZAXALS WERE AT MY
DOORSTEP, READY TO UNDO
ALL THE HARD WORK WE'D
ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER
OVER THE LAST SEVEN
CENTURIES.

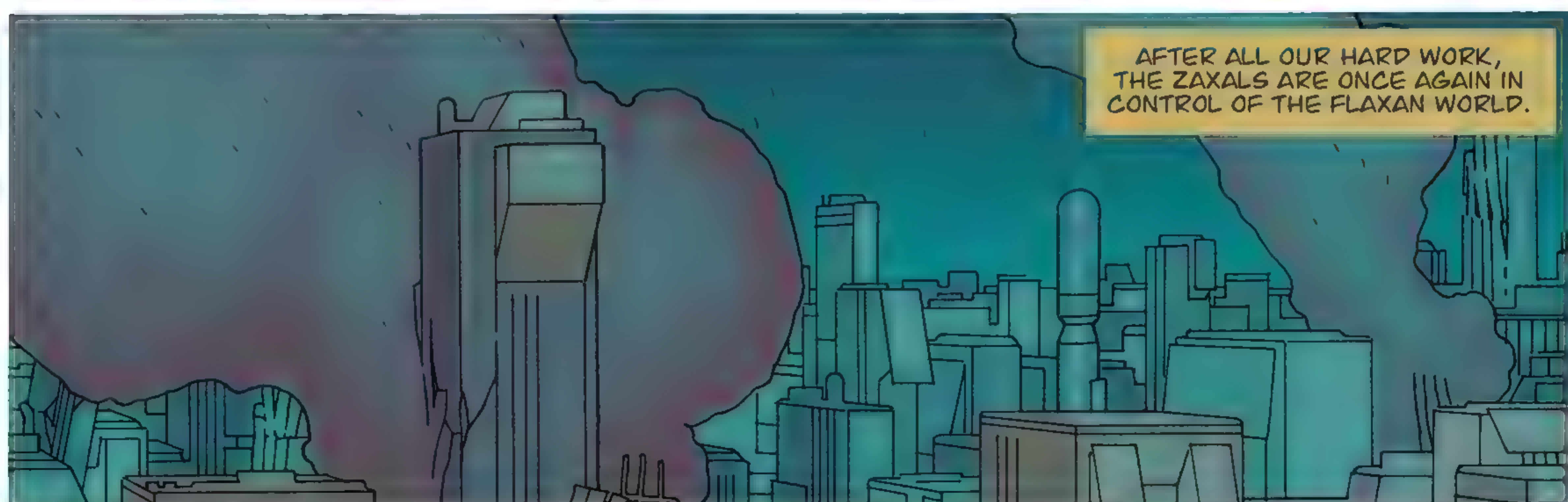
THEY ARE TEARING
IT ALL DOWN... AND
YOU ARE HELPING
THEM DO IT.

I CANNOT BELIEVE
IT'S COME TO THIS.



MONSTER
GIRL! I KNEW
YOU WOULD
STAND WITH
US!

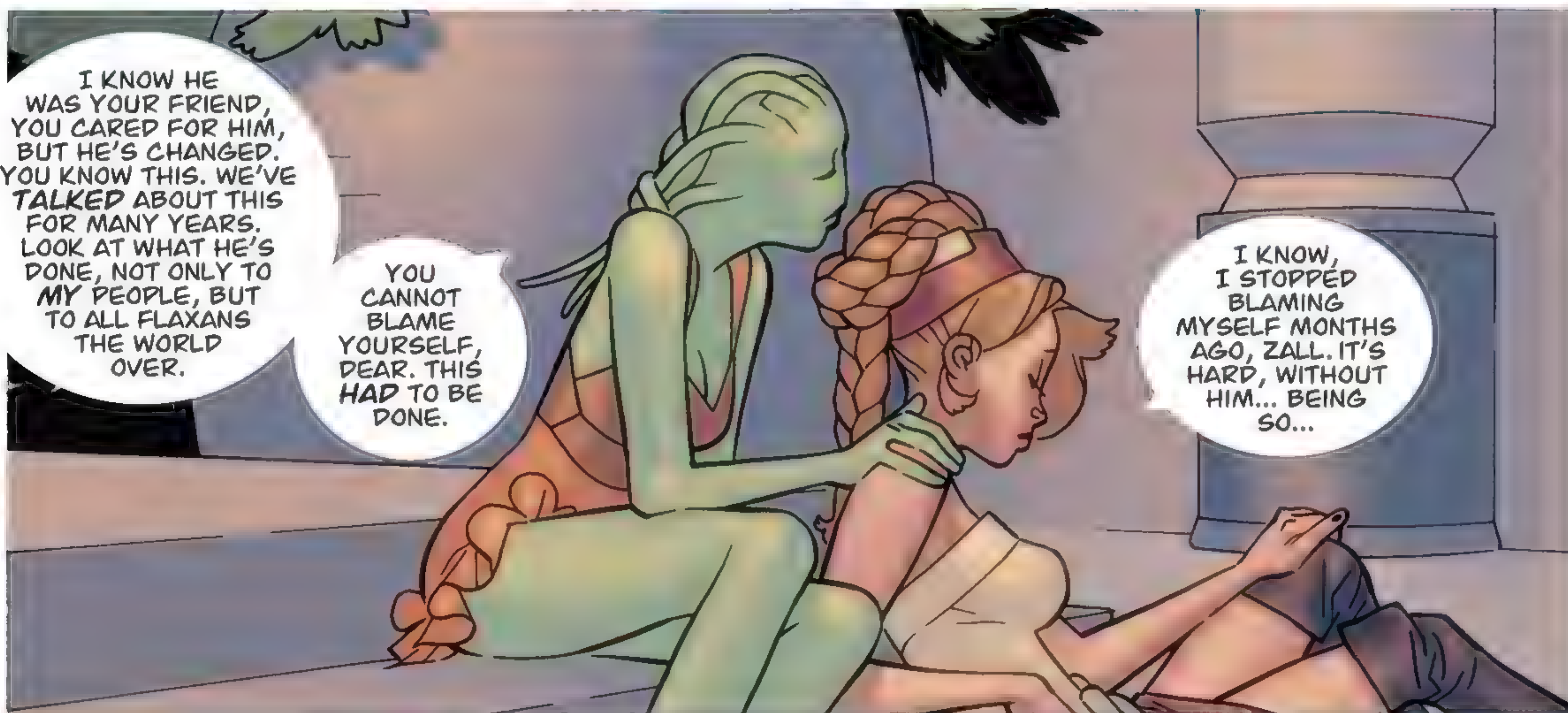
REX IS
NOT TO BE
KILLED! NONE
OF THEM
ARE TO BE
KILLED!



AFTER ALL OUR HARD WORK,
THE ZAXALS ARE ONCE AGAIN IN
CONTROL OF THE FLAXAN WORLD.



AMANDA, YOU RUINED EVERYTHING.



I KNOW HE WAS YOUR FRIEND, YOU CARED FOR HIM, BUT HE'S CHANGED. YOU KNOW THIS. WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THIS FOR MANY YEARS. LOOK AT WHAT HE'S DONE, NOT ONLY TO MY PEOPLE, BUT TO ALL FLAXANS THE WORLD OVER.

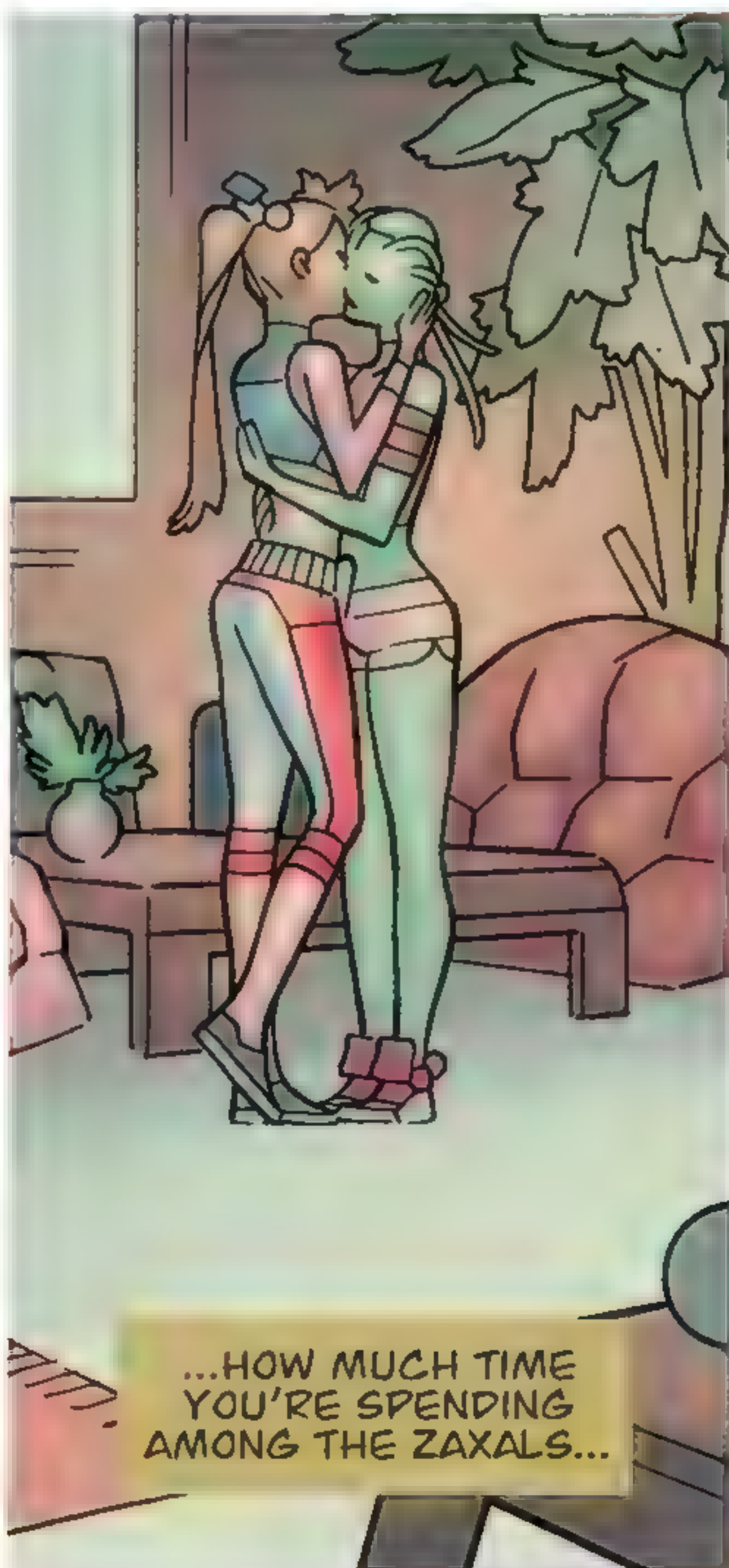
YOU CANNOT BLAME YOURSELF, DEAR. THIS HAD TO BE DONE.

I KNOW, I STOPPED BLAMING MYSELF MONTHS AGO, ZALL. IT'S HARD, WITHOUT HIM... BEING SO...



...ALONE.

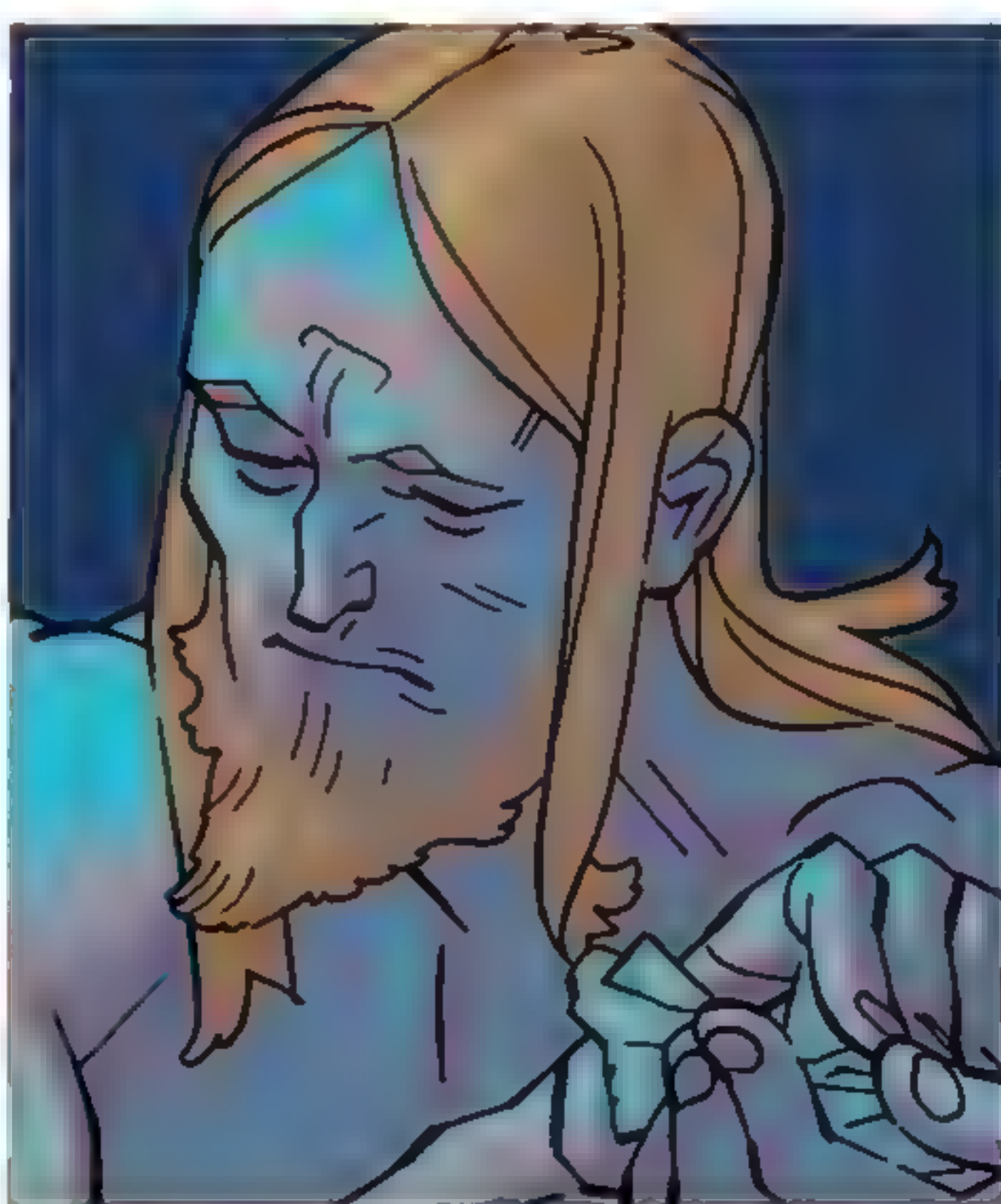
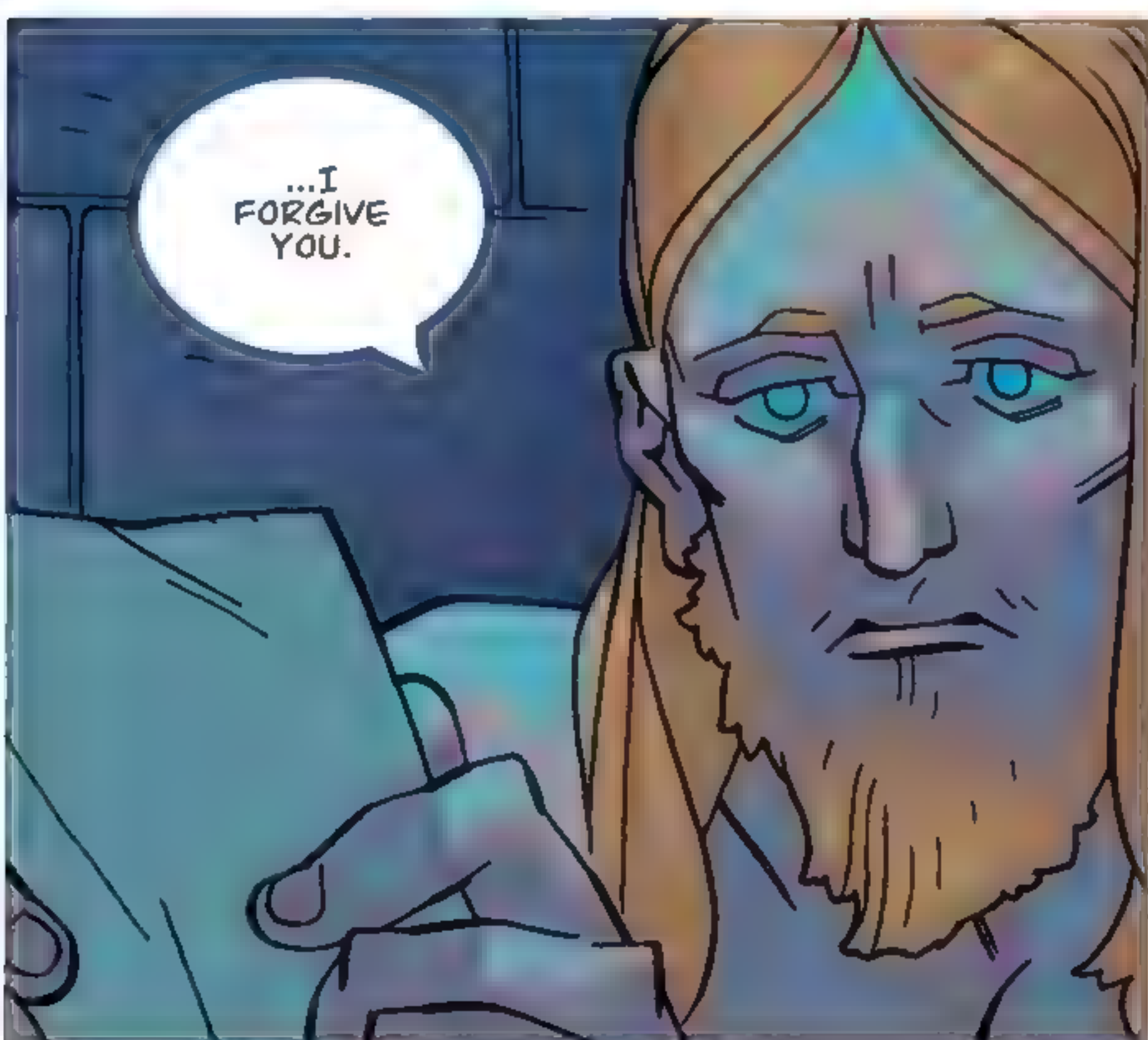
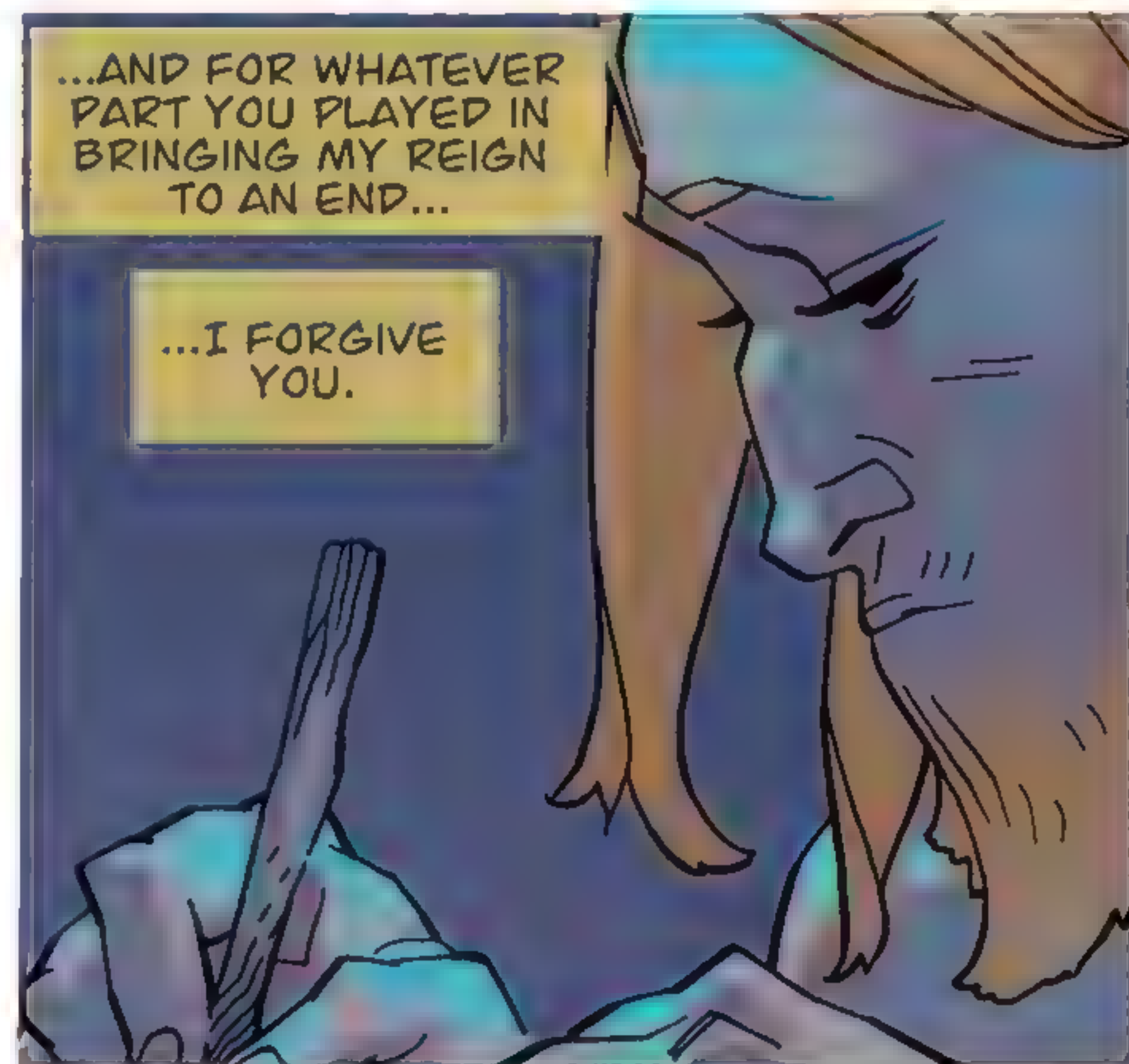
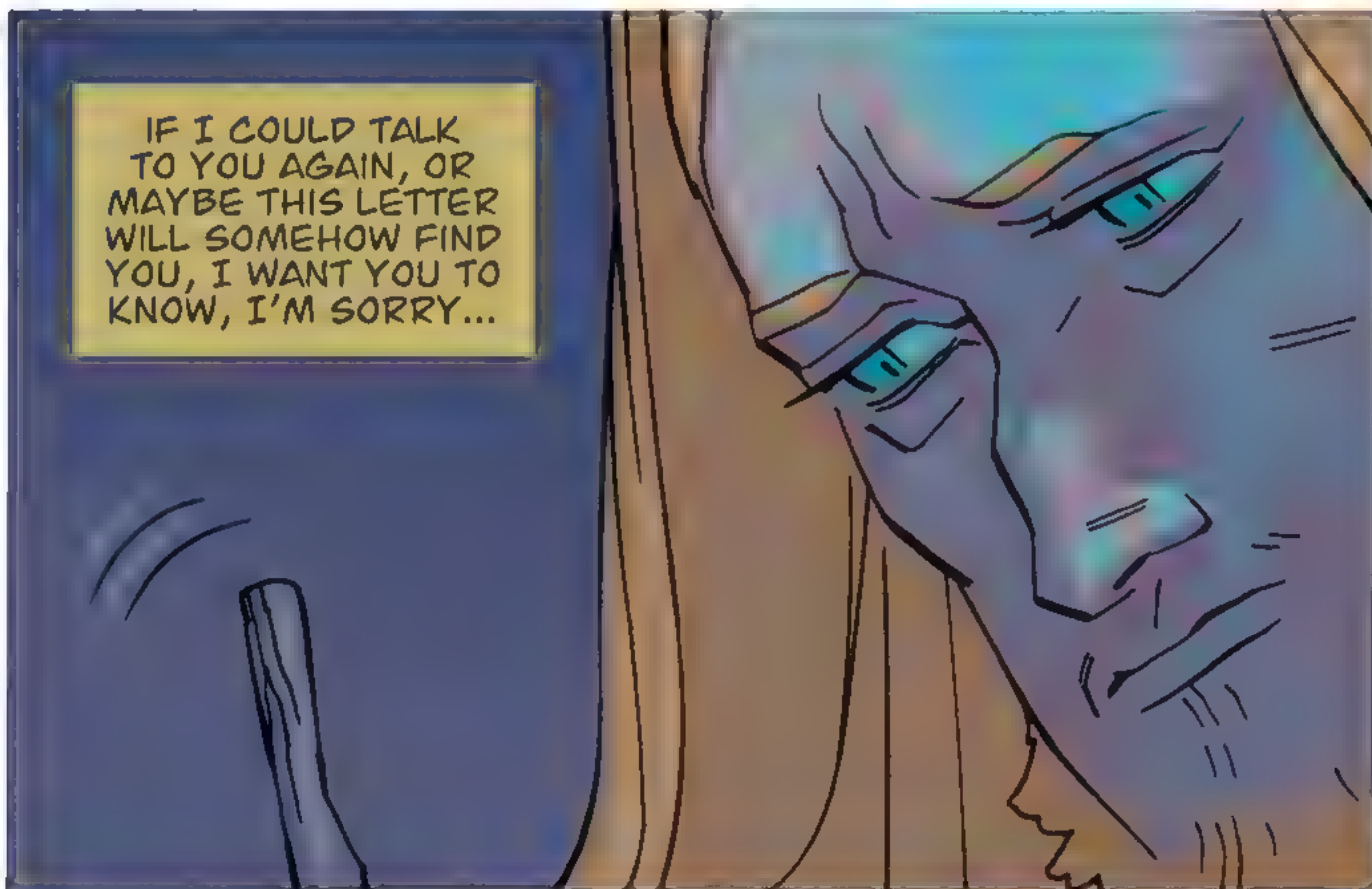
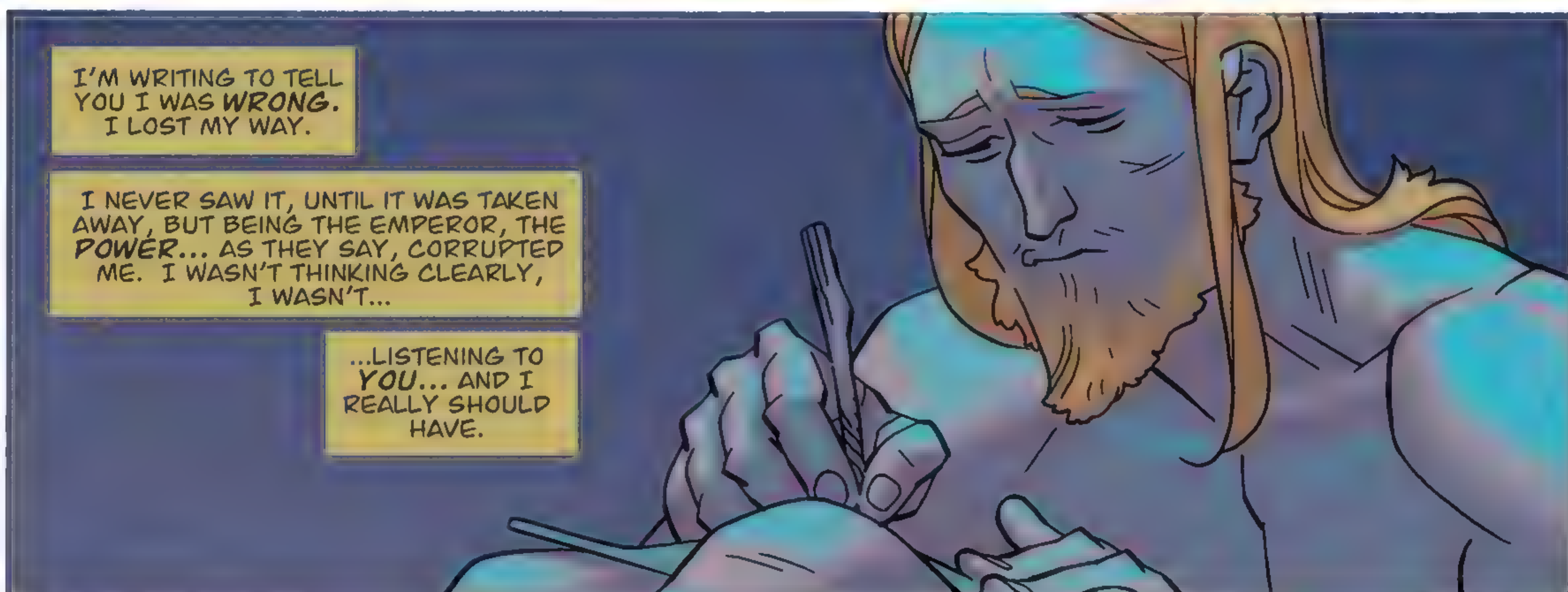
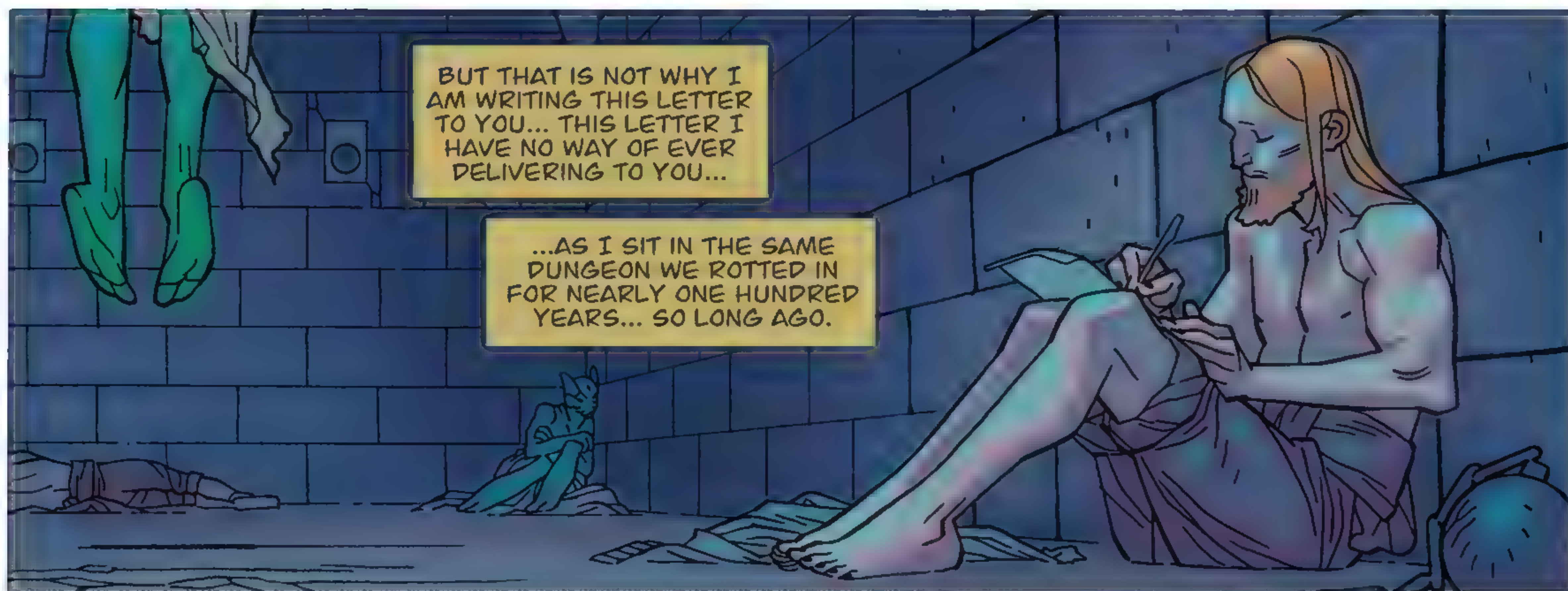
SOMETIMES I THINK ABOUT HOW MUCH TIME HAS PASSED SINCE I WAS USURPED...



...HOW MUCH TIME YOU'RE SPENDING AMONG THE ZAXALS...



HOW CLOSE YOU MUST BE GROWING TO THEM.





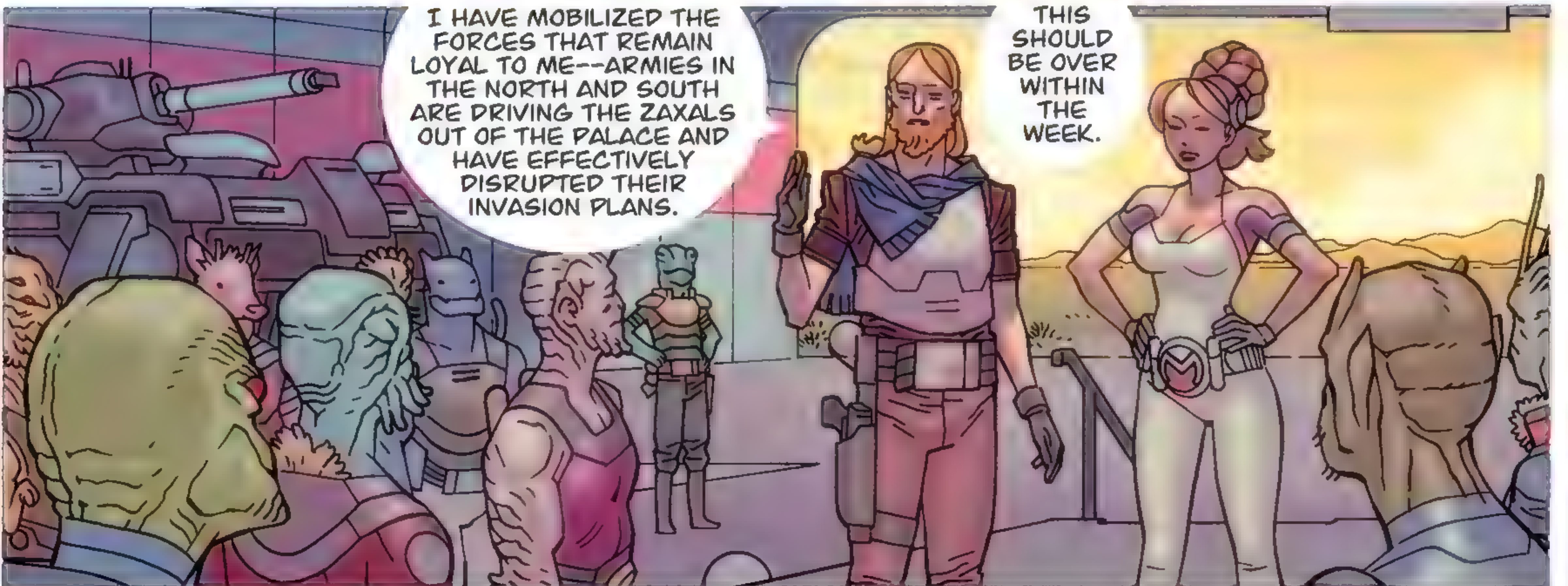
REX, YOU HAVE
TO HELP ME--YOU
WERE RIGHT ABOUT
THE ZAXALS! THEY'RE
MOUNTING AN ATTACK
ON ANOTHER
DIMENSION
RIGHT NOW!

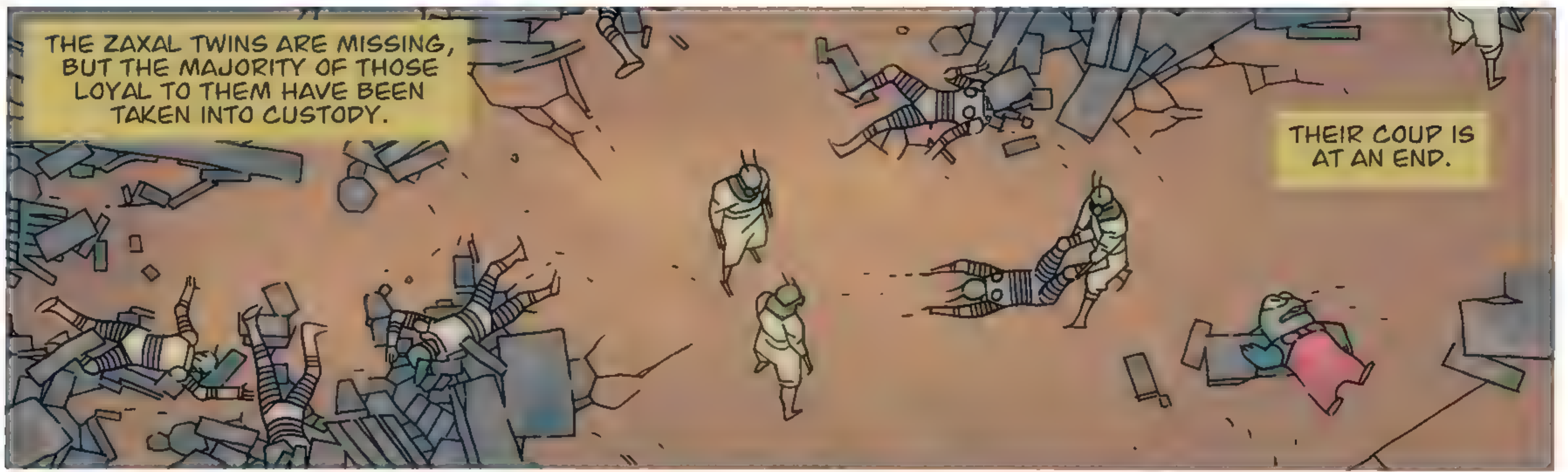
WE HAVE
TO **STOP**
THEM!



I HAVE MOBILIZED THE
FORCES THAT REMAIN
LOYAL TO ME--ARMIES IN
THE NORTH AND SOUTH
ARE DRIVING THE ZAXALS
OUT OF THE PALACE AND
HAVE EFFECTIVELY
DISRUPTED THEIR
INVASION PLANS.

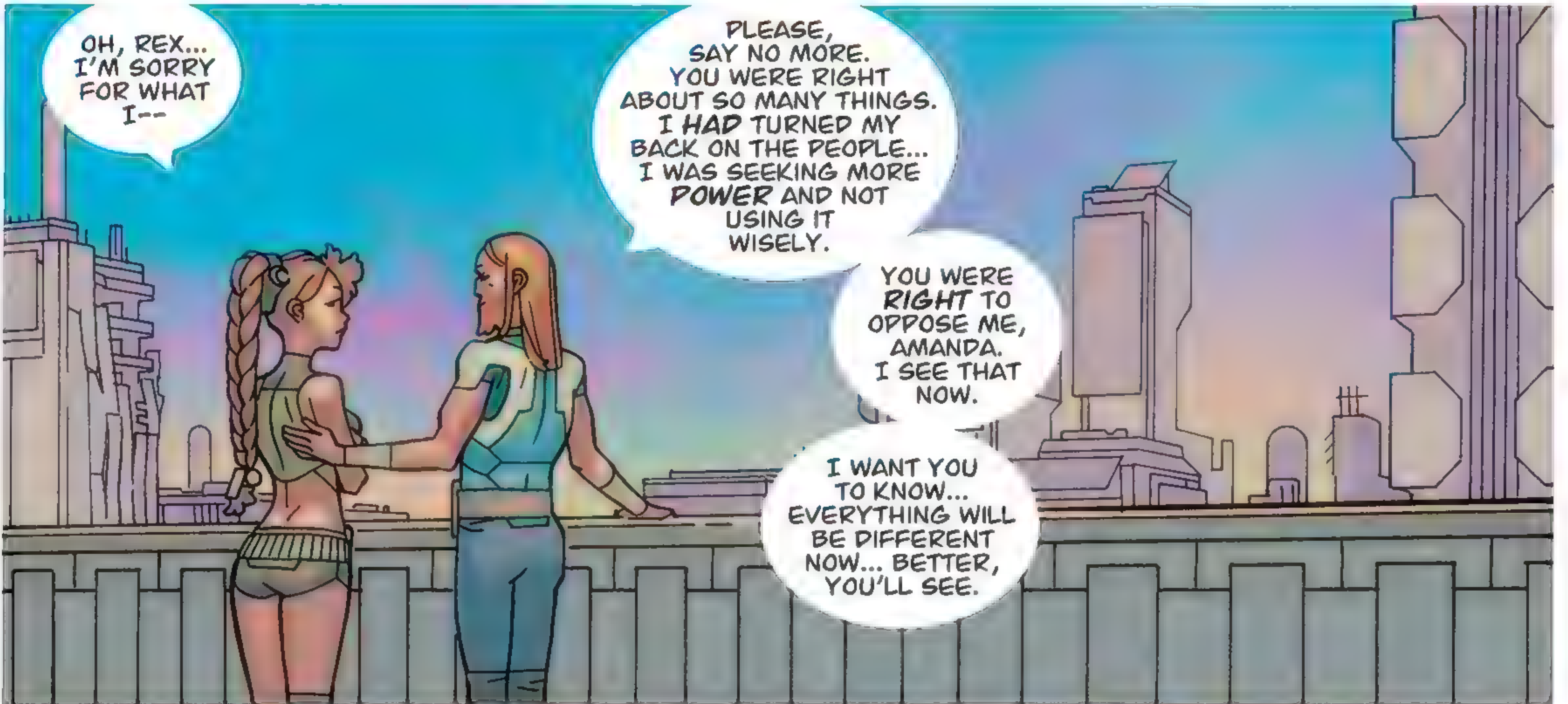
THIS
SHOULD
BE OVER
WITHIN
THE WEEK.





THE ZAXAL TWINS ARE MISSING,
BUT THE MAJORITY OF THOSE
LOYAL TO THEM HAVE BEEN
TAKEN INTO CUSTODY.

THEIR COUP IS
AT AN END.

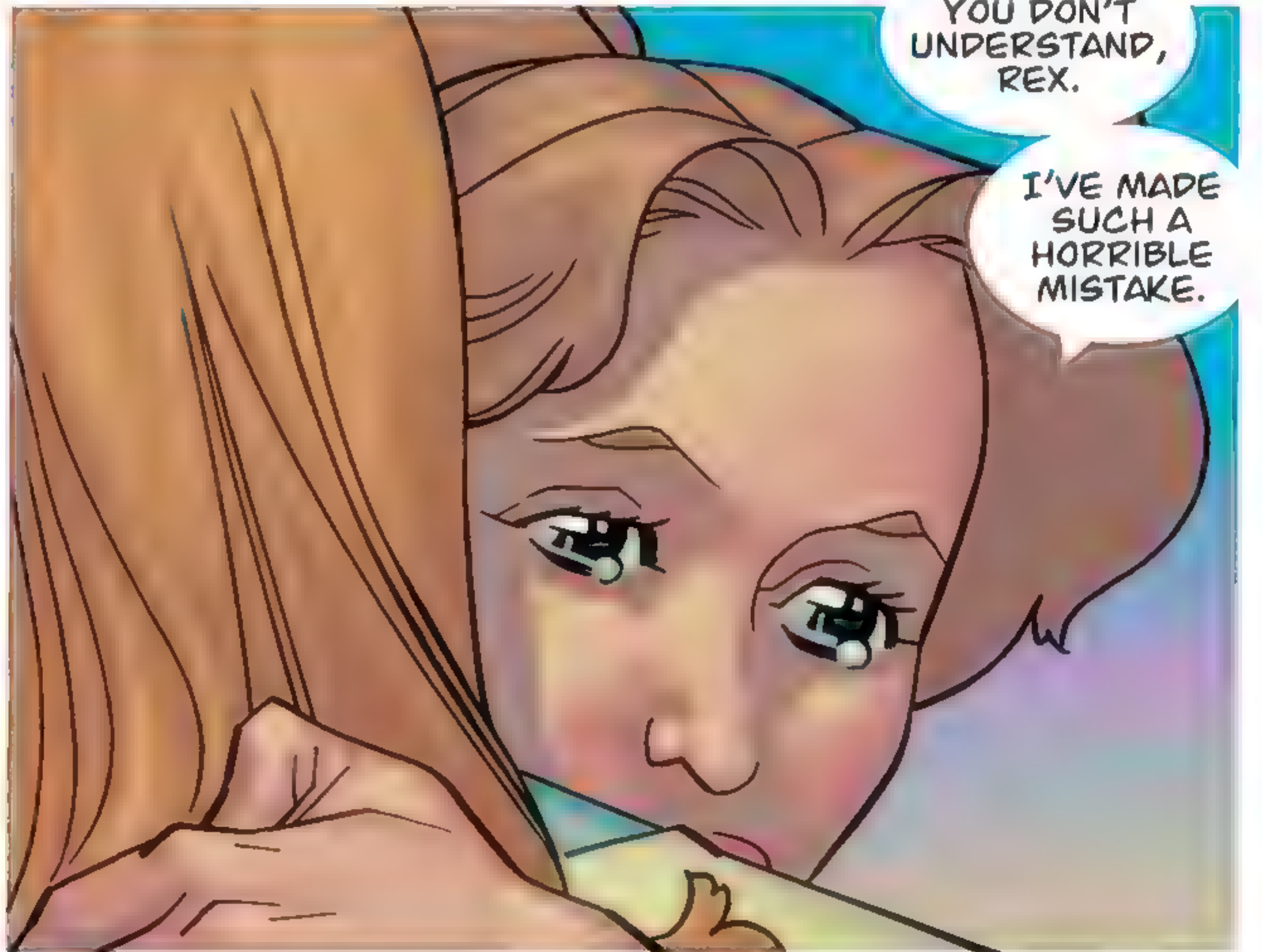


OH, REX...
I'M SORRY
FOR WHAT
I--

PLEASE,
SAY NO MORE.
YOU WERE RIGHT
ABOUT SO MANY THINGS.
I HAD TURNED MY
BACK ON THE PEOPLE...
I WAS SEEKING MORE
POWER AND NOT
USING IT
WISELY.

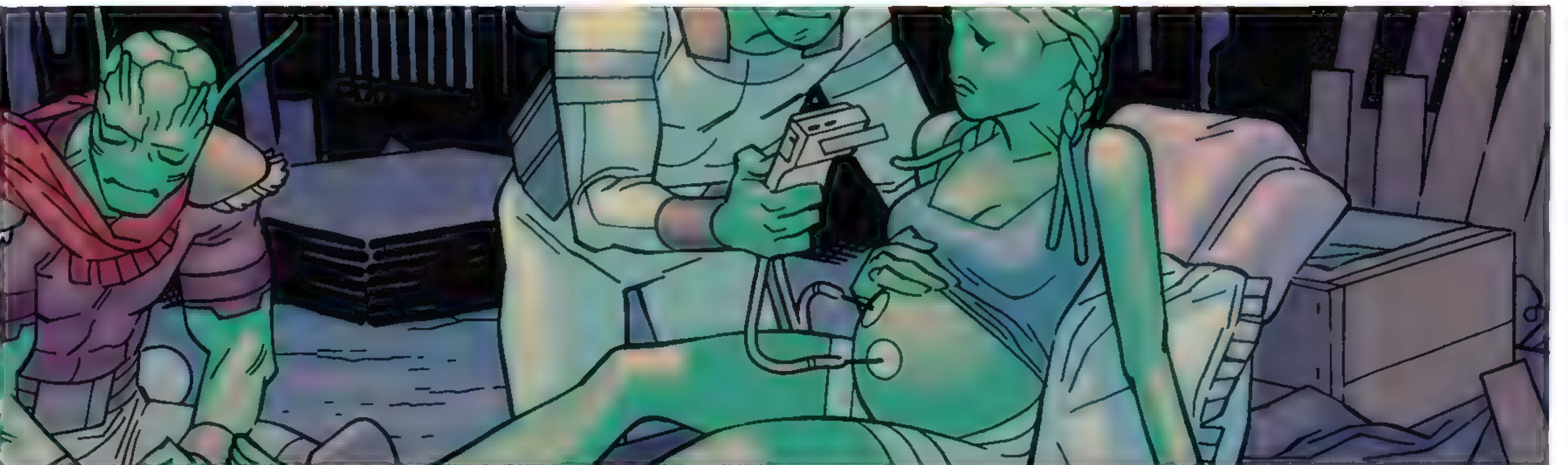
YOU WERE
RIGHT TO
OPPOSE ME,
AMANDA.
I SEE THAT
NOW.

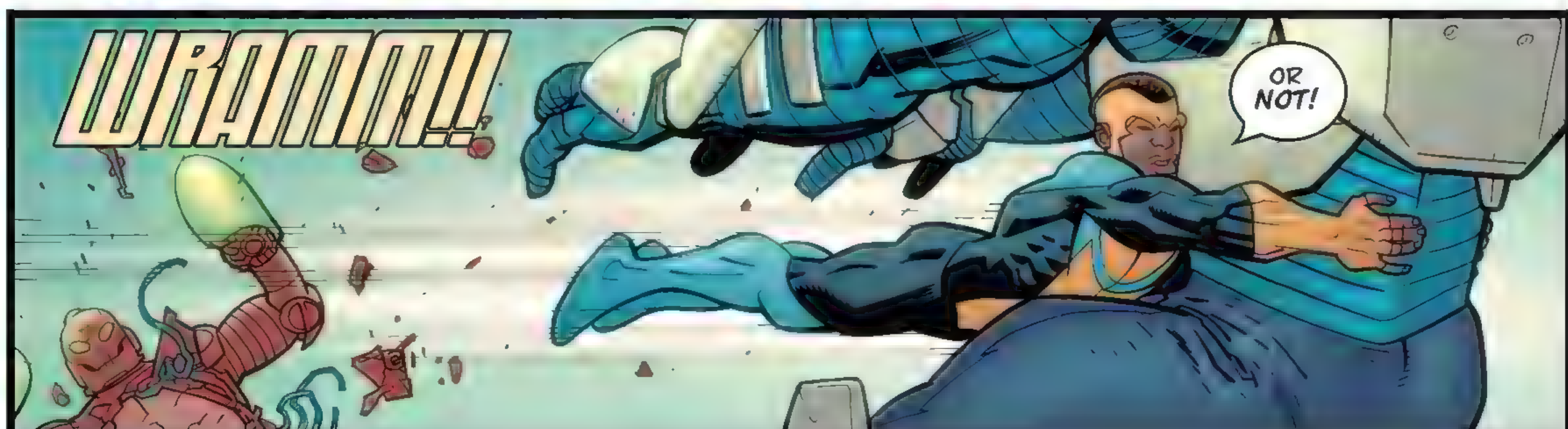
I WANT YOU
TO KNOW...
EVERYTHING WILL
BE DIFFERENT
NOW... BETTER,
YOU'LL SEE.




YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND,
REX.

I'VE MADE
SUCH A
HORRIBLE
MISTAKE.





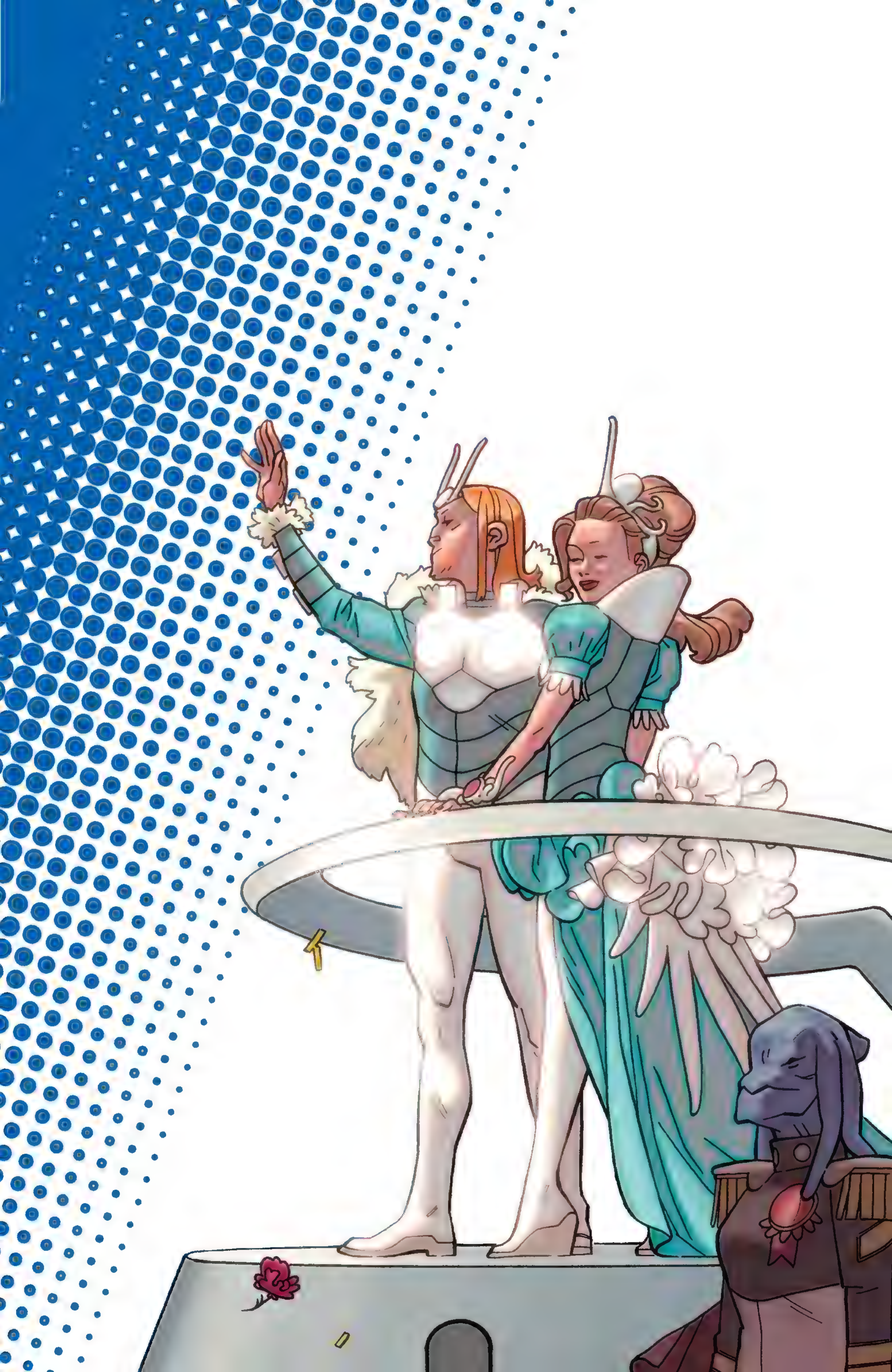


ON YOUR
FEET,
SOLDIER.

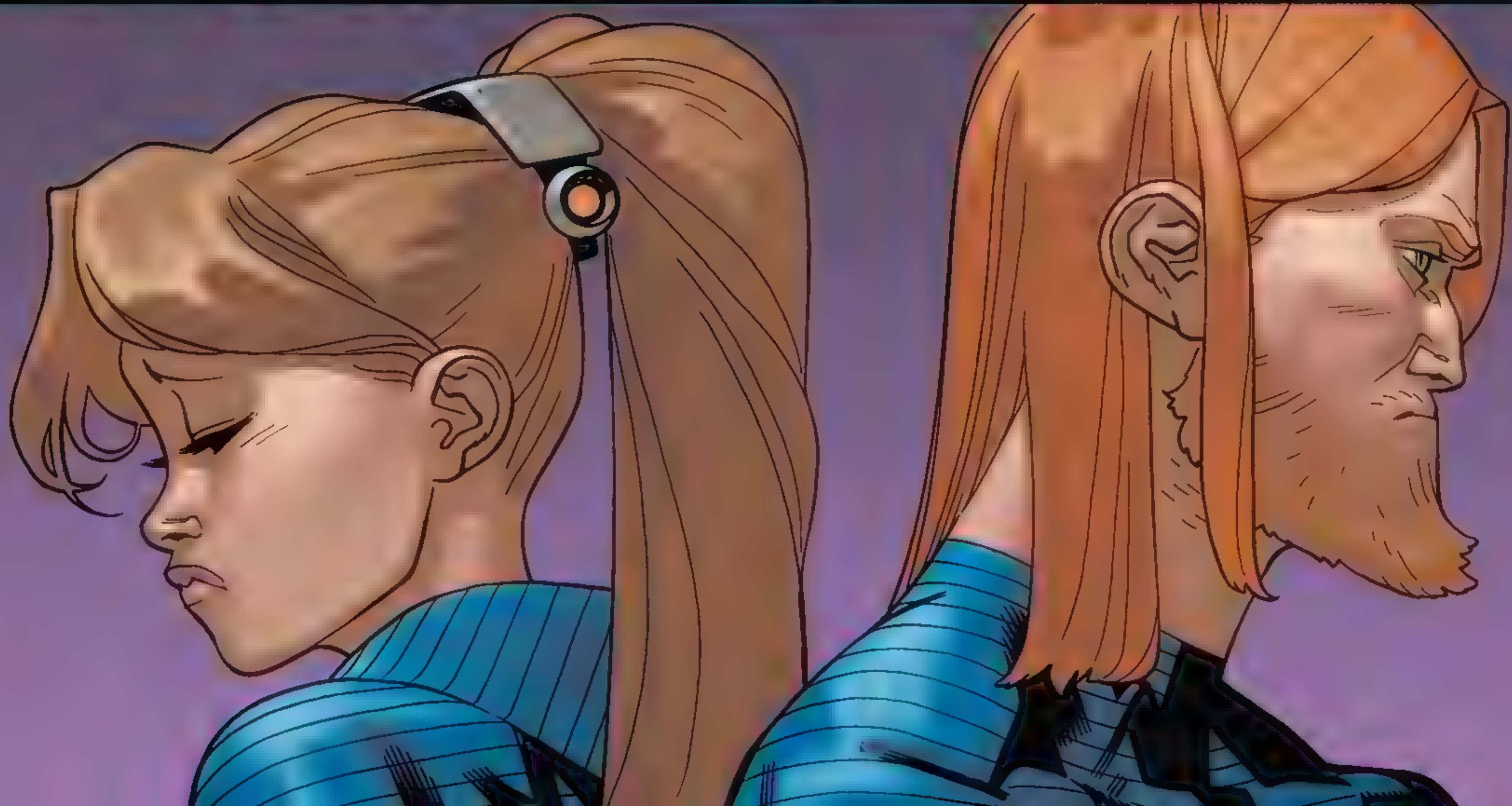
THE GUARDIANS
OF THE GLOBE ARE
BACK IN FULL FORCE,
AND WE'RE AT YOUR
COMMAND. YOU KNOW
THESE BASTARDS
BETTER THAN ANY
OF US...

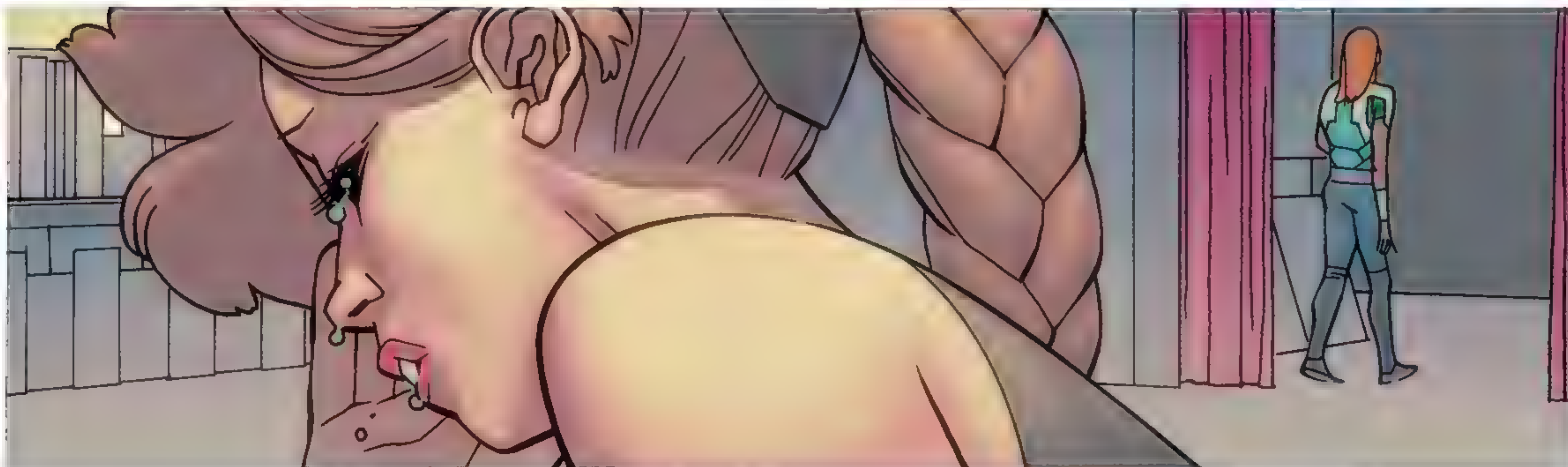
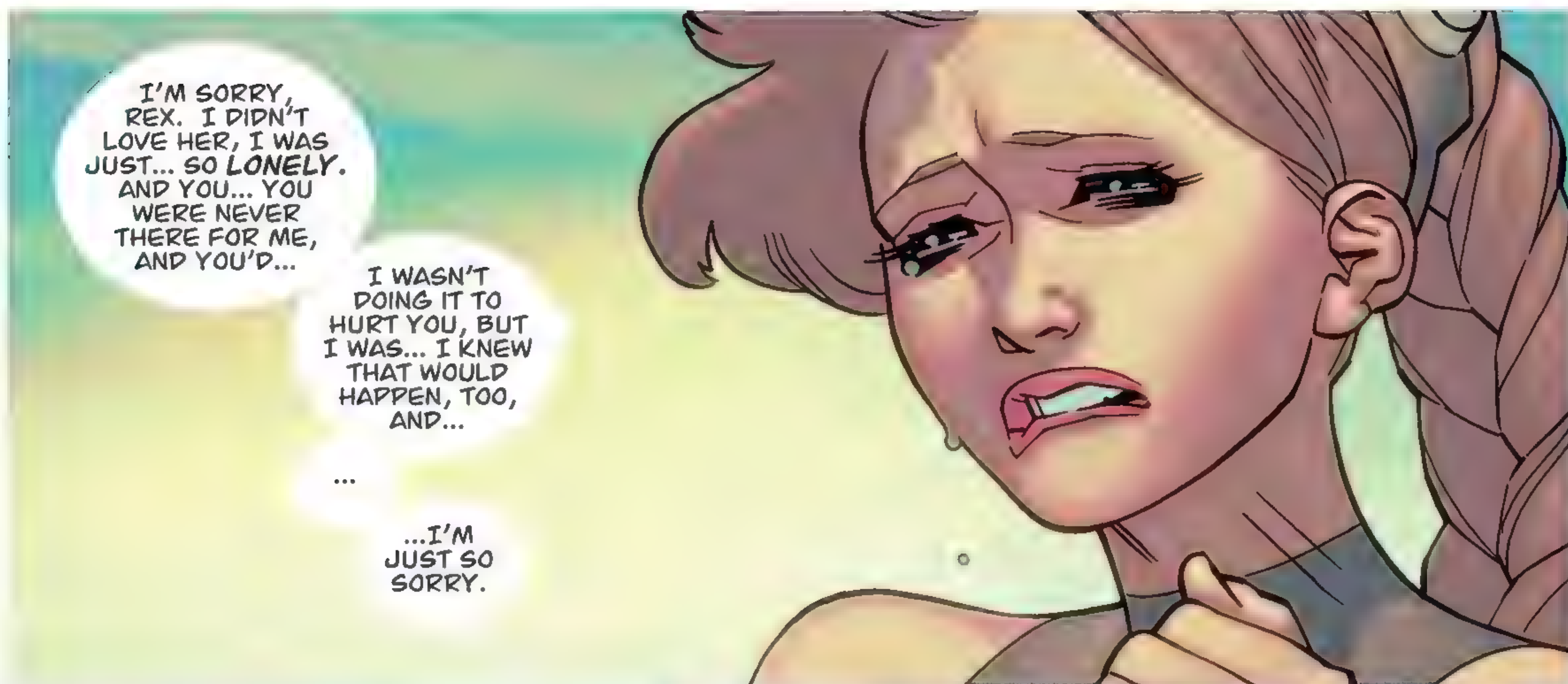
...AND I'M
WILLING TO BET,
GIVEN THE RIGHT
RESOURCES,
YOU KNOW
EXACTLY
HOW TO BEAT
THEM...

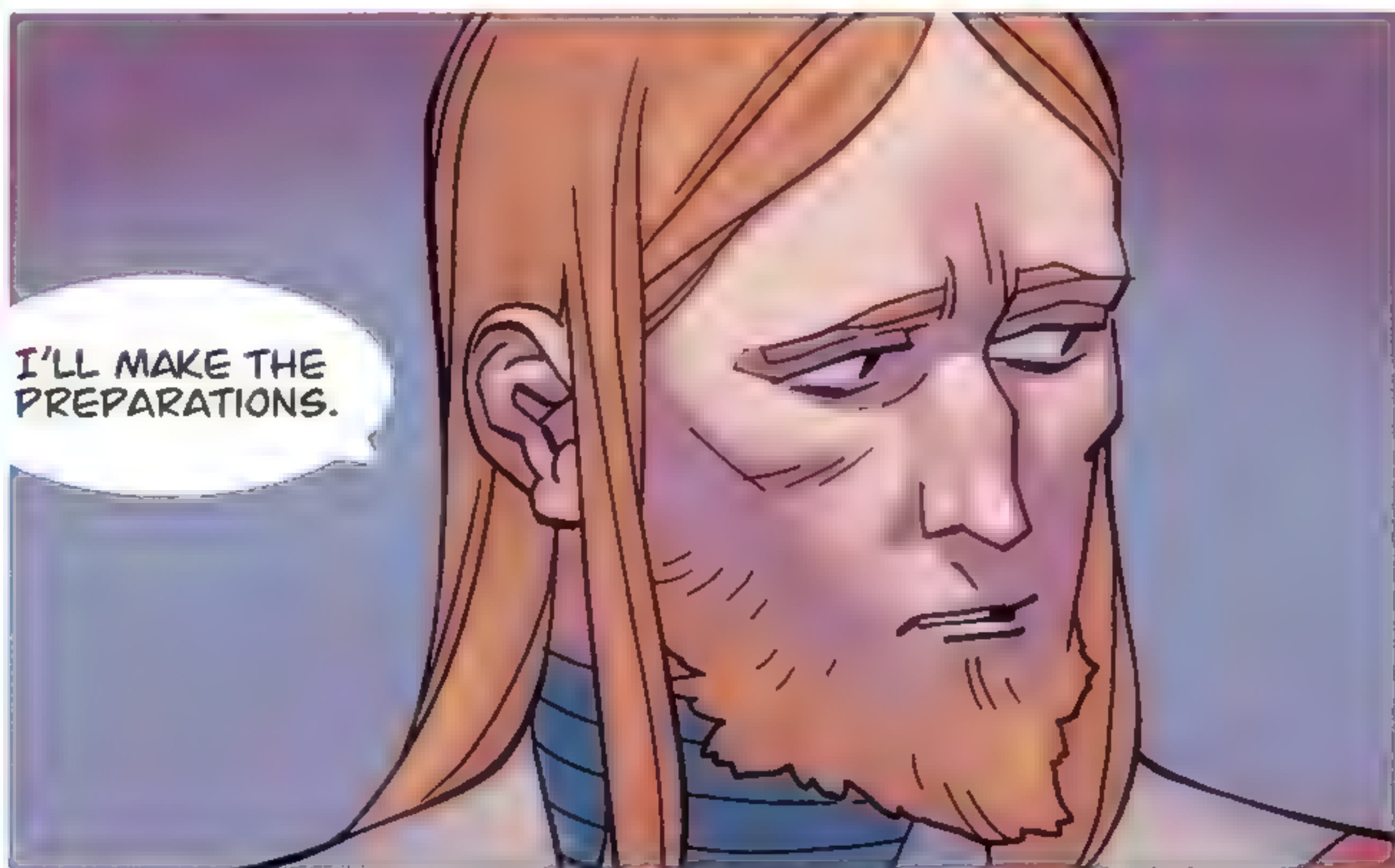
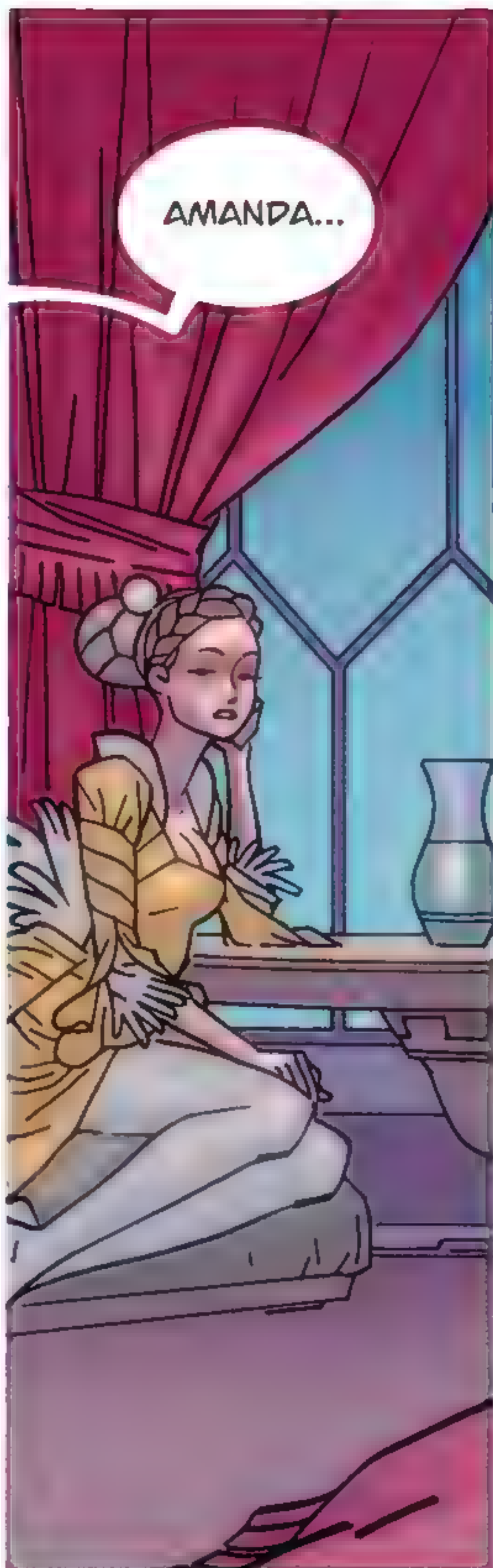
LET'S
FINISH
THIS!

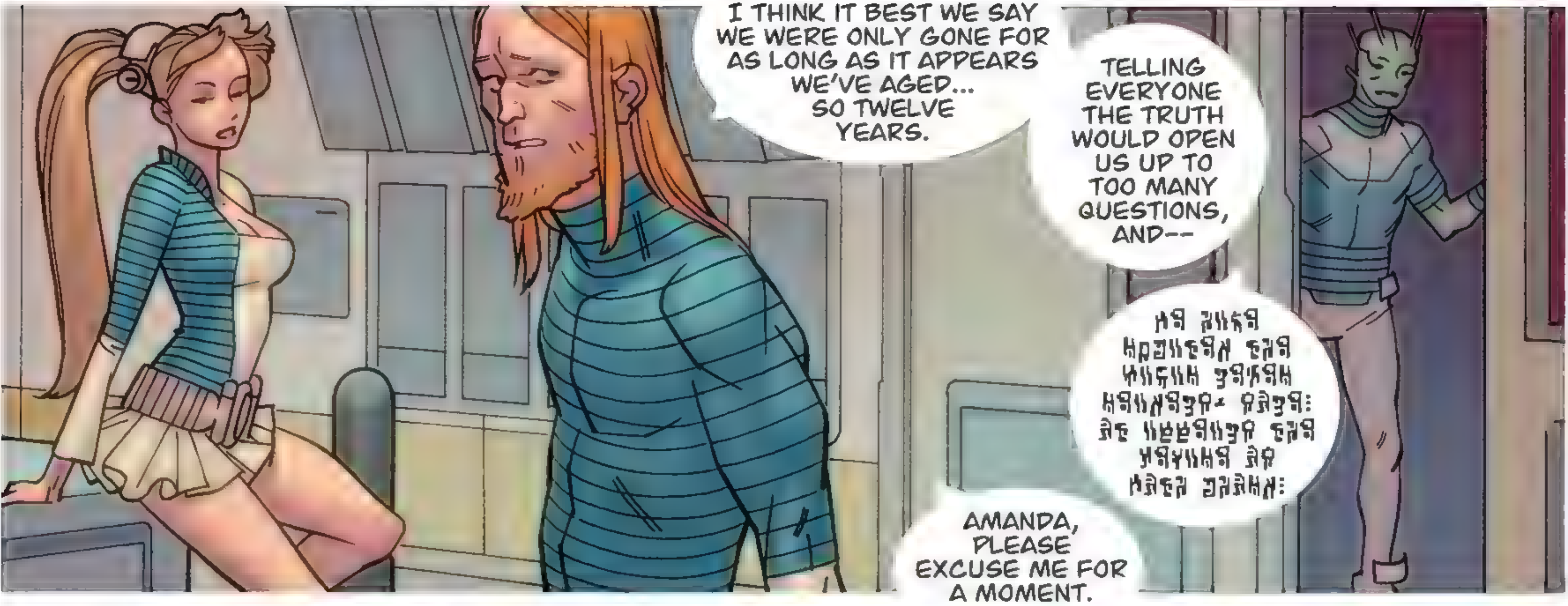


CHAPTER 96







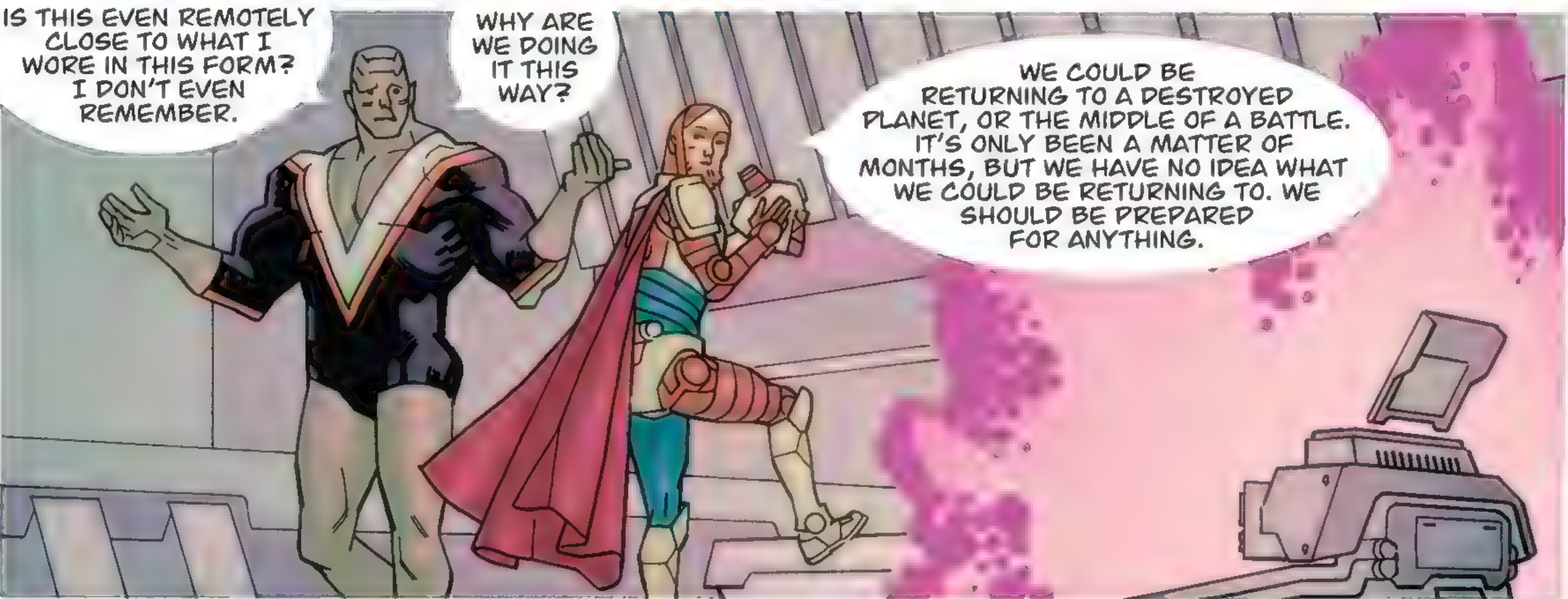


I THINK IT BEST WE SAY WE WERE ONLY GONE FOR AS LONG AS IT APPEARS WE'VE AGED... SO TWELVE YEARS.

TELLING EVERYONE THE TRUTH WOULD OPEN US UP TO TOO MANY QUESTIONS, AND--

អ្នក គ្រប់គ្នា
អាចឆ្លើយតបបាន ច្បាស់
មិនមែនជា អ្នកក្លែងទេ
អ្នកក្លែងទេ អ្នកក្លែងទេ
គ្រប់គ្នា អាចឆ្លើយតបបាន ច្បាស់
មិនមែនជា អ្នកក្លែងទេ
អ្នកក្លែងទេ អ្នកក្លែងទេ

AMANDA, PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT.



IS THIS EVEN REMOTELY CLOSE TO WHAT I WORE IN THIS FORM? I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER.

WHY ARE WE DOING IT THIS WAY?

WE COULD BE RETURNING TO A DESTROYED PLANET, OR THE MIDDLE OF A BATTLE. IT'S ONLY BEEN A MATTER OF MONTHS, BUT WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT WE COULD BE RETURNING TO. WE SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING.



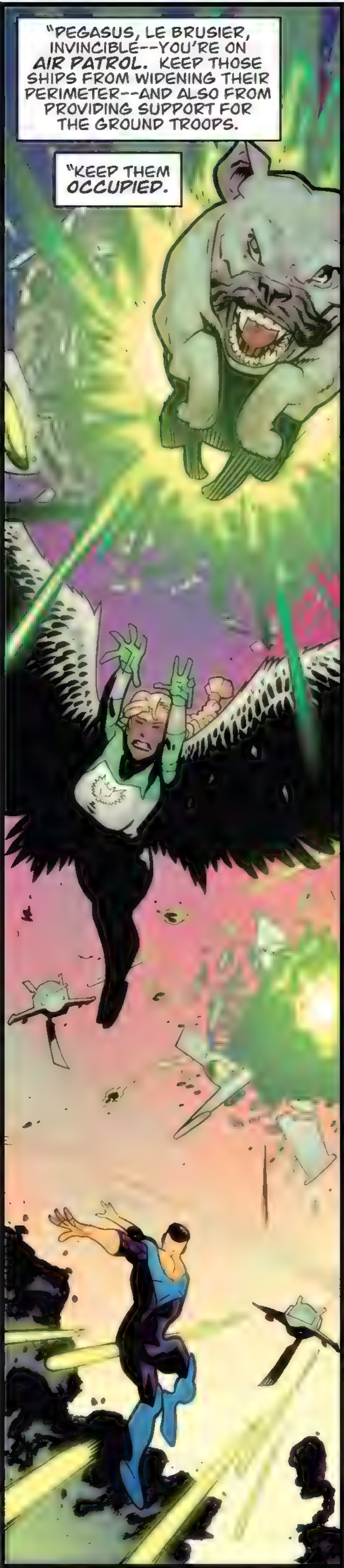
WHAT HAVE WE MISSED?



ATTENTION,
GUARDIANS
OF THE
GLOBE!

WE HAVE
ISOLATED THE
FLAXAN COMMANDER.
THE TROOPS ARE CUT
OFF AND IN DISARRAY!
NOW IS THE TIME
TO PUT AN END
TO THIS.

HERE'S
WHAT I
NEED FROM
ALL OF
YOU!



"PEGASUS, LE BRUSIER,
INVINCIBLE--YOU'RE ON
AIR PATROL. KEEP THOSE
SHIPS FROM WIDENING THEIR
PERIMETER--AND ALSO FROM
PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR
THE GROUND TROOPS.

"KEEP THEM
OCCUPIED.



"OUTRUN, KABOOMERANG--
THERE ARE STILL CIVILIANS
IN THE STREETS, GATHER
THEM UP AND GET THEM TO
THE SAFE ZONES BEFORE
OUR CASUALTY LIST
SKYROCKETS.



"YETI, BLACK SAMSON--
KEEP THOSE SAFE ZONES
PROTECTED! DON'T LET
ANYTHING BREAK THAT
LINE--HOLD THEM OFF
NO MATTER WHAT!

"IF YOU'RE STARTING
TO GET OVERRUN--
CALL IN AND I'LL SEND
SOMEONE TO ASSIST.

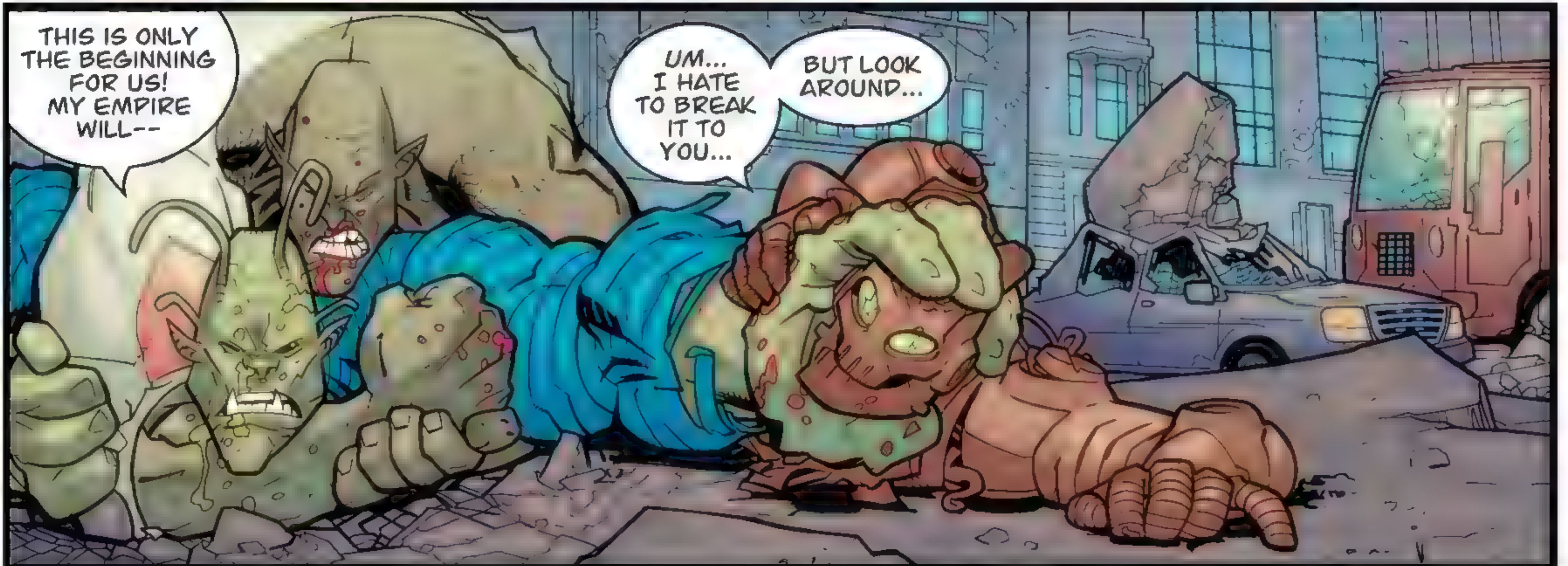


"JAPANDROID, BEST TIGER,
KID THOR, KNOCKOUT, ANYONE
FROM THE ACTIONEERS THAT'S
STILL STANDING--YOU'RE ON
THE FLAXAN GROUND TROOPS,
SPLIT THEM OFF, DIVIDE
AND CONQUER!



"MONSTER GIRL, I NEED
YOU ON THE FLAXAN
EMPEROR--MONAX...

"I'LL ASSIST
YOU AS SOON
AS EVERYONE
IS IN POSITION."





IT'S OVER.



THAT'S IT! YOU'VE CAUSED ENOUGH DAMAGE. I HOPE YOU'RE PROUD OF YOURSELF. WHAT A GREAT LEADER YOU TURNED OUT TO BE.

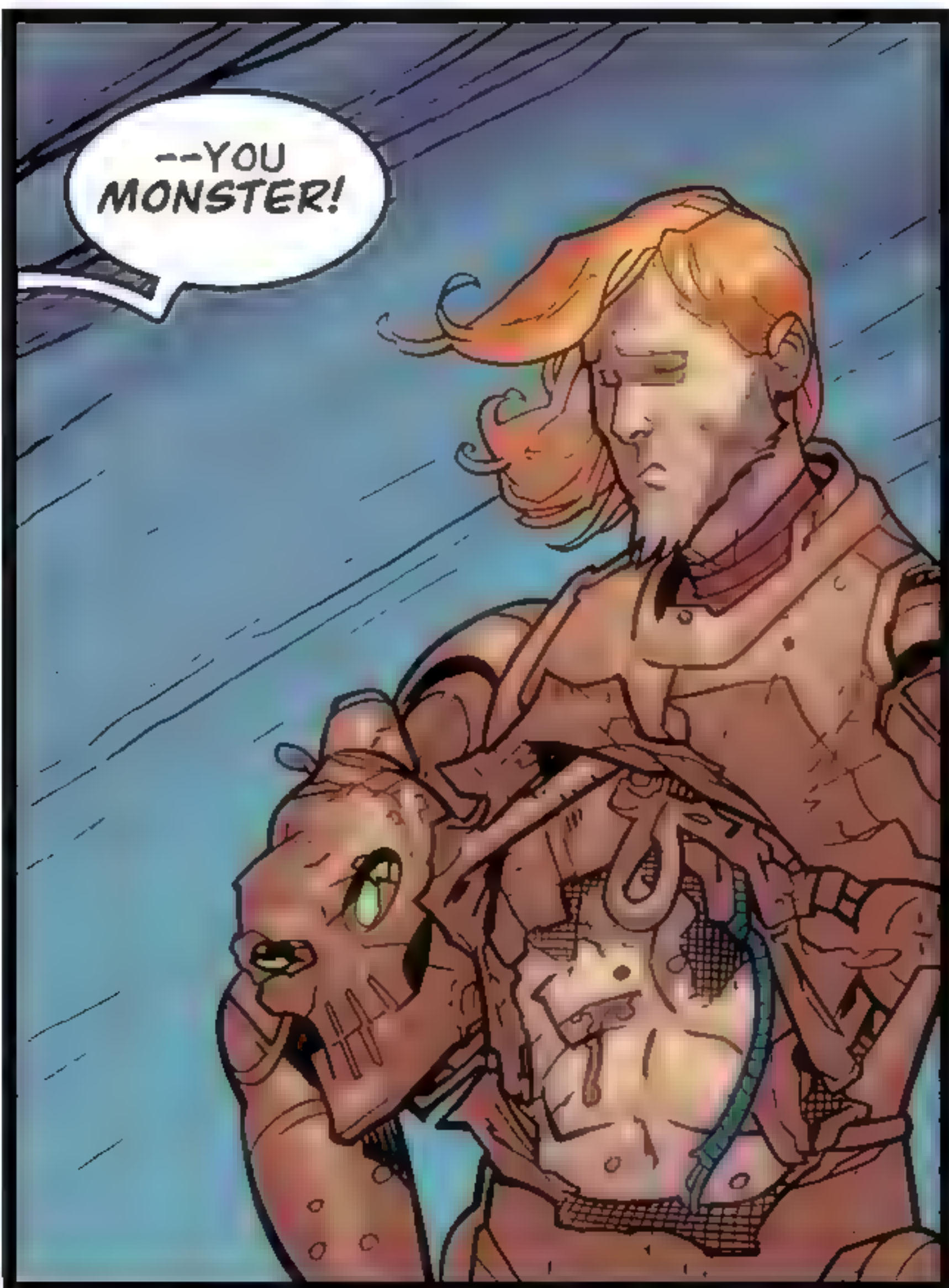
YOU'RE AN EMBARRASSMENT.



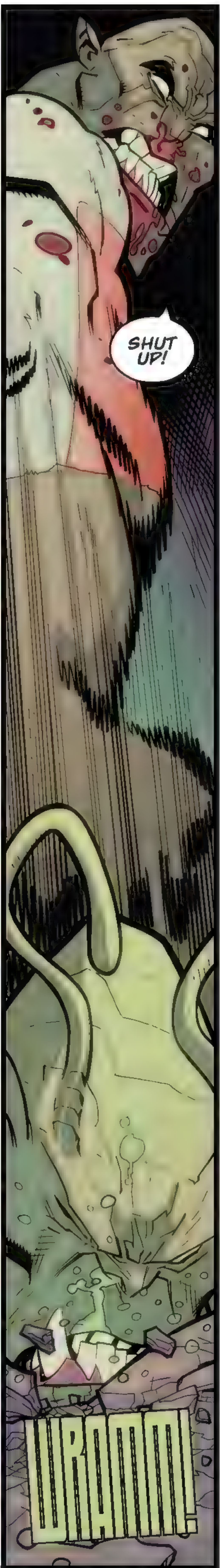
NO! IT'S NOT OVER-- IT CAN'T BE! NOT NOW! NOT LIKE THIS!

YOU DON'T GET TO WIN! NOT YOU-- NOT AFTER EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE!

I WON'T LET YOU WIN--



--YOU MONSTER!



SHUT UP!

WRAAAA!



ZANDALE RANDOLPH'S
SWANK STUDIO APARTMENT.



OH, BOY--
THAT WAS A
TOUGH ONE.
FRACTURE
ISN'T TOO
BAD,
SO DON'T
WORRY.

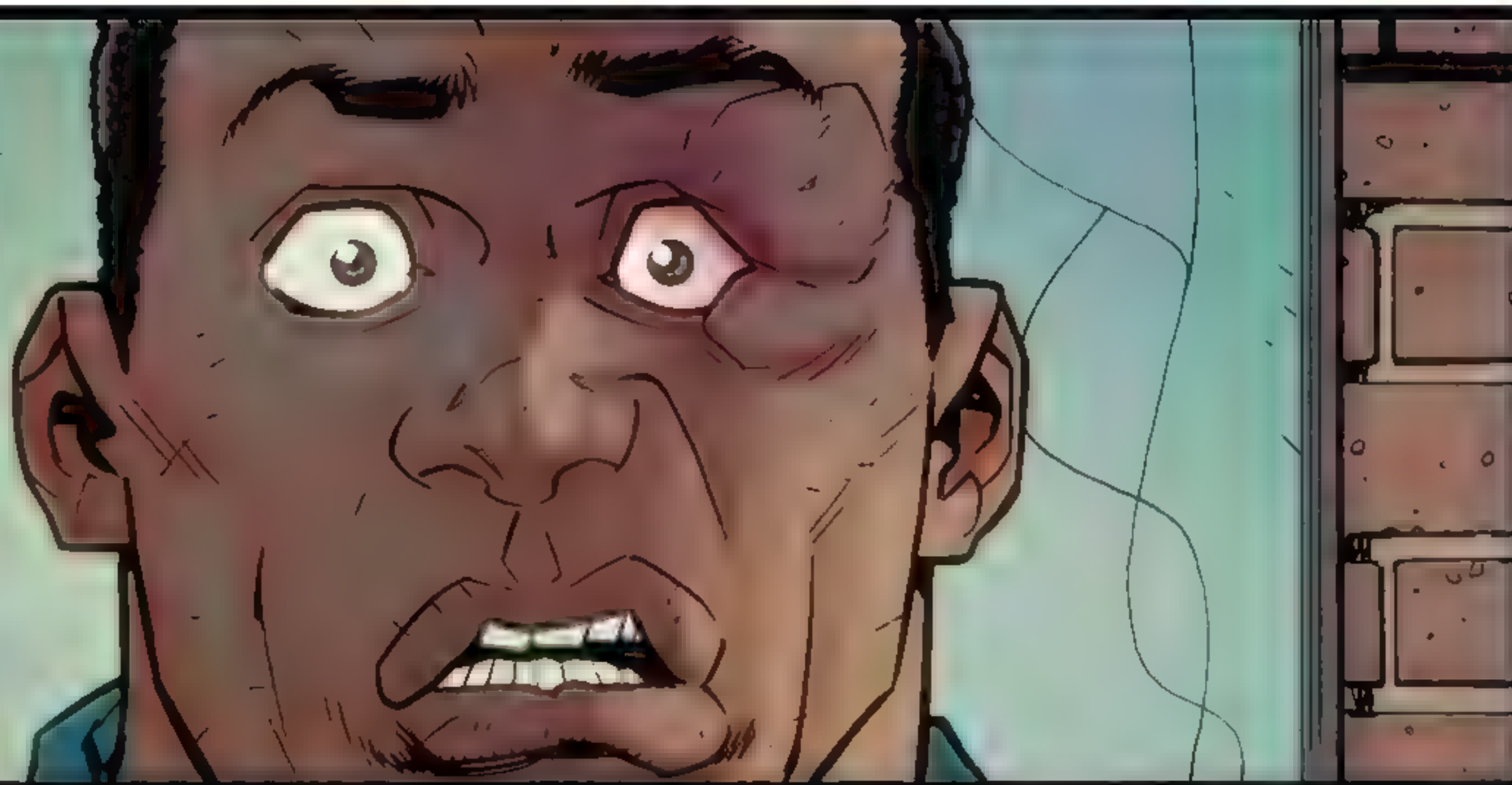
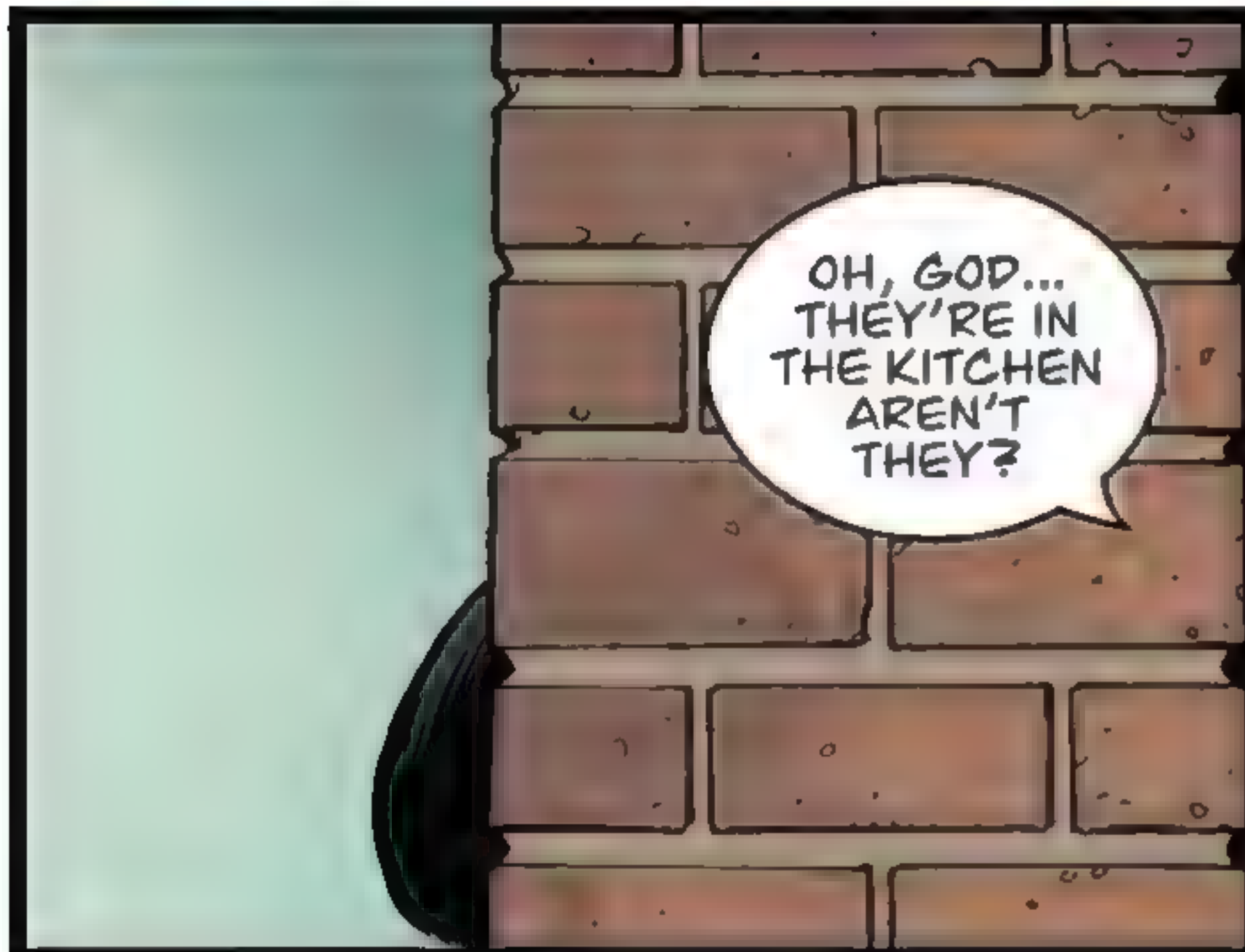
SHOULD BE HEALED IN A
WEEK OR SO, AND IT GIVES
US A GOOD REASON TO
AVOID MY PARENTS! IT'D
BE A PRETTY TOUGH SELL
THAT I BROKE MY ARM
WHILE SETTING UP
FOR A GALLERY
SHOW--



ZANDALE, HONEY--
YOU'RE RAMBLING
NONSENSE--HON',
PLEASE--WHAT
ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT?!



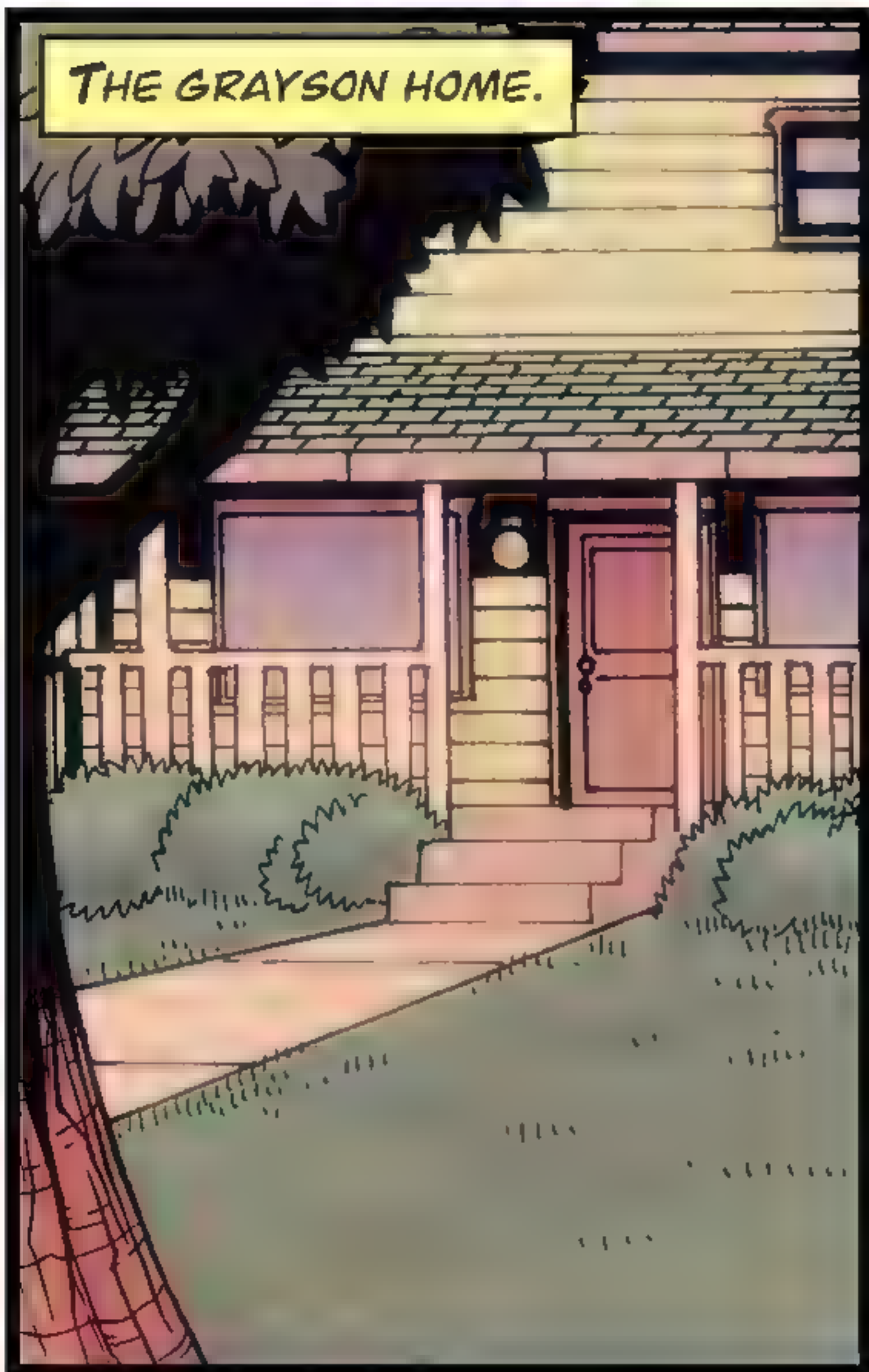
OH, GOD...
THEY'RE IN
THE KITCHEN
AREN'T
THEY?



I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.
YOUR BROTHER
WAS FIGHTING
THOSE ALIENS...
NOT YOU. HOW
COULD YOU
BREAK
YOUR--

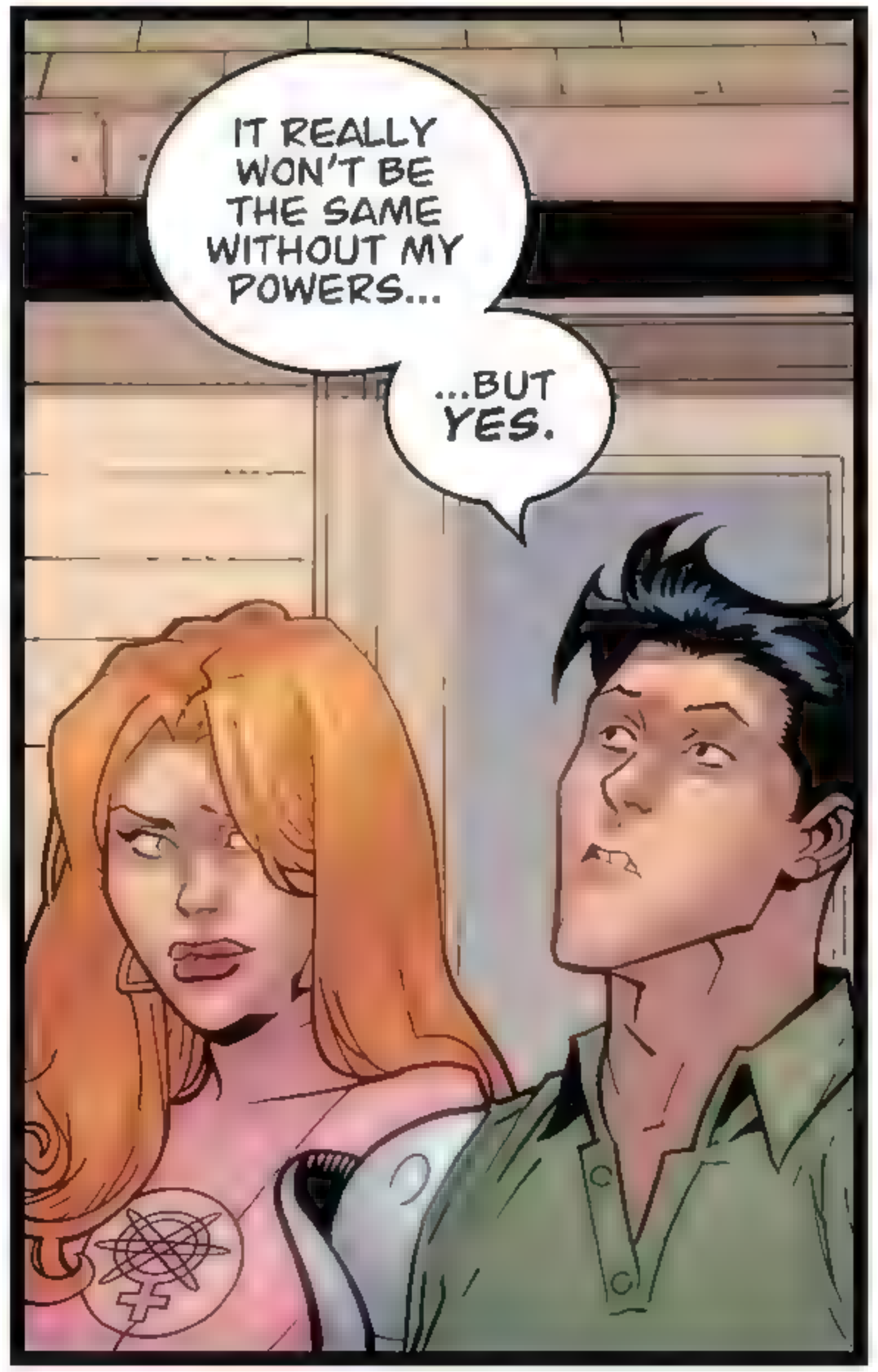
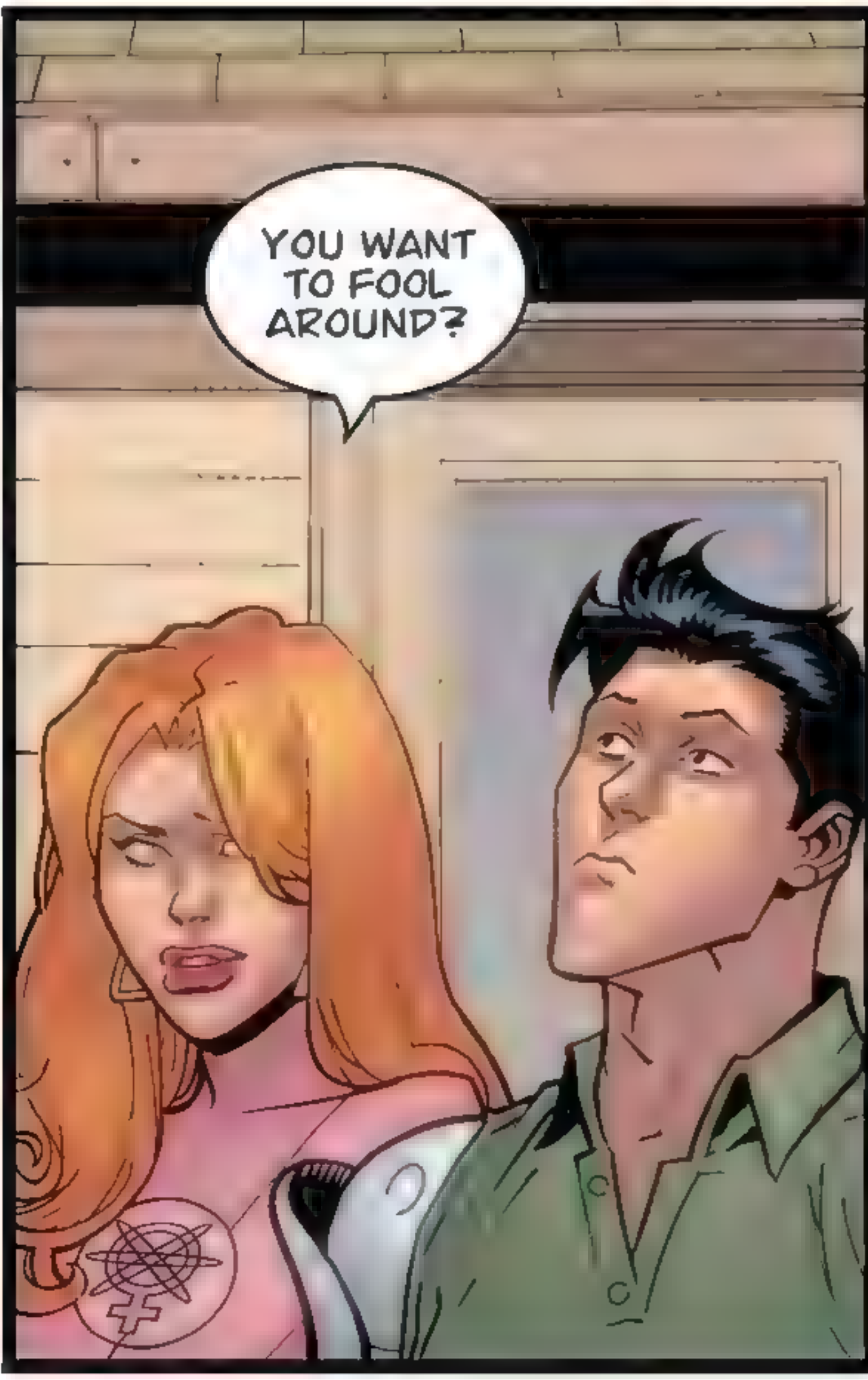
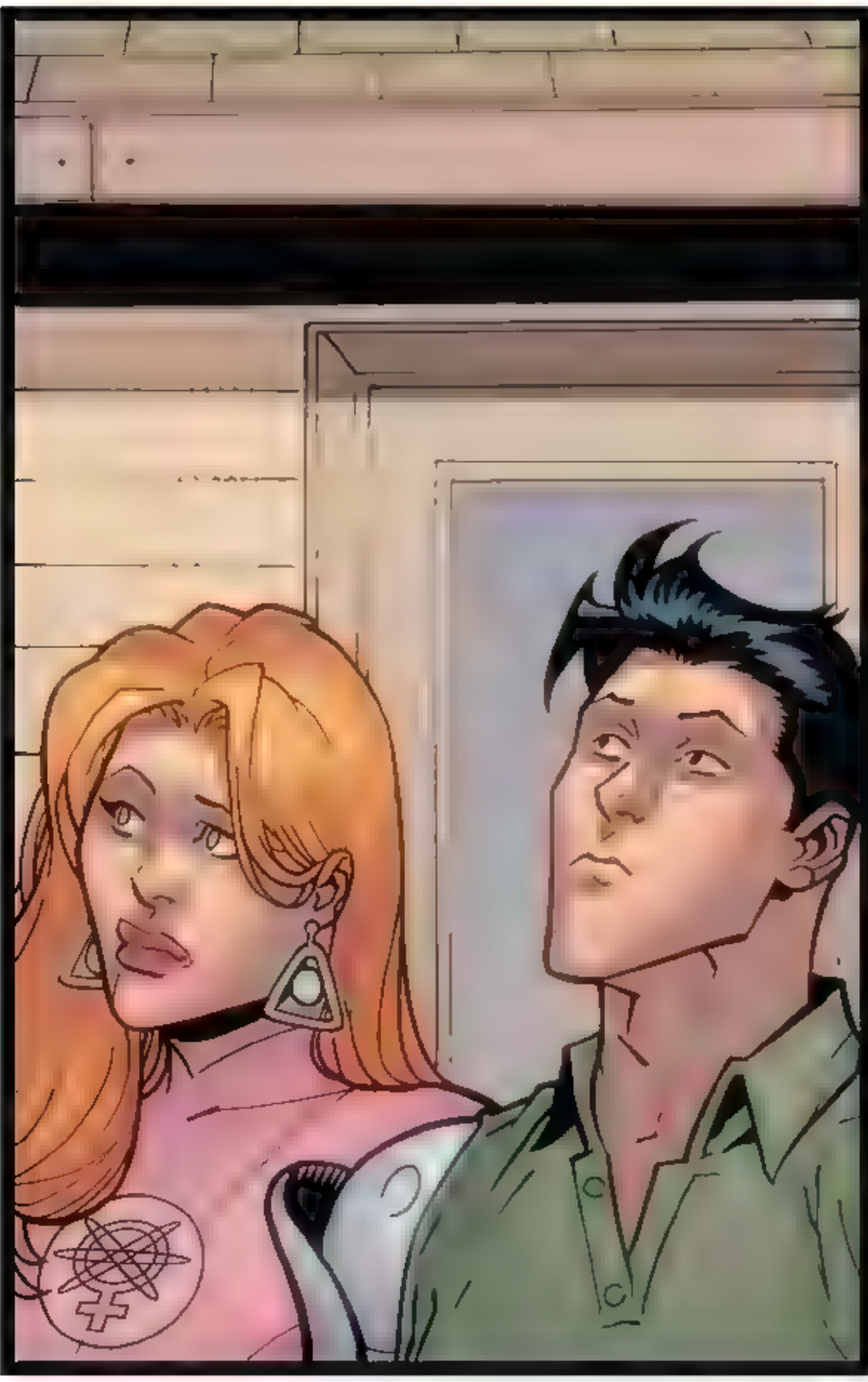
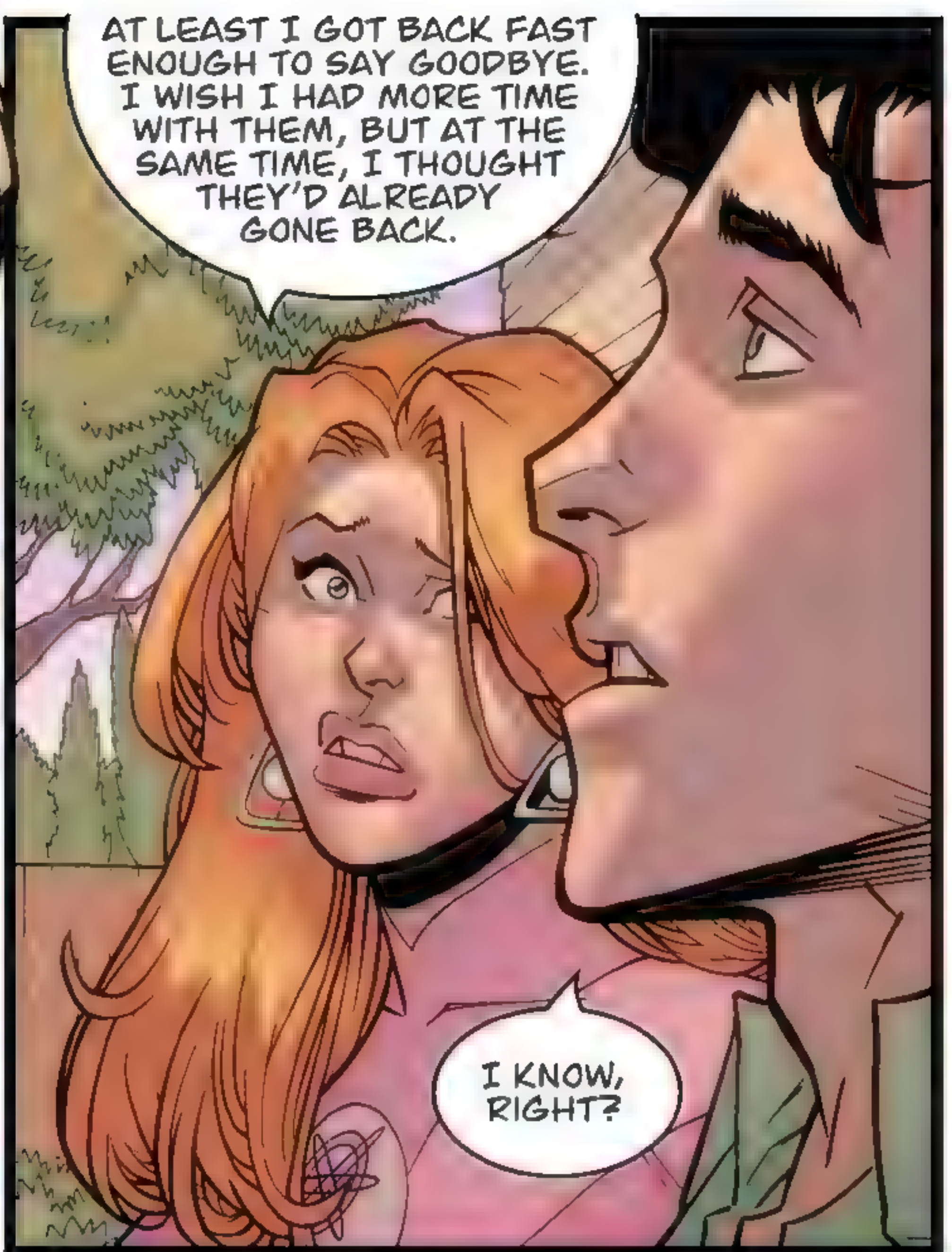
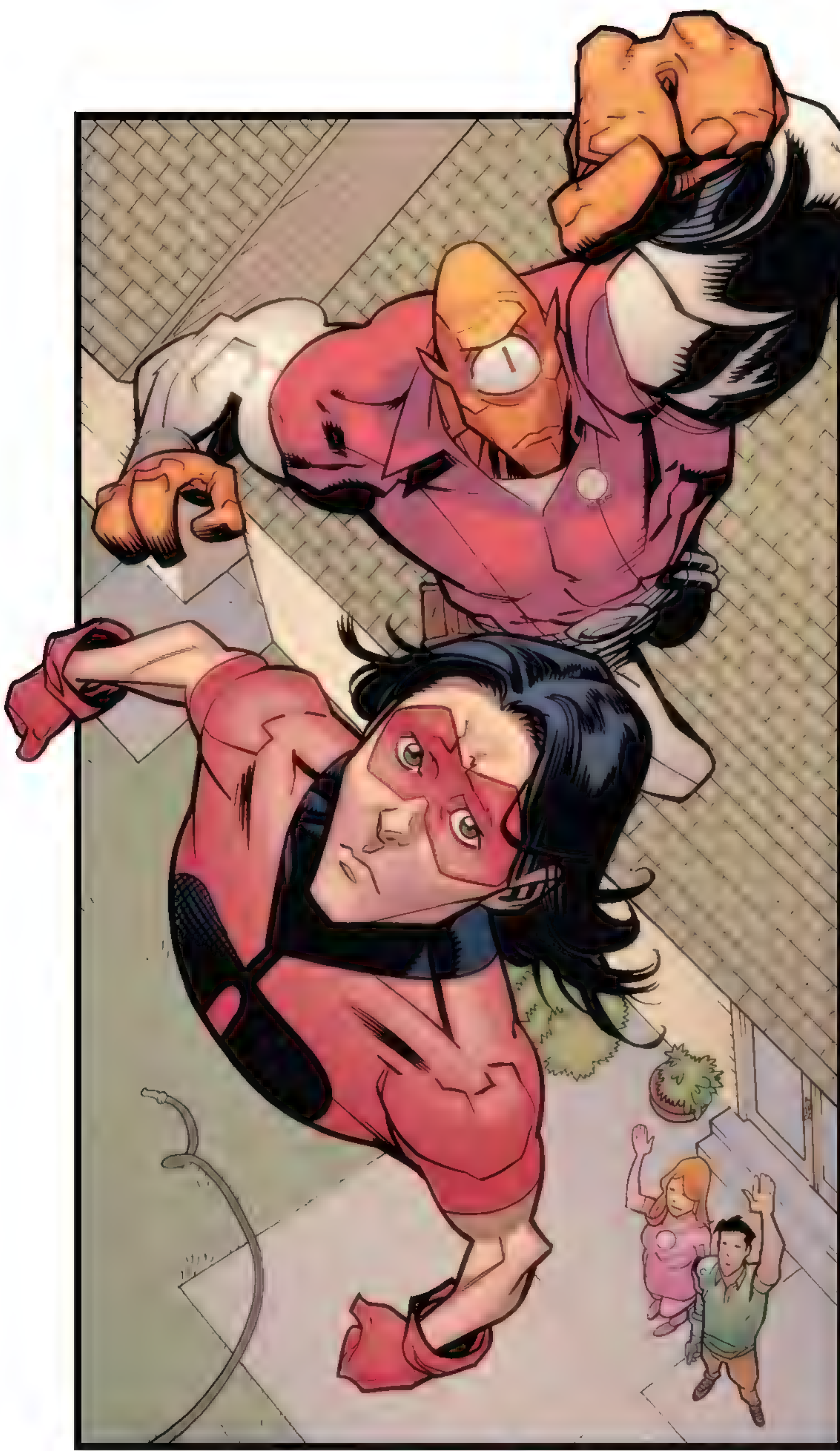
OH,
BOY...













GENERAL KREGG,
I HAVE NEVER KNOWN
YOU TO BE A FOOLISH
MAN. IN FACT, I WOULD
COUNT YOU AMONG
MY MOST LOYAL
AGENTS.

SO WHEN
I SAID TO
INFILTRATE THE
HUMAN POPULATION,
PROCREATE, BUT IN
NO WAY INTERFERE WITH
THE EVENTS THAT
TRANSPIRE WITH THESE
PEOPLE... I WOULD EXPECT
THAT YOU, ABOVE ALL
OTHERS, WOULD
UNDERSTAND AND
FOLLOW THOSE
ORDERS.

AND YET...
HERE WE
ARE.



I AM VERY SORRY,
SIR. IT WAS NOT
MY INTENTION
TO DISOBEY
YOU.

I COULDN'T
STAND BY AND
ALLOW THESE PEOPLE
TO BE HARMED.
THERE IS A HUMAN
WOMAN IN LONDON
WHO CARRIES
MY CHILD.



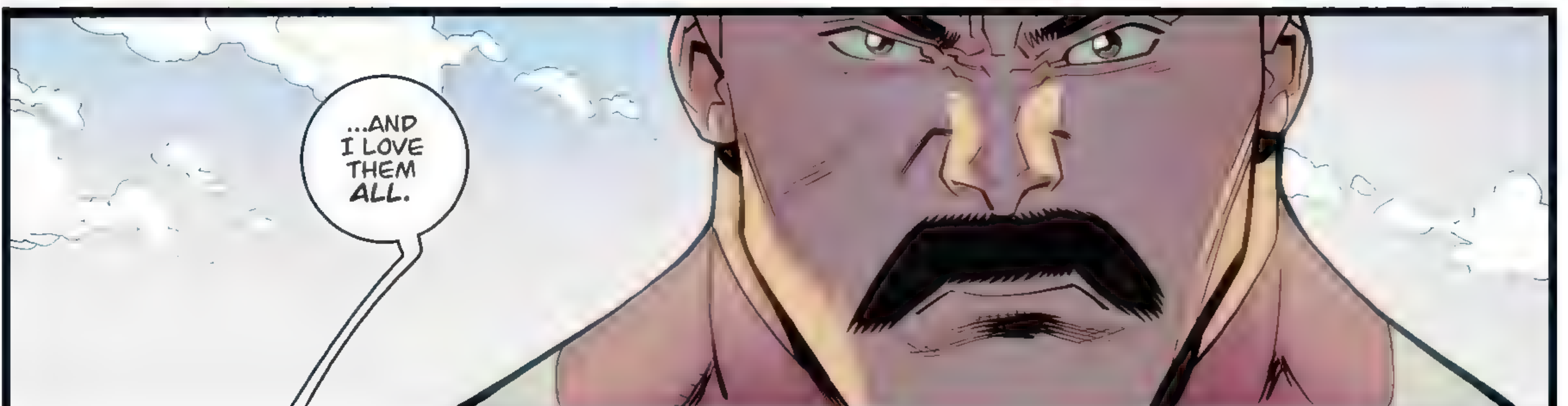
SO? THAT
WOMAN IS
OF LIMITED
IMPORTANCE.

I HAVE
REVIEWED YOUR
LOGS. YOU HAVE
NEARLY A **DOZEN**
HUMAN WOMEN SPREAD
ALL OVER THE GLOBE
WHO ARE CURRENTLY
IMPREGNATED
WITH YOUR
OFFSPRING.

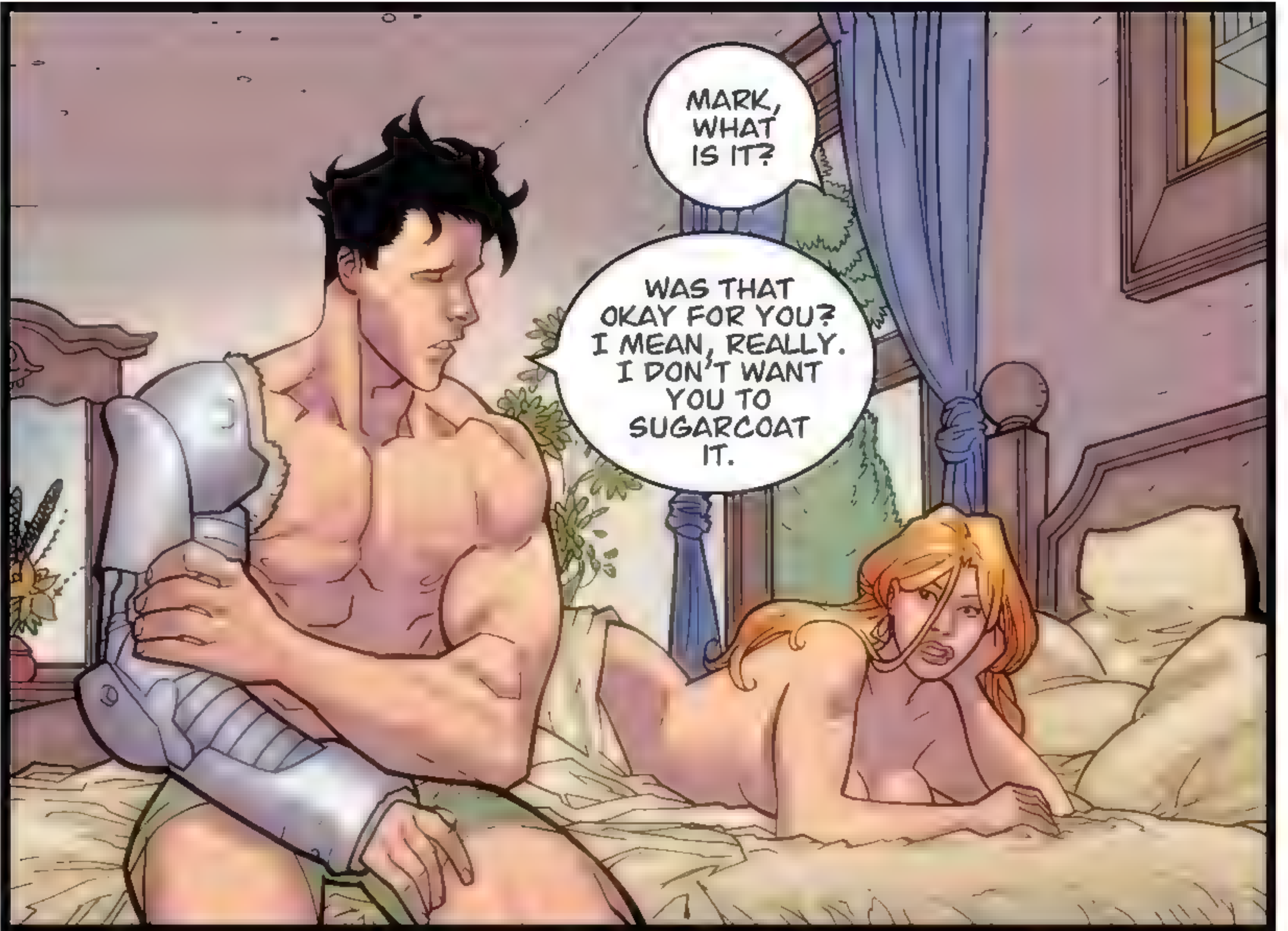
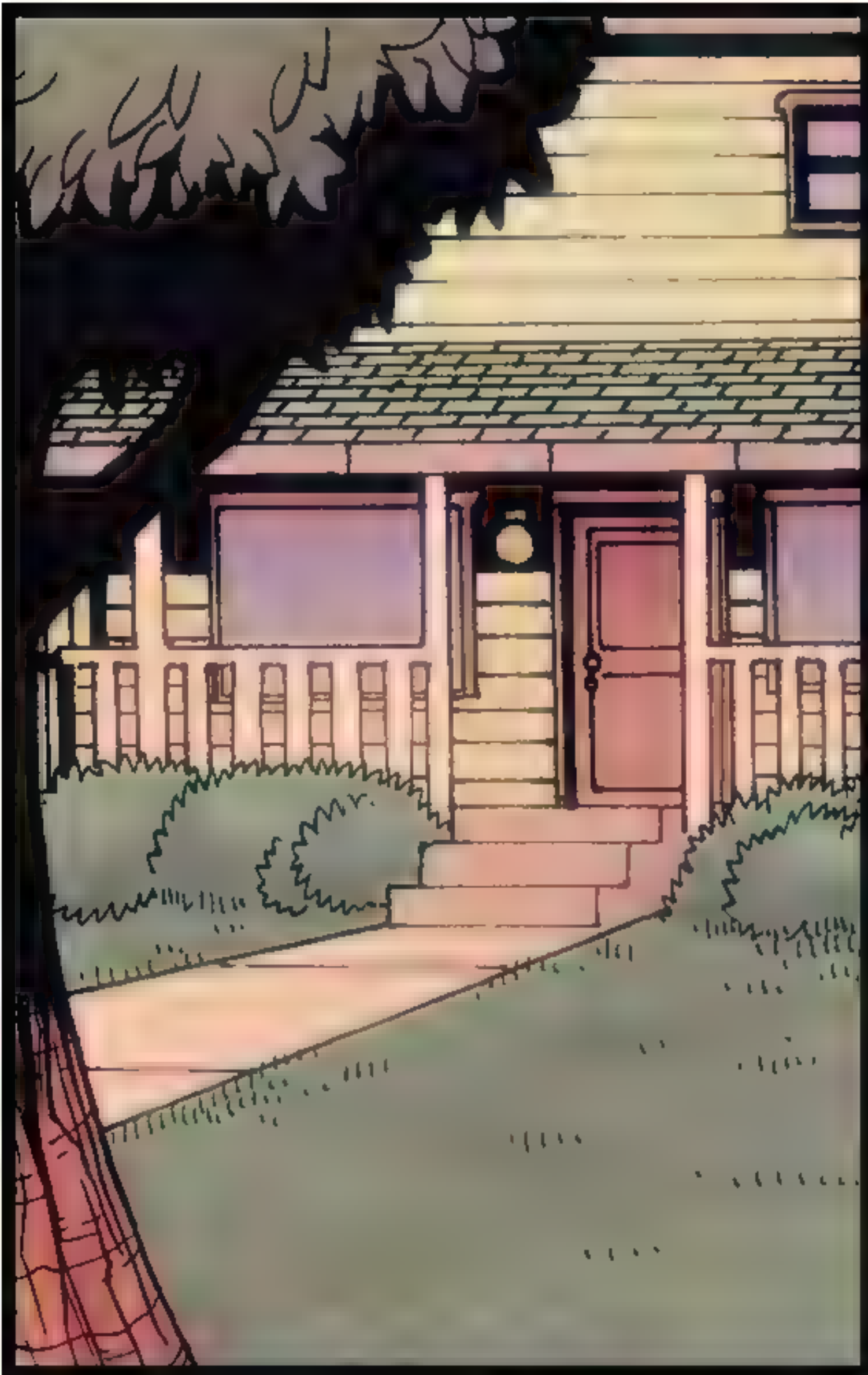


I KNOW,
GRAND
REGENT
THRAGG.

I KNOW...

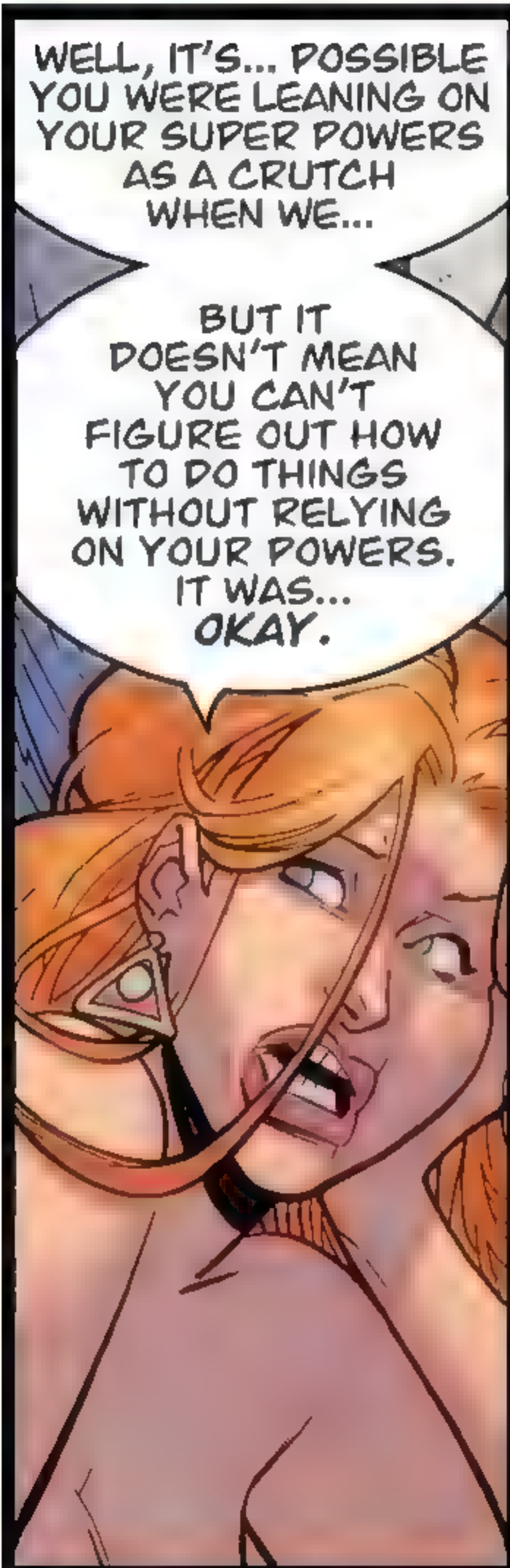


...AND
I LOVE
THEM
ALL.



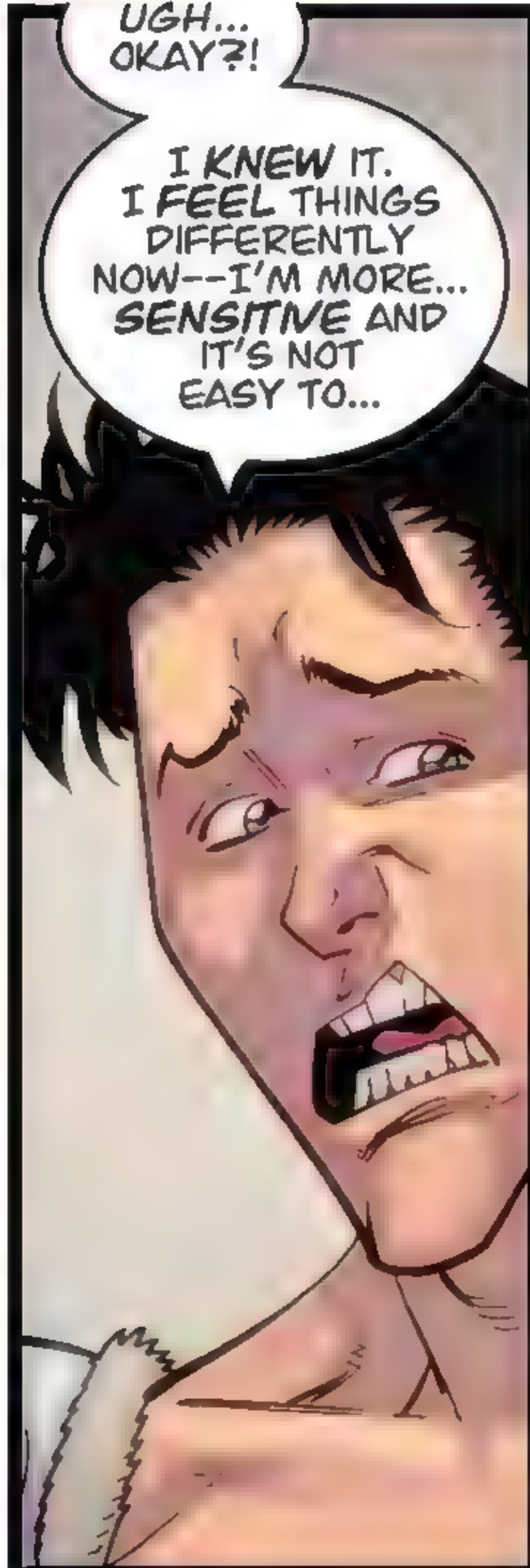
MARK,
WHAT
IS IT?

WAS THAT
OKAY FOR YOU?
I MEAN, REALLY.
I DON'T WANT
YOU TO
SUGARCOAT
IT.



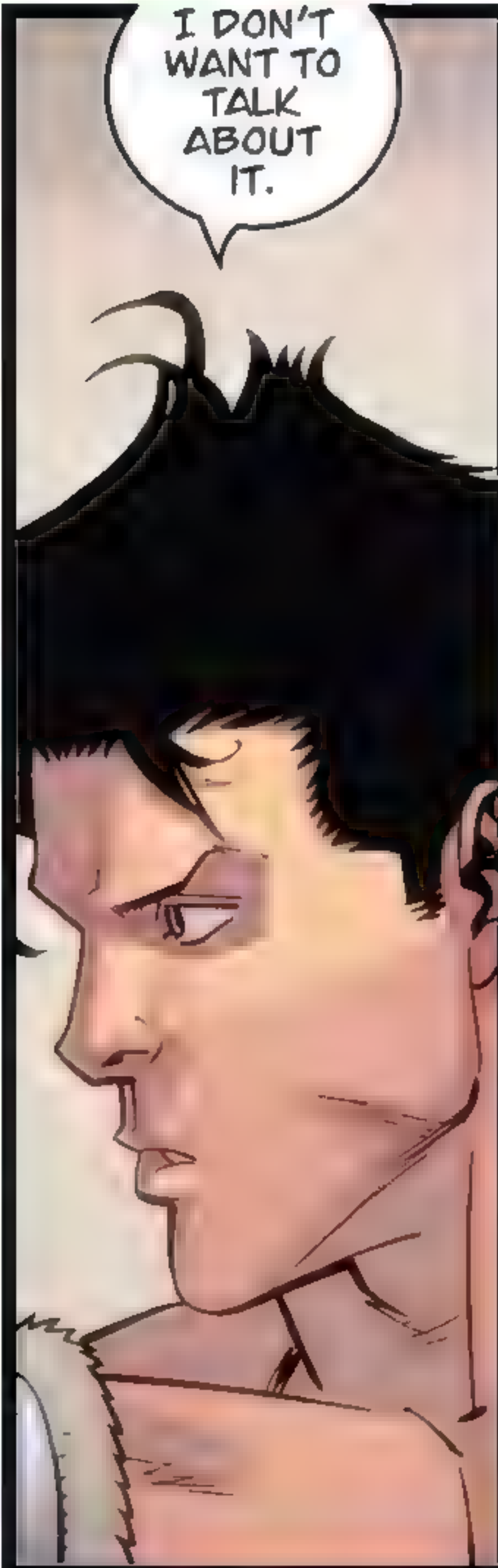
WELL, IT'S... POSSIBLE
YOU WERE LEANING ON
YOUR SUPER POWERS
AS A CRUTCH
WHEN WE...

BUT IT
DOESN'T MEAN
YOU CAN'T
FIGURE OUT HOW
TO DO THINGS
WITHOUT RELYING
ON YOUR POWERS.
IT WAS...
OKAY.

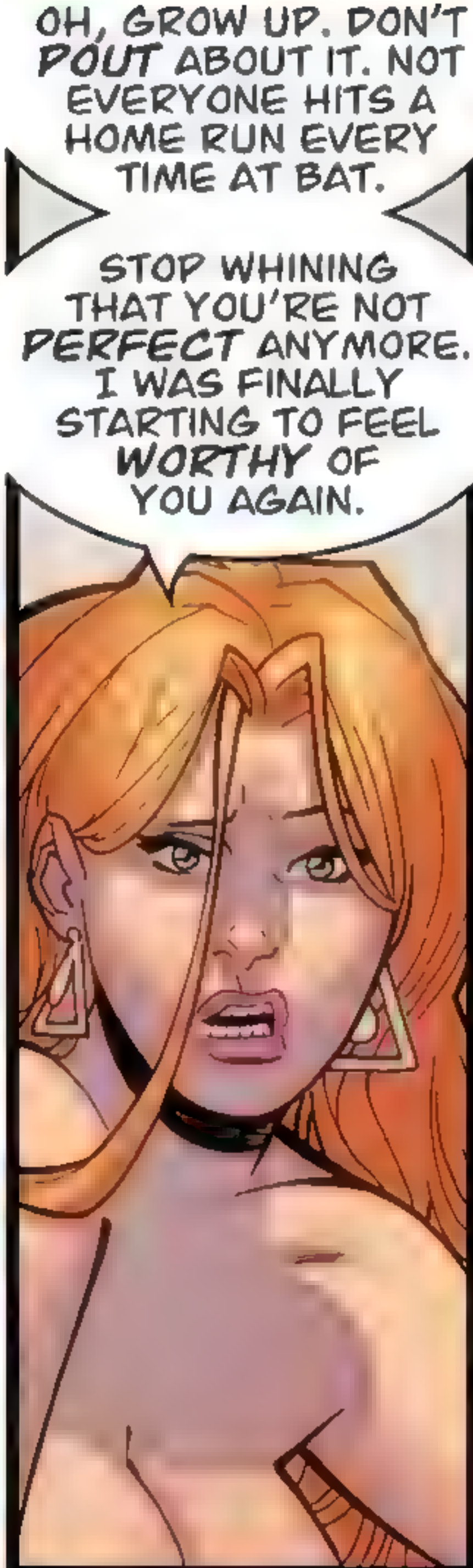


UGH...
OKAY?!

I KNEW IT.
I FEEL THINGS
DIFFERENTLY
NOW--I'M MORE...
SENSITIVE AND
IT'S NOT
EASY TO...

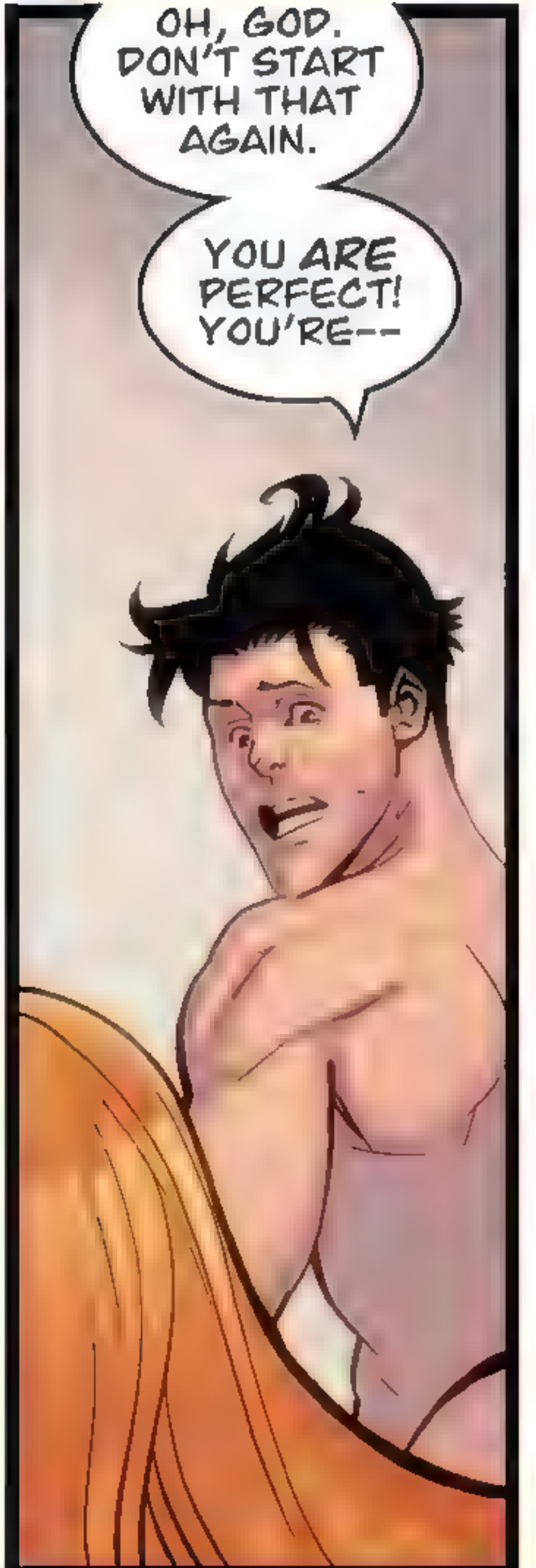


I DON'T
WANT TO
TALK
ABOUT
IT.



OH, GROW UP. DON'T
POUT ABOUT IT. NOT
EVERYONE HITS A
HOME RUN EVERY
TIME AT BAT.

STOP WHINING
THAT YOU'RE NOT
PERFECT ANYMORE.
I WAS FINALLY
STARTING TO FEEL
WORTHY OF
YOU AGAIN.



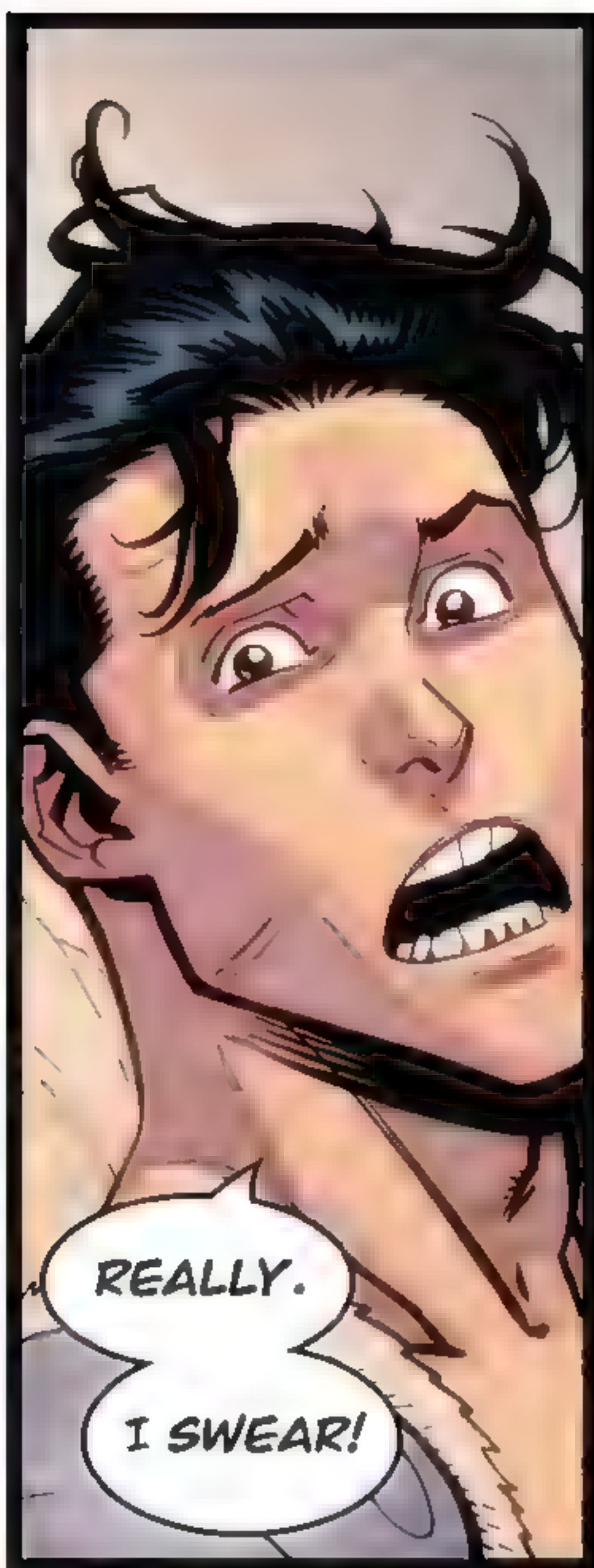
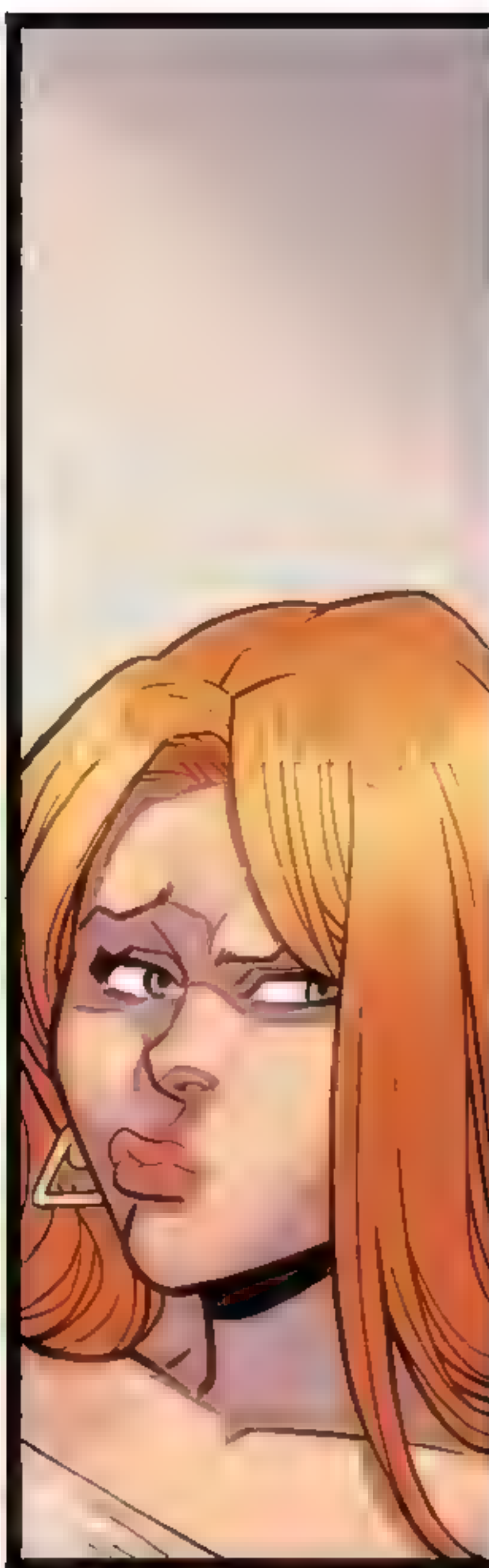
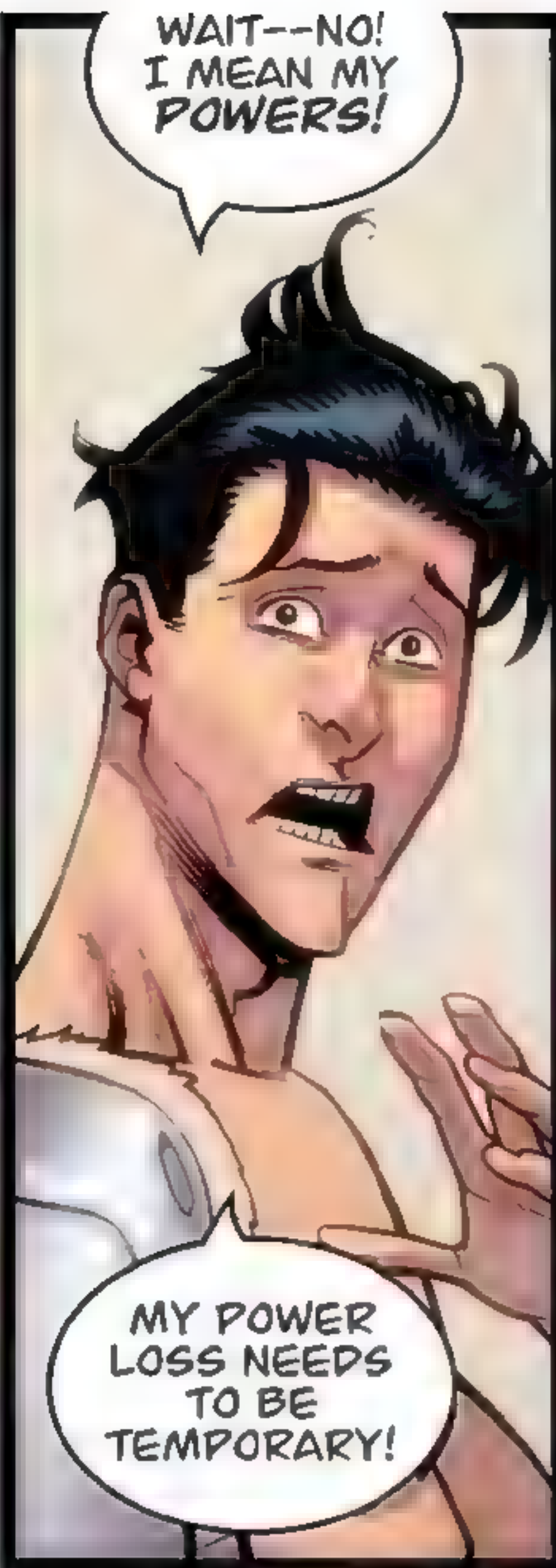
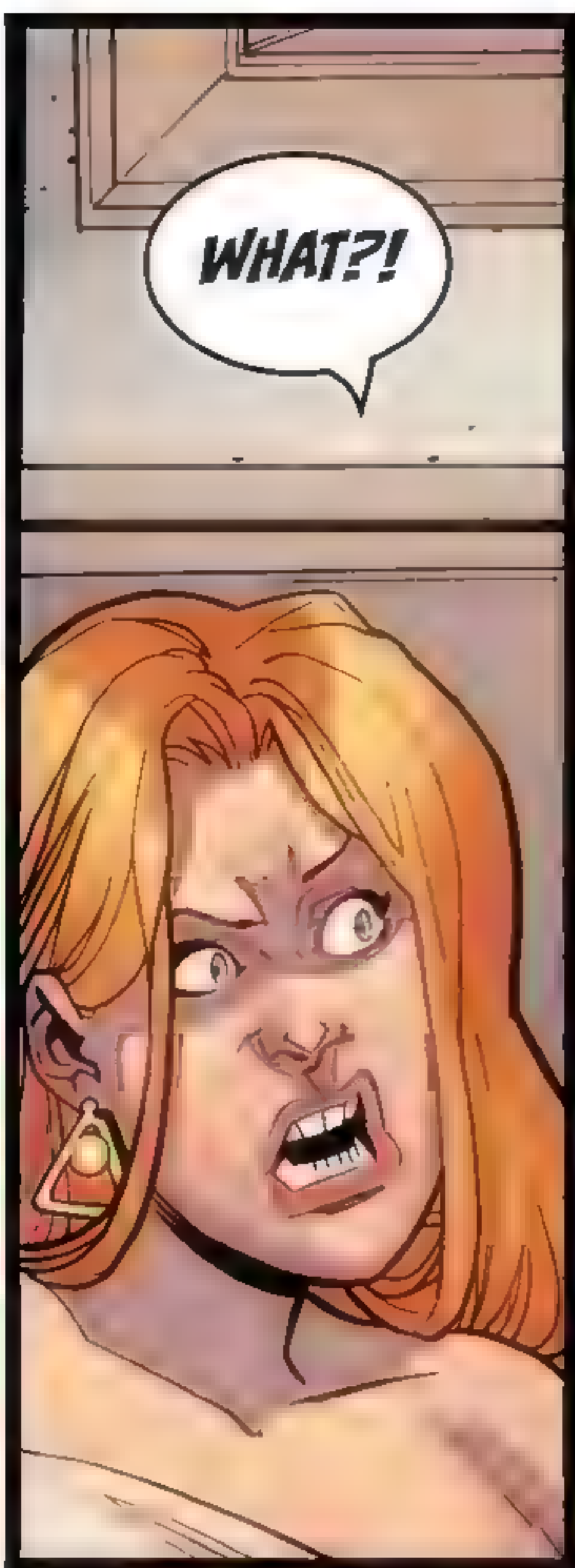
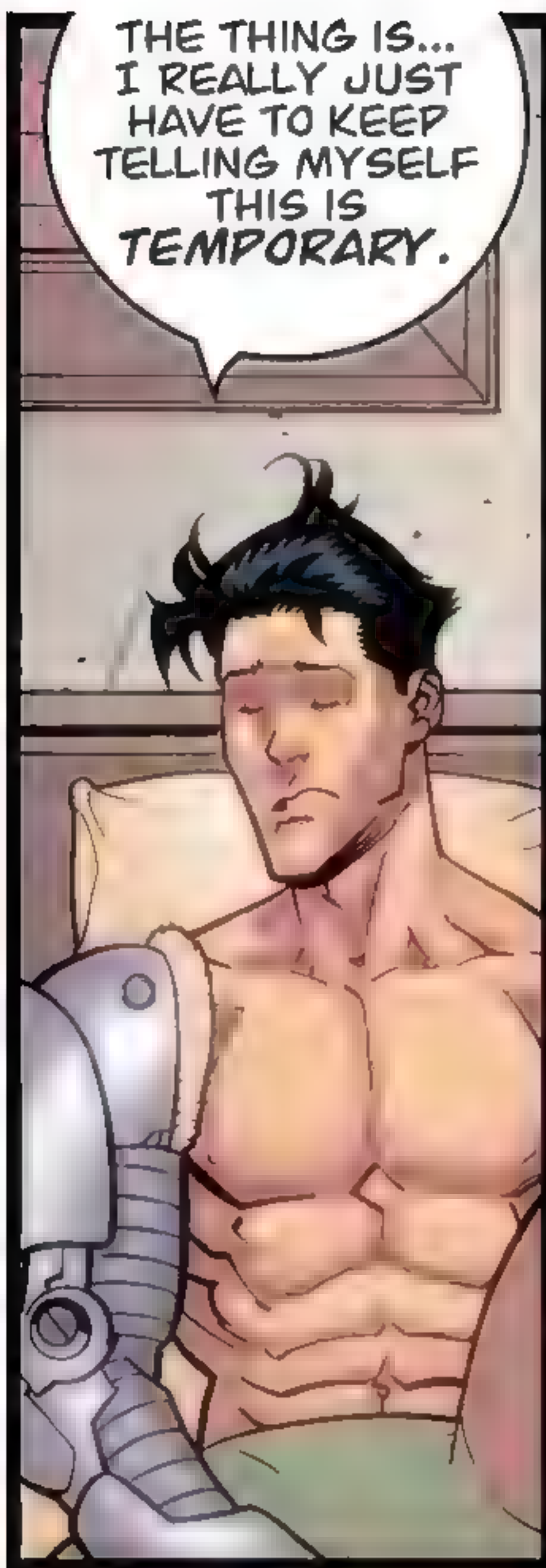
OH, GOD.
DON'T START
WITH THAT
AGAIN.

YOU ARE
PERFECT!
YOU'RE--



OKAY...
LET'S...
BOTH STOP
COMPLAINING
ABOUT
OURSELVES.

AGREED.



"I'VE GOT NO IDEA
WHAT HE COULD
BE WORKING ON."



DEEP BELOW THE PENTAGON,
THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF
THE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY.

UNITED STATES
PENTAGON

Parking in Rear



I KNEW YOUR
MOTHER ONLY
BRIEFLY. I CARED
FOR HER, BUT WE
WERE NOT...
MEANT TO BE
TOGETHER.

I NEVER
KNEW YOU--
THAT WE'D--I
DIDN'T EVEN THINK
IT COULD BE
POSSIBLE FOR
MY MONSTER
FORM TO...

IF I'D
KNOWN YOU
EXISTED, I
WOULD NEVER
HAVE LEFT...
I WOULD
HAVE...

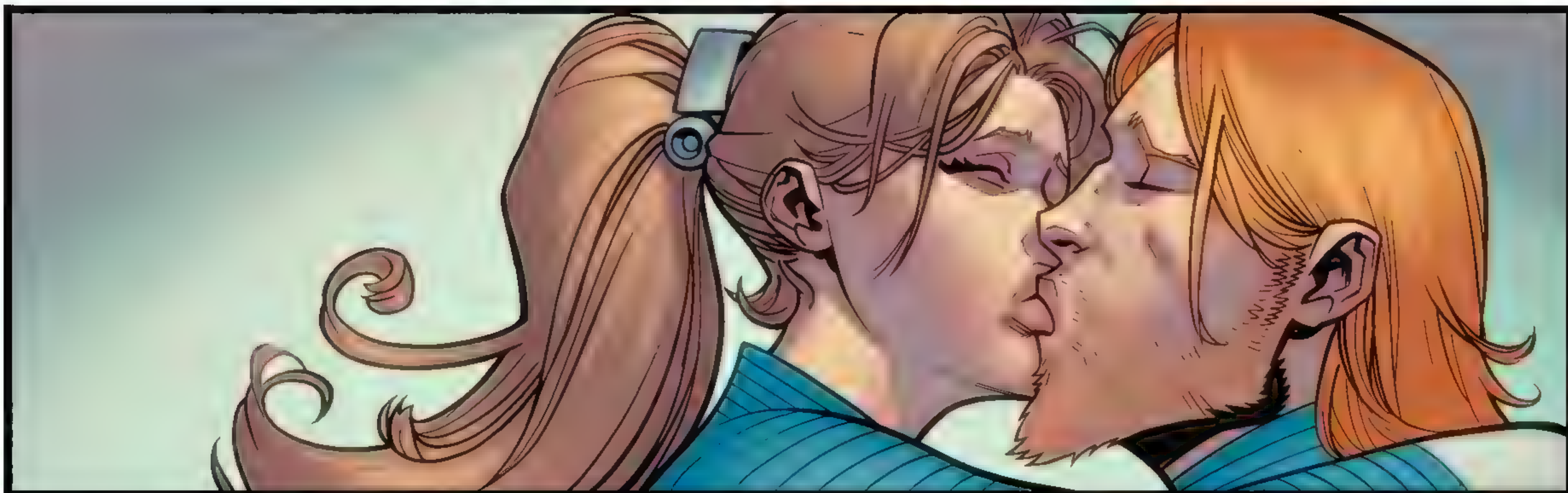
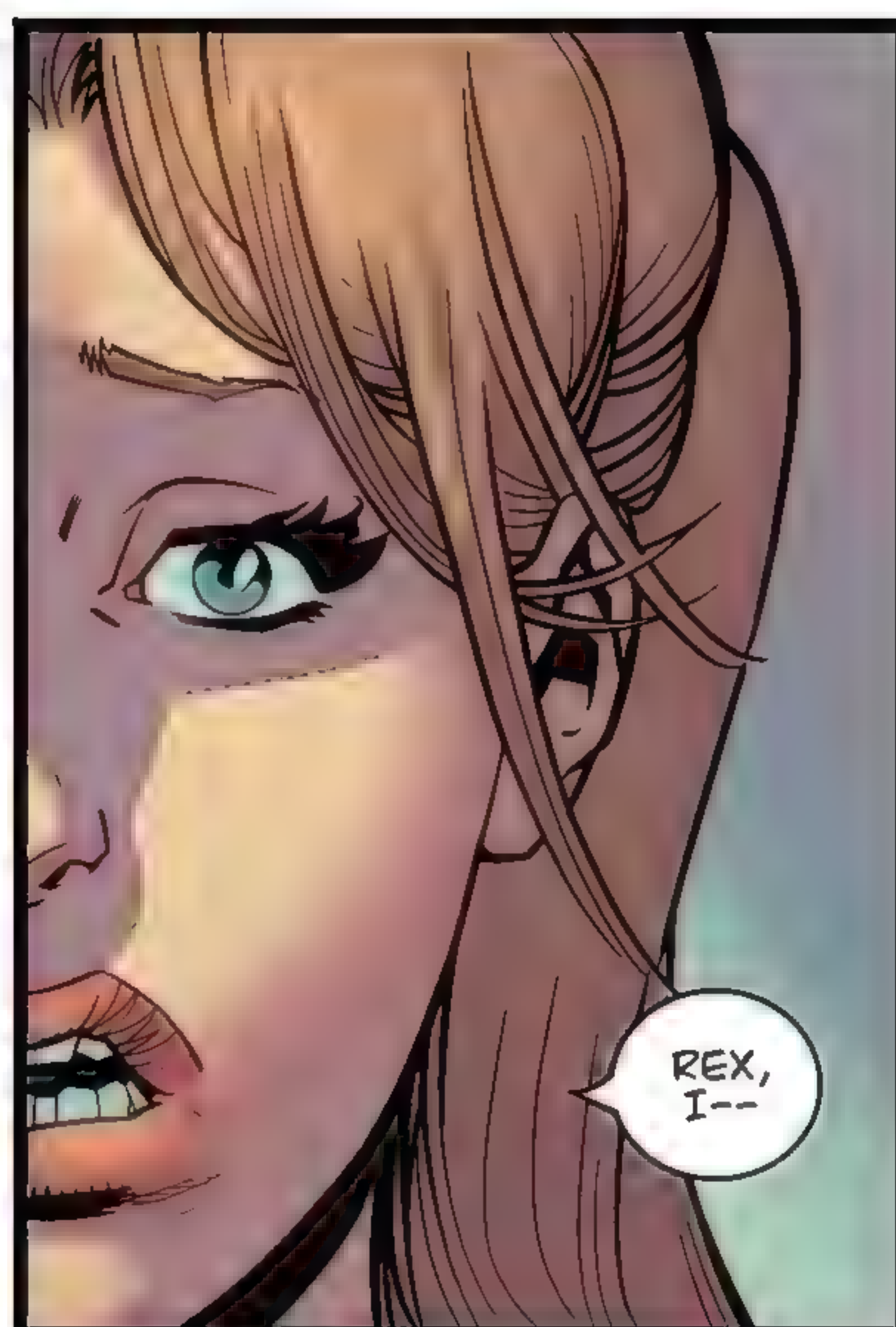
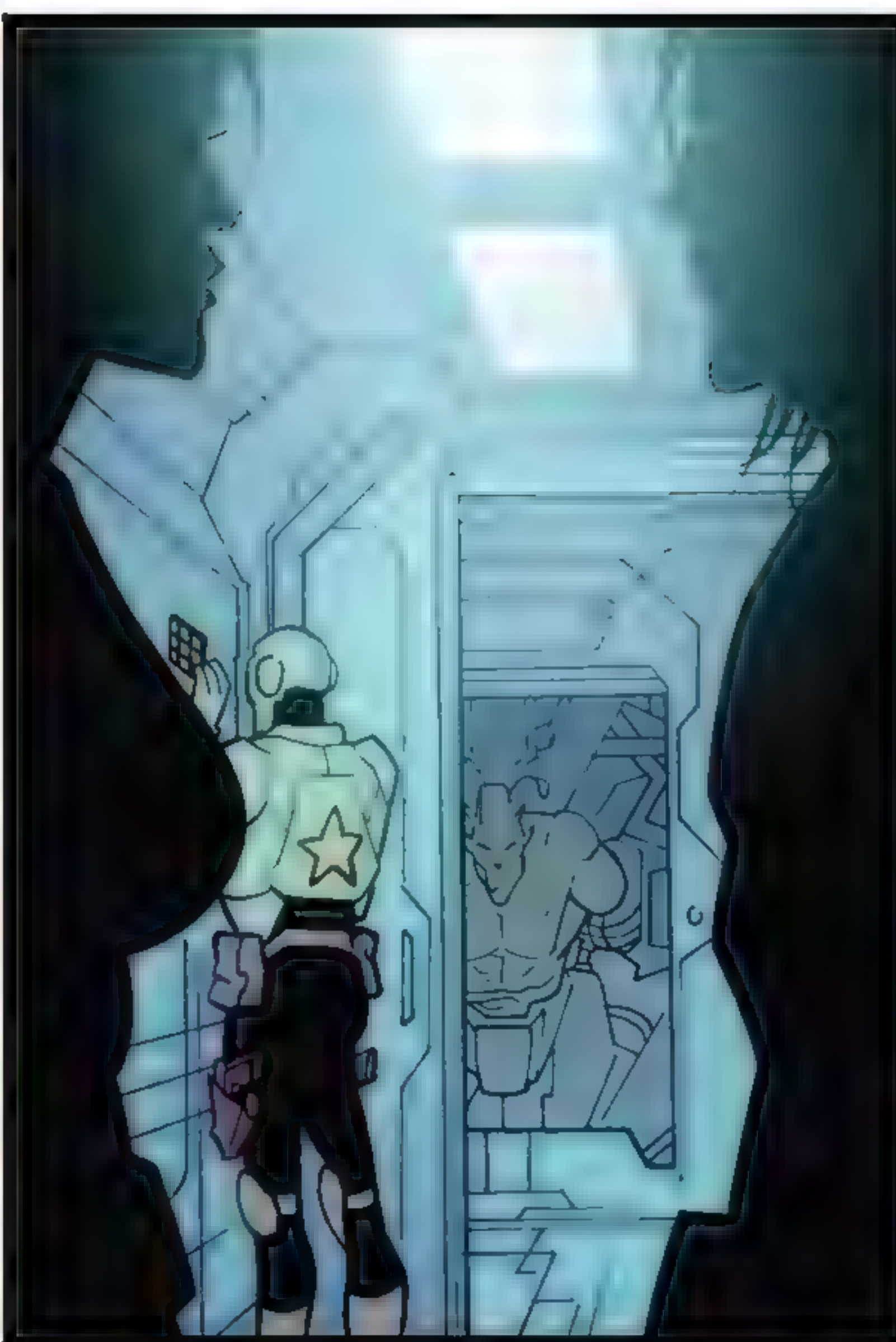
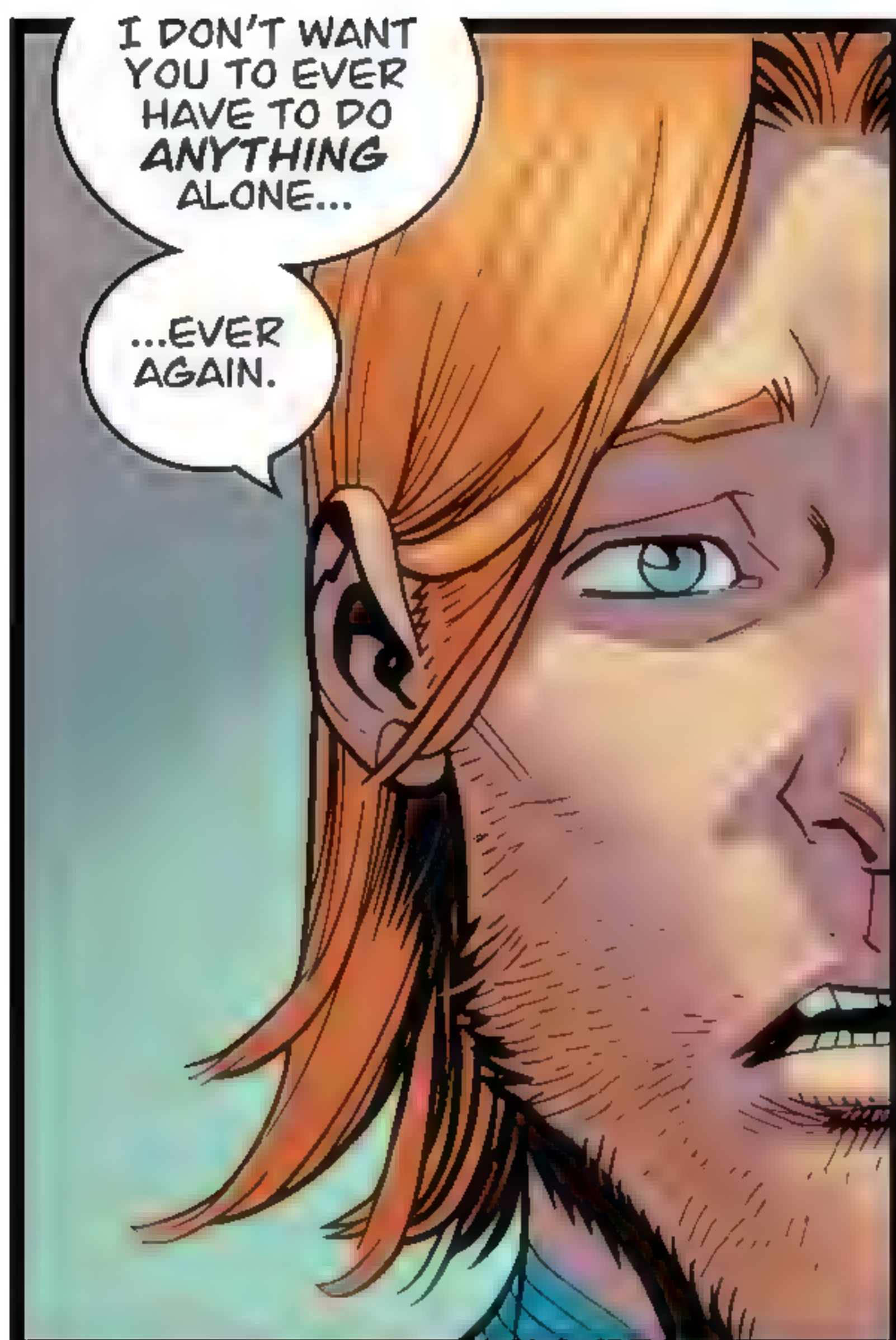
I HAVE
NOTHING
TO SAY
TO YOU.

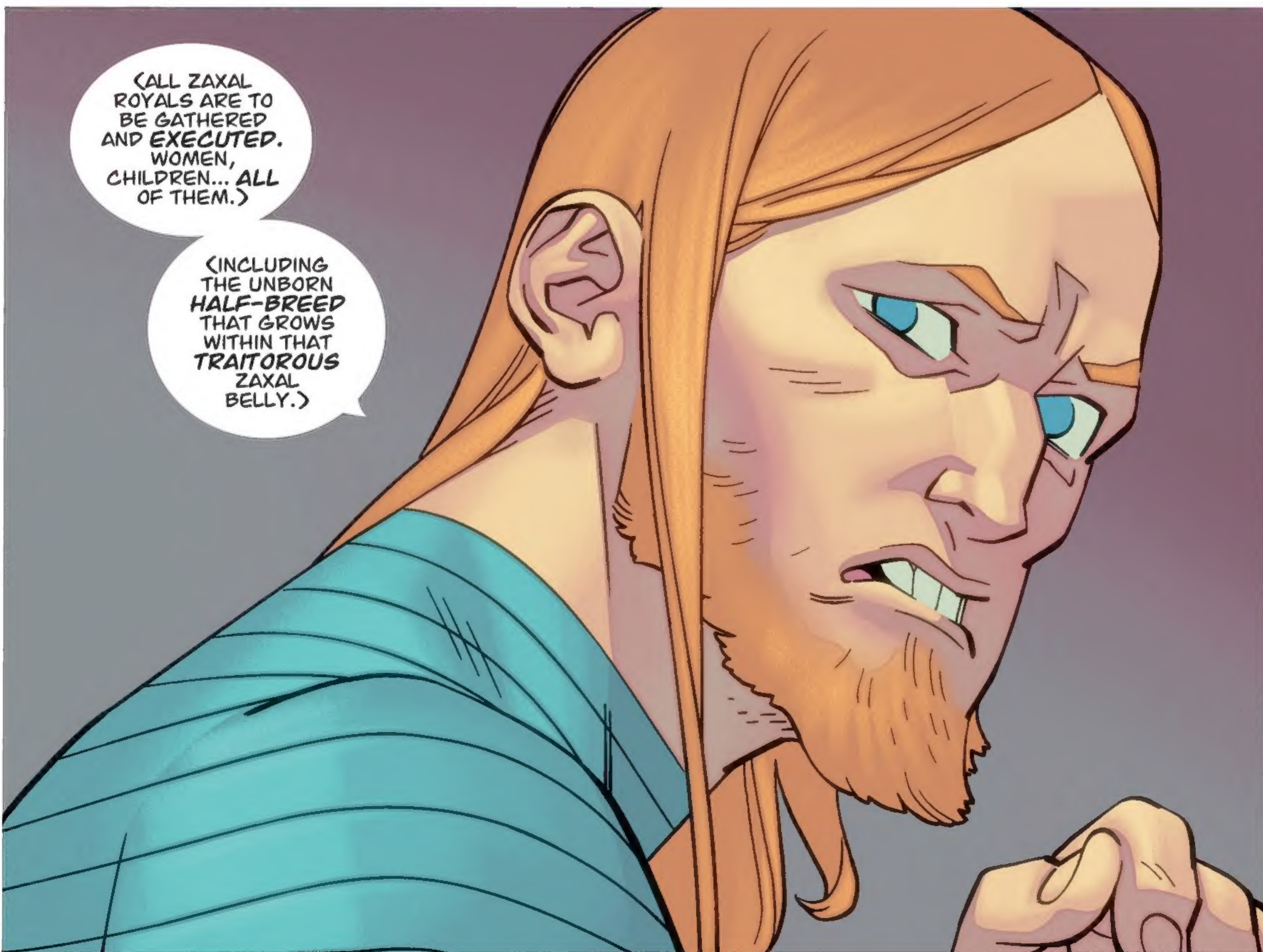
LEAVE
ME.

WE
SHOULD
GO.

THANKS
FOR DOING
THIS,
REX.

I DON'T
THINK I COULD
HAVE GOTTEN
THROUGH
THIS ALONE.









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